

Custom research and development system consisting of three chambers (sample preparation, CVD process and evaporation), isolation valves, XY stages, magnetic linear rotary feedthroughs and sample transfer forks. (See fork closeup on facing page.)



Surface science research at Advanced Light Source, Berkeley, California

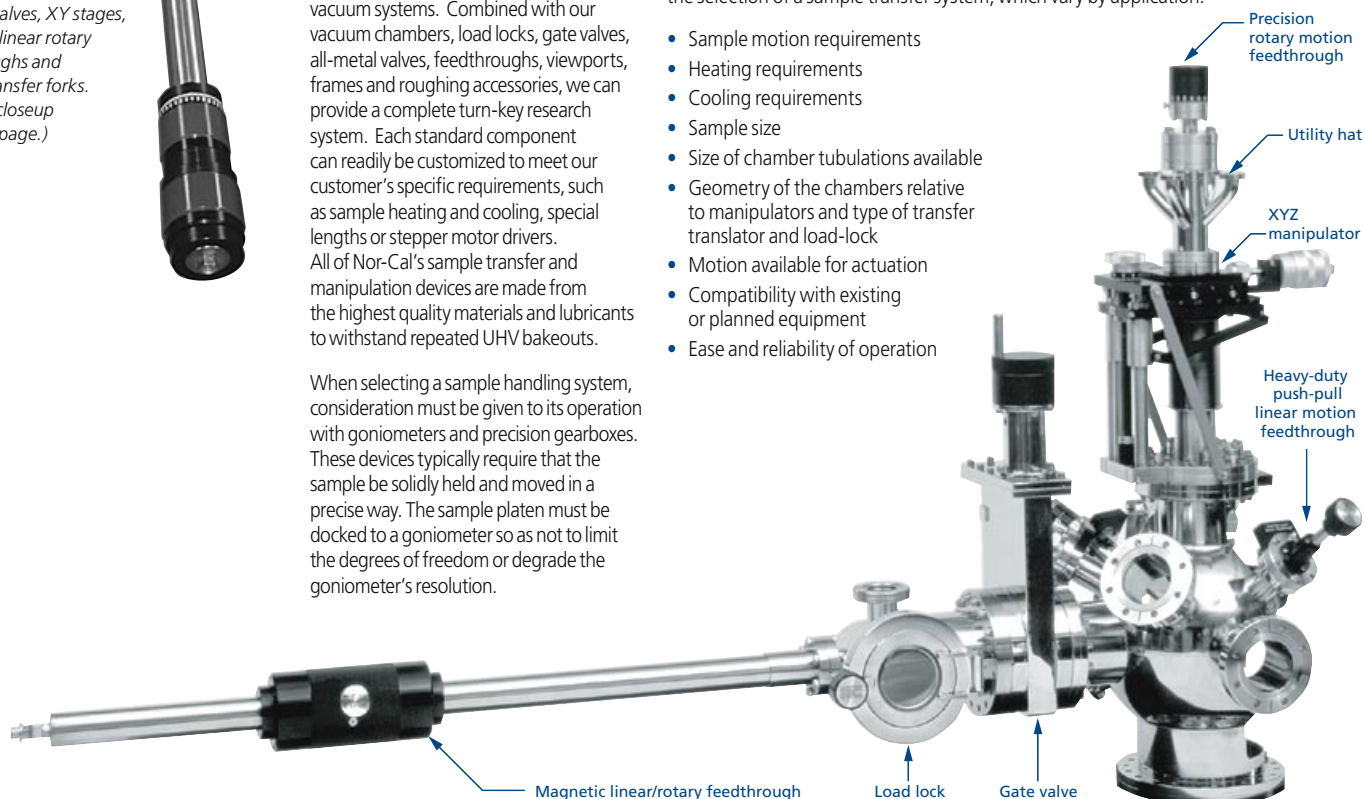
Nor-Cal Products offers the researcher complimentary devices for sample transfer and positioning in ultra-high vacuum systems. Combined with our vacuum chambers, load locks, gate valves, all-metal valves, feedthroughs, viewports, frames and roughing accessories, we can provide a complete turn-key research system. Each standard component can readily be customized to meet our customer's specific requirements, such as sample heating and cooling, special lengths or stepper motor drivers. All of Nor-Cal's sample transfer and manipulation devices are made from the highest quality materials and lubricants to withstand repeated UHV bakeouts.

When selecting a sample handling system, consideration must be given to its operation with goniometers and precision gearboxes. These devices typically require that the sample be solidly held and moved in a precise way. The sample platen must be docked to a goniometer so as not to limit the degrees of freedom or degrade the goniometer's resolution.

Selecting a Sample Transfer System

The following list contains some of the many factors that influence the selection of a sample transfer system, which vary by application.

- Sample motion requirements
- Heating requirements
- Cooling requirements
- Sample size
- Size of chamber tubulations available
- Geometry of the chambers relative to manipulators and type of transfer translator and load-lock
- Motion available for actuation
- Compatibility with existing or planned equipment
- Ease and reliability of operation



All dimensions are in inches unless otherwise noted

XYZ Manipulator

A manipulator is a 3-axis (X,Y,Z) positioning device. For most applications, the instrument hardware is mounted outside the vacuum chamber, with a welded bellows providing a flexible vacuum curtain. The X axis passes in front of the vertical, mechanical structure, or "backframe," with the Y axis moving to and away from the backframe. The Z axis is perpendicular to the X and Y axes and moves up and down directly against the vacuum pressure differential. The polar axis is the same as the Z axis.

The limit of X and Y travel is normally a circular pattern. Range is indicated as a vector sum. This means a $\pm .50$ inch range of X and Y allows the polar axis to be moved anywhere inside a 1.00 inch diameter circle. The sum of the X and Y vectors is limited to .50 inch. Square pattern XY stages are available as options on some models.

Z Translator

A translator is a single axis positioning device, utilizing a bellows as a vacuum seal. Referred to as a "Z only" stage, this axis is normally perpendicular to the chamber. This causes the Z axis to work directly against the force from the pressure differential.

XY Stage

The XY stage provides the X and Y axes only. No Z motion is available.

Polar Rotation

The polar axis is the same as the Z axis. Rotation about the polar axis is commonly achieved by mounting a rotary feedthrough at the center of the traveling flange of a manipulator or translator. This degree of freedom can also be achieved with a differentially pumped rotary seal.

Azimuthal Axis

The azimuthal axis is perpendicular to the polar axis. Sample azimuthal rotation refers to rotation of the sample about an axis normal to the sample face and perpendicular to the polar axis.

Tilt Motion

Tilt refers to changing the polar axis with respect to the X, Y and Z axes. This is usually done at the traveling flange of a 3-axis manipulator or other exterior mounting stage. Tilt range is often limited by the bellows ID and the OD of the probe passing through the bellows. The maximum angle practical is about $\pm 7^\circ$. When used in this manner, translation in X, Y and (slightly) Z will occur with adjustment of the tilt angle. Tilt stages are available in single or dual axis units.

Flip Motion

Flip motion is the changing of an axis normal to the sample face from parallel (or coaxial) to the polar axis to coaxial with the azimuthal axis. The range of this change of axis may be 90° , 180° or full 360° .

Sample Transfer and Heating

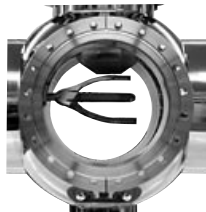
Sample transfer may reduce heating performance at high temperatures. The ideal transfer system for heating the sample to the highest temperatures should use thin sample plates made of appropriate material placed as close to the heater as possible. Thick, high mass, sample plates reduce thermal response and lower peak heating temperatures.

Sample Transfer and Cooling

Sample transfer may reduce cooling performance at low temperatures. The ideal transfer system for cooling the sample to the lowest temperatures should use thin, highly conductive, sample plates that contact the dewar with a large surface area. Thick, high mass, sample plates reduce thermal response and reduce peak cooling performance.

Transfer Components

- **Sample Platen** — the transferable plate that holds the sample
- **Sample Fork** — attaches to a transfer arm from the load-lock and holds the sample platen

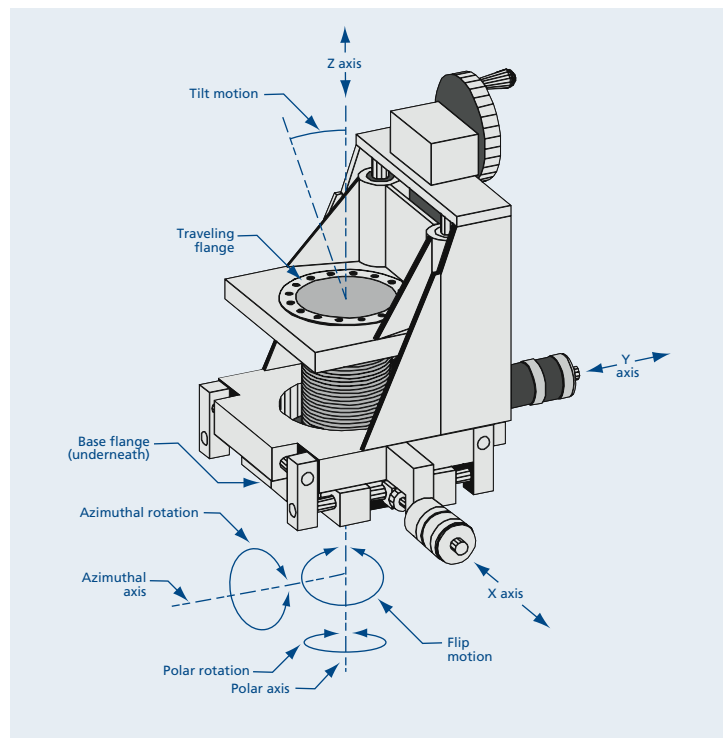


Sample transfer fork

- **Sample Dock** — attaches to a work station (manipulator) and holds the platen for processing or positioning the sample

Fork and Dock Configurations

- **Axial Fork** — a sample fork with the plane of the sample platen face orthogonal to the axis of the transfer arm on which the fork is mounted
- **Radial Fork** — a sample fork with the plane of the sample platen face parallel to the axis of the transfer arm on which the fork is mounted
- **Axial Dock** — a sample dock with the plane of the sample platen face orthogonal to the axis of the manipulator on which the dock is mounted
- **Radial Dock** — a sample dock with the plane of the sample platen face parallel to the axis of the manipulator to which the dock is mounted



Types of Motion Used For Transfer Actuation

- **Linear Motion** — linear movement of the sample along any axis
- **Rotary Motion** — rotary motion about any axis
- **Tilt Motion** — angular positioning movement of the horizontal or orthogonal axis. The weight of the sample, plate, fork and translator can cause deflection that misaligns the axis of transfer. A tilt stage can be used to re-align the axis to enable a transfer

Bolt Pattern Orientation

Our components are manufactured with the primary axis straddling adjacent bolt holes on the mounting flange (American standard). Most components can be furnished with the axis passing through a bolt hole axis (European standard) on request. Some equipment is field adjustable.

