

Model 3024 Albedometer

User's Manual



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INTRODUCTION

The Model 3024 Albedometer is designed for measuring net global radiation and/or albedo over surfaces of different natures.

The Model 3024 Albedometer is constructed of two pyranometers that comply with the specifications for “First Class”, which is second to “Secondary Standard” as published in the *Guide to Meteorological Instruments and Methods of Observation*, Fifth Edition, 1983, of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)—Geneva, Switzerland. The WMO classification list is adopted, improved, and extended by the International Standard Organization (ISO) and published as ISO 9060.

THEORY OF OPERATION

General Description

The Model 3024 consists of two matched First Class Pyranometers mounted on a 500 mm long rod. The top sensor faces up and measures incoming global radiation, while the lower sensor faces down and measures reflected solar radiation. If the sensors are connected in anti-series, the net global radiation is measured. When the outputs are measured separately, the albedo can be calculated by dividing reflected radiation by global radiation.

The Model 3024’s sensing elements are thermal detectors. This type of sensing element responds to the total power absorbed, and is theoretically non-selective as to the spectral distribution of the radiation. This implies that the naked thermal detector is also sensitive to long wave infrared radiation (thermal radiation >3000 nm) from the environment.

The radiant energy is absorbed by a black painted disk. The heat generated flows through a thermal resistance to the heat sink (the albedometer body). The temperature difference across the thermal resistance of the disk is then converted into a voltage.

The temperature rise is easily affected by wind, rain, and thermal radiation losses to the environment (“cold” sky). Therefore, the detector is shielded by two glass domes. Glass domes allow equal transmission of the direct solar component for every position of the sun on the celestial sphere. The spectral range of the albedometer is limited by the transmission of the glass. A desiccator in the body prevents dew on the inner side of the domes, which can cool down considerably on clear, windless nights.

Accuracy

The albedometer’s sensitivity is cross-correlated to a number of parameters, such as temperature, level of irradiance, vector of incidence, etc. The upper limiting values of the resulting sensitivity variations are listed in the specifications. The Model 3024 qualifies as “First Class” according to World Meteorological Organization classifications (see Table 1).

Characteristic	Secondary Standard	First Class	Second Class
Resolution (smallest detectable change in W/m ²)	±1	±5	±10
Stability (percentage of full scale, change/year)	±1	±2	±5
Cosine response (percentage deviation from ideal at 10° solar elevation on a clear day)	<±3	<±7	<±15
Azimuth response (Percentage deviation from the mean at 10° solar elevation on a clear day)	<±3	<±5	<±10
Temperature response (percentage maximum error due to change of ambient temperature within the operating range)	±1	±2	±5
Non-linearity (percentage of full scale)	±0.5	±2	±5
Spectral sensitivity (percentage deviation from mean absorptance 0.3 to 3µm)	±2	±5	±10
Response time (99% response)	<25 s	<1 min.	<4 min.

Table 1. WMO pyranometer classifications.

The non-linearity error—the sensitivity variation with irradiance—is the same for any given 3024 (see Figure 1).

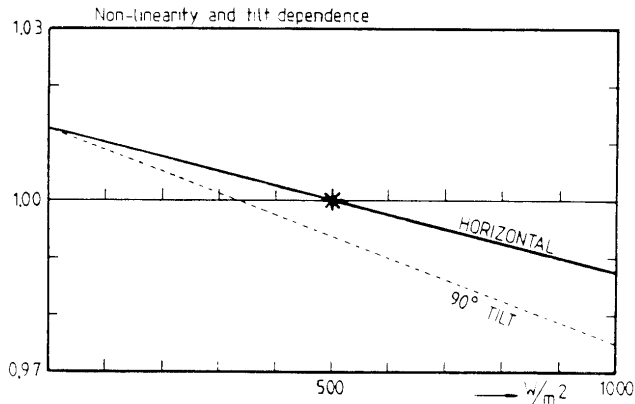


Figure 1. Non-linearity of Model 3024 albedometer.

The temperature dependence of the sensitivity is an individual function. For a given 3024, the curve is somewhere in the shaded region of **Figure 2**.

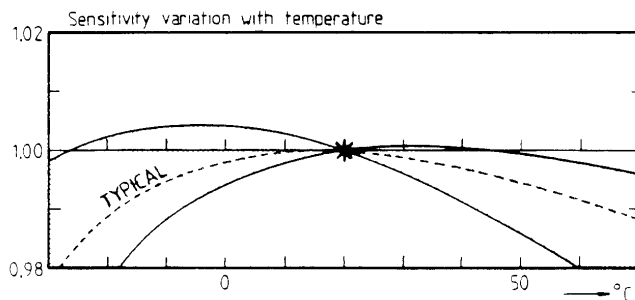


Figure 2. The curve of relative sensitivity variation with instrument temperature of a Model 3024 albedometer is in the shaded region. A typical curve is shown.

Spectral selectivity is the product of spectral absorptance of the black coating and spectral transmittance of the glass domes (see **Figure 3**).

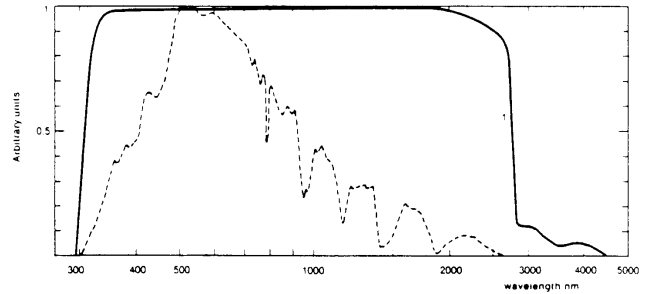


Figure 3. 1. Relative spectral transmittance of two pyranometer domes. (Four surface reflections and index change with wavelength are taken into account.)
2. Spectral distribution of solar radiation at sea level. Sun at zenith (Airmass 1).

INSTALLATION

Location

Ideally, the site for the albedometer should be free from any obstructions above the plane of the sensing element and, at the same time, the albedometer should be readily accessible to allow cleaning of the domes and inspection of the desiccator.

If this is not possible, the site should be chosen in such a way that any obstruction over the azimuth range between earliest sunrise and latest sunset should have an elevation not exceeding 5° (the apparent sun diameter is 0.5°). This is important for accurate measurement of direct solar radiation. Diffuse (solar) radiation is less influenced by obstructions near the horizon. For instance, an obstruction with an elevation of 5° over the whole azimuth range of 360° decreases the downward diffuse solar radiation by only 0.8%.

The albedometer should be located in such a way that a shadow will not be cast on it at any time (for example, by masts or exhaust pipes). Mind that hot (over 200°C) exhausted gas (streams) will produce radiation in the spectral range of the 3024 albedometer. The albedometer should be far from light-colored walls or other objects likely to reflect sunlight onto it.

Mounting

In principle, no special orientation of the instrument is required due to the rotational symmetric sensor. The World Meteorological Organization recommends that the emerging leads are pointed to the nearest pole to minimize heating of the electrical connections.

Accurate measurement requires proper leveling of the thermopile surface. To level the sensor, adjust the sensor arm at the mounting fixture. Electrical contact with ground must be maintained to lead off current induced by lightning.

According to the WMO, the sensor should be installed 1-2 meters above a surface covered by short cut grass, or whatever terrain is typical of the area under study. The mounting device should not interfere with the field of view of the instrument. A setup such as that shown in **Figure 4** is suitable. The upper screen prevents excessive heating of the albedometer body by solar radiation and shields the lower sensor from precipitation. The lower screen prevents direct illumination of the domes by the sun at sunrise and sunset. The shadow of the Model 3024 is minimized by its compact construction. Also, incident and reflected radiation are measured at nearly the same point.

The mast shown in **Figure 4** intercepts a fraction $D/2\pi S$ of the radiation coming from the ground. In the most unfavorable situation (sun at zenith), the albedometer shadow decreases the signal with a part R^2/H^2 .

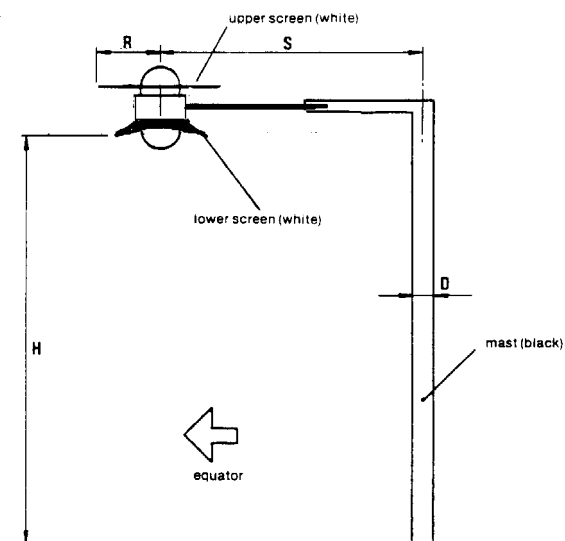


Figure 4
Typical Sensor Installation

Electrical Connection

The Model 3024 is provided with a 10 meter cable with shield and five leads. The color code is:

red	+ upper sensor
blue	- upper sensor
green	+ lower sensor
yellow	- lower sensor
white	case

There are two modes of operating the Model 3024 Albedometer:

- With the sensors connected in anti-series, the net global radiation is measured.
- When the outputs are recorded separately, the albedo can be calculated by dividing the reflected radiation by the global radiation.

The shield is isolated from the case with a surge arrestor, so no shield current can exist. Shield and white leads may be connected to the same ground at the readout equipment.

The albedometer can be connected to a computer or data acquisition system as well. A low voltage analog input module with A/D converter must be available. The span and resolution of the A/D converter in the module must allow a system sensitivity of about 1 bit per W/m^2 . More resolution is not necessary during outdoor solar radiation measurements, because albedometers exhibit offsets up to $\pm 2 W/m^2$ due to a lack of thermal equilibrium.

A surge arrestor is incorporated into the sensor to lead off induced lightning current to the case. For this reason, the case should be grounded. The surge arrestor is noble gas filled, has infinite impedance, and recovers after breakdown. The breakdown voltage is 90 V, and the peak pulse current is 10 kA.

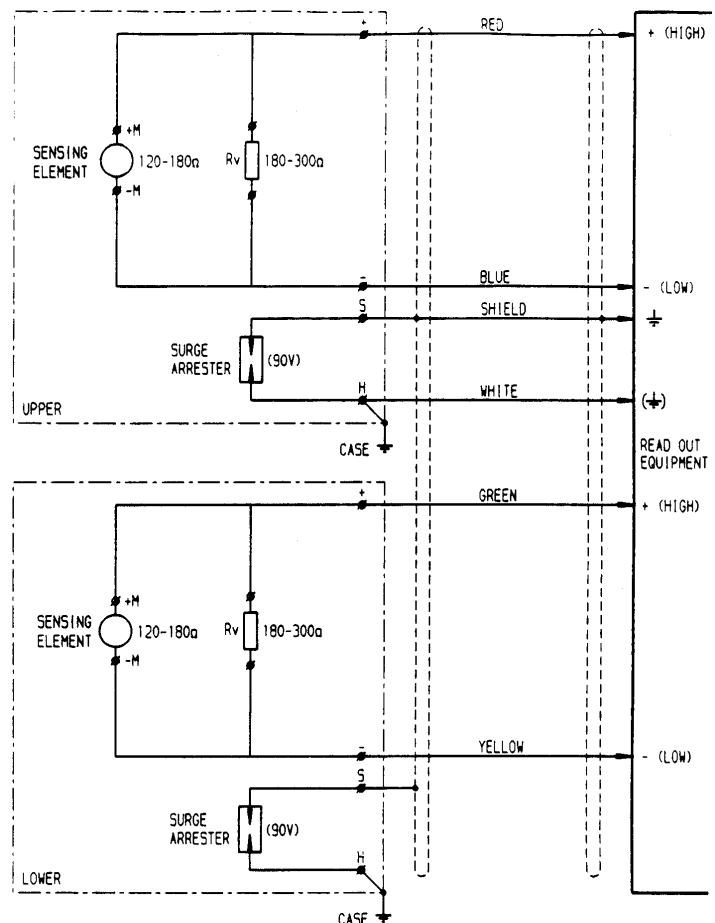


Figure 5
Model 3024 Electrical Connection

MAINTENANCE

Once installed, the albedometer requires little maintenance. The outer domes should be inspected at regular intervals and cleaned regularly, preferably every morning.

On clear windless nights, the outer dome temperature of horizontally placed albedometers will decrease—even to the dew point temperature of the air—due to IR radiation exchange with the cold sky. (The effective sky temperature can be 30°C lower than the ground temperature, which results in an infrared emission of -150 W/m^2 .) When this happens, dew, glazed frost, or hoar frost may form on the top of the outer domes, and may remain there for several hours during the morning. An ice cap on the domes is a strong diffuser and increases the albedometer's signal drastically, up to 50% in the first hours after sunrise.

In some networks, the exposed domes of the albedometer are ventilated continuously by a blower to keep the domes above the dew point temperature. This ventilation also decreases the sensitivity to thermal radiation (zero offset I) by an approximate factor of two.

When the blue silica gel in the drying cartridge turns completely pink (normally after several months), it must be replaced with active material. Pink silica gel can be dried out and reactivated by placing it in an oven at 130°C for several hours.

CALIBRATION

The pyranometers used in the Model 3024 Albedometer should ideally have a constant ratio of voltage output/irradiance level (outside the instrument, in the plane of the sensing element). This ratio is called sensitivity or responsivity.

The irradiance value can be simply computed by dividing the output signal of each pyranometer by its sensitivity figure, or by multiplying the signal value by the reciprocal of the sensitivity figure (often called calibration factor).

The sensitivity figure of a particular pyranometer is an individual one, determined in the manufacturer's laboratory by comparison against a standard pyranometer.

Pyranometer sensitivity changes with time and with exposure to radiation, often due to deterioration of the black paint. Periodic calibration (at least every two years) is advised.

SPECIFICATIONS

(Specifications apply to each of the two pyranometers used in the Model 3024.)

Performance

Response time for 95% response	< 30 s
Zero offset	
a) response to 200 Wm^{-2} net thermal radiation (ventilated)	+15 Wm^{-2}
b) response to 5 K h^{-1} change in ambient temperature	$\pm 4 \text{ Wm}^{-2}$
Non-stability percentage change responsivity per year	$\pm 1\%$
Non-linearity percentage deviation from the responsivity at 500 Wm^{-2} due to the change in irradiance within 100 Wm^{-2} to 1000 Wm^{-2}	$\pm 1.2\%$
Directional response for beam radiation. The range of errors caused by assuming that the normal incidence responsivity is valid for all directions when measuring from any direction a beam radiation whose normal incidence irradiation is 100 Wm^{-2}	$\pm 20 \text{ Wm}^{-2}$
Spectral selectivity percentage deviation of the product of spectral absorptance and spectral transmittance from the corresponding mean within 0, 35 μm and 1, 5 μm	$\pm 2\%$
Temperature response percentage deviation due to change in ambient temperature from -10 to +40° C relative to 20° C	-2%
Tilt response percentage deviation from the responsivity at 0° tilt (horizontal) due to change in tilt from 0° to 90° at 1000 Wm^{-2} irradiance	$\pm 1\%$
Viewing angle	2½ sr
Irradiance	0-1400 W/m^2 (max 2000 W/m^2)
Spectral range	305-2800 nm (50% points) 335-2200 nm (95% points)
Sensitivity	Between 9 and 15 $\mu\text{V/Wm}^{-2}$
Impedance	Depends on connection

Construction

Receiver paint

Glass domes

Desiccant

Spirit level

Materials

Weight

Cable length

Dimensions

Carbon black

Schott K5 optical glass 2 mm thick,
30 mm and 50 mm outer diameter

Silica gel

Sensitivity 0.5 degree (bubble half out
of the ring) coincide with base of the
instrument. Detector surface and base
are coplanar within 0.1°.

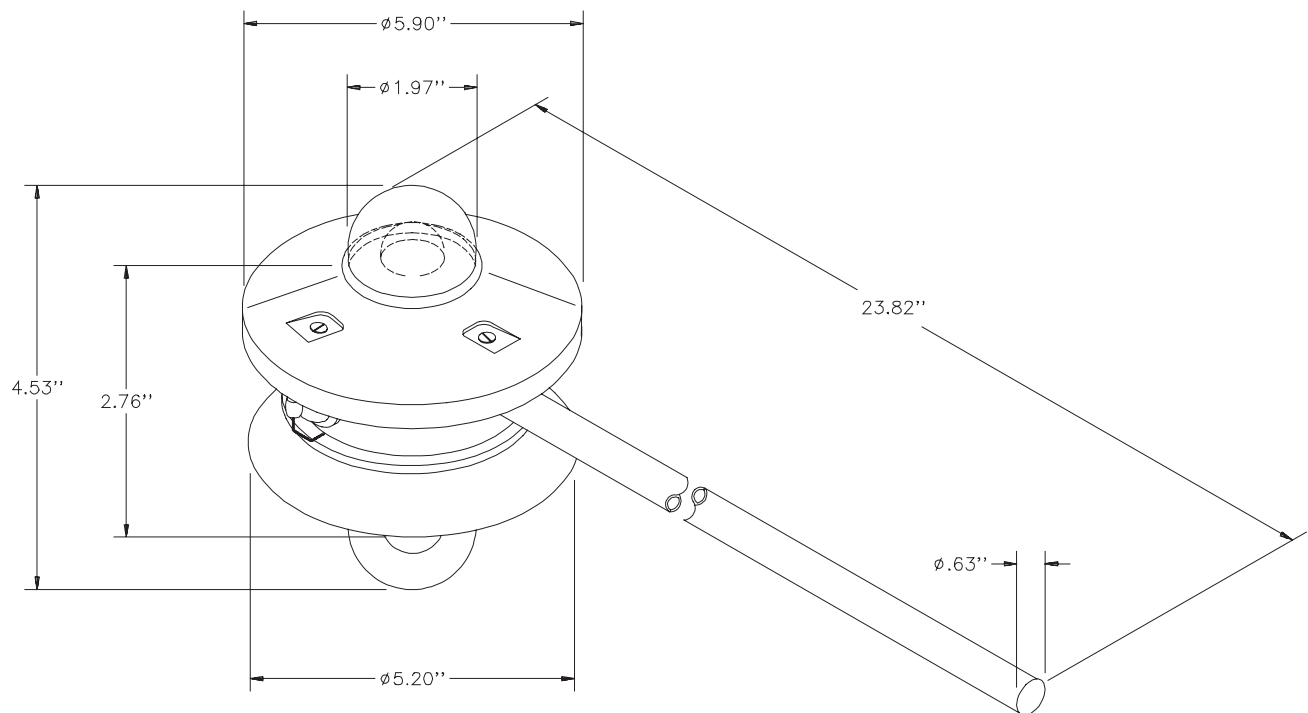
Anodized aluminum case, stainless steel
screws in stainless steel bushes, white plas-
tic screen of ASA, drying cartridge PMMA

1.9 kg

10 m

See **Figure 6**

Figure 6. Model 3024 Albedometer



PARTS LIST

Model 3024 Replaceable Parts and Options

<i>Description</i>	<i>Part Number</i>
Desiccator cartridge	30161
White sun shield	30162
Rubber ring for outer glass dome	30163
Outer glass dome with metal ring	30164



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