



Designation: D3053 – 23

# Standard Terminology Relating to Carbon Black<sup>1</sup>

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## 1. Scope

1.1 This terminology covers a compilation of definitions of technical terms used in the carbon black and rubber industries. Terms that are generally understood or adequately defined in other readily available sources are not included.

1.2 *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:<sup>2</sup>

- D1508 Test Method for Carbon Black, Pelleted Fines and Attrition
- D1509 Test Methods for Carbon Black—Heating Loss
- D1510 Test Method for Carbon Black—Iodine Adsorption Number
- D1511 Test Method for Carbon Black—Pellet Size Distribution
- D1513 Test Method for Carbon Black, Pelleted—Pour Density
- D1514 Test Method for Carbon Black—Sieve Residue
- D1566 Terminology Relating to Rubber
- D1618 Test Method for Carbon Black Extractables—Transmittance of Toluene Extract
- D1765 Classification System for Carbon Blacks Used in Rubber Products
- D1799 Practice for Carbon Black—Sampling Packaged Shipments
- D1900 Practice for Carbon Black—Sampling Bulk Shipments

<sup>1</sup> This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D24 on Carbon Black and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D24.41 on Carbon Black Nomenclature and Terminology.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

- D1937 Test Method for Carbon Black, Pelleted—Mass Strength
  - D2414 Test Method for Carbon Black—Oil Absorption Number (OAN)
  - D2663 Test Methods for Carbon Black—Dispersion in Rubber
  - D3265 Test Method for Carbon Black—Tint Strength
  - D3493 Test Method for Carbon Black—Oil Absorption Number of Compressed Sample (COAN)
  - D3849 Test Method for Carbon Black—Morphological Characterization of Carbon Black Using Electron Microscopy
  - D5230 Test Method for Carbon Black—Automated Individual Pellet Hardness
  - D6556 Test Method for Carbon Black—Total and External Surface Area by Nitrogen Adsorption
  - D6602 Practice for Sampling and Testing of Possible Carbon Black Fugitive Emissions or Other Environmental Particulate, or Both
  - D7854 Test Method for Carbon Black-Void Volume at Mean Pressure
  - D8178 Terminology Relating to Recovered Carbon Black (rCB)
- ### 2.2 ISO Standards:<sup>3</sup>
- ISO 8887 Technical product documentation — Design for manufacturing, assembling, disassembling and end-of-life processing — Part 1: General concepts and requirements
  - ISO 14044 Environmental management – Life cycle assessment – Requirements and guidelines

## 3. Terminology

### 3.1 Definitions:

**aciniform**, *adj*—shaped like a cluster of grapes.

**DISCUSSION**—The spheroidal primary particles of carbon black are fused into aggregates of colloidal dimension forming an aciniform morphology.

**carbon black**, *n*—an engineered material, primarily composed of elemental carbon, obtained from the partial combustion or thermal decomposition of hydrocarbons, existing as aggregates of aciniform morphology which are composed of

<sup>3</sup> Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), ISO Central Secretariat, Chemin de Blandonnet 8, CP 401, 1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland, <https://www.iso.org>.

spheroidal primary particles which exhibit uniformity of primary particle sizes within a given aggregate<sup>4</sup> and turbostratic layering within the primary particles.

**DISCUSSION**—Carbon black exhibits a hierarchy of morphological features: particles (that is, primary particles), aggregates, and agglomerates. While the fundamental building block of carbon black is the primary particle, they almost never exist in isolation, but are strongly fused by covalent bonds into aggregates.<sup>4</sup> The primary particles are conceptual in nature, in that once the aggregate is formed the primary particle no longer exists, they are no longer discrete and have no physical boundaries amongst them. Once produced, individual aggregates join together by van der Waals forces to form agglomerates. Agglomerates do not break down into smaller components unless adequate force is applied (for example, shear force). Primary particle and aggregate sizes are distributional properties and vary depending on the carbon black grade. Transmission electron micrographs shown in Annex A1 of Practice **D6602** demonstrate that while primary particle and aggregate sizes vary greatly within a given grade of carbon black, the primary particle size is essentially uniform within an individual aggregate.<sup>4</sup>

**carbon black, carcass grade, *n***—a type of furnace carbon black having an average nitrogen surface area in the range of 21 to 69 m<sup>2</sup>/g.

**DISCUSSION**—Carcass-grade carbon blacks are produced by the oil furnace process. The use of these grades in the rubber industry is not limited to the carcass portion of the tire. These grades are designated with an “N” first character and a second character of “4, 5, 6, or 7” in Table 1 of Classification **D1765**. See Terminology **D1566** for the definition of carcass.

**carbon black, furnace, *n***—a type of carbon black produced by the decomposition reaction of hydrocarbons when injected into a high-velocity stream of combustion gases under controlled conditions.

**carbon black, hard, *n***—See **carbon black, tread grade**, the preferred term.

**DISCUSSION**—All carbon blacks provide some level of reinforcement when mixed in rubber. The amount of reinforcement is a function of the carbon black grade and amount used. See Terminology **D1566** for the definition of reinforcement.

**carbon black, semi-reinforcing, *n***—See **carbon black, carcass grade**, the preferred term.

**DISCUSSION**—All carbon blacks provide some level of reinforcement when mixed in rubber. The amount of reinforcement is a function of the carbon black grade and amount used. See Terminology **D1566** for the definition of reinforcement.

**carbon black, soft, *n***—See **carbon black, carcass grade**, the preferred term.

**DISCUSSION**—All carbon blacks provide some level of reinforcement when mixed in rubber. The amount of reinforcement is a function of the carbon black grade and amount used. See Terminology **D1566** for the definition of reinforcement.

**carbon black, surface activity, *n***—the inherent ability of the carbon black surface to interact physically or chemically, or both, with rubber or other molecules.

**carbon black, target value, *n***—a consensus value for selected primary properties on which producers center their manufacturing process and users center their specification.

**DISCUSSION**—Target values for carbon black properties are shown in Classification **D1765** for most rubber grade carbon blacks currently in commerce.

**carbon black, thermal, *n***—a type of carbon black produced under controlled conditions by the thermal decomposition of hydrocarbons in the absence of air or flames.

**DISCUSSION**—These grades are designated with an “N” first character and a second character of “8 or 9” in Table 1 of Classification **D1765**.

**carbon black, thermal, acetylenic, *n***—a thermal black produced from acetylene gas.

**carbon black, tread grade, *n***—a type of furnace carbon black having an average nitrogen surface area of 70 m<sup>2</sup>/g or greater.

**DISCUSSION**—Tread grade carbon blacks are produced by the oil furnace process. The use of these grades in the rubber industry is not limited to the tread portion of the tire. These grades are designated with an “N” first character and a second character of “0, 1, 2, or 3” in Table 1 of Classification **D1765**.

**carbon black, typical value, *n***—a consensus value for those carbon black properties that are not specifically targeted for control in the manufacturing process and that are somewhat dependent upon the targeted properties.

**DISCUSSION**—Typical values for carbon black properties are shown in Classification **D1765** for most rubber grade carbon blacks currently in commerce. These are consensus values based upon the range in values supplied by the manufacturers. Typical values are useful in making comparisons between grades but they are not the set-point targets for the process and may be expected to differ significantly between producers.

**carbon black agglomerate, *n***—a cluster of physically bound and entangled aggregates.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D3849**.

**carbon black aggregate, *n***—a discrete, rigid, colloidal mass of extensively coalesced particles; it is the smallest dispersible unit.

**carbon black microstructure, *n***—arrangement of carbon atoms within a carbon black particle.

**carbon black particle, *n***—a small spheroidally shaped (paracrystalline, non-discrete) component of a carbon black aggregate; it is separable from the aggregate only by fracturing.

**carbon black particle diameter, *n***—arithmetic average of the diameters of particles within a carbon black aggregate as measured by electron microscopy.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D3849**.

**carbon black pellet, *n***—a relatively large agglomerate mass that has been densified in spheroidal form to facilitate handling and processing.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D1511**.

**carbon black reinforcing, *n***—See **carbon black, tread grade**, the preferred term.

<sup>4</sup> The one exception to this general characteristic of manufactured carbon black is thermal black, in which primary particles may exist in isolation and the primary particle sizes within an aggregate are not necessarily uniform.

**DISCUSSION**—All carbon blacks provide some level of reinforcement when mixed in rubber. The amount of reinforcement is a function of the carbon black grade and amount used. See Terminology **D1566** for the definition of reinforcement.

**carbon black structure**, *n*—the quality of irregularity and deviation from sphericity of the shape of a carbon black aggregate.

**carbon black weight mean particle size**, *n*—ratio equal to the sum of individual particle diameters, each raised to the fourth power, divided by the sum of the individual particle diameters, raised to the third power.

**compressed oil absorption number (COAN)**, *n*—See **oil absorption number of compressed sample**, the preferred term.

**cradle to gate**, *n*—boundary condition associated with embodied carbon, carbon footprint and LCA studies that considers all activities starting with the extraction of materials from the earth (the cradle), their transportation, refining, processing and fabrication activities until the material or product is ready to leave the factory gate.

**dispersion**, *n*—degree of uniform distribution of a filler’s primary unit (i.e., aggregate of carbon black) into a compound. See also **macro-dispersion**, **micro-dispersion**, and **visual dispersion**.

**end of life**, *n*—point at which a product or component is taken out of its intended use.

**DISCUSSION**—When a product reaches end of life, there are other options for the product other than disposal which include recycling and repurposing. The goal is to move from a linear to a circular model where the end of life product is transformed for further use. See ISO 8887.

**finer**, *n*—that portion of pelleted carbon black that passes through a specified sieve under standard conditions.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D1508**.

**heating loss**, *n*—mass loss, in percent, when carbon black is heated at 125°C for 1 h; the heating loss is primarily attributed to moisture content.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Methods **D1509**.

**individual pellet hardness**, *n*—the force required to fracture or crush a carbon black pellet.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D5230**.

**iodine adsorption number**, *n*—the number of grams of iodine adsorbed per kilogram of carbon black under specified conditions.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D1510**.

**life cycle**, *n*—consecutive and interlinked stages of a product system, from raw material acquisition or generation from natural resources to final disposal.

**DISCUSSION**—See ISO 14044.

**life cycle assessment (LCA)**, *n*—compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle.

**DISCUSSION**—See ISO 14044.

**lot**, *n*—a quantity of carbon black that is essentially uniform in composition and characteristics.

**lot sample**, *n*—a quantity of carbon black selected to represent a lot for testing purposes and taken in accordance with Practice **D1799** or **D1900**.

**macro-dispersion**, *n*—degree of distribution of filler into a compound that can be assessed with the aid of instrumentation including but not limited to a light microscope, profilometer, or interferometric microscope, generally on a scale of less than 100 μm but greater than 2 μm.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Methods **D2663**.

**mass strength**, *n*—a measure of the tendency for carbon black pellets to pack together and to influence flow in a bulk handling system.

**DISCUSSION**—See Test Method **D1937**.

**material**, *n*—a quantity of carbon black with unique composition and characteristics.

**moisture content**, *n*—the percentage, by mass, of water absorbed and adsorbed by carbon black.

**DISCUSSION**—See **heating loss**.

**micro-dispersion**, *n*—degree of distribution of a filler’s primary unit (that is, aggregate of carbon black) into a compound that can be assessed with the aid of instrumentation including but not limited to an electron microscope or scanning probe microscope, generally on a scale of less than 2 μm.

**nanomaterial**, *n*—material with any external dimension in the nanoscale or having internal structure or surface structure in the nanoscale.

**DISCUSSION**—Carbon black exhibits aciniform morphology composed of spheroidal “primary particles” strongly fused together to form discrete entities called aggregates.<sup>5</sup> The primary particles are conceptual in nature, in that once the aggregate is formed the “primary particle” no longer exists, they are no longer discrete, and have no physical boundaries amongst them. The aggregates are loosely held together by weaker forces forming larger entities called agglomerates. The agglomerates will break down into aggregates if adequate force is applied (for example, shear force). Aggregates are the smallest dispersible unit.<sup>5</sup> Carbon black is placed on the market in the form of agglomerates. Following the definition and using the terminology of the ISO Technical Committee 229 “Nanotechnologies,” carbon black is considered a nanostructured material (material having internal or surface structure in the nanoscale).

**nanoparticle**, *n*—a nano-object with all three external dimensions in the nanoscale size range (that is, approximately 1 to 100 nm).

**DISCUSSION**—Carbon black exhibits aciniform morphology composed of spheroidal “primary particles” strongly fused together to form discrete entities called aggregates.<sup>5</sup> The primary particles are conceptual in nature, in that once the aggregate is formed the “primary particle” no longer exists, they are no longer discrete, and have no physical boundaries amongst them. The aggregates are loosely held

<sup>5</sup> The one exception to this general characteristic of manufactured carbon black involves thermal black, where “primary particles” can exist as discrete entities. However, “primary particles” produced via the thermal black process have characteristic diameters in the range of 150 to 500 nm, meaning that primary thermal black particles are of sizes that fall outside the nanoscale region.