



# Standard Specification for Fine-Wire Bunch-Stranded and Rope-Lay Bunch-Stranded Copper Conductors for Use as Electrical Conductors<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation B 738; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This specification covers bare bunch-stranded and rope-lay bunch-stranded conductors made from round copper wires finer than No. 40 AWG with diameters less than 0.0031 in. (.078 mm), either coated or uncoated with tin or silver, for use as electrical conductors. (Explanatory Note 1).

1.2 The values (SI units) for density and temperature are regarded as the standard. For all other properties the inchpound values are to be regarded as standard, and the SI units may be approximate.

## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:

- B 33 Specification for Tinned Soft or Annealed Copper Wire for Electrical Purposes<sup>2</sup>
- B 49 Specification for Copper Redraw Rod for Electrical Purposes
- B 172 Specification for Rope-Lay Stranded Copper Conductors Having Bunch-Stranded Members, for Electrical Conductors<sup>2</sup>
- B 174 Specification for Bunch-Stranded Copper Conductors for Electrical Conductors<sup>2</sup>
- B 193 Test Method for Resistivity of Electrical Conductor Materials<sup>2</sup>
- B 258 Specification for Standard Nominal Diameters and Cross-Sectional Areas of AWG Sizes of Solid Round Wires Used as Electrical Conductors<sup>2</sup>
- B 298 Specification for Silver-Coated Soft or Annealed Copper Wire<sup>2</sup>
- B 354 Terminology Relating to Uninsulated Metallic Electrical Conductors<sup>2</sup>

## 3. Classification

3.1 For the purposes of this specification, the following classifications have been assigned (Explanatory Note 2):

### 3.1.1 Type:

- 3.1.1.1 Type B—Bunch-stranded conductors.
- 3.1.1.2 Type R—Rope-lay bunch-stranded conductors.

<sup>1</sup> This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee B-1 on Electrical Conductors and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee B01.04 on Conductors of Copper and Copper Alloys.

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 02.03.

### 3.1.2 Class:

- 3.1.2.1 Class R—Stranded conductors using wire 42 AWG (0.0025).
- 3.1.2.2 Class S—Stranded conductors using wire 44 AWG (0.0020).
- 3.1.2.3 Class T—Stranded conductors using wire 46 AWG (0.00157).
- 3.1.2.4 Class U—Stranded conductors using wire 48 AWG (0.00124).
- 3.1.2.5 Class V—Stranded conductors using wire 50 AWG (0.00099).

3.2 Detailed information on Type B Conductors is found in Table 1 and Table 2. Detailed information on Type R Conductors is found in Table 3 and Table 2.

## 4. Ordering Information

4.1 Orders for materials under this specification shall include the following information:

- 4.1.1 Quantity of each size, class, and type,
- 4.1.2 Conductor size—circular-mil area, d-c resistance (7.1) or AWG (5.2.1),
- 4.1.3 Class and type (Section 3),
- 4.1.4 Whether coated or uncoated; if coated, designate type of coating (6.1); if silver coated, the minimum thickness of silver (6.1.2), and whether tarnish protection is desired (11.3),
- 4.1.5 Maximum length of lay (5.2.4), if required,
- 4.1.6 Temper (6.2),
- 4.1.7 Separators, if required (5.2.2),
- 4.1.8 Package size (11.1),
- 4.1.9 Special package marking, if required (Section 10), and
- 4.1.10 Place of inspection (Section 9).

4.2 In addition, Supplementary Requirements shall apply only when specified by the purchaser in the inquiry, contract, or purchase order for direct procurement by agencies of the U.S. Government.

## 5. Materials and Manufacture

5.1 The material shall be copper of such quality and purity that the finished product shall have the properties and characteristics described in this specification. Material meeting the requirements of Specification B 49 is such a material.

### 5.2 Construction:

5.2.1 Cross-Sectional Area—The cross-sectional area, number, and diameter of wires for a variety of strand constructions

**TABLE 1 Classification of Type B Bunch-Stranded Conductors**

Class	Wire Diameter, in. <sup>A</sup>	Conductor Sizes, AWG
R	0.0025 (No. 42 AWG)	24,26,28,30,32,34
S	0.0020 (No. 44 AWG)	26,28,30,32,34,36
T	0.00157 (No. 46 AWG)	28,30,32,34,36,38
U	0.00124 (No. 48 AWG)	30,32,34,36,38,40
V	0.00099 (No. 50 AWG)	32,34,36,38,40

<sup>A</sup> Sufficient quantities of wires of these diameters shall be used to form conductors having cross-sectional areas approximately equal to the AWG conductor sizes listed.

in general use are shown in Table 2.

5.2.2 *Separators*—If a separator is required to be furnished with the conductor, it shall be specified by the purchaser at the time of the order as to the requirements for the kind and thickness of material and its application details.

5.2.3 *Joints*:

5.2.3.1 Necessary joints in wires shall be made in accordance with accepted commercial practice.

5.2.3.2 Joints shall be so constructed and so disposed throughout the conductor that the diameter or configuration of the completed conductor is not substantially affected, and that the flexibility of the completed conductor is not adversely affected.

5.2.4 *Lay*:

5.2.4.1 Conductors of the same size and description furnished on one order shall have the same lay.

5.2.4.2 The direction of the lay of bunch-stranded conductors shall be at the option of the manufacturer unless otherwise specified by the purchaser.

5.2.4.3 Unless otherwise specified by the purchaser, the length of the lay of bare or coated bunch-stranded conductors shall conform to the requirements of Table 4.

5.2.4.4 The direction of the lay of the outer layer of rope-lay stranded conductors shall be lefthand, unless otherwise specified by the purchaser.

5.2.4.5 The length of the lay of the outer layer of rope-lay stranded conductors shall be not less than 8 or more than 16 times the outside diameter of the completed conductor. The length of the lay of the wires composing the bunch-stranded members shall be not more than 30 times the diameter of the member.

## 6. Physical Properties

6.1 *Wire Coating*—When coated, the coating of the wires of the stranded conductor, before stranding, shall conform to the requirements of 6.1.1 or 6.1.2.

6.1.1 Tin coating shall conform to the coating requirements of Specification B 33.

6.1.2 Silver coating shall conform to the minimum thickness requirements of the purchase document. Minimum thickness shall be determined using the method for determining plating thickness described in Specification B 298.

6.1.3 The finished diameter and mass of the coated wires used shall be substantially equal to those of the uncoated wires of the same class.

6.2 *Temper*—Unless otherwise specified, all coated conductors shall be furnished in the annealed temper. Uncoated conductors may be furnished either annealed or unannealed as ordered (see 4.1.6).

NOTE 1—The term unannealed as used in this specification means cold-worked conductor as produced on commercial wire-drawing machines.

6.3 *Tensile Strength and Elongation*—The stranded conductor, in its finished form, shall conform to the following:

Finished State	Tensile Strength, min.		Elongation, min. 10 in. %
	psi	MPa	
Unannealed	40 000	275	...
Annealed	...	...	10

## 7. Electrical Properties

7.1 *D-C Resistance*—The d-c resistance in  $\Omega/1000$  ft of the bunch-stranded conductor shall not exceed the appropriate values specified in Table 5. The d-c resistance in  $\Omega/1000$  ft of the rope-lay bunch-stranded conductor shall not exceed the appropriate values specified in Table 6 (Explanatory Note 3 and Note 4).

## 8. Test Methods

8.1 *Coating*—Tests to determine conformance of the coating to the requirements of Specification B 33 or Specification B 298 shall be performed on the individual wires before stranding (see 6.1.1 to 6.1.3).

8.2 *Tensile Strength and Elongation*:

8.2.1 Tests to determine conformance to the tensile strength and elongation requirements of 6.3 shall be made on the finished stranded conductor.

8.2.2 Determine tensile strength,  $T_s$ , expressed in pounds per square inch as follows:

$$T_s = \frac{L}{A}$$

where:

$L$  = maximum load on the stranded conductor during the tension test (see Explanatory Note 5), lbs, and

$A$  = original cross-sectional area of the stranded conductor, in.<sup>2</sup>/in. (see 8.2).

8.2.3 The original cross-sectional area of the stranded conductor shall be considered to be the cross-sectional area of the individual wire calculated from the nominal wire diameter (see Table 5) multiplied by the number of wires in the stranded conductor (Explanatory Note 6).

8.2.4 Determine the elongation of the specimen as the permanent increase in length, expressed in percent of the original length, due to the breaking of the specimen in tension, by measurements made between the jaws of testing machine. The zero length shall be the distance between the jaws at the start of the tension test, and shall be as near 10 in. (250 mm) as practicable. The final length shall be the distance between the jaws at the time of rupture. The fracture shall be between the jaws of the testing machine and not closer than 1 in. (25 mm) to either jaw.

8.3 *Electrical*—Tests to determine conformance to the electrical resistance requirements of 7.1 shall be made on the finished stranded conductor in accordance with Test Method B 193 (Explanatory Note 3).

8.4 *Other Requirements*—For the purpose of calculating mass, cross-sectional area, and the like, the density of the coated copper shall be taken as 8.89 g/cm<sup>3</sup> (0.32117 lb/in.<sup>3</sup>) at 20°C (Explanatory Note 5).