

Lab Experiment # 2

Operating the X-ray Control Console

Purpose

This lab exercise will test the capabilities and limitations of the x-ray console by setting various mAs, mA, and kVp values, while also observing which combinations are available and which are restricted by the unit's design.

Learning Objectives

After completing this lab, you should be able to:

1. Use the laboratory equipment properly.
2. Set up the control console correctly.
3. Function effectively in group work.
4. Perform the experiment independently.
5. Evaluate the effect of seconds and milliseconds on the exposure
6. Convert the exposure time from seconds to milliseconds.
7. Calculate the appropriate milliseconds to maintain image density.
8. Predict the effect of the change in seconds or milliseconds on image quality

Materials Needed

- High-frequency, digital control console



Pre-Lab Discussion

Units of Exposure Time

The exposure timers in use today vary with each X-ray machine. Most machines use seconds or milliseconds. Therefore, radiographers must be able to calculate and set the exposure time on the control console using seconds and milliseconds.

Relationship of Seconds to Milliseconds

Seconds (s)	Milliseconds (ms)
1.0	1000
0.8	800
0.75	750
0.667	667
0.6	600
0.5	500
0.4	400
0.333	333
0.25	250
0.2	200
0.167	167
0.1	100
0.05	50
0.017	17
0.008	* 8
0.004	4
0.002	2
0.001	** 1

* Shortest exposure time possible when using a *single-phase* imaging system

** Shortest exposure time possible when using a *triple-phase* or *high-frequency* imaging system

Millisecond Conversion

$$\text{milli} = \text{m} = 0.001$$

To change seconds to milliseconds – multiply by 1,000

$$\text{sec} \times 1,000 = \text{ms}$$

Example:

To convert 3 seconds to milliseconds:

$$3 \text{ sec} \times 1,000 = 3,000 \text{ ms}$$

Convert 0.04 seconds to milliseconds:



To change milliseconds to seconds – divide by 1,000

$$\frac{\text{ms}}{1,000} = \text{sec}$$

Example:

To convert 250 milliseconds to seconds:

$$\frac{250 \text{ ms}}{1,000} = 0.250 \text{ sec}$$

Convert 800 milliseconds to seconds:

Illustrated Thought Process

Here is a simple method for remembering the direction the decimal point must move.

To convert *seconds* to *milliseconds*, move the decimal point three places to the **RIGHT**.

Ex. 0.500 seconds = 500 milliseconds

A. Write the following visual aid.

s ← **3** → **ms**

B. Place the old time above the appropriate unit of measurement.

0.5
s ← 3 → ms

D. Move the decimal point three (**3**) places in the direction of the arrow and place the converted time above the new unit.

0.5 **500**
s ← 3 → ms

To convert *milliseconds* to *seconds*, move the decimal point three places to the **LEFT**.

Ex. 660 milliseconds = 0.660 seconds

A. Write the visual aid.

s ← **3** → **ms**

B. Place the old time above the appropriate unit of measurement.

660
s ← 3 → ms

C. Move the decimal point three (**3**) places in the direction of the arrow and place the converted time above the new unit.

0.660 660
s ← 3 → ms

Practice Drill – Illustrated Thought Process

1. A radiographic exposure requires 0.12 seconds.
What millisecond-equivalent timer setting should you use?

[_____]

s ← **3** → **ms**

2. A radiographic exposure requires 300 milliseconds.
What decimal-equivalent timer setting should you use?

[_____]

s ← **3** → **ms**

3. A radiographic exposure requires 0.044 seconds.
What millisecond-equivalent timer setting should you use?

[_____]

s ← **3** → **ms**

4. A radiographic exposure requires 9 milliseconds.
What decimal-equivalent timer setting should you use?

[_____]

s ← **3** → **ms**

Setting the Control Console

Lab Worksheet

1. What is the HIGHEST kVp value that can be set on your console?
2. What is the LOWEST kVp value that can be set on your console?
3. What is the HIGHEST mA station that can be set on your console?
4. What is the LOWEST mA station that can be set on your console?
5. What is the HIGHEST mA station that can be set on your console when using the **small** focal spot (small filament)?
6. What is the LOWEST mA station that can be set on your console when using the **small** focal spot (small filament)?
7. What is the HIGHEST mA station that can be set on your console when using the **large** focal spot (large filament)?
8. What is the LOWEST mA station that can be set on your console when using the **large** focal spot (large filament)?
9. What is the longest time that can be set on your X-ray unit?
10. List all mA stations that can be set on your X-ray unit.
11. List all the kVp values that can be set on your X-ray unit.