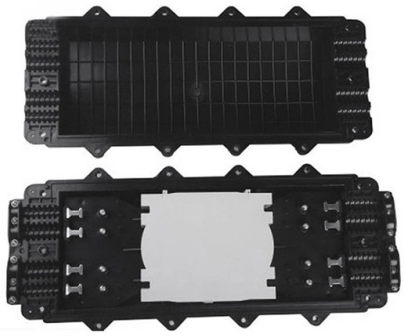
ZITHA TECH SPECIALTY CABLES (Pty) Ltd

What are the different types of telecommunications fiber optic cables



Overview

Optical fiber consists of a core and a cladding layer, selected for total internal reflection due to the difference in the refractive index between the two. In practical fibers, the cladding is usually coated with a layer of acrylate polymer or polyimide. This coating protects the fiber from damage but does not contribute to its optical waveguide properties.

Key Takeaways

Fiber optic cables are primarily classified as single-mode or multimode, with further distinctions based on construction, environment, and connector types.Primary Fiber Types

1. Single-Mode Fiber (SMF) Single-mode fiber has a very small core, typically 8–10 microns in diameter, allowing only one light mode to propagate. This minimizes signal dispersion, making it ideal for long-distance, high-speed transmission, such as telecom backbones and undersea cables. Common subtypes include OS1 (tight-buffered, indoor use) and OS2 (loose-tube, outdoor/long-haul use), supporting speeds up to 100 Gbps over tens of kilometers . 2. Multimode Fiber (MMF) Multimode fiber has a larger core, usually 50 or 62.5 microns, allowing multiple light modes to travel simultaneously. It is suitable for shorter distances, such as within buildings or data centers. Common grades include OM3 (supports 10 Gbps up to 300 meters) and OM4 (extends 10 Gbps reach to 400 meters), optimized for high-speed LANs and enterprise networks .

© 2026 ZITHA TECH SPECIALTY CABLES (Pty) Ltd - All rights reserved

Construction Types

1. Loose-Tube Fiber Designed for outdoor environments, loose-tube cables have fibers housed in protective tubes filled with gel or water-blocking material. This construction protects fibers from moisture, temperature changes, and mechanical stress, making them suitable for telecom backbones and long-haul outdoor installations . 2. Tight-Buffered Fiber Tight-buffered cables have fibers coated with a thick protective layer, making them easier to handle and terminate. They are commonly used indoors, in patch panels, and for short-distance connections . 3. Simplex and Duplex

• Simplex: Contains a single fiber strand, used for one-way transmission or bidirectional transceivers.

• Duplex: Contains two fibers, one for transmitting and one for receiving, standard for full-duplex communication .
Environmental and Jacket Types
• PVC Jacket: Cost-effective, indoor use, flexible but less fire-resistant.

• LSZH (Low Smoke Zero Halogen): Produces minimal smoke and no toxic gases, ideal for data centers and public buildings.

• Plenum-Rated: High fire resistance for air-handling spaces like ceilings or ducts .
Connector Types

Common fiber optic connectors include SC, LC, ST, and MTP/MPO, each with different designs for space, performance, and ease of installation. Polishing types like PC, UPC, and APC affect return loss and signal quality, with APC providing the highest performance .

Summary

Choosing the right fiber optic cable depends on distance, speed, environment, and application. Single-mode fibers are best for long-distance, high-bandwidth networks, while multimode fibers are cost-effective for shorter-range, high-speed connections. Construction, jacket type, and connectors further tailor the cable to specific indoor or outdoor requirements, ensuring reliable and future-proof telecommunications infrastructure .

© 2026 ZITHA TECH SPECIALTY CABLES (Pty) Ltd - All rights reserved

Article Content

Fiber-optic cable

OverviewDesignPerformanceCable typesColor codingHybrid cablesInnerductsSee also

Optical fiber consists of a core and a cladding layer, selected for total internal reflection due to the difference in the refractive index between the two. In practical fibers, the cladding is usually coated with a layer of acrylate polymer or polyimide. This coating protects the fiber from damage but does not contribute to its optical waveguide properties. Individual coated fibers (or fibers formed into ribbons or bundles) then ha

Related Video Reference

This video was associated with the source search result. Verify technical details against current product documentation and project requirements.

Contact Us

Continue your research online:

Website: https://zithatech.co.za
Technical inquiry: https://zithatech.co.za/contact.html

This document is for preliminary research. Verify specifications against current standards, product documentation and project requirements.

© 2026 ZITHA TECH SPECIALTY CABLES (Pty) Ltd - All rights reserved