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(54) Method for processing silver halide color photographic material

Verfahren zur Behandlung eines farbphotographischen Silberhalogenidmaterials

Procédé de traitement d'un matériau photographique couleur à l'halogénure d'argent

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(56) References cited:
WO-A-87/04534 **GB-A- 2 165 954**
GB-A- 2 197 961 **US-A- 3 141 771**

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The file contains technical information submitted after the application was filed and not included in this specification

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Description

This invention relates to a method of continuously processing imagewise exposed silver halide color photographic materials, which method provides good photographic performance and can be easily carried out with low deviation in image quality.

In processing silver halide color photographic materials to provide stable photographic images having good photographic performance, it has recently been desired to maintain a high level of photographic performance throughout continuous processing. To maintain a high level of performance, two problems must be solved. The first problem is that the components of processing solutions are reduced by air oxidation, thermal decomposition, etc., and such reduction diminishes the performance of the processing solutions. The second problem is that in the case of continuously processing color photographic materials using an automatic processor, the processing solutions are concentrated by evaporation. Such concentration diminishes the performance of the processing solutions and can cause the problem of the components of the processing solution being deposited on a wall of the processing bath in the vicinity of the liquid surface.

Preservatives for color developers have been investigated as a means to solve the problems of the occurrence of air oxidation and thermal decomposition of the color developing agent. Such preservatives are described in JP-A-62-215272 (the term "JP-A" as used herein means an "unexamined published Japanese patent application"). Particularly effective organic preservatives are, for example, substituted hydroxyamines (i.e., excluding the unsubstituted hydroxylamine), hydroxamic acids, hydrazines, hydrazides, phenols, α -hydroxyketones, α -aminoketones, saccharides, monoamines, diamines, polyamines, quaternary ammonium salts, nitroxy radicals, alcohols, oximes, diamino compounds, condensed ring-type amines. These compounds are disclosed in JP-A-63-4235 JP-A-63-30845, JP-A-63-21647, JP-A-63-44655, JP-A-63-53551, JP-A-63-43140, JP-A-63-56654, JP-A-63-58346, JP-A-63-43138, JP-A-63-146041, JP-A-63-170642, JP-A-63-44657 and JP-A-63-44656, U.S. Patents 3,615,503 and 2,494,903, JP-A-52-143020, and JP-B-48-30496. (The term "JP-B" as used herein means an "examined published Japanese patent application").

By using the aforesaid organic preservatives such as substituted hydroxylamines, the deterioration or reduction of the color developing agent can be inhibited compared to the case of using hydroxylamine or a sulfite as a preservative. However, this solution to the first problem (deterioration or reduction of the developing agent) leaves the second problem (the evaporation of the processing solution) unsolved. Both problems must be solved in order to further stabilize photographic processing. WO-A-8704534 discloses photographic color development compositions which are especially useful in the processing of high chloride silver halide photographic elements.

It is the object of the present invention to provide a simplified method for continuously processing silver halide color photographic materials to provide good and stable photographic properties.

Said object is solved by a method of continuously processing imagewise exposed silver halide color photographic materials using an automatic processor which has a color development bath and a stabilization bath, which method comprises the steps of a) using a color developer which contains an organic preservative and b) adding to the color developer during the continuous processing a replenisher for the stabilizer solution.

As described above, in photographic processing it is necessary to solve both the problem of deterioration/reduction of the developing agent as well as the problem of evaporation of the processing solution. As the result of various investigations into performing the photographic processing while adding a stabilizer to the color developer, it has been discovered that it is difficult to determine suitable concentrations of each component of the color developer. In particular, it is difficult to determine the concentration of the preservative which is used in the color developer. Moreover, use of unsuitable concentrations of the processing solution and of the water being added in continuous processing causes an unacceptable deviation in photographic properties. However, it has also been discovered that this deviation of the photographic performance is greatly inhibited by using one of the above-mentioned organic preservatives in the present invention. Thus, the present invention permits photographic processing to be performed while using only a small amount of supplementary processing solution to compensate for the processing solution lost due to evaporation.

This accomplishment of the present invention is quite useful because when a replenisher solution is added to the color developer to compensate for evaporation, it is very convenient to use the replenisher for the stabilizer instead of wash water in the continuous photographic processing.

This use of the replenisher instead of wash water enhances convenience by making it unnecessary to use an additional tank and conduits for adding water to the color developer when compensation for loss due to evaporation. Furthermore, when the replenisher for the stabilizer instead of the wash water is used to compensate for lost color developer, it is preferred to minimize the amount of the replenisher for the stabilizer in the stabilization bath. This is particularly true in a small sized automatic processor wherein the replenisher tanks and the processing section are formed in the processor's body.

According to the present invention, the amount of water added to the color developer is preferably from 0.1 to 1.2 times the amount of the developer which has evaporated from the color development bath of an automatic processor.

Regardless of the frequency of addition, the amount of water added is preferably from 0.3 to 0.9 times the amount of developer which has evaporated.

Furthermore, the frequency at which water is added to the color developer may be about once per week, but adding water more than once per day is particularly preferred. Also, it is particularly preferred that before any interruption in the operation of the automatic processor (e.g., at night or during a holiday), the amount of the color developer which is expected to evaporate during the interruption is estimated. Then, from the estimate the amount of replenisher solution required to compensate for evaporation can be calculated and the correct amount can be added to the developer prior to the interruption.

It is preferable to minimize the amount of processing solution which evaporates since in the case of using the automatic processor under certain environmental conditions it is desirable to avoid diluting the processing solution with an excessive amount of water. To minimize such evaporation, it is preferred to reduce the area of the automatic processor's opening to a value below 0.05 cm²/ml, where this value represents the value of the area (cm²) of the surface of the processing solution, i.e., the area in contact with air, divided by the amount (ml) of the processing solution in the automatic processor.

The color developer used in the present invention contains an organic preservative in place of unsubstituted hydroxylamine or the above-described sulfite ions. In the processing of color photographic papers, remarkable effects are obtained by using the organic preservative described in the present invention without using hydroxylamine, but sufficient effects can be obtained in the case of processing color photographic materials for camera use even by using the organic preservative together with hydroxylamine.

The organic preservatives used in the present invention are defined as any organic compound capable of reducing the deterioration rate of an aromatic primary amine color developing agent by being added to the color developer for processing color photographic materials. That is, the organic compounds used in the present invention can prevent the oxidation of the color developing agent by air. Particularly useful organic preservatives for use in this invention are substituted hydroxylamines (i.e., excluding unsubstituted hydroxylamine), hydroxamic acids, hydrazines, hydrazides, phenols α -hydroxyketones, α -aminoketones, saccharides, monoamines, diamines, polyamines, quaternary ammonium salts, nitroxyl radicals, alcohols, oximes, diamido compounds and condensed ring amines. These compounds are disclosed in JP-A-63-4235, JP-A-63-30845, JP-A-63-21647, JP-A-63-44655, JP-A-63-53551, JP-A-63-43140, JP-A-63-56654, JP-A-63-58346, JP-A-63-43138, JP-A-63-146041, JP-A-63-170642, JP-A-63-188742 and JP-A-63-44656, U.S. Patents 3,615,503 and 2,494,903, JP-A-52-143020, and JP-B-48-30496.

The aforesaid preferred organic preservatives are described below in detail by reference to general formulae and by the examples which follow the formulae.

The amount of the organic preservative added to the color developer is preferably from 0.005 mol/l to 0.5 mol/l, and more preferably from 0.03 mol/l to 0.1 mol/l.

Hydroxylamines for use in this invention as the preservatives are those shown by formula (I):



wherein R¹¹ and R¹² each represents a hydrogen atom, an unsubstituted or substituted alkyl group, an unsubstituted or substituted alkenyl group, an unsubstituted or substituted aryl group preferably having from 6 to 18 carbon atoms (e.g., a benzyl group, an alkylphenyl group), or a heterocyclic aromatic group; R¹¹ and R¹² are not simultaneously hydrogen atom; and R¹¹ and R¹² may combine to form a heterocyclic ring together with nitrogen atom.

The ring structure of the heterocyclic ring formed by R¹¹ and R¹² is a 5- or 6-membered ring composed of carbon atoms, hydrogen atoms, halogen atom(s), nitrogen atom(s) or sulfur atom(s), and the ring may be saturated or unsaturated.

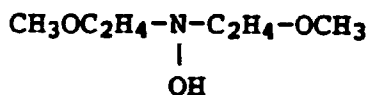
In formula (I), R¹¹ and R¹² are preferably an alkyl group or an alkenyl group having preferably from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and particularly preferably from 1 to 5 carbon atoms.

Examples of the nitrogen-containing heterocyclic ring formed by the combination of R¹¹ and R¹² include a piperidyl group, a pyrrolidyl group, an N-alkylpiperazyl group, a morpholyl group, an indolinyl group and a benzotriazole group.

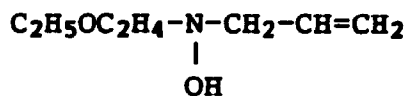
Also, examples of the preferred substituent for R¹¹ and R¹² are a hydroxy group, an alkoxy group, an alkylsulfonyl group, an arylsulfonyl group, an amido group, a carboxy group, a cyano group, a sulfo group, a nitro group and an amino group.

Specific examples of hydroxylamines represented by formula (I) above are as follows:

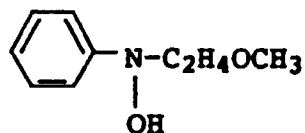


I-2

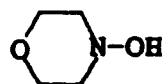
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I-3

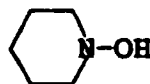
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I-4

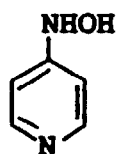
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I-5

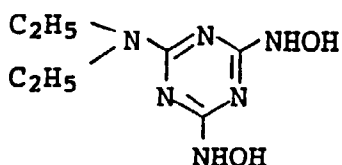
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I-6

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I-7

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I-8

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Hydroxamic acids which can be used in the present invention as the organic preservative are preferably those shown by formula (II) below:

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wherein A^{21} represents a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group, a substituted or unsubstituted amino group, a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkoxy group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryloxy group, a substituted or unsubstituted carbamoyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted sulfamoyl group, an acyl group, a carboxy group, a hydroxyamino group, or a hydroxyaminocarbonyl group and as the substituent for the aforesaid substituted groups can be a halogen atom, an aryl group, an alkyl group or an alkoxy group.

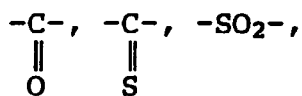
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A^{21} is preferably a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group, a substituted or unsubstituted amino group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkoxy group, or a substituted or unsubstituted aryloxy group, and more preferably a substituted or unsubstituted amino group, a substituted or unsubstituted alkoxy group,

or a substituted or unsubstituted aryloxy group, preferably having up to 10 carbon atoms.

In formula (II), X²¹ represents

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or -SO-, and is preferably

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R²¹ represents a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, or a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group preferably having from 6 to 18 carbon atoms. A²¹ and R²¹ may combine with each other to form a ring structure. Examples of the substituent for R₂₁ include those illustrated above for A²¹. R²¹ is preferably a hydrogen atom.

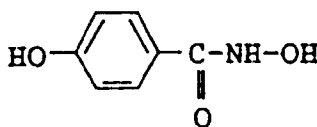
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Y²¹ in formula (II) represents a hydrogen atom or a group capable of becoming a hydrogen atom by a hydrolysis reaction.

Specific examples of hydroxamic acids used in the present invention are as follows:

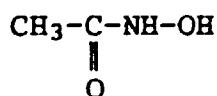
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II-1



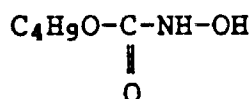
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II-2



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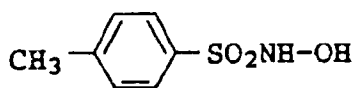
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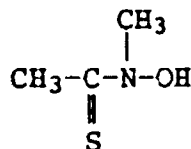
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II-4



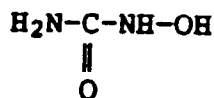
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II-5

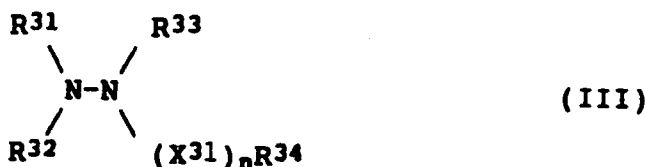


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II-6

The hydrazines and hydrazides for use in the present invention as the preservatives are preferably those shown by formula (III):



wherein R^{31} , R^{32} , and R^{33} each, independently, represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, an aryl group, or a heterocyclic group; R^{34} represents a hydrogen atom, a hydroxy group, a hydrazino group, an alkyl group, an aryl group, a heterocyclic group, an alkoxy group, an aryloxy group, a carbamoyl group, or an amino group; X^{31} represents a divalent group; and n represents 0 or 1; with the proviso that when n is 0, R^{34} represents an alkyl group, an aryl group or a heterocyclic group; R^{32} and R^{34} may together form a heterocyclic ring.

The hydrazine analogues (hydrazines and hydrazides) shown by formula (III), which can be used in the present invention, are explained hereinafter in detail.

In formula (III), R^{31} , R^{32} , and R^{33} each, independently, represents a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group (preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, such as, preferably, methyl, ethyl, sulfopropyl, carboxypropyl, carboxybutyl, hydroxyethyl, cyclohexyl, benzyl, pentyl.), a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group (preferably having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, such as, preferably, phenyl group, 2,5-dimethoxyphenyl, 4-hydroxyphenyl, 2-carboxyphenyl), or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group (preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, such as, preferably, a 5- or 6- membered heterocyclic ring having at least one of oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur, as the hetero atom, e.g., pyridin-4-yl and N-acetylpiperidin-4-yl).

R^{34} represents a hydrogen atom, a hydroxy group, a substituted or unsubstituted hydrazino group (e.g., hydrazino, methylhydrazino, and phenylhydrazino), a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group (preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, e.g., methyl, ethyl, sulfopropyl, carboxybutyl, hydroxyethyl, cyclohexyl, benzyl, t-butyl, and n-octyl), a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group (preferably having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, e.g., phenyl, 2,5-dimethoxyphenyl, 4-hydroxyphenyl, 2-carboxyphenyl, and 4-sulfophenyl), a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group (preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms and also preferably a 5- or 6-membered heterocyclic ring having at least one of oxygen, nitrogen, and sulfur, e.g., pyridin-4-yl group and imidazolyl), a substituted or unsubstituted alkoxy group (preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, e.g., methoxy, ethoxy, methoxyethoxy, benzyloxy, cyclohexyloxy, and octyloxy), a substituted or unsubstituted aryloxy group (preferably having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, e.g., phenoxy, p-methoxyphenoxy, p-carboxyphenoxy, and p-sulfophenoxy), a substituted or unsubstituted carbamoyl group (preferably having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, e.g., unsubstituted carbamoyl, N,N-diethylcarbamoyl, and phenylcarbamoyl), or a substituted or unsubstituted amino group (preferably having from 0 to 20 carbon atoms, e.g., amino, hydroxyamino, methylamino, hexylamino, methoxyethylamino, carboxyethylamino, sulfoethylamino, N-phenylamino, and p-sulfophenylamino).

Examples of the substituent for R^{31} , R^{32} , R^{33} , and R^{34} include a halogen atom (chlorine, bromine, etc.), a hydroxy group, a carboxy group, a sulfo group, an amino group, an alkoxy group, an amido group, a sulfonamido group, a carbamoyl group, a sulfamoyl group, an alkyl group, an aryl group, an aryloxy group, an alkylthio group, an arylthio group, a nitro group, a cyano group, a sulfonyl group, a sulfinyl group, and these groups may be further substituted.

X^{31} in formula (III) is preferably a divalent organic residue and specific examples thereof are $-\text{CO}-$, $-\text{SO}-$, and



In formula (III), n is 0 or 1 and when n is 0, R^{34} is a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group. R^{31} and R^{32} or R^{33} and R^{34} may combine together to form a heterocyclic group. When n is 0, it is preferable that at least one of R^{31} to R^{34} is a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group and in particular, R^{31} , R^{32} , R^{33} , and R^{34} are preferably a hydrogen atom or a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group. However, R^{31} , R^{32} , R^{33} and R^{34} cannot simultaneously be hydrogen atoms. In particular,

when R³¹, R³², and R³³ are hydrogen atoms, R³⁴ is preferably a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group. When R³¹ and R³³ are hydrogen atoms, R³² and R³⁴ are preferably substituted or unsubstituted alkyl groups. When R³¹ and R³² are hydrogen atoms, R³³ and R³⁴ are preferably substituted or unsubstituted alkyl groups and R³³ and R³⁴ may together form a heterocyclic ring.

5 When n is 1, X³¹ is preferably -CO-; R³¹, R³² and R³³ are preferably hydrogen atoms, or substituted or unsubstituted alkyl groups; and R³⁴ is preferably a substituted or unsubstituted amino group.

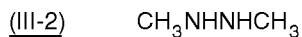
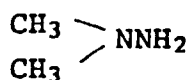
In formula (III), n is most preferably 0.

10 The alkyl group represented by R³¹, R³², R³³, or R³⁴ preferably has from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, and more preferably from 1 to 7 carbon atoms. Examples of the preferred substituent for the alkyl group are a hydroxy group, a carboxylic acid group, a sulfonic acid group, and a phosphonic acid group. When two or more substituents exist, they may be the same or different.

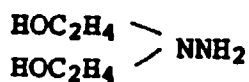
The compound shown by formula (III) may form a bis-compound, a tris-compound or a polymer bonded at R³¹, R³², R³³, or R³⁴.

15 Specific examples of compounds shown represented by formula (III) are illustrated below.

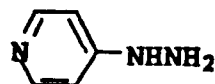
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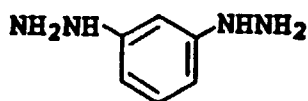
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(III-4)



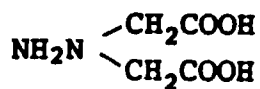
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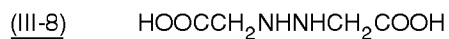


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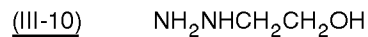
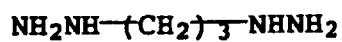


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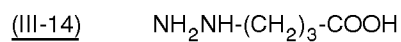
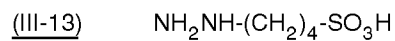
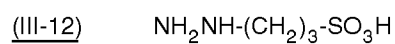
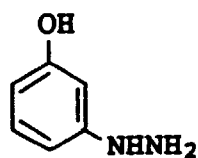




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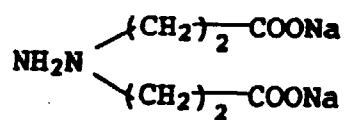
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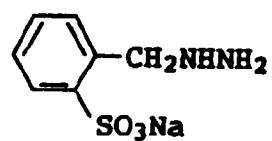
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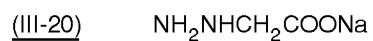
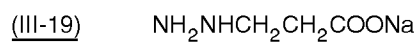
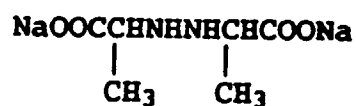
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(III-18)





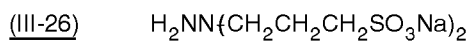
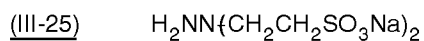
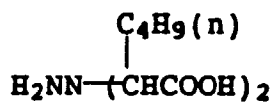
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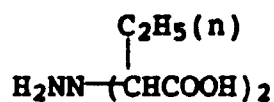
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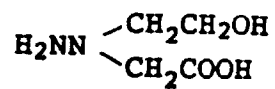
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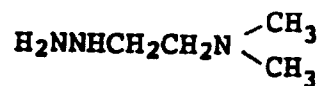
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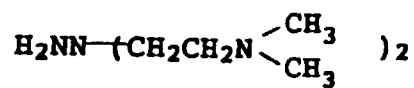
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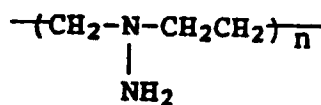


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(III-32)

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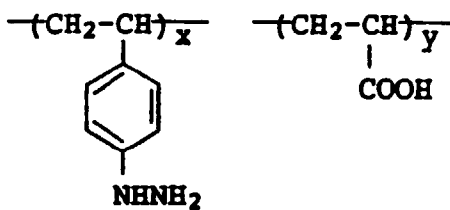


(average molecular weight is about 4,000)

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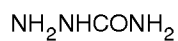
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x:y=60:40

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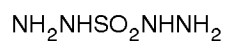
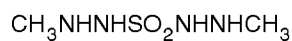
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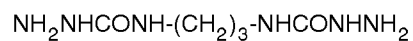
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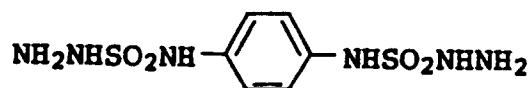
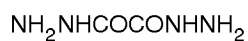
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(III-38)(III-39)

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(III-40)(III-41)

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(III-42)

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(III-43)

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(III-44)

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(III-45)

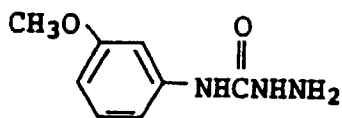
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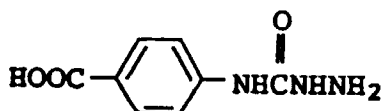
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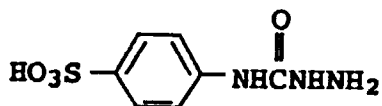
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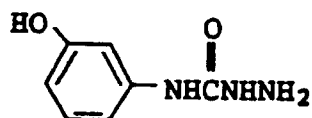
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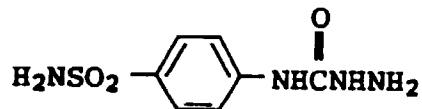
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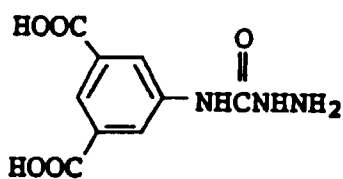
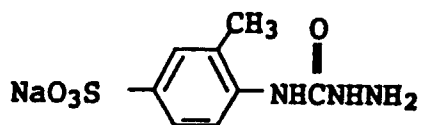
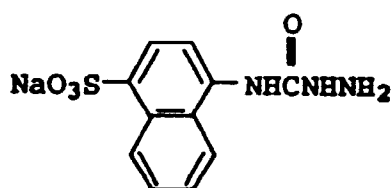
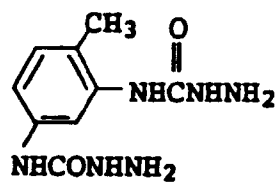
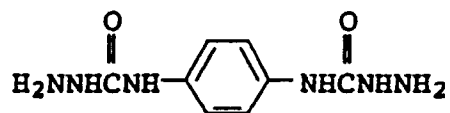
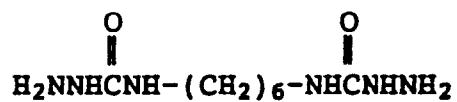
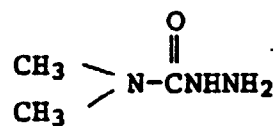
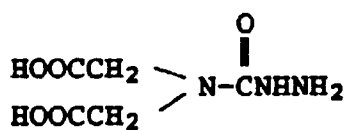
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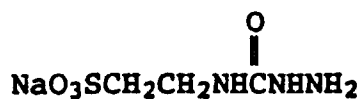
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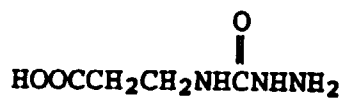
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(III-60)

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(III-61)

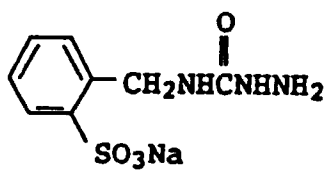
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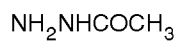
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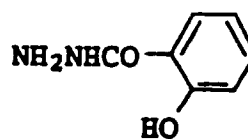
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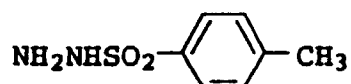
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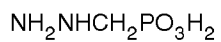
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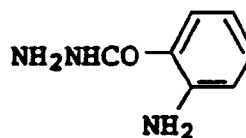
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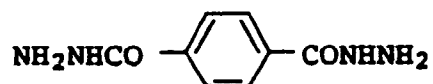
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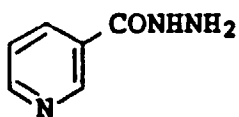
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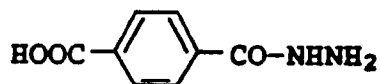
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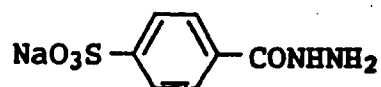
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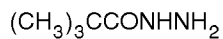
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(III-72)

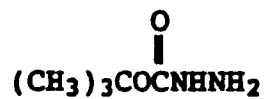
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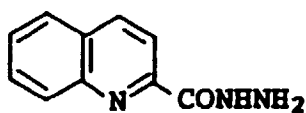
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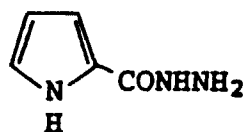
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(III-75)

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(III-76)

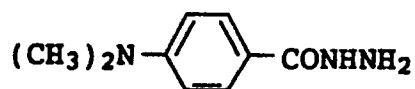
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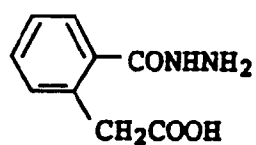
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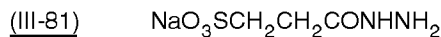
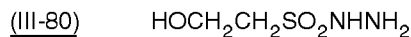
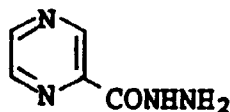
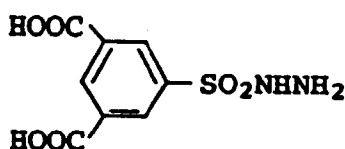
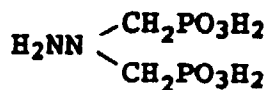
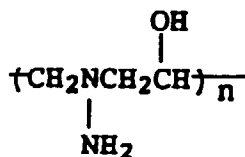
(III-77)

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(III-78)

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(III-79)**(III-83)****(III-84)****(III-86)**

Other practical examples of the compounds of formula (III) are described in Japanese Patent Application Nos. 61-170756 (pp. 11 to 24), 61-171682 (pp. 12 to 22), and 61-173468 (pp. 9 to 19).

The compounds of formula (III) used in the present invention are mostly commercially available and also can be synthesized according to the synthesis methods described in Organic Syntheses, Coll. Vol. 2, pp. 208 to 213, Journal of Organic Chemistry, **36**, 1747(1914), Yukagaku (Oil Chemistry), **24**, 31 (1975), Journal of Organic Chemistry, **25**, 44 (1960), Yakugaku Zasshi (Journal of Pharmacology), **91**, 1127(1971), Organic Syntheses, Coll. Vol. 1, page 450, Shin Jikken Kagaku Koza (New Experimental Chemistry Course), Vol. 14, III, pp. 1621 to 1628, Beil, **2**, 559, Beil, **3**, page 117, E.B. Mohr et al., Inorganic Syntheses, **4**, 32(1953), F.J. Willson and E.C. Pickering, Journal of Chemical Society, **123**, 394(1923), N.J. Leonard and J.H. Boyer, Journal of Organic Chemistry, **15**, 42(1950), Organic Syntheses, Coll. Vol. 5, page 1055, P.A.S. Smith, Derivatives of Hydrazine and other Hydronitrogen Having n-n bonds, pages 120 to 124 and pages 130 to 131 published by The Benjamin/Cummings Company (1983), and Stanley R. Sandier Waif Karo, Organic Functional Group Preparation, Vol. 1, 2nd Edition, page 457.

Phenols for use in the present invention as the organic preservatives are preferably those shown by following formula (IV):



wherein R^{41} represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an alkyl group, an aryl group, an alkoxy group, an aryloxy

group, a carboxy group, a sulfo group, a carbamoyl group, a sulfamoyl group, an amido group, a sulfonamido group, a ureido group, an alkylthio group, an arylthio group, a nitro group, a cyano group, an amino group, a formyl group, an acyl group, a sulfonyl group, a alkoxy carbonyl group, an aryloxy carbonyl group, an alkoxy sulfonyl group or an aryloxy sulfonyl group. When R^{41} is substituted, the substituent can be a halogen atom, an alkyl group, an aryl group, a hydroxy group or an alkoxy group. Also, when two or more R^{41} s exist, they may be the same or different or when they are adjacent, they may combine with each other to form a ring. The ring structure is a 5- or 6-membered ring composed of carbon atoms, hydrogen atoms, halogen atom(s), nitrogen atom(s), oxygen atom(s) or sulfur atom(s), and they may be saturated or unsaturated.

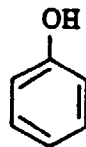
R^{42} in the above formula represents a hydrogen atom or a group capable of being hydrolyzed; m and n each represents an integer of from 1 to 5.

In formula (IV), R^{41} is preferably an alkyl group, a halogen atom, an alkoxy group, an alkylthio group, a carboxy group, a sulfo group, a carbamoyl group, a sulfamoyl group, an amino group, an amido group, a sulfonamido group, a nitro group, or a cyano group. Among them, an alkoxy group, an alkylthio group, an amino group, and a nitro group are particularly preferred. R^{41} more preferably exists at the para-position or ortho-position with respect to $O-R^{42}$. Also, R^{41} preferably has from 1 to 10, and more preferably from 1 to 6, carbon atoms.

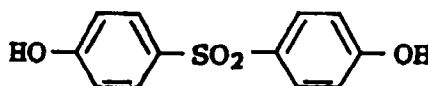
R^{42} is preferably a hydrogen atom or a group having from 1 to 5 carbon atoms, said group capable of being hydrolyzed. Also, when two or more $(O-R^{42})_n$ exist, they more preferably exist at the ortho-position or para-position with respect to each other.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (IV) are illustrated below.

IV-1



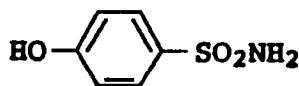
IV-2



IV-3

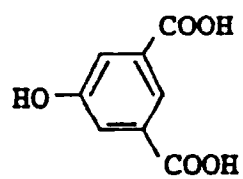


IV-4



IV-5

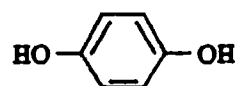
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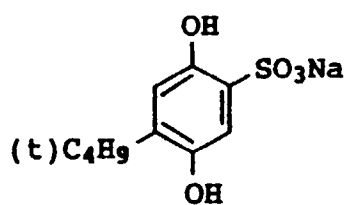
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IV-6

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IV-7

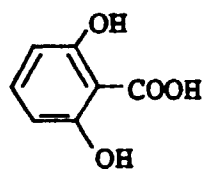
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IV-8

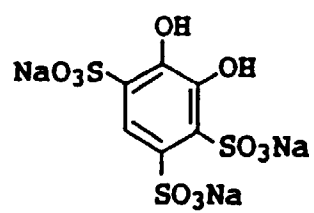
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IV-9

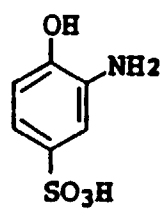
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IV-10

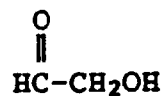
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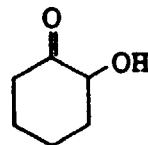
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V-5

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V-6

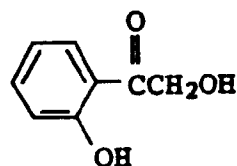
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V-7

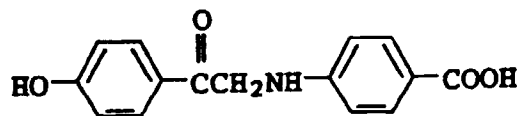
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V-8

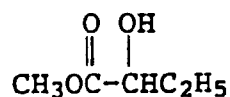
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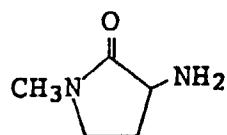
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V-9

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V-10

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Saccharides can also be used as the organic preservatives in the present invention. Saccharides (also called carbohydrates) include monosaccharides and polysaccharides and many of them are represented by the formula $C_nH_{2m}O_m$.

Monosaccharides generally include the aldehydes or ketones of polyhydric alcohol (called aldose and ketose, respectively); the reduction derivatives, oxidation derivatives, and dehydration derivatives thereof; amino sugar; thio sugar. A polysaccharide is a product formed by the dehydration condensation of two or more monosaccharides.

Of the saccharides used in the present invention, aldose having a reducing aldehyde group and the derivatives thereof are preferred. Most preferred are monosaccharides of aldose having a reducing aldehyde group and the derivatives thereof.

Practical examples of the saccharides used in the present invention are illustrated below:

- VI-1: D-xylose
- VI-2: L-Arabinose
- 5 VI-3: D-Ribose
- VI-4: D-Deoxyribose
- VI-5: D-Glucose
- VI-6: D-Galactose
- VI-7: D-Mannose
- 10 VI-8: Glucosamine
- VI-9: L-Sorbose
- VI-10: D-Sorbit (Sorbitol)

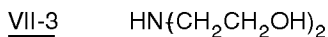
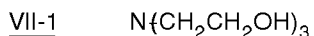
15 The monoamines used in the present invention as the organic preservative are represented by formula (VII) below:



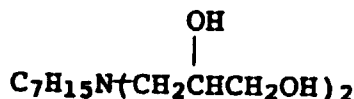
20 wherein R⁷¹, R⁷², and R⁷³ each represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl, alkenyl, aryl or aralkyl group preferably having up to 18 carbon atoms, or a heterocyclic group preferably being a 5- or 6-membered ring (e.g., oxazol ring, azol ring); said R⁷¹ and R⁷², said R⁷¹ and R⁷³ or said R⁷² and R⁷³ may combine with each other to form a nitrogen-containing heterocyclic ring.

25 In this case, R⁷¹, R⁷², and R⁷³ may have a substituent. R⁷¹, R⁷², and R⁷³ are more preferably a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group. The substituent for these groups may be a hydroxy group, a sulfon group, a carboxy group, a halogen atom, a nitro group, an amino group, etc.

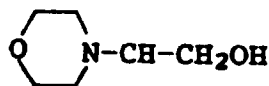
Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (VII) are illustrated below:



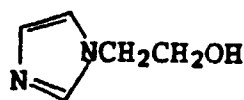
35 VII-4



40 VII-5



45 VII-6



55

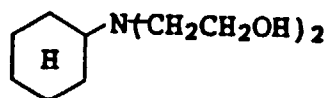
VII-7

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VII-8

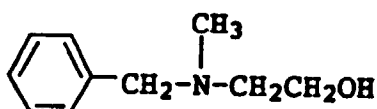
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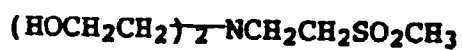
VII-9

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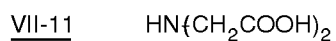


VII-10

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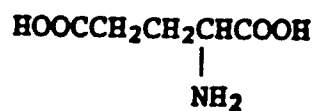


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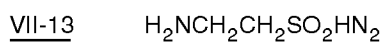


VII-12

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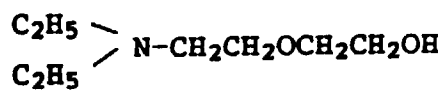


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VII-14

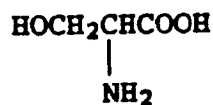
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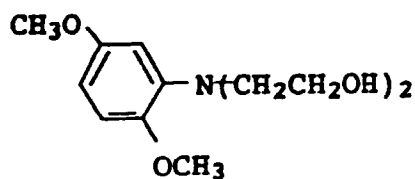
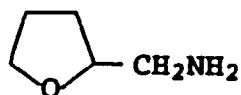
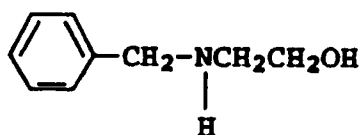
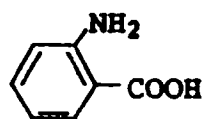


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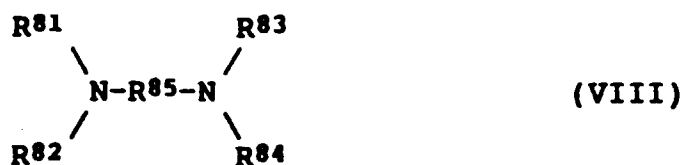
VII-16

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VII-17VII-18VII-19VII-20

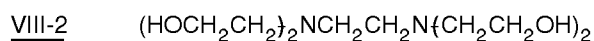
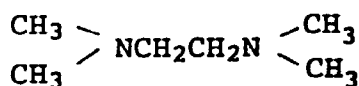
The preferred diamines used in the present invention as the organic preservative are illustrated by formula (VIII) below:



wherein R^{81} , R^{82} , R^{83} , and R^{84} each represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, an alkenyl group, an aryl group, an aralkyl group, or a heterocyclic group and R^{85} represents a divalent organic group such as, an alkylene group, an arylene group, an aralkylene group, an alkenylene group, or a heterocyclic group.

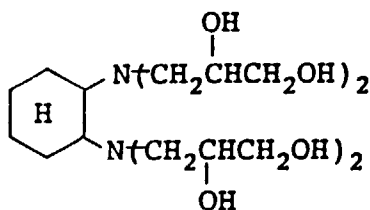
R^{81} , R^{82} , R^{83} , and R^{84} are preferably a hydrogen atom, and R^{85} is preferably an alkylene group.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (VIII) are illustrated below:

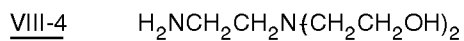
VIII-1

VIII-3

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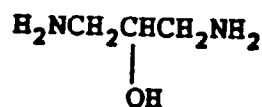


10



VIII-5

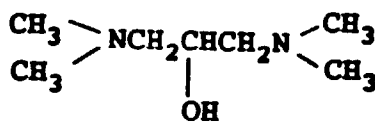
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VIII-6

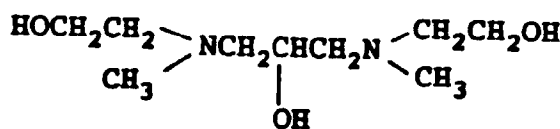
25



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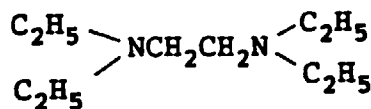
VIII-7

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VIII-8

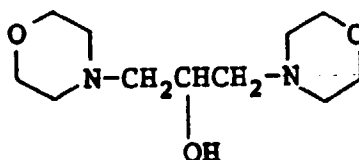
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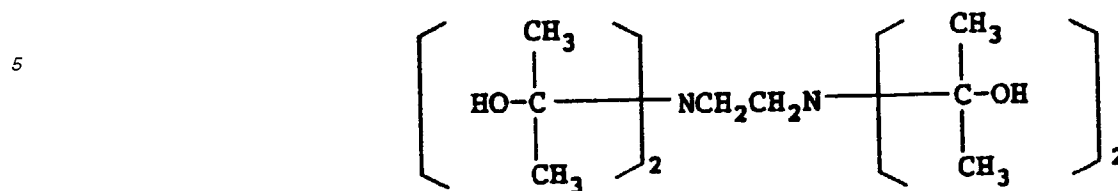
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VIII-9

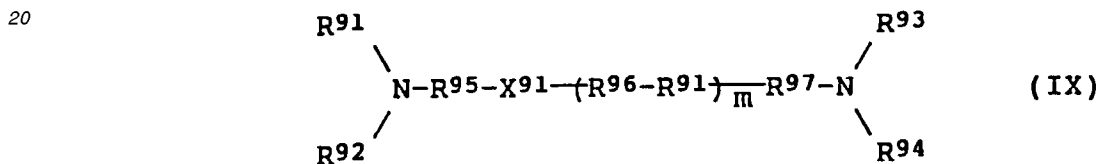
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VIII-10VIII-11

The polyamines used in the present invention as the organic preservative are preferably those represented by formula (IX):

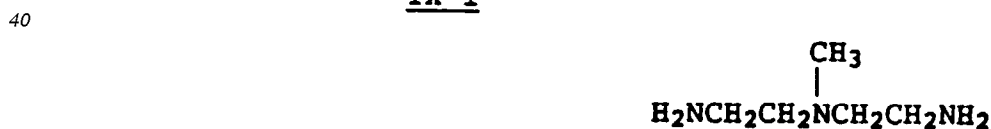
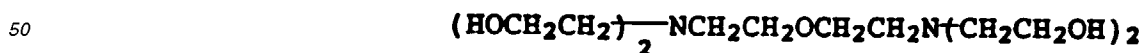
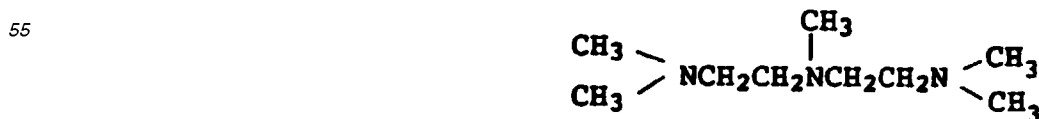


wherein R^{91} , R^{92} , R^{93} , and R^{94} each represents a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, an alkenyl group, an aryl group, an aralkyl group, or a heterocyclic group; R^{95} , R^{96} , and R^{97} each represents a divalent organic group and is the same as defined above for R^{85} of formula (VIII); X^{91} and X^{92} each represents



-O-, -S-, -CO-, -SO₂-, -SO-, or a linkage group composed of the combination of these aforesaid linkage groups (wherein R^{98} has the same significance as R^{91} , R^{92} , R^{93} , and R^{94}); and m represents an integer of 0 or more, so long as the upper limit of m is such that the aforesaid compound may have a molecular weight not so high as to make the compound insoluble in water. Preferably, m is from 1 to 3.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (IX) are illustrated below:

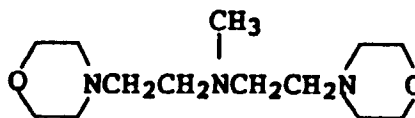
IX-1IX-2IX-3

IX-4

5

IX-5

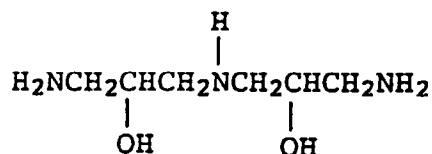
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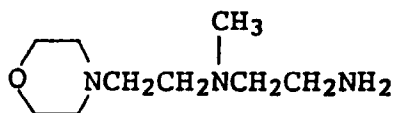
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IX-6

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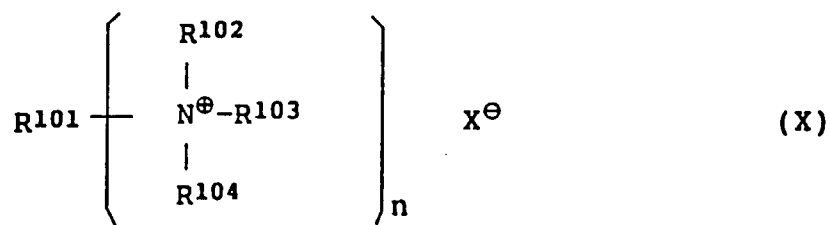
25

IX-7

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The quaternary ammonium salt for use in this invention as the preservatives are preferably those shown by formula (X) below:

35



40

wherein R^{101} represents an n-valent organic group and R^{102} , R^{103} , and R^{104} each represents a mono-valent organic group. In addition, the organic group is a group having at least one carbon atom and is, practically, an alkyl group, an aryl group or a heterocyclic group. At least two of said R^{102} , R^{103} , and R^{104} may combine with each other to form a heterocyclic ring containing the quaternary ammonium aron. In the above formula, n is an integer of 1 or more and X^{\ominus} represents an anion.

45

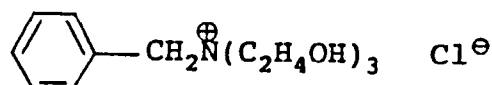
The particularly preferred monovalent group shown by R^{102} , R^{103} , and R^{104} is a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group and it is most preferred that at least one of R^{102} , R^{103} , and R^{104} is a hydroxyalkyl group, an alkoxyalkyl group or a carboxyalkyl group. Also, n is preferably an integer of from 1 to 3, and more preferably 1 or 2.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (X) are illustrated below.

50

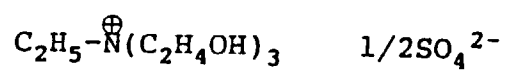
X-1

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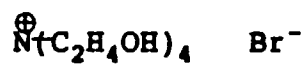


X-2

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X-3

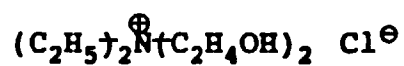
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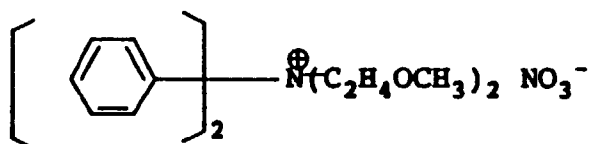
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X-4

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X-5

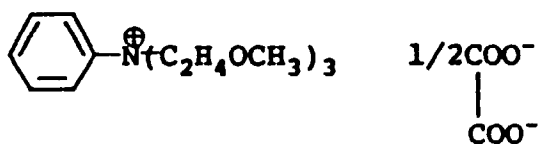
25



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X-6

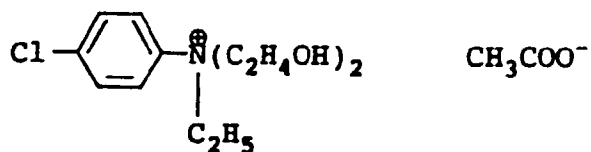
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X-7

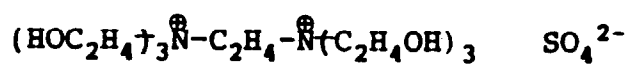
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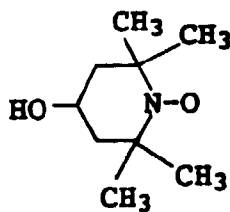
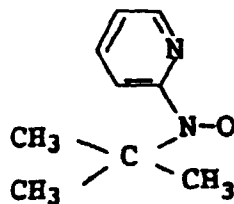
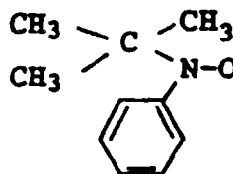


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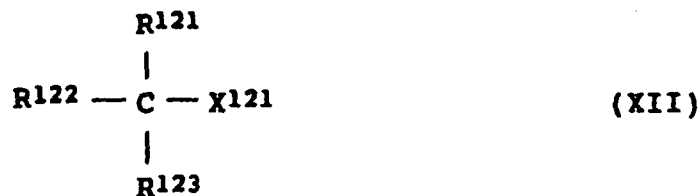
X-8

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XI-3XI-4XI-5

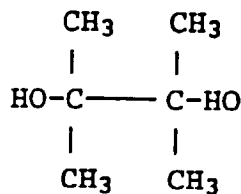
The alcohols used in the present invention as the organic preservative are preferably those represented by formula (XII):

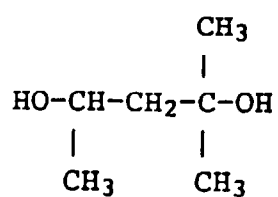
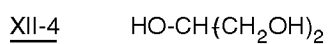
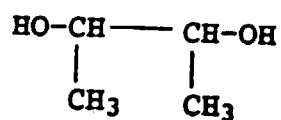
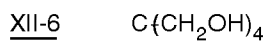
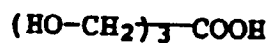
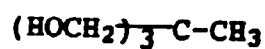
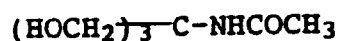
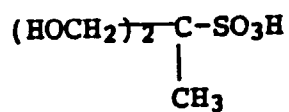
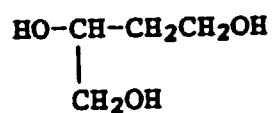


wherein R^{121} represents hydroxy-substituted alkyl group; R^{122} represents an unsubstituted alkyl group or a hydroxy-substituted alkyl group; R^{123} represents a hydrogen atom, an unsubstituted alkyl group or a hydroxy-substituted alkyl group; and X^{121} represents a hydroxy group, a carboxy group, a sulfo group, a nitro group, an unsubstituted or hydroxy-substituted alkyl group, an unsubstituted or substituted amido group, or a sulfonamido group.

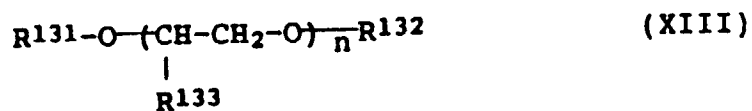
In formula (XII), X^{121} is preferably a hydroxy group, a carboxy group, or a hydroxyalkyl group.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (XII) are illustrated below:

XII-1

XII-2XII-3XII-5XII-7XII-8XII-9XII-10

The alcohols used in the present invention as the organic preservative are preferably those represented by formula (XIII):



wherein R¹³¹, R¹³², and R¹³³ each represents a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group and n represents a positive integer up to 500.

The alkyl group shown by R¹³¹, R¹³², and R¹³³ has preferably 5 or less carbon atoms, and more preferably 1 or 2 carbon atoms. R¹³¹, R¹³², and R¹³³ are preferably a hydrogen atom or a methyl group, and most preferably a hydrogen atom.

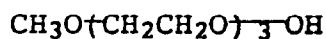
Also, n is a positive integer of, preferably, from 3 to 100, and more preferably from 3 to 30.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (XIII) are illustrated below:

XIII-1



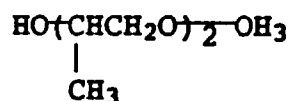
XIII-2



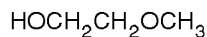
XIII-3



XIII-4



XIII-5



XIII-6



XIII-7



average molecular weight about 300

XIII-8



average molecular weight about 800

XIII-9

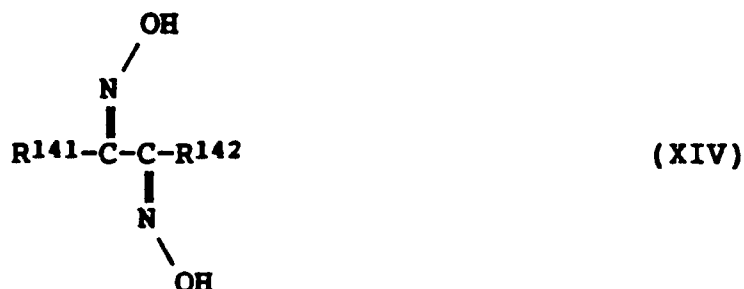


average molecular weight about 3,000

XIII-10

average molecular weight about 8,000

The oximes used in the present invention as the organic preservative are preferably those represented by formula (XIV):

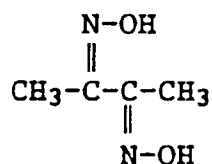
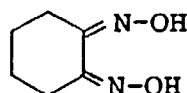
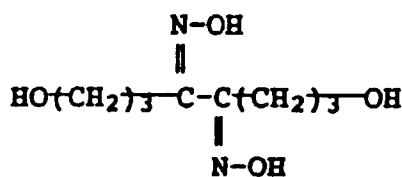
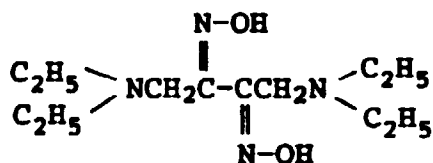


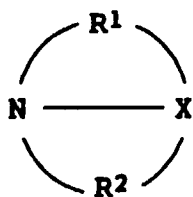
wherein R^{141} and R^{142} each represents a hydrogen atom, a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group, or a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group, also R^{141} and R^{142} may be the same or different and may be combined with each other.

In formula (XIV), R^{141} and R^{142} are preferably an unsubstituted alkyl group or an alkyl group substituted by a halogen atom, a hydroxy group, an alkoxy group, an amino group, a carboxy group, a sulfo group, a phosphonic acid group, or a nitro group.

Also, the sum of the carbon atoms in formula (XIV) is preferably 30 or less, and more preferably 20 or less.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (XIV) are illustrated below:

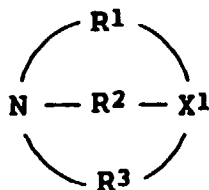
XIV-1XIV-2XIV-3XIV-4



(XVI)

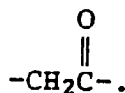
wherein X represents a tri-valent atomic group necessary for completing a condensed ring and R¹ and R², which may be the same or different, each represents an alkylene, arylene, alkenylene or aralkylene group preferably having from 2 to 8 carbon atoms.

The particularly preferred compounds represented by formula (XVI) are those represented by formula (1-a) and (1-b):



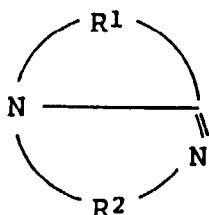
(1-a)

wherein X¹ represents $\geq\text{N}$ or $\geq\text{CH}$; R¹ and R² have the same definition as defined in formula (XVI), and R³ is the same as defined above for R¹, or R³ can be



In formula (1-a), X¹ is preferably $\geq\text{N}$ and R¹, R², or R³ each has preferably 6 or fewer carbon atoms, more preferably 3 or fewer, and most preferably 2.

Also, R¹, R², and R³ are preferably an alkylene group or an arylene group, and most preferably an alkylene group;



(1-b)

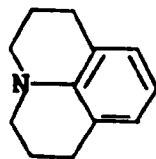
wherein R¹ and R² have the same definition as in formula (XVI).

In formula (1-b), R¹ and R² each has preferably 6 or fewer carbon atoms, and R¹ and R² are preferably an alkylene group or an arylene group and more preferably an alkylene group.

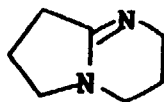
In the compounds represented by formulae (1-a) and (1-b), the compounds represented by formula (1-a) are preferred.

Specific examples of compounds represented by formula (XVI) are illustrated below:

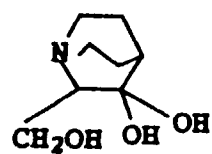
XVI-1XVI-2

XVI-3

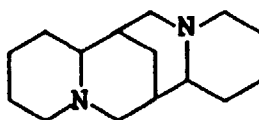
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XVI-4

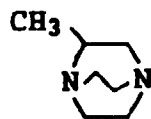
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XVI-5

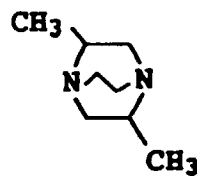
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XVI-6

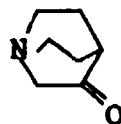
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XVI-7

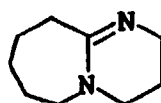
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XVI-8

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XVI-9

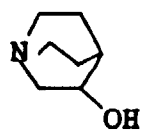
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XVI-10

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XVI-11

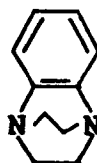
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XVI-12

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XVI-13

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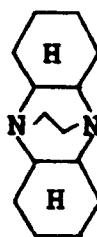
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XVI-14

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XVI-15

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XVI-16

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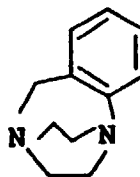
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XVI-17

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XVI-18

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The compounds of formula (XV) used in this invention are mainly commercially available. Also, these compounds can be synthesized according to the methods described in the following documents: Khim Geterotsikl Soedin, (2), 272-275(1976); U.S. Patent 3,297,701; U.S. Patent 3,375,252; Khim Geterotsikl Soedin, (8), 1123-1126(1976); U.S. Patent 4,092,316; The organic preservatives described above in formulae (I) to (XVI) may be used singly or in combination. A preferred combination of these compounds comprises at least one compound represented by formulae (I), (II), (III), (IV), (V), or (VI) and at least one compound represented by formulae (VII), (VIII), (IX), (X), (XI), (XII), (XIII), (XIV), (XV), or (XVI) at the molar ratio of 1:100 to 100:1 and preferably 1:10 to 10:1. A further preferred combination is a compound represented by formulae (I) or (III) and at least one compound of those shown by formulae (VII) or (XVI). The most preferred combination comprises at least one compound represented by formula (I) and at least one compound represented by formula (VII).

Each step of the processing method of this invention is explained below.

Color development

The color developer used in the present invention contains an aromatic primary amine color developing agent such as, preferably a p-phenylenediamine derivative. Typical color developing agents are listed below:

- D-1: N,N-Diethyl-p-phenylenediamine
- D-2: 2-Amino-5-diethylaminotoluene
- D-3: 2-Amino-5-(N-ethyl-N-laurylamino)toluene
- D-4: 4-[N-Ethyl-N-(β -hydroxyethyl)amino]aniline
- D-5: 2-Methyl-4-[N-ethyl-N-(β -hydroxyethyl)imino]aniline
- D-6: 4-Amino-3-methyl-N-ethyl-N-[β -(methanesulfonamido)ethyl]aniline
- D-7: N-(2-Amino-5-diethylaminophenylethyl)methanesulfonamide
- D-8: N,N-Dimethyl-p-phenylenediamine
- D-9: 4-Amino-3-methyl-N-ethyl-N-methoxyethylaniline
- D-10: 4-Amino-3-methyl-N-ethyl-N- β -ethoxyethylaniline
- D-11: 4-Amino-3-methyl-N-ethyl-N- β -butoxyethylaniline.

Also, the aforesaid phenylenediamine derivatives may be used in the form of sulfates, hydrochlorides, sulfites, or p-toluenesulfonates.

The amount of the aromatic primary amine developing agent is preferably from about 0.1 g to about 20 g, and more preferably from about 0.5 g to about 10 g, per liter of the developer.

Also, the color developer can contain, if necessary, a sulfite such as sodium sulfite, potassium sulfite, sodium hydrogensulfite, potassium hydrogensulfite, sodium metabisulfite or potassium metabisulfite, or a carbonyl sulfurous acid addition product as a preservative in addition to the organic preservative used in the present invention. However, for improving the coloring property of the color developer, the amount of the sulfite ion added to the organic preservative is preferably kept to a minimum.

That is, the amount of the sulfite ion added is from 0 to 0.01 mol, preferably from 0 to 0.005 mol, and most preferably from 0 to 0.002 mol, per liter of the color developer. The addition amount of the sulfite ion is preferably kept low in order to minimize the change in photographic characteristics when processing is performed using a lower amount of processing solution.

Also, the addition amount of hydroxylamine which is conventionally used as a preservative for a color developer is preferably less by the same reason as described above. Practically, the addition amount of hydroxylamine is from 0 to 0.02 mole, more preferably from 0 to 0.01 mol, and most preferably from 0 to 0.005 mol, per liter of the color developer.

The pH of the color developer used in the present invention is preferably from 9 to 12, and more preferably from 9 to 11.0, and in addition, the color developer can contain compounds known as developer components.

For maintaining the aforesaid pH of the color developer, it is preferred to use various kinds of buffers in this invention. Examples of an effective buffer include carbonates, phosphates, borates, tetraborates, hydroxybenzoates, glycyl salts, N,N-dimethylglycine salts, leucine salts, norleucine salts, guanine salts, 3,4-dihydroxyphenylalanine salts, alanine salts, aminobutyrate, 2-amino-2-methyl-1,3-propanediol salts, valine salts, proline salts, trishydroxyaminomethane salts, lysine salts, etc. In particular, carbonates, phosphates, tetraborates, and hydroxybenzoates are preferably used as the buffer since they have excellent solubility and at a high pH range, i.e., higher than 9.0, they function well as a buffer yet have no adverse effects (e.g., fog) on the photographic performance when they are added to the color developer, and they are inexpensive.

Practical examples of these buffers are sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate, sodium hydrogencarbonate, potassium hydrogencarbonate, tri-sodium phosphate, tri-potassium phosphate, di-sodium phosphate, di-potassium phos-

phate, sodium borate, potassium borate, sodium tetraborate (borax), potassium tetraborate, sodium o-hydroxybenzoate (sodium salicylate), potassium o-hydroxybenzoate, sodium 5-sulfo-2-hydroxybenzoate (sodium 5-sulfosalicylate), and potassium 5-sulfo-2-hydroxybenzoate (potassium 5-sulfosalicylate).

The addition amount of the aforesaid buffer to the color developer is preferably higher than 0.1 mol/l, and more preferably from 0.1 mol/l to 0.4 mol/l.

Furthermore, the color developer may contain various chelating agents as an agent for preventing the precipitation of calcium or magnesium or for improving the stability of the color developer.

Preferred examples of chelating agents include organic compounds such as aminopolycarboxylic acids described in JP-B-48-30496 and JP-B-44-30232, organic phosphonic acids described in JP-A-56-97347, JP-B-56-39359, and West German Patent 2,227,639, phosphonocarboxylic acids described in JP-A-52-102726, JP-A-53-42730, JP-A-54-121127, JP-A-55-126241, and JP-A-55-659506, and other compounds described in JP-A-58-195845 and JP-A-58-203440 and JP-B-53-40900. Specific examples of chelating agents which are usable in the present invention include are nitrilotriacetic acid, diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, N,N,N-trimethylenephosphonic acid, ethylenediamine-N,N,N',N'-tetramethylenephosphonic acid, transcyclohexanediaminetetraacetic acid, 1,2-diaminopropanetetraacetic acid, glycol ether diaminetetraacetic acid, ethylenediamine o-hydroxyphenylacetic acid, 2-phosphonobutane-1,2,4-tricarboxylic acid, 1-hydroxyethylidene-1,1-diphosphonic acid and N,N'-bis(2-hydroxybenzyl)ethylenediamine-N,N'-diacetic acid.

These chelating agents may be used singly or in combination.

The amount of the chelating agent added is an amount sufficient for blocking metal ions in the color developer and is, for example, from about 0.1 g to 10 g per liter of the developer.

Furthermore, the color developer may optionally contain an optional development accelerator. However, from the standpoint of preventing environmental pollution, easiness of the preparation of the developer, and preventing color staining, the color developer for use in this invention preferably contains substantially no benzyl alcohol. The term "contains substantially no benzyl alcohol" means that the developer contains less than 2 ml of benzyl alcohol per liter of the developer, and preferably no benzyl alcohol.

The aforesaid organic preservatives for use in this invention produce remarkable results when used in a processing method in which the color developer contains substantially no benzyl alcohol.

Other development accelerators for use in the present invention are thioether series compounds described in JP-B-37-16088, JP-B-37-5987, JP-B-38-7826, JP-B-44-12380, and JP-B-45-9019, and U.S. Patent 3,813,247, p-phenylenediamine series compounds described in JP-A-52-49829 and JP-A-50-15554, quaternary ammonium salts described in JP-A-50-137726, JP-B-44-30074, JP-A-56-156826 and JP-A-52-43429, amine series compounds described in U.S. Patents 2,494,903, 3,128,182, 4,230,796, 3,253,919, 2,482,546, 2,596,926, and 3,582,326, and JP-B-41-11431, polyalkylene oxide, 1-phenyl-3-pyrazolidones, and imidazoles described in U.S. Patents 3,128,183 and 3,532,501, JP-B-37-16088, JP-B-42-25201, JP-B-41-11431, and JP-B-42-23883.

Moreover, the color developer used in the present invention may contain an optional antifoggant. Examples of this antifoggant include alkali metal halides such as sodium chloride, potassium bromide or potassium iodide, and organic antifoggants such as nitrogen-containing heterocyclic compounds, e.g., benzotriazole, 6-nitrobenzimidazole, 5-nitroisindazole, 5-methylbenzotriazole, 5-nitrobenzotriazole, 5-chlorobenzotriazole, 2-thiazolylbenzimidazole, 2-thiazolylmethyl-benzimidazole, indazole, hydroxyazaindrizine, and adenine.

It is preferred that the color developer used in the present invention contains an optional whitening agent. As the optical whitening agent, 4,4'-diamino-2,2'-disulfostilbene series compounds are preferred. The amount of the optional whitening agent added to the color developer is preferably from 0 to 5 g/l, more preferably from 0.1 to 4 g/l.

Furthermore, the color developer may optionally contain various kinds of surface active agents such as alkylsulfonic acids, arylphosphonic acids, aliphatic carboxylic acids or aromatic carboxylic acids.

The processing temperature of the color developer used in this invention is from 20°C to 50°C, and preferably from 30°C to 40°C. The processing time is from 20 seconds to 2 minutes, and preferably from 30 seconds to 1 minute.

The amount of the replenisher for the color developer is preferably kept at a minimum but is generally from 20 ml to 600 ml, preferably from 30 ml to 300 ml, and more preferably from 30 ml to 120 ml per m² of the photographic material to be processed.

Blix Solution

As a bleaching agent which is used for a blix solution in the present invention, any bleaching agents can be used but in particular, complex organic salts (e.g., complex organic salts of aminopolycarboxylic acids such as ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid or diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, aminopolyphosphonic acid, phosphonocarboxylic acid, and organic phosphonic acids) of iron(III), organic acids such as citric acid, tartaric acid or malic acid, persulfates, and hydrogen peroxide are preferred.

In these materials, organic complex salts of iron(III) are particularly preferred from the view point of quick processing

and the prevention of environmental pollution. Specific examples of the aminopolycarboxylic acid useful for forming the organic complex salts of iron(III) are ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, 1,3-diaminopropanetetraacetic acid, propylenediaminetetraacetic acid, nitrilotriacetic acid, cyclohexanediaminetetraacetic acid, methyliminodiacetic acid, iminodiacetic acid and glycol ether diaminetetraacetic acid.

5 These compounds may be in the form of sodium salts, potassium salts, lithium salts or ammonium salts. In these compounds, the iron(III) complex salts of ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid, diethylenetriaminepentaacetic acid, cyclohexanediaminetetraacetic acid, 1,3-diaminopropanetetraacetic acid, and methyliminodiacetic acid are preferred owing to the high bleaching power.

10 The ferric ion complex salts may be used in the form of complex salt or may be formed in a solution using a ferric salt (e.g., ferric sulfate, ferric chloride, ferric nitrate, ferric ammonium sulfate, and ferric phosphate) and a chelating agent (e.g., aminopolycarboxylic acids, aminopolyphosphoric acids and phosphonocarboxylic acid). Also, a chelating agent may be used in an excessive amount over the amount of forming the ferric complex salt. As iron complex salts, an aminopolycarboxylic acid iron complex salt is preferred and the addition amount thereof is from 0.01 mol/l to 1.0 mol/l, and preferably from 0.05 mol/l to 0.50 mol/l.

15 For the bleach solution, blix solution and/or the pre-bath thereof, various compounds can be used as a bleach accelerator. As examples of the bleach accelerator, compounds having a mercapto group or a disulfide bond described in U.S. Patent 3,893,858, German Patent 1,290,812, JP-A-53-95630, and Research Disclosure, No. 17129 (July, 1978), thiourea series compounds described in JP-B-45-8506, JP-A-52-20832 and JP-A-53-32735, and U.S. Patent 3,706,561 and halide ions such as iodide ions or bromide ions, are preferred in view of excellent bleaching power.

20 Furthermore, the blix solution for use in this invention can further contain a rehalogenating agent such as a bromide (e.g., potassium bromide, sodium bromide, and ammonium bromide), a chloride (e.g., potassium chloride, sodium chloride, and ammonium chloride), and an iodide (e.g., ammonium iodide). Also, if necessary, the blix solution may further contain a corrosion inhibitor such as at least one kind of inorganic acid or organic acid having a pH buffer function, or an alkali metal salt or an ammonium salt thereof, such as boric acid, borax, sodium metaborate, acetic acid, sodium acetate, sodium carbonate, potassium carbonate, phosphorous acid, phosphoric acid, sodium phosphate, citric acid, sodium citrate or tartaric acid, ammonium nitrate or guanidine.

25 Examples of a fixing agent which may be used for the blix solution in the present invention include thiosulfates such as sodium thiosulfate or ammonium thiosulfate; thiocyanates such as sodium thiocyanate or ammonium thiocyanate; thioether compounds such as ethylene-bis(2-hydroxyethyl)thioether or 3,6-dithia-1,8-octanedione, and water-soluble silver halide solvents such as thioureas. They may be used singly or as a mixture thereof.

30 Also, a specific blix solution composed of a combination of a fixing agent and a large amount of a halide such as potassium iodide described in JP-A-55-155354 can be used in this invention. In this invention, it is preferred to use a thiosulfate, in particular ammonium thiosulfate as a fixing agent. The amount of the fixing agent is preferably from 0.3 mol to 3 mols, and more preferably from 0.5 mol to 2.0 mols per liter of the blix solution. The pH range of the blix solution or the fix solution used in this invention is preferably from 3 to 10, and more preferably from 5 to 9.

35 Also, the blix solution used in this invention can further contain various kinds of optical whitening agents, defoaming agents, surface active agents, and organic solvents (e.g., polyvinylpyrrolidone and methanol).

40 The blix solution used in this invention contains a compound releasing sulfite ions, such as a sulfite (e.g., sodium sulfite, and potassium sulfite, ammonium sulfite), a hydrogensulfite (e.g., ammonium hydrogensulfite, sodium hydrogensulfite, and potassium hydrogensulfite), a metahydrogensulfite (e.g., potassium metahydrogensulfite, sodium metahydrogensulfite, and ammonium metahydrogensulfite), or a sulfinic acid as a preservative. The content of the aforesaid sulfite-releasing compound is preferably such that from about 0.02 to 0.50 mol of the sulfite ions, more preferably from 0.04 to 0.40 mol of the sulfite ions, are released per liter of the blix solution.

45 As the preservative which is used for the blix solution in this invention, sulfites are generally used, but ascorbic acid, a carbonyl-hydrogensulfuric acid addition product, or a carbonyl compound may be added thereto. The blix solution used in this invention may optionally contain a buffer, a chelating agent or an antifungal agent.

50 In the blix solution used in this invention, a part or the whole of the overflow of wash water and/or stabilization solution, which is a post-bath of the blix solution is introduced into the blix solution. The amount thereof is from 10 ml to 500 ml, preferably from 20 ml to 300 ml, and most preferably from 30 ml to 200 ml per square meter of the light-sensitive material being processed.

If the amount of water replenisher solution and/or the stabilizer solution introduced into the blix solution is small, processing costs go down and there is less need to reduce the amount of waste liquid. However, if the amount is too large, the blix solution becomes diluted and inferior desilvering occurs.

55 It is preferred that the concentration of the blix solution is as high as possible for the purpose of reducing the amount of the waste liquid. The optimum concentration of the bleaching agent is from 0.15 mol/liter to 0.40 mol/liter and the optimum concentration of the fixing agent is from 0.5 mol/liter to 2.0 mols/liter.

The amount of the replenisher for the blix solution is from 30 ml to 200 ml, and preferably from 40 ml to 100 ml per square meter of the light-sensitive material. A bleaching agent and a fixing agent may be separately added to

supply the replenisher for the blix solution.

The processing temperature for the blix step in the process of this invention is from 20°C to 50°C, and preferably from 30°C to 40°C. The processing time is from 20 seconds to 2 minutes, and preferably from 30 seconds to 1 minute.

5 Wash Step and/or Stabilization Step

The wash step and the stabilization step used in the present invention are described hereinafter in detail.

10 The amount of the replenisher used in the wash step or the stabilization step in this invention is from 1 to 50 times, and preferably from 3 to 20 times the volume amount of a processing solution carried with unit area of the light-sensitive material from the pre bath.

The amount of the water replenisher solution and/or the stabilizer solution can be selected from a wide range according to the characteristics (e.g., couplers, etc.) and uses of the photographic light-sensitive materials, the temperature of the processing, and the type of replenishing system, (e.g., counter-current system, regular system, etc.). In this case, the relation between the number of the wash tanks and the amount of water can be determined by the method described in Journal of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, Vol 64, pp. 248 to 253 (May, 15 1955). The stage number in the countercurrent system is preferably from 2 to 6, and more preferably from 2 to 4.

Accordingly, the preferred amount of the replenisher is from 300 ml to 1000 ml per square meter of the light-sensitive material in the case of 2 tank countercurrent system, from 100 ml to 500 ml in the case of 3 tank countercurrent system, and from 50 ml to 300 ml in the case of 4 tank countercurrent system. Also, the amount of the pre-bath component carried by a light-sensitive material is from about 20 ml to 60 ml per square meter of the light-sensitive material.

20 The water replenisher solution used in this invention can contain, e.g., isothiazolone compounds and cyanbenzodiazoles described in JP-A-57-8542, chlorine series sterilizers such as chlorinated sodium isocyanurate, etc., described in JP-A-61-120145, benzotriazole described in JP-A-61-267761, copper ions, as well as the sterilizers described in Horishi Horiguchi, Bookin Boobaizai no Kagaku (Antibacterial and Antifungal Chemistry), Biseibutsu no Mekkin Sakkin Boobai Gijutsu (Antibacterial and Antifungal Technology of Microorganisms) edited by Eisei Gijutsu Kai, and Bookin Boobai Zai Jiten (Handbook of Antibacterial And Antifungal Agents), edited by Nippon Bookin Boobai Gakkai.

25 Furthermore, a surface active agent can be used as a wetting agent for the water replenisher solution, and a chelating agent such as ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA) can be used as a water softener.

30 Once light-sensitive material has been blixed or fixed according to the present invention it can be processed by a stabilizer solution after the wash step or without undergoing a wash step.

The stabilization solution contains a compound having a function of stabilizing images. Examples of such a compound are aldehyde compounds such as formaldehyde, etc. buffers for adjusting pH of the photographic layers of the light-sensitive material suitable of stabilizing dyes, and ammonium compounds. Also, the stabilizing solution may further contain various kinds of sterilizers or antibacterial agents described above for imparting an antifungal property to the light-sensitive material after processing or for preventing the growth of bacteria in the solution.

35 Furthermore, the stabilization solution can contain a surface active agent, an optical whitening agent, and/or a hardening agent.

40 When processing the light-sensitive material according to the method of the present invention, the light-sensitive material is preferably processed by a stabilizer solution without undergoing a wash step. Known methods described in JP-A-57-8543, JP-A-58-14834, and JP-A-60-220345 can be used.

Furthermore, it is a preferred embodiment in this invention to use a chelating agent such as 1-hydroxyethylidene-1,1-diphosphonic acid, ethylenediaminetetramethylenephosphonic acid, etc., or a bismuth compound, as a stabilizer solution.

A wash step in this invention is sometimes called as rinse step.

45 In the wash step and/or the stabilization step in the present invention, it is preferred to reduce the concentration of calcium and magnesium in the replenisher to below 5 mg/l.

That is, by reducing the concentration of calcium and magnesium in the replenisher, the content of calcium and magnesium in the wash tank and/or the stabilization tank is inevitably reduced, whereby the growth of fungi and bacteria is inhibited without using sterilizers and antifungal agents. Also, the problems of 1) staining the automatic processor's rollers and squeeze plate and 2) of precipitating deposits can be avoided.

50 In this invention, the concentration of calcium and magnesium in the replenisher for the wash step and/or the stabilization step is preferably less than 5 mg/l, more preferably less than 3 mg/l, and most preferably less than 1 mg/l.

For adjusting the concentration of calcium and magnesium in the wash water or stabilization solution, various known methods can be used but the use of an ion exchange resin and/or a reverse osmosis apparatus is preferred.

55 As the aforesaid ion exchange resin, there are various kinds of cationic exchange resins but a cation exchange resin of an Na type capable of replacing sodium with calcium and magnesium is preferably used.

Also, an H type cationic exchange resin can be used but since in this case, the pH of the processing water becomes acidic, it is preferred that an OH type anionic exchange resin is used together with an H type cationic exchange resin.

In addition, the aforesaid ion exchange resin is preferably a strong acid cation exchange resin having a styrene-divinylbenzene copolymer as the base and a sulfone group as the ion exchange group. Examples of the ion-exchange resin are Diaion SK-1B and Diaion PK-216 (trade names, made by Mitsubishi Chemical Industries Ltd.). It is preferred that at the time of production, the base material of this ion exchange resin contains from 4 to 16 wt% divinylbenzene per monomer. Examples of the anionic exchange resin which can be used in combination with the H-type cationic exchange resin preferably include a strong basic anion exchange resin having a styrene-divinylbenzene copolymer as the base material and a tertiary amine or quaternary ammonium group as the exchange group. Examples of such an anion exchange resin are Diaion SA-10A and Diaion PA-418 (trade names, made by Mitsubishi Chemical Industries Ltd.).

Also, in this invention, a reverse osmosis processing apparatus may be used for reducing the amount of the water replenisher solution and/or the stabilizer solution.

As the reverse osmosis apparatus, known apparatuses can be used without any restriction, but it is preferred to use a very small apparatus having a reverse osmosis film area of less than 3 m² and pressure for use of less than 30 kg/m², and in particular less than 2 m² of the area and less than 20 kg/m² of the pressure. By using such a small apparatus, good workability and a sufficient water saving effect are obtained. Furthermore, the solution can be passed through activated carbon or a magnetic field.

In addition, as the reverse osmosis membrane for the reverse osmosis processing apparatus, a cellulose acetate film, an ethyl cellulose film, a polyacrylic acid film, a polyacrylonitrile film, a polyvinyl carbonate film, a polyether sulfone film, etc., can be used.

Also, the liquid sending pressure is usually from 5 kg/cm² to 60 kg/cm² but for attaining the object of the present invention, a pressure of less than 30 kg/cm² is sufficient and a so-called low-pressure type reverse osmosis apparatus (a pressure of less than 10 kg/cm²) can be also sufficiently used in this invention.

As the structure of the reverse osmosis membrane, a spiral type, a tubular type, a hollow fiber type, a pleated type, a rod type, etc., can be used.

In this invention, at least one of the wash tank or stabilization tank, and the replenisher tank of each, may be irradiated by ultraviolet rays and, thereby, the growth of fungi can be further inhibited.

As the ultraviolet lamp being used for the aforesaid purpose, a low-pressure mercury vapor discharge tube generating line spectrum having a wave length of 253.7 n.m. can be used. In this invention, it is more preferred to use the aforesaid tube having from 0.5 watt to 7.5 watts in sterilizing power.

The ultraviolet lamp may be placed outside the tank or in the processing solution.

In this invention, sterilizers and/or antifungal agents may not be used for the water replenisher solution and/or the stabilizer solution, but these agents may be optionally used if the use thereof does not adversely effect the performance of the pre-bath.

The pH of water replenisher solution or the stabilizer solution is usually from 4 to 9, and preferably from 5 to 8. However, for certain purposes, an acid stabilizer solution (usually lower than pH 4) added with acetic acid, etc., is used.

The processing time for wash water or stabilization solution is explained hereinafter.

The time for washing or stabilization in this invention is from 10 seconds to 4 minutes but shorter time is preferred for effectively obtaining the effect of this invention and more preferably, the processing time is from 20 seconds to 3 minutes, and most preferably from 20 seconds to 2 minutes.

For the wash step or the stabilization step, it is preferred to use a combination of various kinds of wash accelerating means. As the accelerating means, ultrasonic generator in liquid, air foaming, spraying the liquid onto the light-sensitive material, compression by rollers, etc., can be used.

Also, the temperature of the washing step or the stabilization step is in the range of from 20°C to 50°C, preferably from 25°C to 45°C, and more preferably from 30°C to 40°C.

The overflow liquid from the wash step and/or the stabilization step means a liquid overflow from a tank with replenishing to the tank, and for introducing the overflow liquid into the pre-bath, various methods can be employed. For example, a method of placing a slit at the upper portion between the pre-bath and the wall of the adjacent tank in an automatic processor and introducing the overflow liquid into the pre-bath through the slit, or a method of once storing the overflow liquid in a tank outside the automatic processor and supplying the liquid to the pre-bath using a pump may be used.

By thus introducing the overflow liquid into the pre-bath, a small amount of a more concentrated replenisher can be added to the pre-bath, and the components in the bath can be kept at a necessary concentration, whereby the amount of waste solution can be reduced by the volume corresponding to the concentration amount of the replenisher used for the pre-bath.

The same effect is obtained by storing the overflow liquid in a tank, adding the replenisher components thereto, and then using the finished liquid produced thereby.

Also, since the overflow liquid contains the components in the pre-bath, the absolute amount of the components being supplied to the pre-bath can be reduced by using the overflow liquid, whereby the load for environmental pollution

and also the processing cost can be reduced.

The amount of the overflow liquid being introduced into the pre-bath can be optionally selected so as to conveniently control the concentration of the pre-bath but is usually from 0.2 to 5, preferably from 0.3 to 3, and more preferably from 0.5 to 2 as a mixing ratio of the overflow liquid to the amount of the replenisher for the pre-bath.

When in this invention, a water replenisher solution or a stabilizer solution is added to the color developer instead of wash water, it is preferred that a compound releasing ammonium ions such as ammonium chloride and aqueous ammonia is incorporated into the water replenisher solution or into the stabilization solution. This incorporation prevents the reduction of photographic properties.

The practical processing steps of the present invention are illustrated below but the steps of this invention are not limited thereto.

1. Color development - bleach - (wash) - blix - (wash) - (stabilization).
2. Color development blix (wash) - (stabilization).
3. Color development - bleach - blix - (wash) - (stabilization).
4. Color development - blix - blix - (wash) - (stabilization).
5. Color development - bleach - fix - blix - (wash) - (stabilization).
6. Black and white development - wash - (reversal) - color development - (control) - bleach - blix - (wash) - (stabilization).
7. Black and white development - wash - (reversal) - color development - (control) - blix - (wash) - (stabilization).
8. Black and white development - wash - (reversal) - color development - (control) - bleach - blix - (wash).
9. Color development - fix - blix - (wash).
10. Color development - fix - blix - blix - (wash).

In the aforesaid steps, the step enclosed by parentheses means a step which can be omitted according to the kind, object and use of the photographic light-sensitive material being processed, but the wash step and the stabilization step cannot simultaneously be omitted even if both are enclosed by parentheses. Also, the wash step may be replaced with a stabilization step.

The method of this invention can be applied for processing any light-sensitive materials such as color photographic papers, color reversal photographic papers, direct positive color photographic materials, color positive photographic films, color negative photographic films, color reversal photographic films, etc., but in particular, the method of this invention is preferably applied for processing color photographic papers and color reversal photographic papers.

The silver halide color photographic materials which are processed by the method of the present invention are explained below in detail.

It is necessary that the light-sensitive material being processed by the process of this invention contains various color couplers. In this invention, a color coupler is a compound capable of forming a dye by causing a reaction with the oxidation product of an aromatic primary amine developing agent. Typical examples of the useful color couplers are naphtholic or phenolic compounds, pyrazolone or pyrazoloazole series compounds, and open-chained or heterocyclic ketomethylene compounds. Practical examples of the cyan, magenta, and yellow couplers which can be used in the present invention are described in the patents cited in Research Disclosure, (RD) 17643, Paragraph VII-D, (December, 1978) and ibid., (RD) 18717 (November, 1979).

It is preferred that the color couplers incorporated in the light-sensitive materials have non-diffusibility by having a ballast group or by being polymerized. Also, in this invention, 2-equivalent color couplers having a releasable group at the active position are more preferred than 4-equivalent color couplers having a hydrogen atom at the active position since the above-mentioned 2-equivalent couplers can reduce the coating amount of silver and provide better results in accordance with the present invention. Couplers giving colored dyes having a proper diffusibility, non-coloring couplers, DIR couplers releasing a development inhibitor with coupling reaction, or couplers releasing a development accelerator with coupling reaction can also be used in this invention.

Typical examples of the yellow couplers used in the present invention include oil protect type acylacetamide series couplers and practical examples thereof are described in U.S. Patents 2,407,210, 2,875,057, and 3,265,506.

In this invention, the use of 2-equivalent yellow couplers are preferred and typical examples thereof are oxygen atom-releasing type yellow couplers described in U.S. Patents 3,408,194, 3,447,928, 3,933,501 and 4,022,620 and nitrogen atom-releasing type yellow couplers described in JP-B-58-10739, U.S. Patents 4,401,752, 4,326,024, Research Disclosure, RD 18053 (April, 1979), British Patent 1,425,020, West German Patent Application (OLS) Nos. 2,219,917, 2,261,361, 2,329,587, and 2,433,812. Also, α -pivaloylacetyl series couplers are excellent with respect to fastness, in particular, light fastness of colored dyes formed, while α -benzoylacetyl series couplers give high color density.

Examples of the magenta couplers which can be used in the present invention include oil protect type indazolone series and cyanoacetyl series, and preferably pyrazoloazole series couplers such as 5-pyrazolone series and pyrazolotriazole series couplers. The 5-pyrazolone series couplers having an arylamino group or an acylamino group at the 3-position are preferred from the viewpoint of hue and color density of the colored dyes formed. Typical examples are described in U.S. Patents 2,311,082, 2,343,703, 2,600,788, 2,908,573, 3,062,653, 3,152,896, and 3,936,015. As the releasable group for the 2-equivalent 5-pyrazolone series couplers, the nitrogen atom-releasing group described in U.S. Patent 4,310,619 and the arylthio group described in U.S. Patent 4,351,897 are preferred. Also, the 5-pyrazolone series couplers having a ballast group described in European Patent 73,636 give a high color density.

Examples of the pyrazoloazole series magenta couplers which can be used in the present invention include pyrazolobenzimidazoles described in U.S. Patent 3,369,879, and preferably include pyrazolo[5,1-c][1,2,4]triazoles described in U.S. Patent 3,725,067, pyrazolotetrazoles described in Research Disclosure, No. 24220 (June, 1984), and pyrazolopyrazoles described in Research Disclosure, No. 24230 (June, 1984). Also, from the standpoint of less yellow side adsorption and high light-fastness of color dyes formed, the imidazo[1,2-b]pyrazoles described in European Patent 119,741 are preferred and the pyrazolo[1,5-b][1,2,4]triazoles described in European Patent 119,860 are particularly preferred.

Examples of the cyan couplers which can be used in the present invention include oilprotect type naphtholic and phenolic couplers.

Typical naphtholic couplers are the naphtholic couplers described in U.S. Patent 2,474,293 and preferably oxygen atom-releasing type 2-equivalent naphtholic couplers described in U.S. Patents 4,052,212, 4,146,396, 4,228,233, and 4,296,200.

Also, practical examples of phenolic couplers are described in U.S. Patents 2,369,929, 2,801,171, 2,772,162, and 2,895,826.

Cyan couplers having fastness to humidity and heat are preferably used in the present invention and typical examples thereof are phenolic cyan couplers having an alkyl group of two or more carbon atoms at the meta-position of the phenol nucleus described in U.S. Patent 3,772,002, 2,5-diacylamino-substituted phenolic couplers described in U.S. Patents 2,772,162, 3,758,308, 4,126,396, 4,334,011, and 4,327,173, West German Patent Application (OLS) No. 3,329,729, and JP-A-59-166956, and phenolic couplers having a phenylureido group at the 2-position and an acylamino group at the 5-position described in U.S. Patents 3,446,622, 4,333,999, 4,451,559, and 4,427,767.

In this invention, if necessary various kinds of couplers may be used together. Also the graininess can be improved by using a coupler which yields a colored dye which has a proper diffusibility with ordinary couplers. Examples of couplers yielding diffusible dyes include magenta couplers described in U.S. Patent 4,366,237 and British Patent 2,125,570 and yellow, magenta, and cyan couplers described in European Patent 96,570 and West German Patent Application (OLS) No. 3,234,533.

The dye-forming couplers and the aforesaid specific couplers may form dimers or more polymers. Typical examples of the polymerized dye-forming couplers are described in U.S. Patents 3,451,820 and 4,080,211. Also, practical examples of the polymerized magenta couplers are described in British Patent 2,102,173 and U.S. Patent 4,367,282.

To attain the characteristics required for color photographic materials, two or more kinds of the aforesaid couplers may exist in a same photosensitive emulsion layer or two or more of the same kind of coupler may exist in two or more emulsion layer.

A standard amount of the color coupler is in the range of from 0.001 mol to 1 mol per mol of the light-sensitive silver halide in the silver halide emulsion layer, with from 0.01 mol to 0.5 mol of a yellow coupler, from 0.003 mol to 0.3 mol of a magenta coupler, and from 0.002 mol to 0.3 mol of a cyan coupler being preferred amounts.

The couplers used in the present invention can be introduced into the color photographic materials by various dispersion methods. Examples include an oil drop-in-water dispersion method and a latex dispersion method. Examples of a high-boiling organic solvent for the oil drop-in-water dispersion method are described in U.S. Patent 2,322,027, etc., and practical examples of the process and effect of the latex dispersion method and the latexes for impregnation are described in U.S. Patent 4,199,363 and West German Patent Application (OLS) Nos. 2,541,274 and 2,541,230.

The silver halide emulsions of the light-sensitive materials used in the present invention may contain any halide composition such as silver iodobromide, silver bromide, silver chlorobromide, silver chloride, etc. For example, in the case of quick processing or low-replenish processing, color photographic papers, a silver chlorobromide emulsion containing at least 60 mol% silver chloride or a silver chloride emulsion is preferred, and the aforesaid emulsions having

a silver chloride content of from 80 to 100 mol% are more preferred. Also, in the case of requiring high speed and forming particularly low fog during the production, storage and/or processing the light-sensitive materials, a silver chlorobromide emulsion containing at least 50 mol% silver bromide or a silver bromide emulsion (the emulsions may contain less than 3 mol% silver iodide), and particularly those containing at least 70 mol% silver bromide are preferred. For the color photographic materials for camera use, a silver iodobromide emulsion or a silver chloroiodobromide containing from 3 to 15 mol% silver iodide is preferred.

The silver halide grains for use in this invention may have a different phase between the inside and the surface layer thereof, may be a multiphase structure having a junction structure, or may be composed of a uniform phase throughout the whole grain. Also, the silver halide grains may be composed of a mixture thereof.

The mean grain size distribution of the silver halide grains for use in this invention may be narrow or broad but a so-called mono-disperse silver halide emulsion wherein the value (coefficient of variation) of the standard deviation in the grain size distribution curve divided by the mean grain size is within 20%, and particularly preferably within 15% is preferably used. Also, for meeting the gradation required for the light-sensitive materials, two or more kinds of mono-dispersed silver halide emulsions (preferably having the aforesaid coefficient of variation) each having different mean grain size can be coated in a same layer or different layers which have a substantially same light-sensitivity. Furthermore, a combination of two or more kinds of poly-dispersed silver halide emulsions or a combination of a mono-dispersed emulsion and a poly-dispersed emulsion can be used for one layer or a multilayer.

The silver halide grains for use in this invention may have a regular crystal form such as cubic, octahedral, dodecahedral, tetradecahedral, etc., an irregular crystal form such as spherical, etc., or a composite form of these crystal forms. Also, the silver halide grains may be tabular grains and in this case, a tabular grain silver halide emulsion wherein tabular silver halide grains having an aspect ratio (length/thickness) of from 5 to 8, or at least 8 account for at least 50% of the total projected area of the silver halide grains can be used. The emulsion may be composed of these various crystal forms.

The silver halide emulsion for use in this invention may be of a surface latent image type, forming latent images mainly on the surface thereof, or an inside latent image type, forming mainly in the inside thereof.

The silver halide photographic emulsion for use in this invention can be prepared by the methods described in Research Disclosure, Vol. 170, No. 17643, Paragraphs I, II, and III (December, 1978).

The emulsion for use in this invention is usually chemical ripened and spectrally sensitizing after physical ripening. The additives used for these steps are described in Research Disclosure, Vol. 176, No 17643 (December, 1979) and Ibid., Vol. 187, No. 18716 (November 1979) and they are shown in the following table together other photographic additives.

	<u>Additive</u>	<u>RD 17643</u>	<u>RD 18716</u>
5	1. Chemical sensitizer	Page 23	Page 648, right column
	2. Sensitivity increasing agent	-	"
10	3. Spectral sensitizer	Pages 23-24	Page 648, right column to page 649, right column
15	4. Super dye sensitizer	-	Page, 649, right column
20	5. Whitening agent	Page 24	-
	6. Antifoggant and stabilizer	Pages 24-25	Page 649, right column
25	7. Coupler	Page 25	-
	8. Organic solvent	Page 25	-
30	9. Light absorbent and filter dye and ultra-violet absorbent	Pages 25-26	Page 649, right column to page 650, left column
35	10. Stain inhibitor	Page 25, right column	Page 650, left to right columns
40	11. Dye image stabilizer	Page 25	-
	12. Hardening agent	Page 26	Page 651, left column
45	13. Binder	Page 26	"
	14. Plasticizer, wetting agent	Page 27	Page 650, right column
50	15. Coating aid and surface active agent	Pages 26-27	"
	16. Antistatic agent	Page 27	"

The aforesaid photographic emulsions are coated on a flexible support such as a plastic film (films of cellulose nitrate, cellulose acetate, polyethylene terephthalate, etc.), papers, etc., or a solid support such as glass plates, etc. Details of the supports and coating methods are described in Research Disclosure, Vol. 176, No. 17643, XV (page 27) and XVII (page 28) (December, 1978).

In this invention, reflecting supports are preferably used.

The "reflecting support" is a support having high reflectivity for clearly showing dye images formed in the silver halide emulsion layers formed thereon. Such a reflecting support includes a support having coated thereon a hydrophobic resin containing therein a light reflecting material such as titanium oxide, zinc oxide, calcium carbonate, calcium sulfate, etc., and a support composed of a hydrophobic resin containing therein the aforesaid light-reflecting material.

The invention is further explained in detail based on the following examples.

EXAMPLE 1

A color photographic material having layer 1 to layer 14 on the front surface of a paper support (100 μm in thickness) having a polyethylene coating on both surfaces and layer 15 to layer 16 on the back side thereof was prepared. The polyethylene coating on the emulsion side contained titanium oxide as a white pigment and a slight amount of ultramarine blue as a bluish dye (the chromaticity of the front surface of the support was 88.0, -0.20, and -0.75 as L*, a*, and b* series).

Composition of Layers

The coating amount was shown as g/m² units of silver for the silver halide emulsion and colloid silver, and as g/m² units for gelatin and the additives. The emulsion for each layer was prepared according to the method for Emulsion EM 1 as described later. In this case, however, a Lipman emulsion which had not been subjected to surface chemical sensitization was used as the emulsion for Layer 14.

Layer 1 Antihalation Layer

Black colloid layer	0.10
Gelatin	0.70

Layer 2 Interlayer

Gelatin	0.70
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Layer 3 Low-speed Red-sensitive Emulsion Layer

Silver bromide spectrally sensitized by red sensitizing dyes (ExS-1, 2, and 3) (mean grain size 0.25 μm, size distribution (coefficient of variation) 8%, octahedron)	0.04
Silver chlorobromide spectrally sensitized by red sensitizing dyes (ExS-1, 2, and 3) (silver chloride 5 mol%, mean grain size 0.40 μm, size distribution 10%, octahedron)	0.08
Gelatin	1.00

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	Cyan couplers (ExC-1 and 2 equivalent amount)	0.30
5	Fading inhibitors (Cpd-1, 2, 3, and 4 equivalent amount)	0.18
	Stain inhibitor (Cpd-5)	0.003
10	Coupler dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.03
	Coupler solvents (Solv-1, 2, and 3 equivalent amount)	0.12

15 Layer 4 High-speed Red-sensitive Emulsion Layer

20	Silver bromide spectrally sensitized by red sensitizing dyes (ExS-1, 2, and 3) (mean grain size 0.60 μm, size distribution 15%, octahedron)	0.14
	Gelatin	1.00
	Cyan couplers (ExC-1 and 2 equivalent amount)	0.30
	Fading inhibitors (Cpd-1, 2, 3, and 4 equivalent amount)	0.18
	Coupler dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.03
25	Coupler solvent (Solv-1, 2, and 3 equivalent amount)	0.12

Layer 5 Interlayer

30	Gelatin	1.00
	Color mixing inhibitor (Cpd-7)	0.08
	Color mixing inhibitor solvents (Solv-4 and 5 equivalent amount)	0.16
	Polymer latex (Cpd-8)	0.10

35 Layer 6 Low-speed Green-sensitive Emulsion Layer

40	Silver bromide spectrally sensitized by green sensitizing dye (ExS-4) (mean grain size 0.25 μm, size distribution 8%, octahedron)	0.04
	Silver chlorobromide spectrally sensitized by green sensitizing dye (ExS-4) (silver chloride 5 mol%, mean grain size 0.40 μm, size distribution 10%, octahedron)	0.06
	Gelatin	0.80
	Magenta couplers (ExM-1 and 2 equivalent amount)	0.11
45	Fading inhibitor (Cpd-9)	0.10
	Stain inhibitors (Cpd-10, 11, 12, and 13/10:7:7:1)	0.025
	Coupler dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.05
	Coupler solvents (Solv-4 and 6 equivalent amount)	0.15

50 Layer 7 High-speed Green-sensitive Emulsion Layer

55	Silver bromide spectrally sensitized by green sensitizing dye (ExS-4) (mean grain size 0.65 μm, size distribution 16%, octahedron)	0.10
	Gelatin	0.80
	Magenta couplers (ExM-1 and 2 equivalent amount)	0.11

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(continued)

5	Fading inhibitor (Cpd-9)	0.10
	Stain inhibitors (Cpd-10, 11, 12, and 13/10:7:7:1)	0.025
	Coupler dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.05
	Coupler solvents (Solv-4 and 6 equivalent amount)	0.15

Layer 8 Interlayer

10 Same as Layer 5.

Layer 9 Yellow Filter Layer

15	Yellow colloid silver	0.12
	Gelatin	0.07
	Color mixing inhibitor (Cpd-7)	0.03
	Color mixing inhibitor solvents (Cpd-4 and 5 equivalent amount)	0.10
20	Polymer latex (Cpd-8)	0.07

Layer 10 Interlayer

25 Same as Layer 5.

Layer 11 Low-speed Blue-sensitive Emulsion Layer

30	Silver bromide spectrally sensitized by blue sensitizing dyes (ExS-5 and 6) (mean grain size 0.40 μm , size distribution 8%, octahedron)	0.07
	Silver chlorobromide spectrally sensitized by blue sensitizing dyes (ExS-5 and 6)(silver chloride 8 mol%, mean grain size 0.60 μm , size distribution 11%, octahedron)	0.14
	Gelatin	0.80
35	Yellow coupler (ExY-1)	0.35
	Fading inhibitor (Cpd-14)	0.10
	Stain inhibitors (Cpd-5 and 15 at 1:5)	0.007
	Coupler dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.05
40	Coupler solvent (Solv-2)	0.10

Layer 12 High-speed Blue-sensitive Emulsion Layer

45	Silver bromide spectrally sensitized by blue sensitizing dyes (ExS-5 and 6) (mean grain size 0.85 μm , size distribution 18%, octahedron)	0.15
	Gelatin	0.60
	Yellow coupler (ExY-1)	0.30
	Fading inhibitor (Cpd-14)	0.10
50	Stain inhibitors (Cpd-5 and 15 at 1:5)	0.007
	Coupler dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.05
	Coupler solvent (Solv-2)	0.10

Layer 13 Ultraviolet Absorption Layer

55	Gelatin	1.00
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(continued)

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Ultraviolet absorbents (Cpd-2, 4, and 16 equivalent amount)	0.50
Color mixing inhibitors (Cpd-7 and 17 equivalent amount)	0.03
Dispersion medium (Cpd-6)	0.02
Ultraviolet absorbent solvents (Solv-2 and 7 equivalent amount)	0.08
Irradiation inhibiting dyes (Cpd-18, 19, 20, and 21 at 10:10:13:15)	0.04

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Layer 14 Protective Layer

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Fine grain silver chlorobromide (silver chloride 97 mol%, mean grain size 0.2 μm) 0.03

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Acryl-modified copolymer of polyvinyl alcohol 0.01

Polymethyl methacrylate particles (mean particle size 2.4 μm) and silicon oxide (mean particle size 5 μm) equivalent amount 0.05

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Gelatin 0.18

Gelatin hardening agents (H-1 and 2 equivalent amount) 0.18

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Layer 15 Back Layer

Gelatin	2.50
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Layer 16 Back Surface Protective Layer

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Polymethyl methacrylate particles (mean particle size 2.4 μm) and silicon oxide (mean particle size 5 μm) equivalent amount	0.05
Gelatin	2.00
Gelatin hardening agents (H-1 and 2 equivalent amount)	0.14

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Preparation of Emulsion EM-1

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An aqueous solution of potassium bromide and an aqueous solution of silver nitrate were simultaneously added to an aqueous gelatin solution with vigorous stirring at 75°C over a period of 15 minutes to provide an emulsion of octahedral silver bromide grains having a mean grain size of 0.40 μm. To the emulsion were successively added 3 g of 3,4-dimethyl-1,3-thiazoline-2-thione, 6 mg of sodium thiosulfate, and 7 mg of chloroauric acid (tetra-hydrate) and the mixture was heated to 75°C for 80 minutes to perform chemical sensitization treatment. Then, the silver halide grains growth was further performed by the same precipitation condition as above with the grains thus obtained as cores to finally provide an octahedral mono-dispersed core/shell silver bromide emulsion having a mean grain size of 0.7 μm. The coefficient of variation of the grain sizes was about 10%. To the emulsion were added 1.5 mg of sodium thiosulfate and 1.5 mg of chloroauric acid (tetrahydrate) per mol of silver and they were heated to 60°C for 60 minutes to perform chemical sensitization treatment to provide an inside latent image type silver halide emulsion.

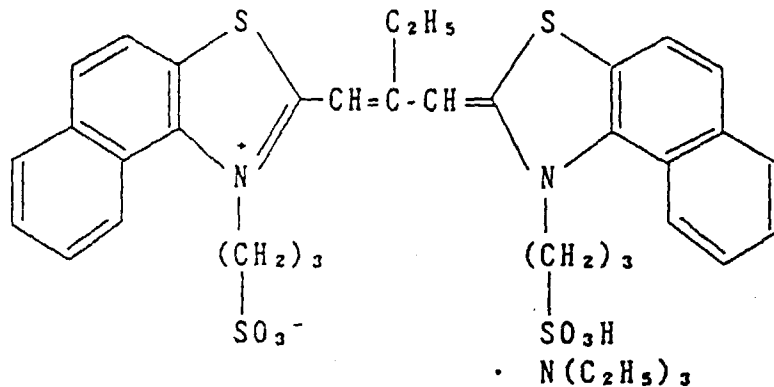
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For each silver halide emulsion layer nucleating agents ExZK-1 and ExZK-2 were used each in an amount of 10⁻³% by weight and a nucleation accelerator Cpd-22 in an amount of 10⁻²% by weight. Furthermore, for each layer Alkanol

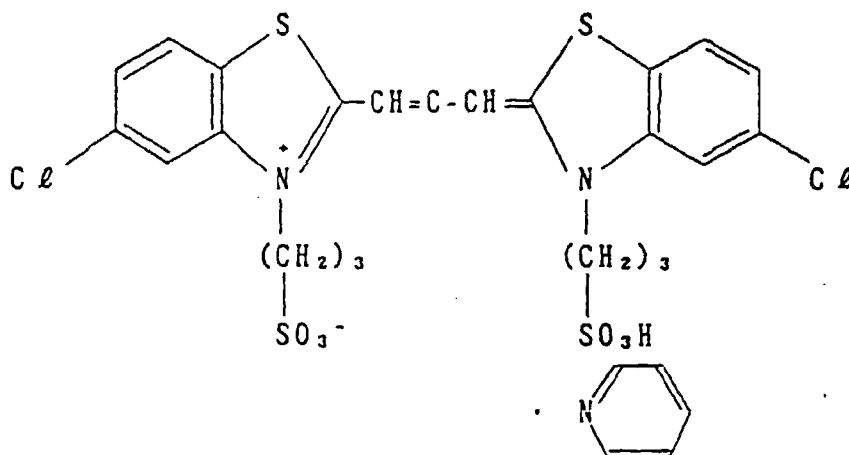
XC (made by Du Pont) and a sodium alkylbenzenesulfonate were used as emulsion-dispersion aids and succinic acid ester and Magefac F-120 (made by Dainippon Ink and Chemicals, Inc.) were used as coating aids. Also, for the layers containing silver halide or colloid silver Cpd-23, 24, and 25 were used as stabilizers.

The compounds used in the above layers are shown below:

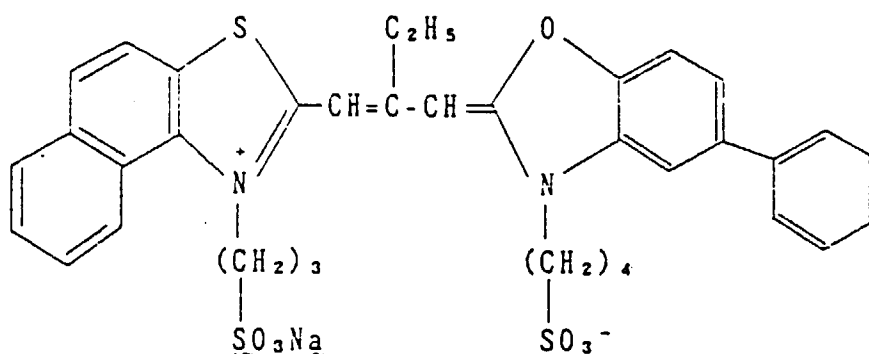
E x S - 1

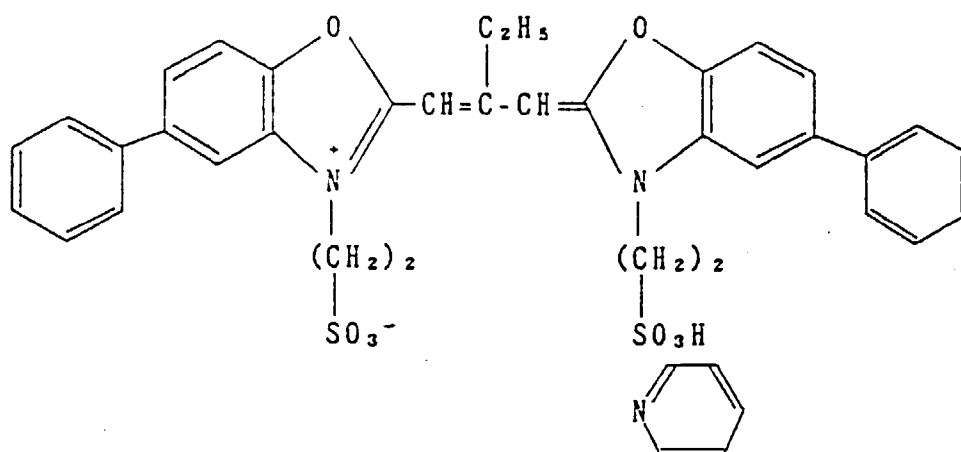
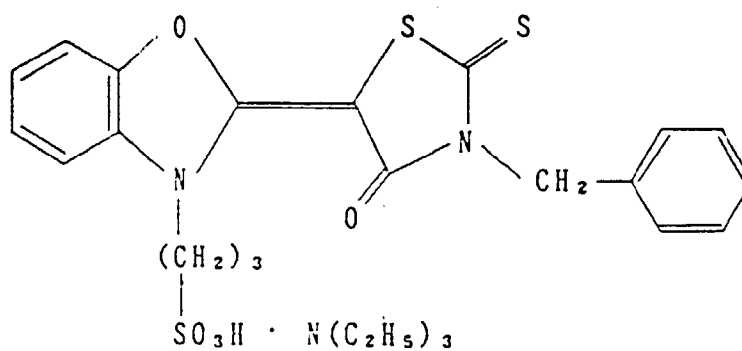
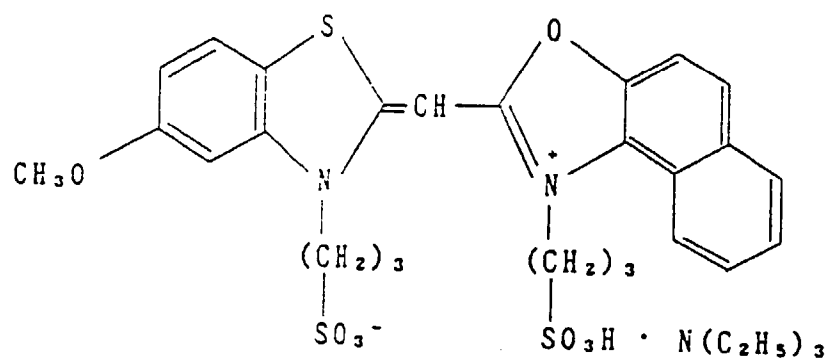


E x S - 2



E x S - 3

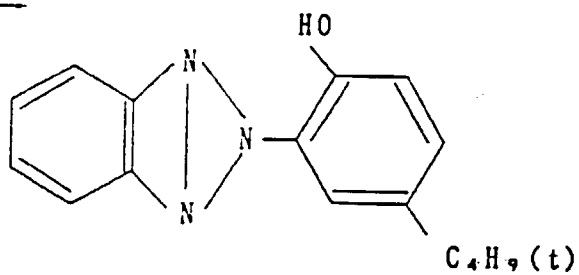


E x S - 4E x S - 5E x S - 6

C p d - 1

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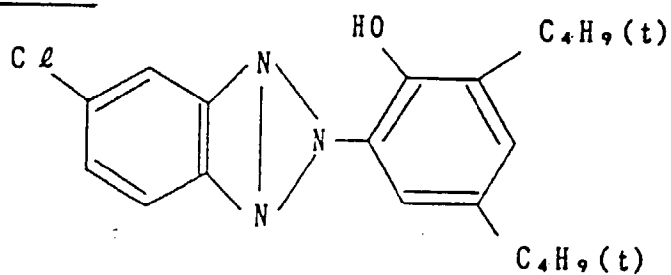
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C p d - 2

15

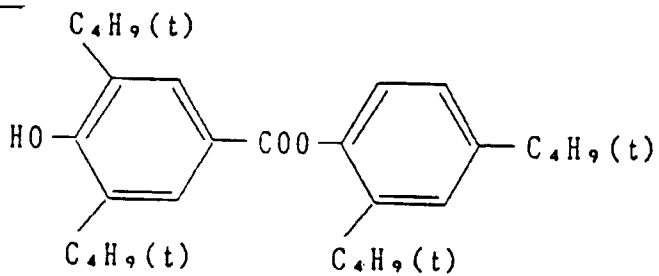
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C p d - 3

25

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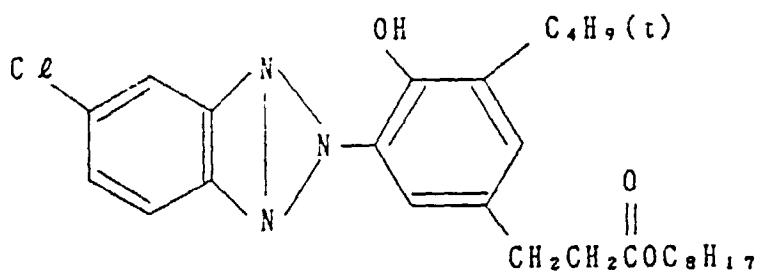


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C p d - 4

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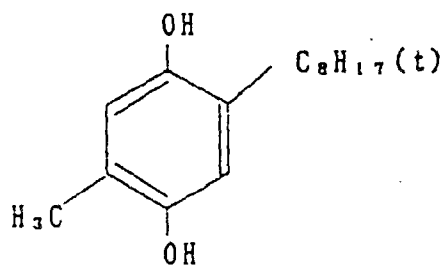
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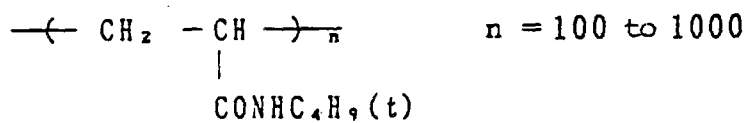
C p d - 5

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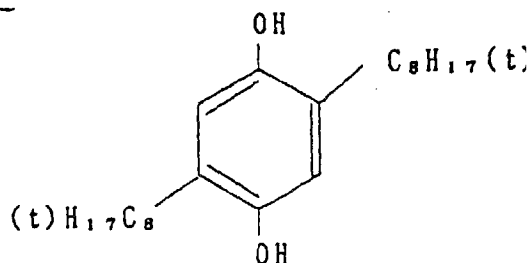
C p d - 6

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C p d - 7

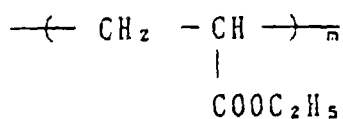
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C p d - 8

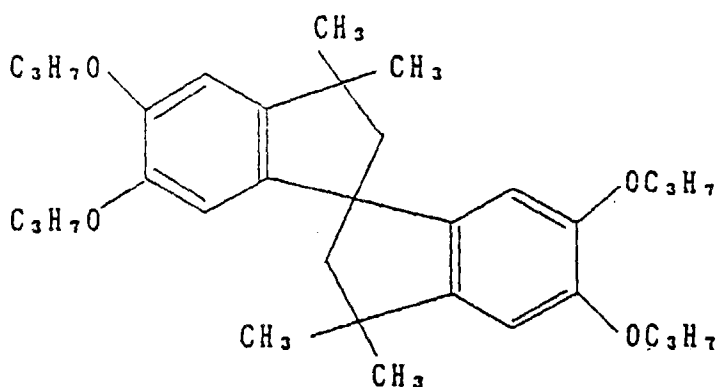
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C p d - 9

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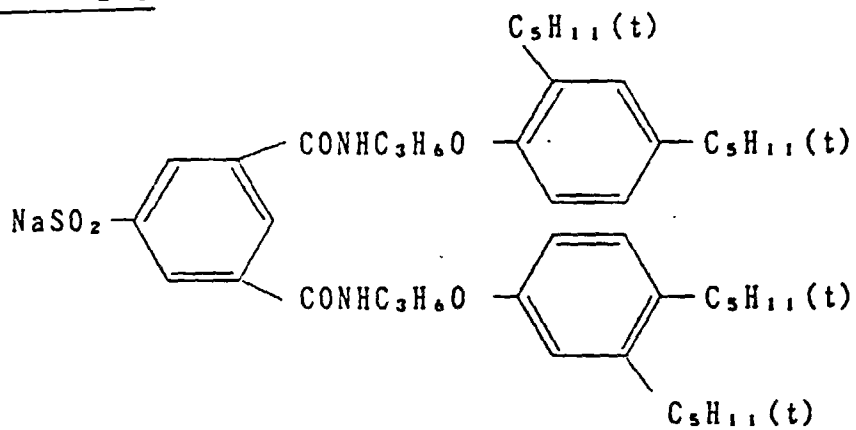


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C p d - 1 0

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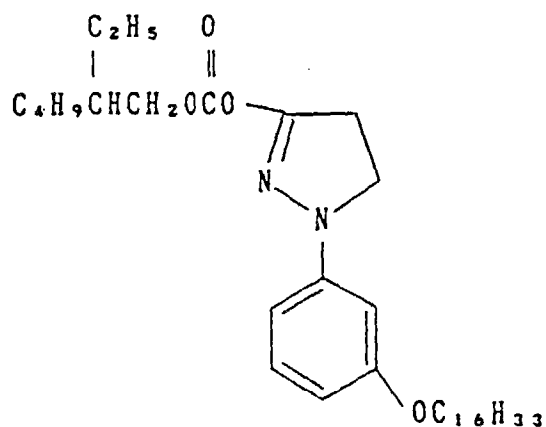
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C p d - 1 1

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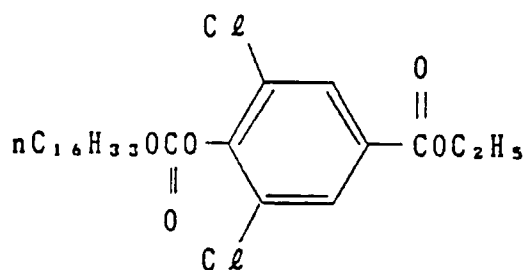


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C p d - 1 2

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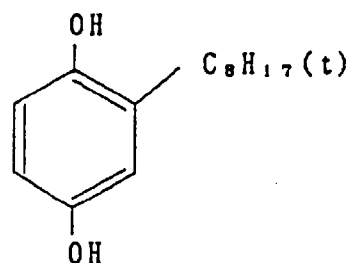
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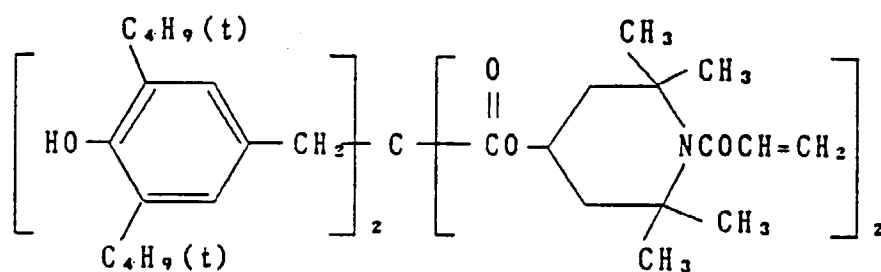
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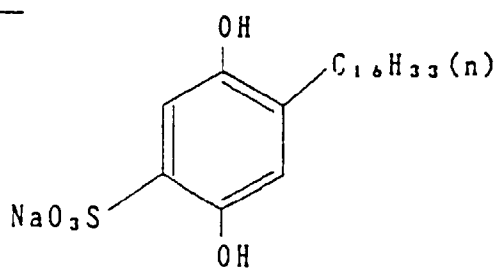
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C p d - 1 5

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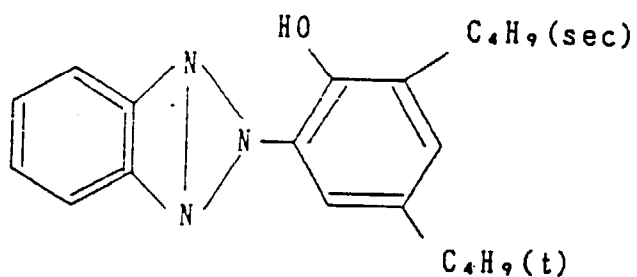
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C p d - 1 6

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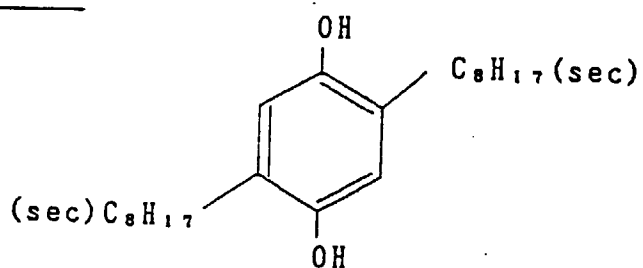


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C p d - 1 7

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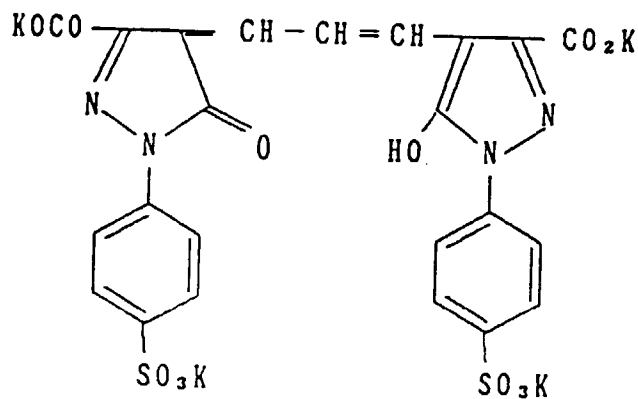


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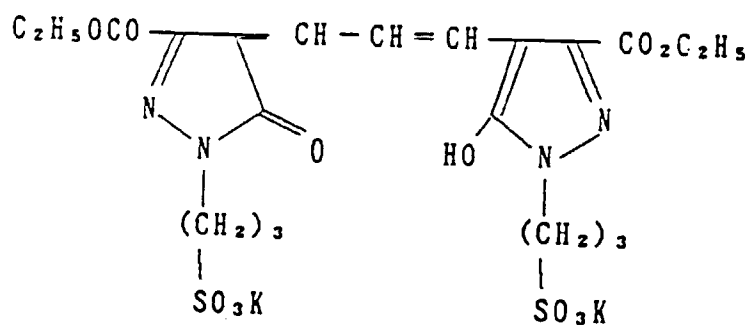
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C p d - 1 9

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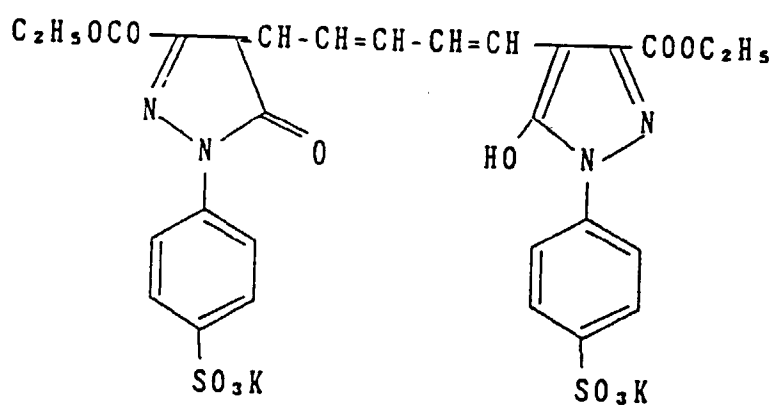


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C p d - 2 0

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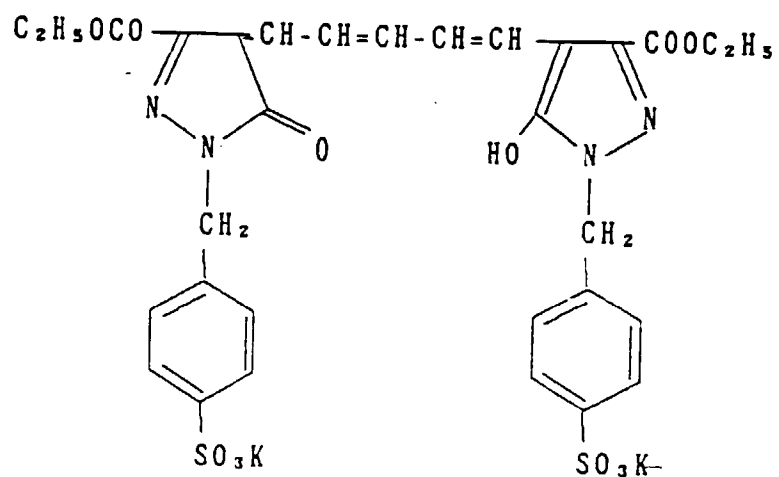


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C p d - 2 1

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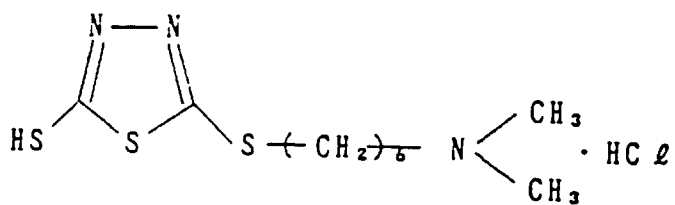
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C p d - 2 2

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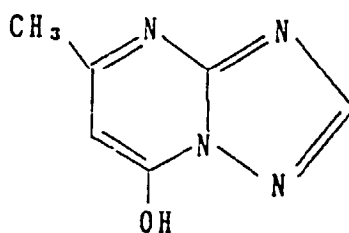
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C p d - 2 3

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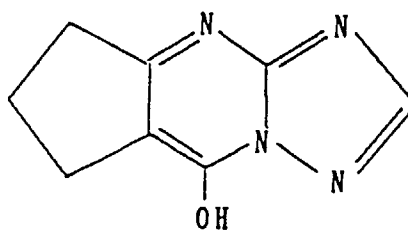


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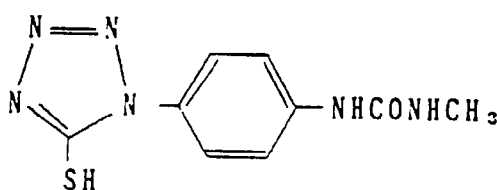
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C p d - 2 5

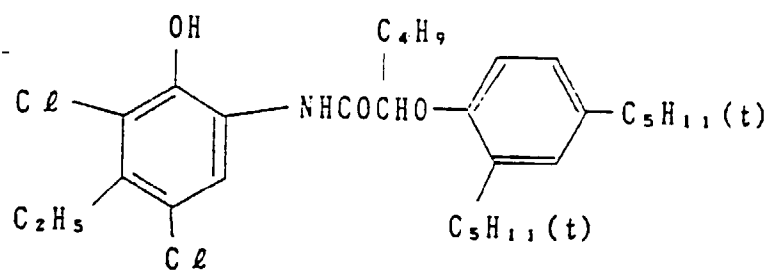
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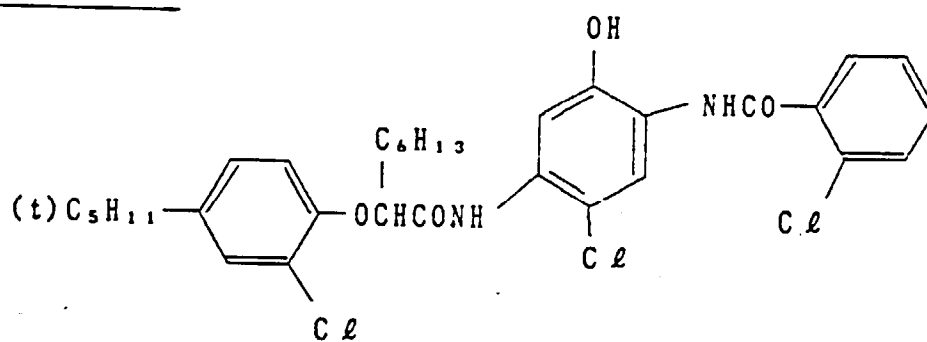
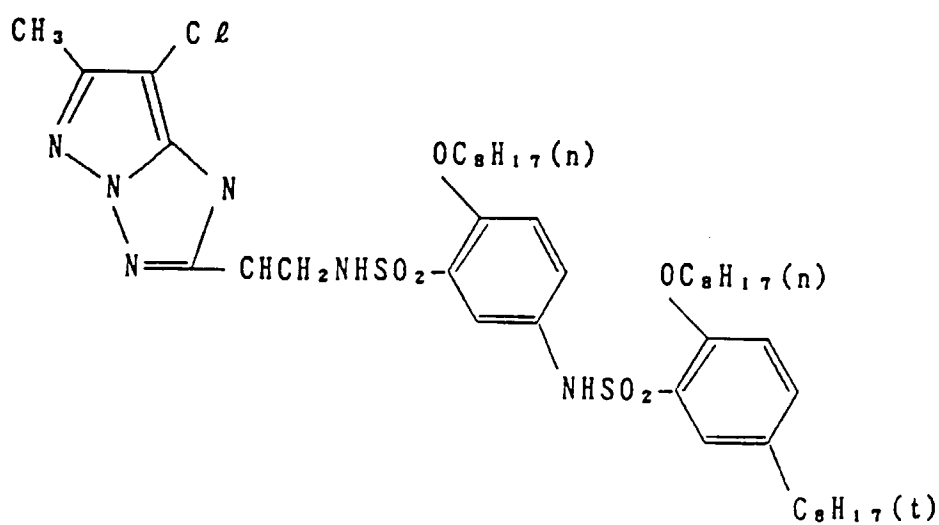
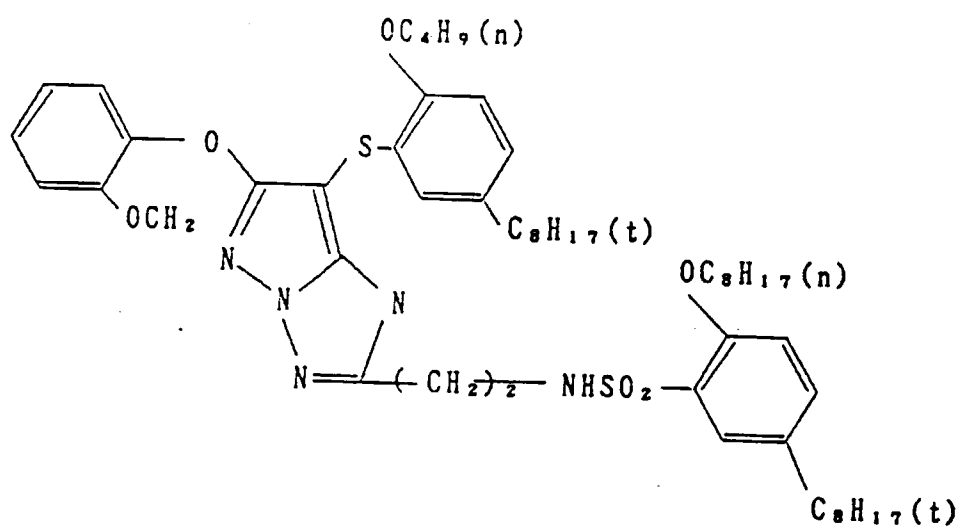


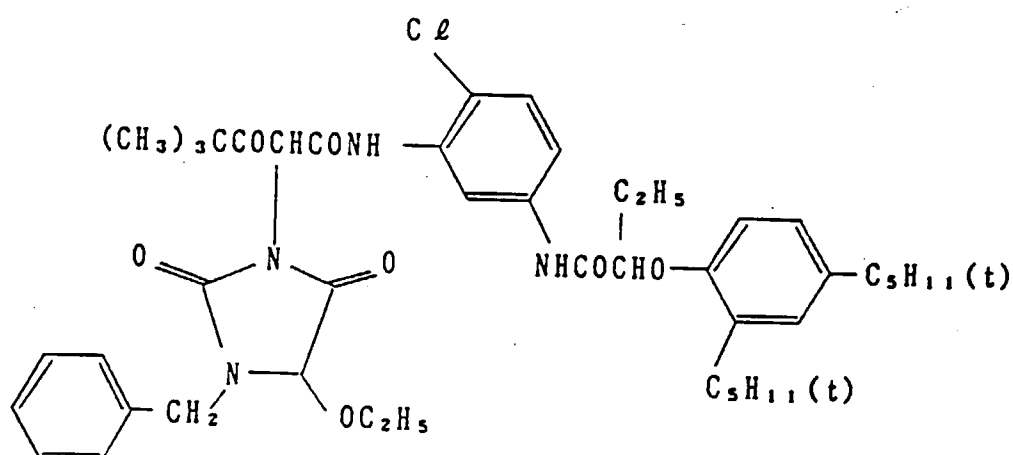
E x C - 1

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E x C - 2E x M - 1E x M - 2

Ex Y - 1

- 20 Solv-1: Di(2-ethylhexyl)sebacate
 Solv-2: Trinonyl Phosphate
 Solv-3: Di(3-methylhexyl) Phthalate
 Solv-4: Tricresyl Phosphate
 Solv-5: Dibutyl Phthalate
 25 Solv-6: Trioctyl Phosphate
 Solv-7: Di(2-ethylhexyl) Phthalate
 H-1: 1,2-Bis(vinylsulfonylaceto)ethane
 H-2: 4,6-Dichloro-2-hydroxy-1,3,5-triazine sodium salt
 ExzK-1: 7-[3-(5-Mercaptotetrazol-1-yl)benzamido]-10-propal-1,2,3,4-tetrahydrocoumaridinium Perchlorate
 30 ExzK-2: 1-Formyl-2-{4-[3-(3-[3-(5-mercaptotetrazol-1-yl)phenyl]ureido)benzulfonamido]phenyl}hydrazine

The silver halide color photographic material (Sample 401) prepared as above was imagewise exposed and subjected to continuous processing by the following steps using an automatic processor at 0.6 m² per day until the accumulated amount of the replenisher for the color developer became 1.5 times the tank volume.

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Processing Step	Time	Temperature	Tank Volume	Replenisher
		(°C)	(ℓ)	(ml/m ²)
Color Development	90 sec.	38	8	300
Blix	40 sec.	33	3	300
Wash (1)	40 sec.	33	3	-
Wash (2)	40 sec.	33	3	-
Wash (3)	15 sec.	33	0.5	320
Drying	30 sec.	80		

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A so-called countercurrent replenishing system was used as the replenishing system for wash water. In this system, the replenisher was supplied to Wash Bath (3), the overflow liquid from Wash Bath (3) was introduced into Wash Bath (2), and the overflow liquid from Wash Bath(2) was introduced into Wash Bath (1). In this case, the amount of the blix solution carried by the light-sensitive material from the blix bath into Wash Bath (1) was 35 ml/m² and the amount of the replenisher for wash water was 9.1 times the carried amount of the blix solution.

The compositions of the processing solutions were as follows.

	<u>Color Developer</u>	<u>Mother Liquor</u>	<u>Replenisher</u>
5	Ethylenediaminetetrakis-methylenephosphonic acid	0.5 g	0.5 g
	Diethylene glycol	10 ml	10 ml
10	Benzyl alcohol	12.0 ml	14.4 ml
	Potassium bromide	0.65 g	-
15	Sodium sulfite	2.4 g	2.9 g
	Compound III-7	4.0 g	4.8 g
20	Triethanolamine	4.0 g	4.8 g
	N-Ethyl-N-(β -methanesulfon-amidoethyl)-3-methylaniline sulfate	5.6 g	6.6 g
25	Potassium carbonate	27.0 g	25.0 g
	Optical whitening agent (diaminostilbene series)	1.0 g	1.2 g
30	Water to make	1000 ml	1000 ml
	pH (25°C)	10.50	10.80

	Blix Solution	Mother Liquor	Replenisher
35	Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid di-sodium di-hydrate	4.0 g	Same as the mother liquor
	Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid Fe(III) ammonium di-hydrate	46.0 g	
	Sodium thiosulfate (700 g/l)	155 ml	
40	Sodium p-methylbenzenesulfinate	20 g	
	Sodium hydrogensulfite	12 g	
	2-Amino-5-mercapto-1,3,4-thiadizole	0.45 g	
	Ammonium nitrate	30.0 g	
	Water to make	1000 ml	
45	pH (25°C)	6.20	

Wash Water (tank liquid and replenisher had same composition)

50 City tap water was passed through a mixed bed type column packed with an H-type strong basic cation exchange resin (Amberlite IR-120B, made by Rhom & Hass Co.) and an OH-type anion exchange resin (Amberlite IR-400) to give pure water having the following quality:

55	Calcium	0.3 mg/l
	Magnesium	below 0.1 mg/l
	pH	6.5
	Electrical conductivity	5.0 μ s/cm

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Then, the same continuous processing as above was performed while using the stabilizer solution (A) instead of wash water, the stabilizer solution (A) having the following composition in place of the wash water.

Stabilizer Solution A (Mother liquid and replenisher had same composition)

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1-Hydroxyethylidene-1,1-diphosphonic acid (60%)	1.6 ml
Bismuth chloride	0.3 g
Polyvinylpyrrolidone	0.3 g
Aqueous ammonia (26%)	2.5 ml
Nitrilotriacetic acid	1.0 g
5-Chloro-2-methyl-4-isothiazolin-3-one	0.05 g
2-Octyl-4-isothiazoline	0.05 g
Optical whitening agent (4,4'-diaminostilbene series)	1.0 g
Water to make	1000 ml
pH (25°C)	7.5

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Then, following the same method as above (for Stabilizer solution A), except that sodium hydroxide was used in place of aqueous ammonia (26%), stabilizer solution B was prepared as a substitute for wash water, and the continuous processing was performed using the stabilizer solution B. The continuous processing was performed in a room having a temperature of 20° C, a humidity of 75%, and a carbon dioxide concentration of 1200 ppm.

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The open area of the automatic processor used in this example was 0.005 cm²/ml and the evaporated amount was 60 ml/day. In addition the working time was 10 hours.

Then, before and after each continuous processing, the density change of the magenta image (ΔD_{Gmin} and ΔD_{Gmax}) and the change of the yellow image density ($\Delta CB_{1,0}$) at the point of 1.0 in magenta image density were determined. The results obtained are shown in Table 1.

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Then, the continuous processing was further performed while adding the replenisher for the stabilization solution as a substitution for wash water and then the change of the photographic properties was determined. The results obtained are shown in Table 1.

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As is clear from Table 1, the method of the present invention resulted in less deviation of photographic performance in the continuous processing. In addition, when the processing is performed using Stabilizer solution A containing aqueous ammonia (26%), the change of the minimum density was slightly large, an inferior result when compared to the case of using Stabilization solution B containing no aqueous ammonia. It is believed that the inferior result was due to fog formed by ammonia in the stabilizer solution.

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TABLE 1

No.	Solution addition method		Change of photographic property			
	Added solution	Added amount (ml)	Added times	ΔD_{gmin}	ΔD_{gmax}	$\Delta CB_{1.0}$
1 (Comparison)	-	-	-	+0.07	+0.15	-0.15
2 (")	-	-	-	+0.07	+0.16	-0.14
3 (")	-	-	-	+0.08	+0.17	-0.15
4 (Invention)	Stabilizer A	30	Once a day	+0.05	+0.10	+0.08
5 (")	Stabilizer B	30	Once a day	+0.02	+0.02	-0.03

EXAMPLE 2

By following the same procedure as in Example 1 except that each of compounds I-1, I-2, II-2, III-12, III-22, IV-8, and V-1 was used in place of Compound III-7 while adding the water replenisher solution to the color developer, the deviation of the photographic properties by continuous processing was less and good results were also obtained.

Claims

1. A method of continuously processing imagewise exposed silver halide color photographic materials using an automatic processor which has a color development bath and a stabilization bath, which method comprises the steps of
- a) using a color developer which contains an organic preservative, and
 - b) adding to the color developer during the continuous processing a replenisher for the stabilizer solution.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the replenisher added to the color developer is from 1 to 50 times by volume the amount of the color developer removed from the color development bath when the silver halide photographic materials are removed from the bath.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the amount of the replenisher added to the color developer is from 3 to 20 times by volume the amount of the components removed from the color development bath when the silver halide photographic materials are removed from the bath.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the replenisher added to the color developer is from 0.1 to 1.2 times the amount of the developer which has evaporated from the bath.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the amount of the replenisher added to the color developer bath is from 0.3 to 0.9 times the amount of the developer which has evaporated.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the organic preservative added to the color developer solution is from 0.005 mol/l to 0.5 mol/l of the color developer solution.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein the amount of the organic preservative added to the color developer solution is from 0.03 mol/l to 0.1 mol/l of the color developer solution.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the organic preservative is selected from the group consisting of substituted hydroxylamines, hydroxamic acids, hydrazines, hydrazides, phenols, α -hydroxyketones, α -aminoketones, saccharides, monoamines, diamines, polyamines, quaternary ammonium salts, nitroxy radicals, alcohols, oximes, diamido compounds, and condensed ring amines.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein the organic preservative comprises
- i) at least one compound selected from the group consisting of substituted hydroxylamines, hydroxamic acids, hydrazines, hydrazides, phenols, α -hydroxyketones, α -aminoketones and saccharides, and
 - (ii) at least one compound selected from the group consisting of monoamines, diamines, polyamines, quaternary ammonium salts, nitroxy radicals, alcohols, oximes, diamino compounds and condensed ring amines.
10. The method of claim 8, wherein the organic preservative comprises
- (i) one compound selected from the group consisting of hydroxylamines, hydrazines and hydrazides, and at least
 - (ii) one compound selected from the group consisting of monoamine and condensed ring amine compounds.
11. The method of claim 8, wherein the organic preservative comprises a substituted hydroxylamine compound and a monoamine compound.
12. The method of claim 8, wherein a two tank countercurrent system is used and the amount of the replenisher is

from 300 ml to 1000 ml/m² of the silver halide photographic material.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein a three tank countercurrent system is used and the amount of the replenisher is from 100 ml to 500 ml/m² of the silver halide photographic material.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein a four tank countercurrent system is used and the amount of the replenisher is from 50 ml to 300 ml/m² of the silver halide photographic material.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the pH of the stabilization solution is from 4 to 9.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the time for stabilization is from 10 s to 4 min.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the time for stabilization is from 20 s to 2 min.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the temperature of the stabilization step is from 20°C to 50°C.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the temperature of the stabilization step is from 25°C to 45°C.

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zur kontinuierlichen Behandlung eines bildweise belichteten, farbphotographischen Silberhalogenidmaterials unter Verwendung eines automatischen Prozessors, der ein Farbentwicklungsbad und ein Stabilisierungsbad aufweist, wobei das Verfahren die Schritte

a) der Verwendung eines Farbentwicklers, der ein organisches Entwicklerschutzmittel enthält, und

b) der Zugabe einer Nachfülllösung für die Stabilisatorlösung zu dem Farbentwickler während der kontinuierlichen Behandlung umfaßt.

2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei die zu dem Farbentwickler gegebene Menge an Nachfülllösung die 1- bis 50-fache Volumenmenge an Farbentwickler beträgt, die aus dem Farbentwicklungsbad entfernt wird, wenn die photographischen Silberhalogenidmaterialien aus dem Bad entfernt werden.

3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 2, wobei die zu dem Farbentwickler gegebene Menge an Nachfülllösung die 3- bis 30-fache Volumenmenge der Bestandteile beträgt, die aus dem Farbentwicklungsbad entfernt werden, wenn die photographischen Silberhalogenidmaterialien aus dem Bad entfernt werden.

4. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei die zu dem Farbentwickler gegebene Menge an Nachfülllösung das 0,1- bis 1,2-fache der Menge an Entwickler beträgt, der vom Bad verdunstet ist.

5. Verfahren nach Anspruch 4, wobei die zu dem Farbentwicklerbad gegebene Menge an Nachfülllösung das 0,3- bis 0,9-fache der Menge an Entwickler beträgt, der verdunstet ist.

6. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei die zu der Farbentwicklungslösung gegebene Menge an organischen Entwicklerschutzmittel 0,005 mol/l bis 0,5 mol/l der Farbentwicklerlösung beträgt.

7. Verfahren nach Anspruch 6, wobei die zu der Farbentwicklerlösung gegebene Menge an organischen Entwicklerschutzmittel 0,03 mol/l bis 0,1 mol/l der Farbentwicklerlösung beträgt.

8. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei das organische Entwicklerschutzmittel aus der Gruppe substituierte Hydroxylamine, Hydroxamsäuren, Hydrazine, Hydrazidphenole, α -Hydroxyketone, α -Aminoketone, Saccharide, Monoamine, Diamine, Polyamine, quartäre Ammoniumsalze, Nitroxylradikale, Alkohole, Oxime, Diamidoverbindungen und kondensierte Ringamine ausgewählt ist.

9. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, wobei das organische Entwicklerschutzmittel

(i) mindestens eine Verbindung, die aus der Gruppe substituierter Hydroxylamine, Hydroxamsäuren, Hydra-

zine, Hydrazide, Phenole, α -Hydroxyketone, α -Aminoketone und Saccharide ausgewählt ist, und

(ii) mindestens eine Verbindung, die aus der Gruppe Monoamine, Diamine, Polyamine, quartäre Ammoniumsalze, Nitroxylradikale, Alkohole, Oxime, Diaminverbindungen und zu Ringen kondensierte Aminen ausgewählt ist, umfaßt.

10. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, wobei das organische Entwicklerschutzmittel

(i) eine Verbindung, die aus der Gruppe Hydroxylamine, Hydrazine und Hydrazide ausgewählt ist, und mindestens

(ii) eine Verbindung, die aus der Gruppe Monamine und kondensierten Ringaminverbindungen ausgewählt ist, umfaßt.

11. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, wobei das organische Entwicklerschutzmittel eine substituierte Hydroxylaminverbindung und eine Monoaminverbindung umfaßt.

12. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8, wobei eine Gegenstromanlage mit zwei Tanks verwendet wird und die Menge an Nachfülllösung 300 bis 1000 ml/m² des photographischen Silberhalogenidmaterials beträgt.

13. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei eine Gegenstromanlage mit drei Tanks verwendet wird und die Menge an Nachfülllösung 100 bis 500 ml/m² des photographischen Silberhalogenidmaterials beträgt.

14. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei eine Gegenstromanlage mit vier Tanks verwendet wird und die Menge an Entwickler 50 bis 300 ml/m² des photographischen Silberhalogenidmaterials beträgt.

15. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei der pH-Wert der Stabilisierungslösung 4 bis 9 beträgt.

16. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Zeit zur Stabilisierung 10 s bis 4 min beträgt.

17. Verfahren nach Anspruch 16, wobei die Zeit zur Stabilisierung 20 s bis 2 min beträgt.

18. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Temperatur im Stabilisierungsschritt 20 bis 50°C beträgt.

19. Verfahren nach Anspruch 18, wobei die Temperatur im Stabilisierungsschritt 25 bis 45°C beträgt.

Revendications

1. Procédé de traitement en continu de matériaux photographiques couleurs à l'halogénure d'argent, exposés suivant une image, en utilisant un processeur automatique qui possède un bain de développement de couleur et un bain de stabilisation, lequel procédé comprend les étapes consistant à :

a) utiliser un agent développeur chromogène qui contient un conservateur organique et

b) ajouter à l'agent développeur chromogène lors du traitement continu une solution de régénération destinée à la solution de stabilisant.

2. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la quantité de la solution de régénération ajoutée à l'agent développeur de couleur est comprise entre 1 et 50 fois en volume la quantité de l'agent développeur de couleur retiré du bain de développement de couleur lorsque les matériaux photographiques à l'halogénure d'argent sont retirés du bain.

3. Procédé selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la quantité de la solution de régénération ajoutée à l'agent développeur de couleur est comprise entre 3 et 20 fois en volume la quantité des composants retirés du bain de développement de couleur lorsque les matériaux photographiques à l'halogénure d'argent sont retirés du bain.

4. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la quantité de la solution de régénération ajoutée à l'agent développeur de couleur est comprise entre 0,1 et 1,2 fois la quantité de l'agent développeur qui s'est évaporée du bain.

5. Procédé selon la revendication 4, dans lequel la quantité de la solution de rémunération ajoutée au bain d'agent développeur de couleur est comprise entre 0,3 et 0,9 fois la quantité de l'agent développeur qui s'est évaporée.
- 5 6. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la quantité du conservateur organique ajoutée à la solution d'agent développeur de couleur est comprise entre 0,005 mol/l et 0,5 mol/l de la solution d'agent développeur de couleur.
- 10 7. Procédé selon la revendication 6, dans lequel la quantité du conservateur organique ajoutée à la solution d'agent développeur de couleur est comprise entre 0,03 mol/l et 0,1 mol/l de la solution d'agent développeur de couleur.
- 15 8. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le conservateur organique est choisi dans le groupe constitué des hydroxylamines substituées, des acides hydroxamiques, des hydrazines, des hydrazides, des phénols, des α -hydroxycétones, des α -aminocétones, des glucides, des monoamines, des diamines, des polyamines, des sels d'ammonium quaternaire, des radicaux nitroxy, des alcools, des oximes, des composés diamido et des amines à noyaux accolés.
- 20 9. Procédé selon la revendication 8, dans lequel le conservateur organique comprend :
- (i) au moins un composé choisi dans le groupe constitué des hydroxylamines substituées, des acides hydroxamiques, des hydrazines, des hydrazides, des phénols, des α -hydroxycétones, des α -aminocétones et des glucides, et
- (ii) au moins un composé choisi dans le groupe constitué des monoamines, des diamines, des polyamines, des sels d'ammonium quaternaire, des radicaux nitroxy, des alcools, des oximes, des composés diamino et des amines à noyaux accolés.
- 25 10. Procédé selon la revendication 8, dans lequel le conservateur organique comprend :
- (i) un composé choisi dans le groupe constitué des hydroxylamines, des hydrazines et des hydrazides et au moins
- 30 (ii) un composé choisi dans le groupe constitué des monoamines et des composés amines à noyaux accolés.
11. Procédé selon la revendication 8, dans lequel le conservateur organique comprend un composé hydroxylamine substituée et un composé monoamine.
- 35 12. Procédé selon la revendication 8, dans lequel on utilise un système de deux réservoirs à contre-courant et la quantité de la solution de régénération est comprise entre 300 ml et 1 000 ml/m² du matériau photographique à l'halogénure d'argent.
- 40 13. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel on utilise un système de trois réservoirs à contre-courant et la quantité de la solution de régénération est comprise entre 100 ml et 500 ml/m² du matériau photographique à l'halogénure d'argent.
- 45 14. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel on utilise un système de quatre réservoirs à contre-courant et la quantité de la solution de régénération est comprise entre 50 ml et 300 ml/m² du matériau photographique à l'halogénure d'argent.
15. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le pH de la solution de stabilisation est compris entre 4 et 9.
16. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la durée de stabilisation est comprise entre 10 s et 4 min.
- 50 17. Procédé selon la revendication 16, dans lequel la durée de stabilisation est comprise entre 20 s et 2 min.
18. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la température de l'étape de stabilisation est comprise entre 20°C et 50°C.
- 55 19. Procédé selon la revendication 18, dans lequel la température de l'étape de stabilisation est comprise entre 25°C et 45°C.