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How to operate an automatic burette

To fill a self-zeroing burette, follow the steps below:

- Fill the reservoir bottle with the desired solution, making sure the liquid fills at least 1/4 of the reservoir bottle.
- Place the burette back on to the reservoir bottle.
- Close the release valve stopcock.
- Hold both the burette and reservoir bottle neck with one hand, while covering the vent tube with the index finger or thumb (depending on the burette model) of the same hand.
- With the other hand begin squeezing the rubber blowing bulb to pump air inside the reservoir bottle.
- The solution should begin to climb up through the capillary tube and pour inside the graduated burette tube and begin to fill it.
- When the level of the solution in the burette tube is above the capillary exit, slowly remove the finger and release the pressure from the reservoir. This will cause the solution from the capillary to drain back in the reservoir bottle, which removes the excess liquid, leaving the level of the solution to match the first point of the graduated scale (which is 0).
- Drain the solution from the tube to remove the air from the outward tube and stopcock, then repeat the filling.

To drain the burette after use:

- Open the stopcock and drain the solution from the burette tube in a beaker, then, when the tube is empty, pour the solution back in the reservoir bottle. Some burettes have an intermediate stopcock which allows the contents of the burette directly into the reservoir bottle, without having to remove the burette.

Important tips:

- Do not pump air too fast as too much pressure inside the reservoir bottle may cause the burette to lift in the reservoir bottle neck and the bottle contents could splash.
- If during filling air bubbles get trapped in the burette, stop filling it and wait to see if they rise. If they remain stuck on the tube, drain the solution and fill it again. Although sometimes gentle tapping of the burette tube can break up the trapped air bubbles, this is not recommended, as there's a chance you might crack the glass tube. If air gets trapped in the outlet drain tube, open the stopcock and drain the solution until the air is removed.
- When filling the burette with more viscous or dense liquids, wear gloves and try to hold the burette tighter than usual, but not too tight as you might break it. Gently pump the liquid inside the burette and make sure you don't increase the pressure too much inside the reservoir.

Source: Scilabware, 30 July 2019



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