



Standard Terminology Relating to Thermal Analysis¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology is a compilation of definitions of terms used in ASTM documents relating to thermal analysis. This terminology includes only those terms for which ASTM either has standards or is contemplating some action. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive listing of terms related to thermal analysis.

1.2 This terminology specifically supports the single-word form for terms using thermo as a prefix, such as thermoanalytical or thermomagnetometry, while recognizing that for some terms a two-word form can be used, such as thermal analysis. This terminology does not support, nor does it recommend, use of the grammatically incorrect, single-word form using thermal as a prefix, such as, thermalanalytical or thermalmagnetometry.

1.3 Definitions that are similar to those published by another standards body are identified with the abbreviation of the name of the organization: for example, ICTAC is the International Confederation for Thermal Analysis and Calorimetry.

1.4 A definition is a single sentence with additional information included in notes. It is reviewed every five years, and the year of the last review or revision is appended.

2. Terminology

combined, *adj*—the application of two or more techniques to different samples at the same time. (ICTAC) (1993)

controlled-rate thermal analysis, (*CRTA*), *n*—a family of techniques that monitors the temperature versus time profile needed to maintain a chosen, fixed rate of change of a property of a substance. (ICTAC) (1993)

NOTE 1—Compared to controlled-temperature experiments, where the reaction rate tends to increase exponentially and the rate can become limited by heat or mass transfer, CRTA experiments are more likely to involve the chemical reaction as the limiting step. This technique can also improve the resolution of multiple reactions. For example, in controlled rate experiments, power to the furnace is controlled to ensure a fixed rate of mass loss (or gain).

controlled-temperature program, *n*—the temperature history experienced by a sample during the course of a thermal analysis experiment.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E-37 on Thermal Measurements and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E37.03 on Nomenclature and Definitions.

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NOTE 2—In contrast to controlled-rate experiments, power to the furnace is controlled to ensure a fixed rate of temperature change for controlled-temperature experiments. The program may include heating or cooling segments in which the temperature is changed at a fixed rate, isothermal segments in which time becomes the explicit independent variable, or any sequence of these individual segments. If the atmosphere (or vacuum) around the sample is changed by some external action (depending on the independent variable only—temperature or time) during the course of the experiment, that too becomes part of the controlled-temperature program.

curve, thermal, *n*—the plot of a parameter against temperature or time. (ICTAC) (1993)

dielectric thermal analysis, (*DETA* or *DEA*), *n*—a technique in which the dielectric constant (permittivity, or capacitance) and dielectric loss (conductance) of a substance under oscillating electric field are measured as a function of temperature or time while the substance is subjected to a controlled-temperature program in a specified atmosphere. (ICTAC) (1993)

derivative, *adj*—pertaining to the first derivative (mathematical) of any curve with respect to temperature or time.

differential, *adj*—pertaining to a difference in measured or measureable quantities usually between a substance and some reference or standard material.

differential scanning calorimetry (*DSC*), *n*—A technique in which the difference into a substance and a reference material is measured as a function of temperature while the substance and reference material are subjected to a controlled-temperature program. (ICTAC) (1993)

NOTE 3—The record is the differential scanning calorimetric or DSC curve. Two modes, power compensation differential scanning calorimetry, and heat flux differential scanning calorimetry can be distinguished, depending on the method of measurement used.

differential thermal analysis (*DTA*), *n*—A technique in which the temperature difference between the substance and a reference material is measured as a function of temperature, while the substance and reference material are subjected to a controlled-temperature program. (ICTAC) (1993)

NOTE 4—The term *quantitative differential thermal analysis* covers those uses of DTA where the equipment is designed to produce quantitative results.

dilatometry, *n*—see **Thermodilatometry**.

dynamic mechanical analysis (*DMA*), *n*—a technique in which the storage modulus (elastic response) and loss modulus (viscous response) of a substance under oscillatory