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Standard Test Methods for Conducting Creep, Creep-Rupture, and Stress-Rupture Tests of Metallic Materials¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E139; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense.

1. Scope*

1.1 These test methods cover the determination of the amount of deformation as a function of time (creep test) and the measurement of the time for fracture to occur when sufficient force is present (rupture test) for materials when under constant tensile forces at constant temperature. It also includes the essential requirements for testing equipment. For information of assistance in determining the desirable number and duration of tests, reference should be made to the product specification.

1.2 These test methods list the information which should be included in reports of tests. The intention is to ensure that all useful and readily available information is transmitted to interested parties. Reports receive special attention for the following reasons: (1) results from different, recognized procedures vary significantly; therefore, identification of methods used is important; (2) later studies to establish important variables are often hampered by the lack of detailed information in published reports; (3) the nature of prolonged tests often makes retest impractical, and at the same time makes it difficult to remain within the recommended variations of some controlled variables. A detailed report permits transmittal of test results without implying a degree of control which was not achieved.

1.3 Tests on notched specimens are not included. These tests are addressed in Practice E292.

1.4 Tests under conditions of short times are not included. These test methods are addressed in Test Methods E21.

1.5 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.6 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the*

responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.

1.7 This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

- E4 Practices for Force Verification of Testing Machines
- E6 Terminology Relating to Methods of Mechanical Testing
- E8/E8M Test Methods for Tension Testing of Metallic Materials
- E21 Test Methods for Elevated Temperature Tension Tests of Metallic Materials
- E29 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications
- E74 Practices for Calibration and Verification of Force-Measuring Instruments
- E83 Practice for Verification and Classification of Extensometer Systems
- E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods
- E220 Test Method for Calibration of Thermocouples By Comparison Techniques
- E292 Test Methods for Conducting Time-for-Rupture Notch Tension Tests of Materials
- E633 Guide for Use of Thermocouples in Creep and Stress-Rupture Testing to 1800°F (1000°C) in Air
- E1012 Practice for Verification of Testing Frame and Specimen Alignment Under Tensile and Compressive Axial Force Application

¹ These test methods are under the jurisdiction of the ASTM Committee E28 on Mechanical Testing

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—The definitions of terms relating to creep testing, which appear in Section E of Terminology E6 shall apply to the terms used in this practice. For the purpose of this practice only, some of the more general terms are used with the restricted meanings given below.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *axial strain*—the average of the strain measured on opposite sides and equally distant from the specimen axis.

3.2.2 *bending strain*—the difference between the strain at the surface of the specimen and the axial strain. In general it varies from point to point around and along the reduced section of the specimen.

3.2.2.1 *maximum bending strain*—measured at a position along the length of the reduced section of a straight unnotched specimen.

3.2.3 *creep*—the time-dependent strain that occurs after the application of a force which is thereafter maintained constant.

3.2.4 *creep-rupture test*—a test in which progressive specimen deformation and the time for rupture are measured. In general, deformation is much larger than that developed during a creep test.

3.2.5 *creep test*—a test that has the objective of measuring creep and creep rates occurring at stresses usually well below those which would result in fracture during the time of testing. Since the maximum deformation is only a few percent, a sensitive extensometer is required.

3.2.6 *gage length*—the original distance between gage marks made on the specimen for determining elongation after fracture.

3.2.7 *length of the reduced section*—the distance between tangent points of the fillets which bound the reduced section.

3.2.7.1 The adjusted length of the reduced section is greater than the length of the reduced section by an amount calculated to compensate for strain in the fillet region (see 8.2.3).

3.2.8 *plastic strain during force application*—the portion of the strain during force application determined as the offset from the linear portion to the end of a stress-strain curve made during force application. The offset construction is shown in Test Methods E8/E8M.

3.2.9 *reduced section, of the specimen*—the central portion of the length having a cross section smaller than the ends which are gripped. The cross section is uniform within tolerances prescribed in 6.6.

3.2.10 *strain during force application*—the change in strain during the time interval from the start of force to the instant of full-force application.

3.2.11 *stress-rupture test*—a test in which time for rupture is measured, no deformation measurements being made during the test.

3.2.12 *total plastic strain, at a specified time*—equal to the sum of plastic strain during force application plus creep.

3.2.13 *total strain, at a specified time*—equal to the sum of the strain during force application plus creep.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Rupture tests, properly interpreted, provide a measure of the ultimate load-carrying ability of a material as a function of time. Creep tests measure the load-carrying ability for limited deformations. The two tests complement each other in defining the load-carrying ability of a material. In selecting material and designing parts for service at elevated temperatures, the type of test data used will depend on the criterion of load-carrying ability that better defines the service usefulness of the material.

5. Apparatus

5.1 *Testing Machine:* The accuracy of the testing machine shall be within the permissible variation specified in Practices E4.

5.1.1 Exercise precaution to ensure that the force on the specimens is applied as axially as possible. Perfect axial alignment is difficult to obtain, especially when the pull rods and extensometer rods pass through packing at the ends of the furnace. However, the machine and grips should be capable of applying force to a precisely made specimen so that the maximum bending strain does not exceed 10 % of the axial strain, when the calculations are based on strain readings taken at the lowest force for which the machine is being qualified.

NOTE 1—This requirement is intended to limit the maximum contribution of the testing apparatus to the bending which occurs during a test. It is recognized that even with qualified apparatus, different tests may have quite different percent bending strains due to chance orientation of a loosely fitted specimen, lack of symmetry of that particular specimen, lateral force from furnace packing, and thermocouple wire, etc.

5.1.1.1 In testing of low ductility material, even a bending strain of 10 % may result in lower strength than would be obtained with improved axiality. In these cases, measurements of bending strain on the specimen to be tested may be specifically requested and the permissible magnitude limited to a smaller value.

5.1.1.2 The testing apparatus may be qualified by measurements of axiality made at room temperature. When one is making an evaluation of equipment, the specimen form should be the same as that used during the elevated-temperature tests. The evaluation specimen concentricity shall be at least as good as called out in the specimen drawing. Only elastic strains should occur throughout the reduced section. This requirement may necessitate use of a material different from that used during the elevated-temperature test.

5.1.1.3 Test Method E1012, or an equivalent test method (1),³ shall be used for the measurement and calculation of bending strain for round, rectangular, and thin strip specimens.

5.1.1.4 Axiality measurements should be made at room temperature during the initial setup of the assembled test machine, (including the pull rods, and grips) before use for testing. Gripping devices and pull rods may oxidize, warp, and creep with repeated use at elevated temperatures. Increased bending stresses may result. Therefore, grips and pull rods should be periodically retested for axiality and reworked when necessary.

³ The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this standard.

5.1.2 The testing machine shall incorporate means of taking up the extension of the specimen so that the applied force will be maintained within the limits specified in 5.1. The extension of the specimen shall not allow the force application system to introduce eccentricity of force application in excess of the limits specified in 5.1.1. The take-up mechanism shall avoid introducing shock forces, overloading due to friction or inertia in the force application system, or apply torque to the specimen.

5.1.3 The testing machine shall be erected to secure reasonable freedom from vibration and shock due to external causes. Precautions shall be made to minimize the transmission of shock to neighboring test machines and specimens when a specimen fractures. Vibration and shock effects may be seen as noise in the curve when plotting the creep versus time. When such effects are visible in the plotted data, vibration and shock should not introduce apparent noise to the creep data in excess of 7.5 % total creep or total plastic strain. Such external vibrations shall not result in applied force errors in excess of +1 % of the specified test force.

5.1.4 For high-temperature testing of materials which are readily attacked by their environment (such as oxidation of metal in air), the specimen may be enclosed in a capsule so that it can be tested in a vacuum or inert-gas atmosphere. When such equipment is used, the necessary corrections to obtain true specimen applied forces shall be made. For instance, compensation shall be made for differences in pressures inside and outside of the capsule and for any force application variation due to sealing-ring friction, bellows or other features.

5.2 *Heating Apparatus:* The apparatus for and method of heating the specimens shall provide the temperature control necessary to satisfy the requirements specified in 8.4.4 without manual adjustments more frequent than once in each 24-h period after force application. Automatic temperature control is preferred.

5.2.1 Heating shall be by an electric resistance or radiation furnace with the specimen in air at atmospheric pressure unless other media are specifically agreed upon in advance.

NOTE 2—The media in which the specimens are tested may have a considerable effect on the results of tests. This is particularly true when the properties are influenced by oxidation or corrosion during the test, although other effects can also influence test results.

5.3 *Temperature-Measuring Apparatus (2):*

5.3.1 The method of temperature measurement must be sufficiently sensitive and reliable to ensure that the temperature of the specimen is within the limits specified in 8.4.4.

5.3.2 Temperature shall be measured with calibrated thermocouples in conjunction with calibrated thermocouple measurement instrumentation. Other calibrated methods of temperature measurement may be used if they are well characterized with respect to standard thermocouple measurement methods.

NOTE 3—Such measurements are subject to two types of error. Thermocouple calibration and instrument measuring errors initially introduce uncertainty as to the exact temperature. Secondly both thermocouples and measuring instruments may be subject to variation with time. Common errors encountered in the use of thermocouples to measure temperatures include, calibration error, drift in calibration due to contami-

nation or deterioration with use, lead-wire error, error arising from method of attachment to the specimen, direct radiation of heat to the bead, heat-conduction along thermocouple wires, etc.

5.3.3 Temperature measurements shall be made with calibrated thermocouples. Representative thermocouples should be calibrated from each lot of wires used for making base-metal thermocouples. Except for relatively low temperatures of exposure, base-metal thermocouples are subject to error upon reuse unless the depth of immersion and temperature gradients of the initial exposure are reproduced. Consequently base-metal thermocouples should be calibrated by the use of representative thermocouples and actual thermocouples used to measure specimen temperatures shall not be calibrated. Base-metal thermocouples also should not be re-used without clipping back to remove wire exposed to the hot zone. Any reuse of base-metal thermocouples after relatively low-temperature use without this precaution should be accompanied by recalibration data demonstrating that calibration was not unduly affected by the conditions of exposure.

5.3.3.1 Noble-metal thermocouples are also subject to errors due to contamination, etc., and should be annealed periodically and checked for calibration. Care should be exercised to keep the thermocouples clean prior to exposure and during use at elevated temperatures.

5.3.3.2 Measurement of the drift in calibration of thermocouples during use is difficult. When drift is a problem during tests, a method should be devised to check the readings of the thermocouples on the specimens during the test. For reliable calibration of thermocouples after use, the temperature gradient of the testing furnace must be reproduced during the recalibration.

5.3.4 Temperature-measuring, controlling and recording instruments should be calibrated periodically against a secondary standard, such as a precision potentiometer. Lead-wire error should be checked with the lead wires in place as they normally are used.

5.4 *Extensometer System:* The sensitivity and accuracy of the strain-measuring equipment should be suitable to define the creep characteristics with the precision required for the application of the data. The Practice E83 extensometer classification should be made part of the report of test results. Suitability of the sensor type and characteristics for creep measurement should be determined before implementation of the system. Suitability of individual sensors should be periodically evaluated or evaluated upon occurrence of significant noise in the creep curve. Acceptable noise levels should not exceed 5 % of the total calibrated range. Laboratories employing multiple sensors and electrical averaging should ensure that the additive effects of each sensor's noise do not result in an unacceptable average noise level. Peak to peak noise on the raw creep data should not exceed 7.5 % of the total creep or total plastic strain for the test. Noise levels exceeding these values must be documented in the test report.

5.4.1 Nonaxiality of force application is usually sufficient to cause significant errors at small strains when strain is measured on only one side of the specimen (3). Therefore, the extensometer shall be attached to and indicate strain on opposite sides of the specimen. The reported strain shall be the average of the

strains on the two sides, either a mechanical or electrical average internal to the instrument or a numerical average of two separate readings.

5.4.2 Whenever possible the extensometer should be attached to the specimen, not to any load carrying parts joined to the specimen, because the intervening joints and parts introduce significant extensions which, are not accurately separable from the extension in the specimen alone.

5.4.3 To avoid the inaccuracy introduced by strain in the fillets and shoulders, the extensometer should be attached to the reduced portion of the specimen.

5.4.3.1 It is sometimes necessary to attach the extensometer to the specimen shoulders. For example, when materials with low ductility are tested, failure tends to occur at the extensometer attachments unless these are located on the specimen shoulders.

5.4.3.2 When making a creep-rupture test of a ductile material an extensometer attached to the reduced section of a specimen tends to loosen as the cross-sectional area decreases during the test. In this case the extensometer may be attached to the specimen shoulders or to small ribs or grooves machined at the ends of the reduced section of the specimen for that purpose (4).

5.4.4 When it is necessary to use miniature specimens, the extensometer may be attached to the specimen holders. The observed values of extension should be adjusted as described in 8.6.3 and 9.2.4. Even with this adjustment the strain values are of inferior accuracy and the reported values should be labeled “approximate.” The method of measurement should be described in the report.

5.5 *Room Temperature Control:* The temperature in the room should be sufficiently constant so the specimen temperature variations do not exceed the limits stated in 8.4.4.

5.5.1 Extensometer readings should be taken only when the room temperature is within $\pm 3^{\circ}\text{C}$ ($\pm 5^{\circ}\text{F}$) of the room temperature at the time of force application, unless a correction is applied to the extensometer reading. The extensometer correction equation or chart should have specimen temperature as well as room temperature as a variable. The correction may be omitted if it has been established that the extensometer reading is not changed by variations in room temperature. In evaluating the effect of such variations, the electronic instrumentation should also be calibrated at various ambient temperatures.

5.6 *Timing Apparatus*—For rupture testing machines, provide suitable means for measuring the elapsed time between complete application of the force and the time at which fracture of the specimen occurs, to within 1 % of the elapsed time.

6. Test Specimen and Sample

6.1 The size and shape of test specimens shall be based primarily on the requirements necessary to obtain representative samples of the material being investigated or as required by specification.

6.2 For rolled, extruded or other directionally processed materials, unless otherwise specified, test specimens shall be oriented such that the axis of the specimen is parallel to the direction of fabrication, and located as follows:

6.2.1 At the center for products 38 mm (1½ in.) or less in thickness, diameter, or distance between flats, or

6.2.2 Midway from the center to the surface for products over 38 mm (1½ in.) in thickness, diameter, or distance between flats.

6.3 Test specimens of the type, size, and shape described in Test Methods E8/E8M are generally suitable for tests at elevated temperature with the following modifications: (1) tighter dimensional tolerances are recommended in 6.6; (2) for creep tests, larger ratios of length to diameter (or width) of reduced section may be desirable to increase the accuracy of strain measurement; and (3) for coarse-threaded specimens, made from material with little ductility, the size of thread should be at least ¾ the diameter of the reduced section. According to 6.1, rectangular specimens will be used for sheet and strip. Otherwise, the specimen should have a reduced section of circular cross section. The largest diameter or greatest width specimen consistent with 6.1 should be used except that these dimensions need not be greater than 12.5 mm (0.5 in.).

NOTE 4—Specimen size in itself has little effect on creep and rupture properties provided the material is sound and is not subject to appreciable surface corrosion or orientation effects. A small number of grains in the specimen cross section, or preferred orientation of grains due to fabrication conditions, can have a pronounced effect on the test results. When corrosion oxidation occurs, the results may be a function of specimen size. Likewise, surface preparation of specimens, if affecting results, becomes more important as the specimen size is reduced.

6.4 Specimens of circular cross section should have threaded, shouldered, or other suitable ends for gripping that will meet the requirements of 5.1.1.

NOTE 5—Satisfactory axial alignment may be obtained with precisely machined threaded ends. But at temperatures where oxidation and creep are readily apparent, precisely fitted threads are difficult to maintain and to separate after test. Practical considerations require the use of relatively loose-fitting threads. Other gripping methods have been successfully used (5, 6, 7).

6.5 For rectangular specimens some modifications of the standard specimens described in Test Methods E8/E8M are usually necessary to permit application of the force to the specimen in the furnace with the axiality specified in 5.1.1. If the material available is sufficient, the use of elongated shoulder ends to permit gripping outside the furnace is the easiest method. When the length of the specimen is necessarily restricted, several methods of gripping may be used as follows:

6.5.1 A device that applies the force through a cylindrical pin in each of the enlarged ends of the specimen. The pin holes should be accurately centered on extensions of the centerline of the gage section. The good axiality of force application using a grip of this type has been demonstrated (6, 7).

6.5.2 High-temperature sheet grips similar to those illustrated in Test Methods E8/E8M and described as self-adjusting grips have proved satisfactory for testing sheet materials that cannot be tested satisfactorily in the usual type of wedge grips.

6.5.3 Extension tabs may be welded or brazed to the specimen shoulders and extended to grips outside the furnace. When these are used, care must be exercised to maintain coaxiality of the centerlines of the extensions and the gage length. Any brazing or welding should be done in a jig or

fixture to maintain accurate alignment of the parts. Any machining should be done after brazing or welding.

6.5.4 Grips that conform to and apply force against the fillets at the ends of the reduced section.

6.6 The diameter (or width) at the ends of the reduced section of the specimen shall not be less than the diameter (or width) at the center of the reduced section. It may be desirable to have the diameter (or width) of the reduced section of the specimen slightly smaller at the center than at the ends. The diameter (or width) at the ends of the reduced section shall not be greater than 100.5 % of the diameter (or width) at the center of the reduced section. When specimens of this form are used to test low ductility materials, failure may regularly occur at the fillets. In these cases, the center of the reduced section may be made smaller by a gradual taper from the ends and the exception to the requirements above noted in the report. Specimen surfaces shall be smooth and free from undercuts and scratches. Special care shall be exercised to minimize disturbance of surface layers by cold work, which produces high residual stresses plastic deformation, or other undesired effects. The axis of the reduced section shall be straight within $\pm 0.5\%$ of the diameter. Threads of the specimen shall be concentric with this axis within the same tolerance. Other means of gripping shall have comparable tolerances.

6.7 For cast-to-size specimens it may not be possible to adhere to the diameter, straightness, and concentricity limitations of 6.6, but every effort should be made to approach these as closely as possible.

7. Calibration and Standardization

7.1 The calibration of load measuring systems, extensometers, thermocouples (2), potentiometers, and micrometers shall be traceable to national standards, where systems of traceability exist. Applicable ASTM standards and guidance are listed here:

Load-measuring system	Practices E4 and E74
Extensometer	Practice E83
Thermocouples ^A	Method E220
Potentiometers	Method E220 and STP 470B (2)

^A Method E220 melting point methods are also recommended for thermocouple calibration.

7.1.1 Axiality of the force application apparatus shall be measured as described in 5.1.1 and documented as described in Practice E1012.

7.2 Calibrations and verifications shall be as frequent as is necessary to ensure that the errors for each test are less than the permissible indicated variations listed in these test methods. The maximum period between calibrations and verifications shall be:

Force-measuring system	1 year
Extensometers	1 year ^A
Thermocouples	each lot run
Precision Potentiometers (dry cell type)	1 month
Micrometers and calipers	6 months
Recording systems	6 months
Temperature measuring equipment/system	3 months (see 7.4)
Weights	every five years (see 7.5)
Dial Indicators (used to measure creep)	1 month (see 7.6)

^A Extensometers shall be verified for freedom of movement prior to each test. Exceptions to this list shall be instruments in use when the test exceeds calibration period.

NOTE 6—In cases where the test duration exceeds the maximum calibration frequency, it is acceptable to perform the calibration immediately following the conclusion of the test.

7.3 For verification of creep-rupture testing machines, non-machined blanks of material with predetermined rupture properties are available from ASTM International Headquarters at a nominal cost.

7.4 As an alternative to calibration immediately following the conclusion of the test exceeding 3 months, multiple temperature measuring equipment/system can be used so that calibration of each equipment/system can staggered to eliminate or minimize the calibration-overdue periods.

7.5 The metal weights used to apply the test force shall be certified every five years (if not painted/plated, or calibrated prior to each test) to be within a limit of error of 0.5 %. Painted/plated weights shall be verified when paint/plating shows wear or damage.

7.6 Dial indicators used in tests exceeding 1 month should be exercised at least 3 times to prevent becoming stuck. Difference in readings before and after the exercise should be recorded.

8. Procedure

8.1 *Measurement of Cross-Sectional Area*—Determine the minimum cross-sectional area of the reduced section of the specimen as specified in Measurement of Dimensions of Test Specimens in Test Methods E8/E8M. In addition, measure the largest diameter (or width) in the reduced section and compare with the minimum value to determine whether the requirements of 6.6 are satisfied.

8.2 *Measurement of Original Length:*

8.2.1 Unless otherwise specified, base all values for elongation on a gage length equal to four diameters (4D) in the case of round specimens and four times the width in the case of rectangular specimens, the gage length being punched or scribed on the reduced section of the specimen.

NOTE 7—Elongation values of specimens with rectangular cross sections cannot be compared unless all dimensions including the thickness are equal. Therefore, an elongation specification should include the specimen cross-sectional dimensions as well as the gage length. Using a gage length equal to 4.5 times the square root of the cross-sectional area compensates somewhat for variations in specimen thickness but even this does not result in the same value of elongation when specimens of the same material are machined to different thicknesses and tested (6, 7).

8.2.2 When the length-to-diameter ratio of the reduced section is greater than standard, the gage length should be approximately one diameter less than the length of the reduced section.



NOTE 8—Recognition must be given to the wide use of total elongation of fractured rupture specimens in judging materials. Percentage elongation is very dependent on the gage length over which it is measured. Adherence to the customary gage length of four times the specimen diameter is, therefore, very desirable. Recognition must be given, however, to the approved use of longer or shorter gage length to specimen diameter ratios in rupture testing and the possible prohibition to using gage marks to define the uniform gage length for elongation measurement. Therefore, reporting of elongation for longer gage lengths should be acceptable, provided the gage length is clearly indicated. For most ductile metals a standard four-diameter gage length centered on a fracture occurring in a longer than standard reduced section will give a higher elongation than the standard test. For this reason the use of several, congruent, standard gage lengths to cover a long reduced section is not recommended. The majority of the stretching occurs near the fracture site. Since stretching is not uniform over the length of the reduced section, the percent elongation depends on the gage length.

8.2.3 When testing metals of limited ductility, gage marks punched or scribed on the reduced section may be undesirable because fracture may occur at the stress concentrations so caused. Then, place gage marks on the shoulders or measure the overall length of the specimen. Also measure the adjusted length of the reduced section to the nearest 0.2 mm (0.01 in.) as described in 8.2.4. If a gage length, other than that specified in 8.2.1 is employed to measure elongation, describe the gage length in the report. In the case of acceptance tests, any deviation from 8.2.1 must be agreed upon before testing.

8.2.4 When the extensometer is to be attached to the specimen shoulders, measure the adjusted length of the reduced section between points on the two fillets where the diameter (or width) is 1.05 times the diameter (or width) of the reduced section. This dimension is used as the divisor for converting the observed extension to strain in the reduced section (see 9.2.3 and 9.3.1).

8.3 *Cleaning Specimen*—Unless otherwise requested, wash carefully the reduced section and those parts of the specimen which contact the grips in clean alcohol, acetone, or other suitable solvent that will not affect the metal being tested. Specimens may be cleaned at the machining facility prior to receiving at the test lab. In all cases, specimens should be handled carefully to avoid imparting oil from skin to the specimen. Cast to size specimens typically do not need cleaning.

8.4 *Temperature Control:*

8.4.1 Form the thermocouple bead in accordance with Guide E633.

8.4.2 Guide E633 provides guidance on thermocouple attachment. In attaching thermocouples to a specimen, the junction shall be kept in intimate contact with the specimen and shielded from radiation. Shielding may be omitted if, for a particular furnace and test temperature, the difference in indicated temperature from an unshielded bead and a bead inserted in a hole in the specimen has been shown to be less than one half the variation listed in 8.4.4. The bead should be as small as possible and there shall be no shorting of the circuit (such as could occur from twisting the thermocouple wires behind the bead or from a bare attachment wire touching both bare thermocouple wires). Ceramic insulators should be used on the thermocouples in the hot zone for test temperatures high enough to damage standard thermal insulation on the thermo-

couple wires. The remaining portions of the wires shall be thermally shielded and electrically insulated by a suitable covering. If some other electrical insulation material is used in the hot zone, it should be carefully checked to determine whether the electrical insulating properties are maintained with higher temperatures.

8.4.3 When the length of the reduced section is less than 50 mm (2 in.) attach at least two thermocouples to the specimen, one near each end of the reduced section. For reduced sections 50 mm or greater, add a third thermocouple near the center.

8.4.4 Before the force is applied and for the duration of the test do not permit the difference between the indicated temperature and the nominal test temperature to exceed the following limits:

Up to and including 1000°C (1800°F)	2°C (±3°F)
Above 1000°C (1800°F)	3°C (±5°F)

8.4.5 The term “indicated temperature” means the temperature that is indicated by the temperature measuring device using good quality pyrometric practice.

NOTE 9—It is recognized that true temperature may vary more than the indicated temperature. The permissible indicated temperature variations in 8.4.4 are not to be construed as minimizing the importance of good pyrometric practice and precise temperature control. All laboratories should keep both indicated and true temperature variations as small as practicable. However, should temperatures vary outside the given limits, time and temperature of the variation shall be recorded and good engineering judgment taken to assure the variations did not affect testing of the material and that the results of the test are valid. This should be clearly documented in the test report. It is well recognized, in view of the extreme dependency of strength of materials on temperature, that close temperature control is necessary. The limits prescribed represent ranges that are common practice.

8.4.6 Temperature overshoots during heating should not exceed the limits above. The heating characteristics of the furnace and the temperature control system should be studied to determine the power input, temperature set point, proportioning control adjustment, and control-thermocouple placement necessary to limit transient temperature overshoots. It may be desirable to stabilize the furnace at a temperature from 5 to 20 °C below the nominal test temperature before making the final adjustments. Report any temperature overshoot with details of magnitude and duration.

8.4.7 The time of holding at temperature prior to the start of the test should be governed by the time necessary to ensure that the specimen has reached equilibrium and that the temperature can be maintained within the limits specified in 8.4.4. Unless otherwise specified, this time should not be less than 1 h. Record the time to attain test temperature and the time at temperature before force application.

8.4.8 Any disturbance causing the temperature of the specimen to be outside the limits specified in 8.4.4 should require an investigation that may necessitate using good engineering judgment regarding the impact on the creep properties. Temperature deviations may be cause for rejection of the test and require retesting. Allowing the temperature to fall below the nominal temperature reduces creep rate and prolongs rupture time, both characteristics being very sensitive to test temperature. Low temperatures usually do not damage the material as can over temperature, which may considerably accelerate creep. Consequently under temperature should be cause for