



## **INSTRUCTION MANUAL**

Digivac Model 100V and 100H

Digital Vacuum Gauges

### Digivac Models

Model 100H  
Model 100V

### 100H Ranges

1 to 1990 milliTorr  
1 to 1990 milliBar  
1 to 199.0 pascal

### 100V Ranges

.001 to 760 Torr  
.001 to 1013 milliBar  
.001 to 101.3 kilopascal

The Digivac Company  
1020 Campus Drive  
Morganville NJ 07751  
[www.digivac.com](http://www.digivac.com)  
(732) 765-0900  
(732) 765-1800 FAX

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## 1.0 DESCRIPTION AND PRINCIPLE OF OPERATION.

The DIGIVAC 100 series gauges are compact digital vacuum sensing instruments. They use a thermocouple to sense vacuum and display the reading in either milliTorr, microBar or pascal. The Digivac Model 100 can use different thermocouple gauge tubes. If in doubt about what gauge sensor you have, consult the Digivac packing list that came with your instrument for positive identification.

Major models and variations are as follows:

100H	Plastic case with D cell battery that shipped with either a KJL6000 or DV-6M thermocouple vacuum gauge sensor.
100V	Plastic case with a D cell battery that shipped with a Varian 531 thermocouple vacuum gauge sensor

Consult the Digivac website [www.digivac.com](http://www.digivac.com) for information about other Digivac vacuum controllers and gauges.

The Digivac Model 100 operates by measuring the temperature rise of an electrically heated thermocouple exposed to a vacuum. As vacuum increases, or, more correctly, as absolute pressure decreases, fewer and fewer molecules of gas are available to cool the thermocouple. With less molecules the air temperature rises and the thermocouple gauge thus senses the vacuum. A precision reference inside the Digivac in conjunction with an integrated circuit amplifier controls the electrical excitation of the sensor filament. In gauges that use KJL6000 or Hastings tubes, a precision temperature compensated AC square wave oscillator is included in the electronics. The voltage response of the thermocouple is piped through a CPU and is translated to the current vacuum reading.

## 2.0 CONSTRUCTION.

The Digivac consists of the indicating and controlling instrument, the gauge tube, and the gauge tube cable. These gauge run on a user supplied "D" cell battery.

The instrument is housed in a rugged free-standing plastic enclosure. It is normally simply placed on a suitable surface, but can be flush mounted in a panel if desired. The gauge tube houses the various thermocouple sensing, heating and compensating elements and terminates in an octal connector. On most models, the connector wiring terminates at the instrument with a D-subminiature connector. Regulating circuitry in the Digivac provides constant current for gauge tube excitation, and thus compensates for resistance in the probe leads.

## 3.0 UNPACKING AND INSPECTION.

After the DIGIVAC is received, it should be carefully unpacked and inspected for damage during shipment and for completeness. The package should contain, as a minimum, the instrument, the thermocouple gage tube, the tube connecting cable, and an instruction manual. In the event of a loss during shipment, a claim should immediately be made to the common carrier or the postal service, as applicable. The Digivac warranty pertains only to the instrument, and does not cover losses in shipping.

## 4.0 INSTALLATION.

The instrument should be located in a clean, dry environment for best results. A customer supplied Alkaline "D" cell should be installed in the unit. The battery compartment can be opened with a counter clockwise turn of a coin inserted into the slot on the cover. The gauge tube cable should be identified by wire tags or markings specific to your environment.

Thermocouple gauge tubes must be installed in a thread-down orientation in a clean, dry vacuum system. While threading the gauge tube in to the manifold, the gauge tube cable should be disconnected to avoid damage. In this way, twisting of the cable and the octal socket on the tube is avoided. Care should be exercised to install the tubes in a dry part of the system. Since the instrument works on the principle of temperature rise, the probes will not work if they become filled with a liquid such as vacuum or diffusion pump oil. The gauge tube should be protected against oil and other contaminants by installing it in such a way to protect it. A good practice is to mount the gauge tube in the most vertically distant place from oil and other contaminants as applicable. The gauge tube should be mounted in the most stable pressure region of the vessel to be measured. For example, it would be better to install the gauge tube on a tank rather than on the pipe that is directly connected to a vacuum pump. In the event of contamination, see section 6.0 for gauge tube cleaning instructions.

If the gauge is used in a Neon sign processing facility, the following is recommended to protect the gauge from damage from bombarding:

- The gauge tube should be isolated from the system with a stopcock. The stopcock should be closed when bombarding.
- There should be at least 2 feet of tubing between the electrode and the Digivac. For best results, the tubing should be metal.
- In extreme cases, the gauge can be absolutely protected by installing a normally open solenoid valve between the gauge tube and the system. The solenoid valve coil should be in parallel with the bombarding transformer. In this way, the solenoid will be closed and the gauge tube will be positively protected whenever bombarding is done.
- If a gauge is damaged by bombarding, it can generally be brought back to operating condition by replacing the Op amp which controls the gauge tube current. Consult Digivac.

## **5.0 OPERATION.**

After installation, the DIGIVAC is ready for immediate operation. The unit will normally provide accurate readings immediately, however, occasionally a gauge tube will have absorbed material during storage, and may require as much as 24 hours of operation before accurate readings are attained. It is recommended that the DIGIVAC be energized continuously during vacuum system operation. In this way, the hot filament will not allow contaminants to condense.

In cases where the system has contaminants, as is often the case with metalizing and coating equipment, it is often effective to isolate the gauge tube with a solenoid or manual valve during periods when contamination is most active.

## **6.0 SERVICING - GAUGE TUBE CLEANING.**

In many cases, a gauge tube may become fouled with oil or other foreign matter. It is often possible to restore the functionality of contaminated probes with cleaning. If the contaminant is known, the tube should be filled with a fluid that is known to be a solvent to that contaminant. As an example, ether is often effective in removing residues of some oils. Commercial carburetor cleaners are very powerful solvents and are highly effective against some contaminants.

After cleaning with solvents, the gauge tube should be completely dried or flushed with a volatile solvent to assure that it is dry prior to re-installing it. If this is not done, contamination of the system may result.

## **6.1 FACTORY REPAIR AND CALIBRATION.**

The vacuum gauge assembly is designed to provide years of trouble-free service, and the liberal internal use of plug-in components make it easily repairable. No field servicing of the unit is recommended, other than replacement of the gauge tube, but factory servicing and calibration are available at a nominal cost and turn-around times of 24 hours are typical.

## 6.2 FIELD CALIBRATION.

Each Digivac vacuum gauge controller is calibrated to the particular vacuum gauge sensor that is shipped with the unit. While changing the gauge tube is possible, it will result in a slightly different reading as all gauge tubes are not created equal. Although it is preferable that all calibration be performed at Digivac, field calibration can be accomplished.

Before re-calibrating the instrument, it should be ascertained that the instrument is in fact incorrect. In many cases, the problem will be with a tube that is fouled, or a system that is operating improperly. It is recommended that a spare tube be kept on hand and stored in a clean, dry place. Then, in cases of suspect readings, the tube should be changed before proceeding further.

If adjustments are to be made, proceed as follows:

- A) Remove the Top cover of the vacuum gauge controller and locate the two potentiometers. While facing the front of the unit such that you can read the numbers, the zero calibration adjust is to the left, and the span calibration adjust is to the right.
- B) Operate the vacuum system at the lowest attainable pressure, and allow the system and the gauge tube to stabilize for several minutes. Factory zero setting is done at a pressure of .1 milliTorr (.1 micron) or less.
- C) Adjust the zero setting potentiometer so the unit reads zero. Make sure not to under span. Allow the measurement standard to rise to 1 milliTorr and make sure the gauge reading also reads 1 milliTorr.
- D) Check the operation of the gauge at other pressures. Normally, adjustment of the zero will not be interactive with the readings of the instrument at higher pressures.
- E) The span adjustment is normally not necessary. If necessary, adjust the span with the span potentiometer (on the right)
  - a. For the 100H set the vacuum level to a steady 1980 milliTorr, and slowly turn the potentiometer on the right until the Digivac gauge reads 1980 milliTorr
  - b. For the 100V, set the vacuum level to Atmosphere (approximately 760 Torr) and slowly turn the potentiometer on the right until the Digivac gauge reads 760 Torr, being careful not to over span.
  - c. If you adjust the span, recheck the zero, then the span, and the zero one last time.

## 7.0 NOTES ON CALIBRATION.

The DIGIVAC is calibrated in nitrogen, which has thermal properties virtually identical to air. Other gasses will affect the readings by an amount proportional to the thermal conductivity of the gases. In most cases, the gases present in a vacuum system will be air, nitrogen, or oxygen, and no appreciable errors will occur.

Certain other gases, however, have thermal conductivity significantly greater than air and will cause the instrument to read higher than the actual amount of pressure. Examples of such gasses are water vapor, fluorocarbon refrigerants, and acetone. Conversely, other gasses have thermal conductivity significantly lower than air and will cause the instrument to read lower than actual pressure. Examples of such gasses include helium, oxygen and to a lesser extent, CO<sub>2</sub>.

When interpreting readings using gasses other than air, it should be borne in mind that the DIGIVAC reads Torr, which is a measure of absolute pressure - that is the opposite of vacuum. Thus, a lower numerical reading actually is a higher level of vacuum. For more information, refer to section 8.0.

When in doubt, consult Digivac.

## 8.0 UNDERSTANDING TORR.

The DIGIVAC and most similar instruments are calibrated in microns or "milliTorr." It is appropriate to discuss what microns are and to relate microns to other measures of pressure and vacuum.

Microns are not really a measure of vacuum at all, but rather of absolute pressure. It will be recalled that the pressure of the atmosphere is 14.696 or approximately 14.7 pounds per square inch at sea level. This pressure is due to the weight of all of the air in the earth's atmosphere above any particular square inch. This 14.696 psi is equivalent to the pressure produced by a mercury column of approximately 29.92 inches high or .76 meters (about 3/4 of a yard) or 760 millimeters of mercury. Atmospheric pressure varies greatly with altitude. It decreases approximately 1 inch of mercury per thousand feet of altitude. It also varies widely with local weather conditions. (Variations of one half inch in a single day are common.) The word vacuum means pressure lower than atmospheric or "suction," but, in describing negative pressure, the atmosphere is only a satisfactory reference if we are dealing with values of vacuum down to about 27 inches of mercury. Below that, it is much more useful to talk in terms of absolute pressure, starting from absolute zero. The DIGIVAC and all similar instruments do just this.

One TORR, a commonly used unit, is an absolute pressure of one millimeter of mercury. A milliTorr is equal to one thousandth of a TORR. A MICRON is the same as a milliTorr. The full scale reading of a DIGIVAC is 1999 microns and is equivalent to 1.999 TORR of approximately 2/760 of atmospheric pressure. This is less than .1 inches of mercury, and less than .05 PSI.

## **9.0 ACCESSORIES AND MODIFICATIONS.**

The following are offered as accessory equipment or field-installed modifications.

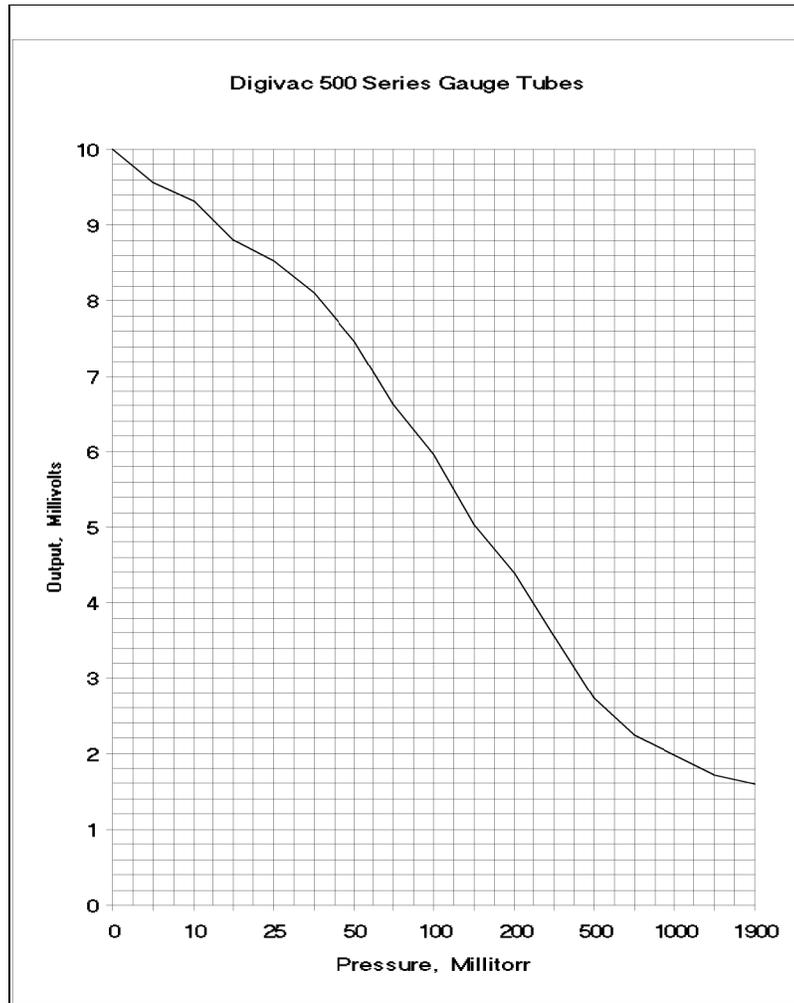
Padded shoulder strap Case with Velcro closure- For instruments that will be used in the field, particularly in cryogenic applications, a padded shoulder strap case is available. This case holds a Digivac 100tc battery powered gauge in the optimal reading position. The operator can open the Velcro cover, pull out the gauge tube cable, plug it into the tube on the equipment, and see the reading. It was developed to assist in field service of cryogenic tank farms and vacuum jacketed piping.

### **COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER GAUGE TUBES.**

On special order, Digivac Instruments can be provided to use with most other vacuum gauge tubes. AC and DC excitation are available. Gauges have been provided for Hastings, Varian, Thermionics, Veeco, VRC, and Fredericks gauge tubes.

Below is the typical response of a thermocouple vacuum gauge tube.  
 Digivac gauges which use pressure transducers are linear.

Milli-Torr	Milli-volts
0	10
5	9.57
10	9.32
20	8.81
25	8.54
35	8.11
50	7.46
75	6.63
100	5.96
150	5.04
200	4.38
300	3.56
500	2.72
750	2.24
1000	1.97
1500	1.71
1900	1.59



Typical response of a Hastings Dv-6 and Dv-36 tubes

