



Designation: E1363 – 23

Standard Test Method for Temperature Calibration of Thermomechanical Analyzers¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E1363; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method describes the temperature calibration of thermomechanical analyzers from $-50\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ to $1500\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. (See [Note 1](#).)

1.2 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.3 **Warning**—Mercury has been designated by many regulatory agencies as a hazardous substance that can cause serious medical issues. Mercury, or its vapor, has been demonstrated to be hazardous to health and corrosive to materials. Use caution when handling mercury and mercury-containing products. See the applicable product Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for additional information. The potential exists that selling mercury or mercury-containing products, or both, is prohibited by local or national law. Users must determine legality of sales in their location.

1.4 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. Specific precautionary statements are given in [Section 7](#) and [Note 12](#).

1.5 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.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E37 on Thermal Measurements and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E37.10 on Fundamental, Statistical and Mechanical Properties.

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2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards*:²

E473 Terminology Relating to Thermal Analysis and Rheology

E3142 Test Method for Thermal Lag of Thermal Analysis Apparatus

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*:

3.1.1 The terminology relating to thermal analysis appearing in Terminology E473 shall be considered applicable to this document.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 An equation is developed for the linear correlation of the experimentally observed program temperature and the actual melting temperature for known melting standards. This is accomplished through the use of a thermomechanical analyzer with a penetration probe to obtain the onset temperatures for two melting point standards. An alternate, one-point method of temperature calibration is also given for use over very narrow temperature ranges. (See [Note 2](#).)

NOTE 1—This test method may be used for calibrating thermomechanical analyzers at temperatures outside this range of temperature. However, the accuracy of the calibration will be no better than that of the temperature standards used.

NOTE 2—It is possible to develop a more elaborate method of temperature calibration using multiple (more than two) fusion standards and quadratic regression analysis. Since most modern instruments are capable of heating rates which are essentially linear in the region of use, the procedure given here is limited to a two-point calibration.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Thermomechanical analyzers are employed in their various modes of operation (penetration, expansion, flexure, etc.) to characterize a wide range of materials. In most cases, the value to be assigned in thermomechanical measurements is the temperature of the transition (or event) under study. Therefore, the temperature axis (abscissa) of all TMA thermal

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.

curves must be accurately calibrated either by direct reading of a temperature sensor or by adjusting the programmer temperature to match the actual temperature over the temperature range of interest.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Thermomechanical Analyzer (TMA)*—The essential instrumentation required to provide the minimum thermomechanical analytical or thermodilatometric capability for this test method includes:

6.1.1 *A Rigid Specimen Holder or Platform*, of inert, low coefficient of expansion material ($<1 \mu\text{m m}^{-1} \text{K}^{-1}$) to center the specimen in the furnace and to fix the specimen to mechanical ground.

6.1.2 *A Rigid (expansion compression, flexure, tensile, etc.) Probe*, of inert, low coefficient of expansion material ($<1 \mu\text{m m}^{-1} \text{K}^{-1}$) that contacts with the specimen with an applied compressive or tensile force. For this test method, the use of a penetration probe is recommended.

6.1.3 *A Sensing Element*, linear over a minimum range of 2 mm to measure the displacement of the rigid probe to $\pm 50 \text{ nm}$ resulting from changes in the length/height of the specimen.

6.1.4 *A Weight or Force Transducer*, to generate a constant force of $50 \text{ mN} \pm 5 \text{ mN}$ ($5.0 \text{ g} \pm 0.5 \text{ g}$) that is applied through the rigid probe to the specimen.

NOTE 3—The recommendation of a 5.0 g load (or a force of 50 mN) is based on the use of penetration probes commonly used in the commercially available thermomechanical analyzers. These probes have tip diameters ranging from 0.89 mm to 2.0 mm and lead to pressures from 80 kPa to 16 kPa when using the recommended 5.0 g load. The use of probes which differ greatly from this range of tip diameters may require different loading (or force).

6.1.5 *A Furnace*, capable of providing uniform controlled heating (cooling) at a rate of $1 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1}$ to $10 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1} \pm 1 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1}$ of a specimen to a constant temperature within the applicable temperature range of this test method.

NOTE 4—The temperature range of operation of commercial thermomechanical analyzers vary by manufacturer and mode. The complete range of temperature of an instrument is sometimes achieved by the use of two different furnaces. In this case, temperature calibration must be carried out for each furnace.

6.1.6 *A Temperature Controller*, capable of executing a specific temperature program by operating the furnace between selected temperature limits at a rate of temperature change of $10 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1} \pm 1 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1}$.

6.1.7 *A Temperature Sensor*, that may be positioned in close proximity to the test specimen to provide an indication of the specimen/furnace temperature readable to within $\pm 0.1 \text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1}$.

6.1.8 A means of sustaining an environment around the specimen with an inert purge gas (for example, nitrogen, helium, argon, etc.) at a purge gas flow rate of 20 mL min^{-1} to 50 mL min^{-1} .

6.1.9 *A Data Collection Device*, to provide a means of acquiring, storing, and displaying measured or calculated signals, or both. The minimum output signals required for TMA are a change in linear dimension, temperature, and times.

7. Hazards

7.1 This test method may involve the use of hazardous materials, operations, and equipment. It is the responsibility of the user of this test method to establish appropriate safety practice and to determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use. (**Warning**—Toxic or corrosive effluents, or both, may be released when heating some materials and could be harmful to personnel and the apparatus.)

7.2 Once this calibration procedure has been executed as described in 10.1.2.1 – 10.1.2.7 of this test method, the measuring temperature sensor position should not be changed, nor should it be in contact with the sample or sample holder in a way that would impede movement. If for some reason the temperature sensor position is changed or the temperature sensor is replaced, then the entire calibration procedure should be repeated.

8. Calibration

8.1 For the temperature range covered by many applications, the melting transition of 99.99 % pure materials may be used for calibration. (See Table 1.)

NOTE 5—The values in Table 1 were determined using special 99.9999 % pure materials and highly accurate steady-state conditions that are not attainable with this test method. The actual precision of this test method is given in Section 13.

NOTE 6—The melting temperatures of these materials have been selected as primary fixed points (see Table 1) for the International Practical Temperature Scale of 1990.³

NOTE 7—Some materials have different crystalline forms (for example, tin) or may react with the container. Such calibration materials should be discarded after their initial melt.

NOTE 8—Committee E37 recommends calibration of all reported signals at least annually.

³ Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report RR:E37-1011. Contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org.

TABLE 1 Recommended Melting Temperature Reference Materials

Calibration Material ^A	Melting Temperature	
	(°C)	(K)
Mercury	−38.8344	234.3156
Water	0.01	273.16
Gallium	29.7646	302.9146
Indium	156.5985	429.7485
Tin	231.928	505.078
Bismuth	271.402	544.552
Cadmium	321.069	594.219
Lead	327.462	600.612
Zinc	419.527	692.677
Antimony	630.628	903.778
Aluminum	660.323	933.473
Silver	961.78	1234.93
Gold	1064.18	1337.33
Copper	1084.62	1357.77
Nickel	1455	1728
Cobalt	1495	1768

^A Della Gatta, G., Richardson, M. J., Sarge, S. M., and Stolen, S., "Standards, Calibration, and Guidelines in Microcalorimetry, Part 2: Calibration Standards for Differential Scanning Calorimetry," *Pure and Applied Chemistry*, Vol 78, No. 7, 2006, pp. 1455–1476.

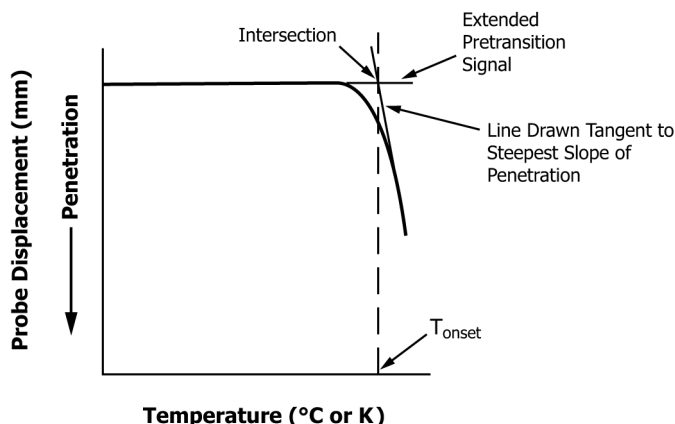


FIG. 1 Assignment of the Extrapolated Onset Temperature (T_o) from TMA Thermal Curve

9. Assignment of the Penetration Onset Temperature

9.1 The assignment of the TMA penetration onset temperature is an important procedure since, when using this test method, temperature calibration of the thermomechanical analyzer is directly dependent upon it. The temperature standards given in Table 1 will give a downward deflection on the thermal curve, similar to that shown in Fig. 1, when placed under a weighted TMA penetration probe and heated to their respective melting temperatures.

9.2 The extrapolated onset temperature for such a penetration thermal curve is obtained by extending the pre-transition portion of the thermal curve to the point of intersection with a line drawn tangent to the steepest portion of the curve which describes the probe displacement. The temperature corresponding to this point of intersection is the penetration onset temperature. This is shown graphically in Fig. 1. There are some materials (for example, aluminum metal) which show pre-transition probe displacement prior to the sharper downward deflection observed on melting. In this case, the pre-transition baseline is extended from the point which represents the highest temperature the material reaches prior to exhibiting significant or measurable softening under the conditions of the experiment. Fig. 2 describes the assignment of the extrapolated

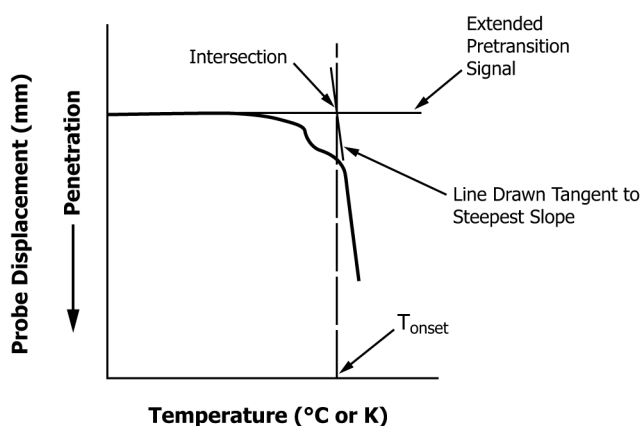


FIG. 2 Assignment of Extrapolated Onset Temperature (T_o) from TMA Thermal Curve for Specimen Exhibiting Pre-Transition Softening

onset temperature for a specimen which exhibits pre-transition penetration.

10. Procedure

10.1 *Two-Point Calibration*—For the purposes of this procedure, it is assumed that the relationship between observed extrapolated onset temperature (T_o) and actual specimen temperature (T_i) is a linear one governed by the equation:

$$T_i = (T_o \times S) + I \quad (1)$$

where S and I are the slope and intercept of a straight line, respectively.

10.1.1 Select two calibration reference materials near the temperature range of interest. The standards should be as close to the upper and lower temperature limits used in the actual analysis runs as is practical.

10.1.2 Determine the apparent extrapolated onset temperature for the calibration reference material chosen, using a penetration-type probe with the TMA instrument.

10.1.2.1 Place a 10 mg to 20 mg specimen of one of the calibration reference materials on the sample platform (or holder, whichever is applicable).

NOTE 9—The specimen should have a smooth surface on both top and bottom. Avoid the use of specimens with sharp ridges and irregular surfaces. These can lead to false values for the onset temperatures. Powdered or liquid standards may be placed into a stable, inert container, if necessary.

10.1.2.2 Place a probe loaded with 5 g (or force of 50 mN) in contact with the test specimen.

10.1.2.3 Purge the specimen chamber area with inert gas at a flow rate that is appropriate to the dimensions of the apparatus throughout the experiment. Typical flow rates are from 20 mL/min to 50 mL/min. The same purge gas and flow rate should be maintained in both calibration runs and analysis runs.

10.1.2.4 Heat the calibration sample specimen to a temperature about 50 °C below the calibration temperature and allow the TMA furnace to equilibrate for at least 1 min.

10.1.2.5 Heat the calibration specimen at 5 °C/min through the transition allowing the probe to reach a point of maximum penetration. (See Fig. 1.)

NOTE 10—Temperature calibration may be affected by heating rate, purge gas flow rate, and choice of purge gas.

NOTE 11—Other heating rates may be used but shall be reported. See Appendix X1 and Test Method E3142 for the determination and application of thermal lag.

10.1.2.6 From the TMA thermal curve obtained, assign the extrapolated onset temperature (see Fig. 1) to the required precision.

NOTE 12—Retain all available digits.

10.1.2.7 Repeat the procedure described in 10.1.2 – 10.1.2.5 using the second calibration reference material that was chosen.

11. Calculation

11.1 Using the reference material temperature values from Table 1 and the corresponding onset temperatures obtained experimentally, determine the slope and intercept using the following equations: