Designation: E 6 – 02a

An American National Standard

Standard Terminology Relating to Methods of Mechanical Testing[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E 6; 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 Department of Defense.

1. Scope

1.1 This terminology covers the principal terms relating to methods of mechanical testing of solids. The general definitions are restricted and interpreted, when necessary, to make them particularly applicable and practicable for use in standards requiring or relating to mechanical tests. These definitions are published to encourage uniformity of terminology in product specifications.

1.2 Terms relating to fatigue and fracture testing are defined in Terminology E 1823.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*

E 8 Test Methods for Tension Testing of Metallic Materials[2]

E 8M Test Methods for Tension Testing of Metallic Materials [Metric][2]

E 796 Test Method for Ductility Testing of Metallic Foil[2]

E 1823 Terminology Relating to Fatigue and Fracture Testing[2]

3. Index of Terms

3.1 The definitions of the following terms, which are listed alphabetically, appear in the indicated sections of 4.1.

Term	Section
angle of bend	D
angle of twist	B
angular strain	see **strain**
axial strain	see **strain**
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bearing stress	F
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Brinell hardness test	C
calibration	G
calibration factor	G
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compressive stress	see **stress**
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constraint	A
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creep rupture strength	E
creep strength	E
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malleability	see **ductility**
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maximum elongation	B
mechanical hysteresis	A
mechanical properties	A
mechanical testing	A
microstrain	see **strain**
modulus of elasticity	A
modulus of rigidity	see **modulus of elasticity**

[1] This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E28 on Mechanical Testing and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E28.91 on Editorial and Terminology except where designated otherwise. A subcommittee designation in parentheses following a definition indicates the subcommittee with responsibility for that definition.

Current edition approved August 10, 2002. Published October 2002. Originally published as E 6 – 23 T. Last previous edition E 6 – 02.

[2] *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 03.01.

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normal stress	see **stress**
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4. Terminology

4.1 *Terms and Definitions:*

A. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

constraint, *n*—any restriction to the deformation of a body. **(E28.11)**

ductility, *n*—the ability of a material to deform plastically before fracturing. **(E28.02)**

DISCUSSION—Ductility is usually evaluated by measuring (*1*) the elongation or reduction of area from a tension test, (*2*) the depth of cup from a cupping test, (*3*) the radius or angle of bend from the bend test, or (*4*) the fatigue ductility from the fatigue ductility test (see Test Method E 796).

DISCUSSION—Malleability is the ability to deform plastically under repetitive compressive forces.

elastic limit [FL^{-2}]**,** *n*—the greatest stress which a material is capable of sustaining without any permanent strain remaining upon complete release of the stress.

DISCUSSION—Due to practical considerations in determining the elastic limit, measurements of strain, using a small force rather than zero force, are usually taken as the initial and final reference.

fracture ductility, ϵ_f**,** *n*—the true plastic strain at fracture.

fracture strength, S_f [FL^{-2}]**,** *n*—the normal stress at the beginning of fracture. Fracture strength is calculated from the force at the beginning of fracture during a tension test and the original cross-sectional area of the specimen.

force [F]**,** *n*—in mechanical testing, a vector quantity of fundamental nature characterized by a magnitude, a direction, a sense, and a discrete point of application, that acts externally upon a test object and creates stresses in it. **(E28.91)**

DISCUSSION—Force is a derived unit of the SI system. Units of force in the SI system are newtons (N).

DISCUSSION—Where applicable, the noun **force** is preferred to **load** in terminology for mechanical testing.

least count, *n*—the smallest change in indication that can customarily be determined and reported.

DISCUSSION—In machines with close graduations it may be the value of a graduation interval; with open graduations or with magnifiers for reading, it may be an estimated fraction, rarely as fine as one tenth, of a graduated interval; and with verniers it is customarily the difference between the scale and vernier graduation measured in terms of scale units. If the indicating mechanism includes a stepped detent, the detent action may determine the least count.

load [F] **,** *n*—in mechanical testing, an external force or system of forces or pressures, or both, that act upon the test object. **(E28.91)**

DISCUSSION—**Load** is a deprecated term and, where applicable, it should be replaced by **force**, particularly where it is used as a noun. For reasons of editorial simplicity or traditional usage, replacement of **load** by **force** may not always be desirable when used as a verb, adjective, or other part of speech (for example, to load a specimen, loading rate, load cell).

mechanical hysteresis, *n*—the energy absorbed in a complete cycle of loading and unloading. **(E28.03)**

DISCUSSION—A complete cycle of loading and unloading includes any stress cycle regardless of the mean stress or range of stress.

mechanical properties, *n*—those properties of a material that are associated with elastic and inelastic reaction when force is applied, or that involve the relationship between stress and strain.

DISCUSSION—These properties have often been referred to as "physical properties," but the term "mechanical properties" is much to be preferred.

mechanical testing, *n*—the determination of mechanical properties. **(E28.90)**

modulus of elasticity [FL^{-2}], *n*—the ratio of stress to corresponding strain below the proportional limit.

DISCUSSION—The stress-strain relations of many materials do not conform to Hooke's law throughout the elastic range, but deviate therefrom even at stresses well below the elastic limit. For such materials the slope of either the tangent to the stress-strain curve at the origin or at a low stress, the secant drawn from the origin to any specified point on the stress-strain curve, or the chord connecting any two specified points on the stress-strain curve is usually taken to be the "modulus of elasticity." In these cases the modulus should be designated as the "tangent modulus," the" secant modulus," or the "chord modulus," and the point or points on the stress-strain curve described. Thus, for materials where the stress-strain relationship is curvilinear rather than linear, one of the four following terms may be used:

(*a*) *initial tangent modulus* [FL^{-2}], *n*—the slope of the stress-strain curve at the origin.

(*b*) *tangent modulus* [FL^{-2}], *n*—the slope of the stress-strain curve at any specified stress or strain.

(*c*) *secant modulus* [FL^{-2}], *n*—the slope of the secant drawn from the origin to any specified point on the stress-strain curve.

(*d*) *chord modulus* [FL^{-2}], *n*—the slope of the chord drawn between any two specified points on the stress-strain curve.

DISCUSSION—Modulus of elasticity, like stress, is expressed in force per unit of area (pounds per square inch, etc.).

Poisson's ratio, μ, *n*—the absolute value of the ratio of transverse strain to the corresponding axial strain resulting from uniformly distributed axial stress below the proportional limit of the material. **(E28.03)**

DISCUSSION—Above the proportional limit, the ratio of transverse strain to axial strain will depend on the average stress and on the stress range for which it is measured and, hence should not be regarded as Poisson's ratio. If this ratio is reported, nevertheless, as a value of "Poisson's ratio" for stresses beyond the proportional limit, the range of stress should be stated.

DISCUSSION—Poisson's ratio will have more than one value if the material is not isotropic.

proportional limit [FL^{-2}], *n*—the greatest stress which a material is capable of sustaining without any deviation from proportionality of stress to strain (Hooke's law).

DISCUSSION—Many experiments have shown that values observed for the proportional limit vary greatly with the sensitivity and accuracy of the testing equipment, eccentricity of loading, the scale to which the stress-strain diagram is plotted, and other factors. When determination of proportional limit is required, the procedure and the sensitivity of the test equipment should be specified.

set—strain remaining after complete release of the force producing the deformation.

DISCUSSION—Due to practical considerations, such as distortion in the specimen and slack in the strain indicating system, measurements of strain at a small force rather than zero force are often taken.

DISCUSSION—Set is often referred to as permanent set if it shows no further change with time. Time elapsing between removal of force and final reading of set should be stated.

shear modulus, *G* [FL^{-2}], *n*—the ratio of shear stress to corresponding shear strain below the proportional limit of the material. **(E28.03)**

DISCUSSION—The value of the shear modulus may depend on the direction in which it is measured if the material is not isotropic. Wood, many plastics and certain metals are markedly anisotropic. Deviations from isotropy should be suspected if the shear modulus differs from that determined by substituting independently measured values of Young's modulus, *E*, and Poisson's ratio, μ, in the relation:

$$G = E/[2(1 + \mu)]$$

DISCUSSION—In general, it is advisable in reporting values of shear modulus to state the range of stress over which it is measured.

strain, *e*, *n*—the per unit change, due to force, in the size or shape of a body referred to its original size or shape. Strain is a nondimensional quantity, but it is frequently expressed in inches per inch, metres per metre, or percent.

DISCUSSION—In this standard, "original" refers to dimensions or shape of cross section of specimens at the beginning of testing.

DISCUSSION—Strain at a point is defined by six components of strain: three linear components and three shear components referred to a set of coordinate axes.

DISCUSSION—In the usual tension, compression, or torsion test it is customary to measure only one component of strain and to refer to this as "the strain." In a tension or a compression test this is usually the axial component.

DISCUSSION—Strain has an elastic and a plastic component. For small strains the plastic component can be imperceptibly small.

DISCUSSION—Linear thermal expansion, sometimes called "thermal strain," and changes due to the effect of moisture are not to be considered strain in mechanical testing.

angular strain, *n*—use *shear strain.*

axial strain, *n*—linear strain in a plane parallel to the longitudinal axis of the specimen. **(E28.04)**

elastic true strain, ϵ_e, *n*—elastic component of the true strain.

engineering strain, *e*, *n*—a dimensionless value that is the change in length (ΔL) per unit length of original linear dimension (L_0) along the loading axis of the specimen; that is, $e = (\Delta L)/L_0$. **(E28.02)**

linear (tensile or compressive) strain, *n*—the change per unit length due to force in an original linear dimension. **(E28.04)**

DISCUSSION—An increase in length is considered positive.

macrostrain, *n*—the mean strain over any finite gage length of measurement large in comparison with interatomic distances. **(E28.13)**

DISCUSSION—Macrostrain can be measured by several methods, including electrical-resistance strain gages and mechanical or optical extensometers. Elastic macrostrain can be measured by X-ray diffraction.

DISCUSSION—When either of the terms *macrostrain* or *microstrain* is first used in a document, it is recommended that the physical dimension or the gage length, which indicate the size of the reference strain volume involved, be stated.

microstrain, *n*—the strain over a gage length comparable to interatomic distances. **(E28.13)**

DISCUSSION—These are the strains being averaged by the macrostrain measurement. Microstrain is not measurable by existing techniques. Variance of the microstrain distribution can, however, be measured by X-ray diffraction.

DISCUSSION—When either of the terms *macrostrain* or *microstrain* is first used in a document, it is recommended that the physical dimension or the gage length, which indicate the size of the reference strain volume involved, be stated.

plastic true strain, ϵ_p, *n*—the inelastic component of true strain.

residual strain, *n*—strain associated with residual stress. **(E28.13)**

Discussion—Residual strains are elastic.

shear strain, *n*—the tangent of the angular change, due to force, between two lines originally perpendicular to each other through a point in a body. **(E28.04)**

transverse strain, *n*—linear strain in a plane perpendicular to the axis of the specimen.

Discussion—Transverse strain may differ with direction in anisotropic materials.

true strain, ϵ, *n*—the natural logarithm of the ratio of instantaneous gage length, L, to the original gage length, L_0; that is, $\epsilon = 1n\ (L / L_0)$ or $\epsilon = 1n\ (1+e)$. **(E28.02)**

stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—the intensity at a point in a body of the forces or components of force that act on a given plane through the point. Stress is expressed in force per unit of area (pounds-force per square inch, megapascals, and so forth).

Discussion—As used in tension, compression, or shear tests prescribed in product specifications, stress is calculated on the basis of the original dimensions of the cross section of the specimen. This stress is sometimes called "engineering stress," to emphasize the difference from true stress.

compressive stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—normal stress due to forces directed toward the plane on which they act. **(E28.04)**

engineering stress, S [FL^{-2}], *n*—the normal stress, expressed in units of applied force, F, per unit of original cross-sectional area, A_0; that is, $S = F/A_0$. **(E28.02)**

fracture stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—the true normal stress on the minimum cross-sectional area at the beginning of fracture.

Discussion—This term usually applies to tension tests of unnotched specimens.

nominal stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—the stress at a point calculated on the net cross section by simple elastic theory without taking into account the effect on the stress produced by geometric discontinuities such as holes, grooves, fillets, and so forth.

normal stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—the stress component perpendicular to a plane on which the forces act.

principal stress (normal) [FL^{-2}], *n*—the maximum or minimum value of the normal stress at a point in a plane considered with respect to all possible orientations of the considered plane. On such principal planes the shear stress is zero.

Discussion—There are three principal stresses on three mutually perpendicular planes. The states of stress at a point may be:

(*1*) *uniaxial* [FL^{-2}], *n*—a state of stress in which two of the three principal stresses are zero,

(*2*) *biaxial* [FL^{-2}], *n*—a state of stress in which only one of the three principal stresses is zero, or

(*3*) *triaxial* [FL^{-2}], *n*—a state of stress in which none of the principal stresses is zero.

(*4*) *multiaxial* [FL^{-2}], *n*—biaxial or triaxial.

residual stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—stress in a body which is at rest and in equilibrium and at uniform temperature in the absence of external and mass forces. **(E28.13)**

shear stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—the stress component tangential to the plane on which the forces act. **(E28.04)**

tensile stress [FL^{-2}], *n*—normal stress due to forces directed away from the plane on which they act. **(E28.04)**

torsional stress[FL^{-2}], *n*—the shear stress in a body, in a plane normal to the axis of rotation, resulting from the application of torque. **(E28.03)**

true stress, σ [FL^{-2}], *n*—the instantaneous normal stress, calculated on the basis of the instantaneous cross-sectional area, A; that is, $\sigma = F/A$; if no necking has occurred, $\sigma = S(1+e)$. **(E28.02)**

stress-strain diagram, *n*—a diagram in which corresponding values of stress and strain are plotted against each other. Values of stress are usually plotted as ordinates (vertically) and values of strain as abscissas (horizontally). **(E28.04)**

torque [FL] , *n*—a moment (of forces) that produces or tends to produce rotation or torsion. **(E28.03)**

Young's modulus, *E* [FL^{-2}], *n*—modulus of elasticity in tension or compression.

B. TENSION, COMPRESSION, DUCTILITY, SHEAR, AND TORSION TESTING

angle of twist (torsion test), *n*—the angle of relative rotation measured in a plane normal to the torsion specimen's longitudinal axis over the gage length. **(E28.03)**

breaking force[F], *n*—the force at which fracture occurs. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—When used in connection with tension tests of thin materials or materials of small diameter for which it is often difficult to distinguish between the breaking force and the maximum force developed, the latter is considered to be the breaking force.

compressive strength [FL^{-2}], *n*—the maximum compressive stress which a material is capable of sustaining. Compressive strength is calculated from the maximum force during a compression test and the original cross-sectional area of the specimen. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—In the case of a material which fails in compression by a shattering fracture, the compressive strength has a very definite value. In the case of materials which do not fail in compression by a shattering fracture, the value obtained for compressive strength is an arbitrary value depending upon the degree of distortion which is regarded as indicating complete failure of the material.

discontinuous yielding, *n*—a hesitation or fluctuation of force observed at the onset of plastic deformation, due to localized yielding. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—The stress-strain curve need not appear to be discontinuous.

elongation, *El*, *n*—the increase in gage length of a body subjected to a tension force, referenced to a gage length on the body. Usually elongation is expressed as a percentage of the original gage length. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—The increase in gage length may be determined either *at* or *after* fracture, as specified for the material under test.

Discussion—The term elongation, when applied to metals, generally means measurement after fracture; when applied to plastics and elastomers, measurement at fracture. Such interpretation is usually applicable to values of elongation reported in the literature when no further qualification is given.

Discussion—In reporting values of elongation the gage length shall be stated.

Discussion—Elongation is affected by: specimen geometry; length, width, thickness of the gage section and adjacent regions; and test procedure, such as alignment and speed of pulling.

fatigue ductility, D_f—the ability of a material to deform plastically before fracturing, determined from a constant-strain amplitude, low-cycle fatigue test. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—Fatigue ductility is usually expressed in percent in direct analogy with elongation and reduction of area ductility measures.

Discussion—The fatigue ductility corresponds to the fracture ductility. Elongation and reduction of area represent the engineering tensile strain after fracture.

Discussion—For the purpose of this definition, the fatigue ductility exponent, *c*, is defined as $c = -0.60$.

Discussion—The fatigue ductility is used for metallic foil for which the tension test does not give useful elongation and reduction of area measures.

fatigue ductility exponent, *c*, *n*—the slope of a log-log plot of the plastic strain range and the fatigue life. **(E28.04)**

fatigue life, N_f, *n*—the numbers of cycles of stress or strain of a specified character that a given specimen sustains before failure of a specified nature occurs. **(E28.04)**

strain gage fatigue life, *n*—the number of fully reversed strain cycles corresponding to the onset of degraded gage performance, whether due to excessive zero shift or other detectable failure mode. **(E28.14)**

lower yield strength, *LYS* [FL^{-2}], *n*—the minimum stress recorded during discontinuous yielding, ignoring transient effects. See Figs. 1 and 2. **(E28.04)**

maximum elongation, El_{max}, *n*—the elongation at the time of fracture, including both elastic and plastic deformation of the tensile specimen. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—This definition is used for rubber, plastic, and some metallic materials.

Discussion—Maximum elongation is also called ultimate elongation or break elongation.

modulus of rupture in torsion [FL^{-2}], *n*—the value of maximum shear stress in the extreme fiber of a member of circular cross section loaded to failure in torsion computed from the equation:

$$S_s = Tr/J \quad (1)$$

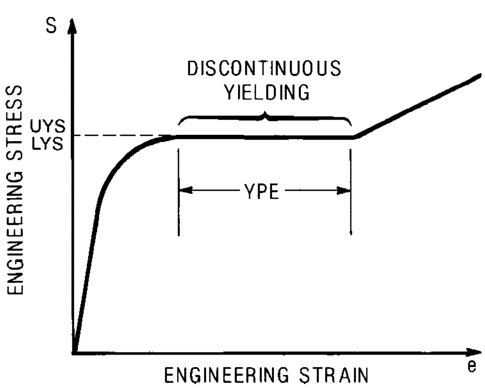

FIG. 1 Stress-Strain Diagram for Determination of Upper and Lower Yield Strengths and Yield Point Elongation in a Material Exhibiting Discontinuous Yielding

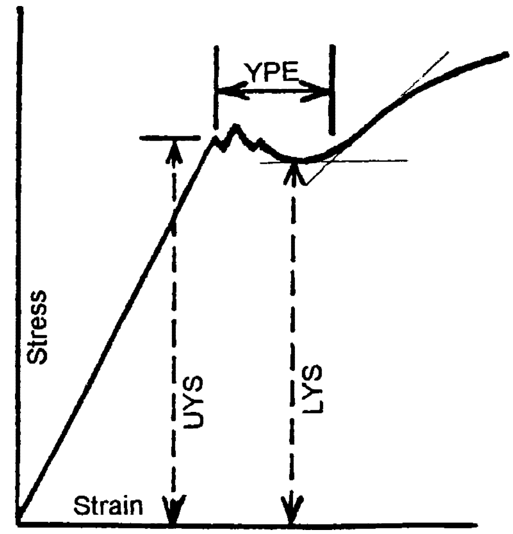

FIG. 2 Stress Strain Diagram Showing Yield Point Elongation and Upper and Lower Yield Strengths

where:
T = maximum twisting moment,
r = original outer radius, and
J = polar moment of inertia of the original cross section. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—When the proportional limit in shear is exceeded, the modulus of rupture in torsion is greater than the actual maximum shear stress in the extreme fiber, exclusive of the effect of stress concentration near points of application of torque.

Discussion—If the criterion for failure is other than fracture or attaining the first maximum of twisting moment, it should be so stated.

necking, *n*—the onset of nonuniform or localized plastic deformation, resulting in a localized reduction of cross-sectional area. **(E28.02)**

reduction of area, *n*—the difference between the original cross-sectional area of a tension test specimen and the area of its smallest cross section. The reduction of area is usually expressed as a percentage of the original cross-sectional area of the specimen. **(E28.04)**

Discussion—The smallest cross section may be measured at or after fracture as specified for the material under test.

Discussion—The term reduction of area when applied to metals generally means measurement after fracture; when applied to plastics and elastomers, measurement at fracture. Such interpretation is usually applicable to values for reduction of area reported in the literature when no further qualification is given.

shear fracture, *n*—a mode of fracture in crystalline materials resulting from translation along slip planes which are preferentially oriented in the direction of the shearing stress. **(E28.04)**

shear strength [FL^{-2}], *n*—the maximum shear stress which a material is capable of sustaining. Shear strength is calculated from the maximum force during a shear or torsion test and is based on the original dimensions of the cross section of the specimen. **(E28.04)**

slenderness ratio, *n*—the effective unsupported length of a uniform column divided by the least radius of gyration of the cross-sectional area. **(E28.04)**

tensile strength, S_u [FL^{-2}]**,** *n*—the maximum tensile stress which a material is capable of sustaining. Tensile strength is calculated from the maximum force during a tension test carried to rupture and the original cross-sectional area of the specimen. **(E28.04)**

total elongation, El_t**,** *n*—the elongation determined after fracture by realigning and fitting together of the broken ends of the specimen. **(E28.04)**

DISCUSSION—This definition is usually used for metallic materials.

uniform elongation, El_u[%]**,** *n*—the elongation determined at the maximum force sustained by the test piece just prior to necking, or fracture, or both. **(E28.04)**

DISCUSSION—Uniform elongation includes both elastic and plastic elongation.

upper yield strength, *UYS* [FL^{-2}]**,** *n*—the first stress maximum (stress at first zero slope) associated with discontinuous yielding. See Figs. 1 and 2, and Fig. 3 **(E28.04)**

yield point, *YP* [FL^{-2}]**,** *n*—term previously used, by E 8 and E 8M, for the property which is now referred to as **upper yield strength**. **(E28.04)**

yield point elongation, *YPE***,** *n*—the strain (expressed in percent) separating the stress-strain curve's first point of zero slope from the point of transition from discontinuous yielding to uniform strain hardening. **(E28.04)**

DISCUSSION—If the transition occurs over a range of strain, the *YPE* end point is the intersection between *(a)* a horizontal line tangent to the curve at the last zero slope and *(b)* a line drawn tangent to the strain hardening portion of the stress-strain curve at the point of inflection. If there is no point at or near the onset of yielding at which the slope reaches zero, the material has 0% *YPE.*

yield strength, *YS* or S_y [FL^{-2}]**,** *n*—the engineering stress at which, by convention, it is considered that plastic elongation of the material has commenced. This stress may be specified in terms of (*a*) a specified deviation from a linear stress-strain relationship, (*b*) a specified total extension attained, or (*c*) maximum or minimum engineering stresses measured during discontinuous yielding. **(E28.04)**

DISCUSSION—The following types of yield strengths, which correspond to the approaches listed above may be specified:
(*a*) *specified offset yield strength, n* (usually an offset strain of 0.2 % is specified)—the engineering stress at which the material has been plastically strained by an amount equal to the specified offset strain. This stress is reached at the point where the stress-strain curve intersects a line having a slope equal to the modulus of elasticity and constructed such that it is offset from the linear portion of the stress-strain curve by an amount equal to the specified strain (see Fig. 4).
(*b*) *specified extension under load yield strength, n* (usually a strain of 0.5 % is specified, although higher strains may need to be used in testing of elastomers, polymers, and high-strength materials, to ensure that the yield strength determined will exceed the material's elastic limit)—the engineering stress at which the material has elongated (including both elastic and plastic deformation) an amount corresponding to the specified strain. This stress is attained at the point where the stress-strain curve intersects a line drawn parallel to the stress axis at the specified strain on the strain axis (see Fig. 5).
(*c*) *upper or lower yield strengths, n*—the upper (first maximum) or the lower (minimum, ignoring transient effects) engineering stress measured during discontinuous yielding occurring at or near the onset of plastic deformation (see Figs. 1 and 2, and Fig. 3).

DISCUSSION—When yield strength is specified, the type of yield strength must be stated, along with the specified offset or extension under load, when applicable. The following are examples: *YS* (0.2 % offset), *YS* (0.5 % *EUL*), *UYS, LYS.*

DISCUSSION—Offset or extension under load yield strengths should be specified for continuously yielding materials, because upper and lower yield strengths are not defined for such materials. Determination of upper or lower yield strengths, or both, is often favored for discontinuously yielding materials, because offsets or extensions constructed would generally intersect the portion of the stress-strain curve reflecting the stress oscillations which are characteristic of discontinuous yielding.

DISCUSSION—The values obtained by the methods described above may differ. However, when discontinuous yielding causes the stress-strain curve to show a stress hesitation with no pronounced increases or decreases (see Fig. 1), the offset, *EUL* and upper and lower yield strengths generally approach or attain a common value.

DISCUSSION—Yield strength, however determined, is generally affected by speed of testing. However, upper and lower yield strengths can also be dramatically influenced by test equipment parameters such as stiffness and alignment. (For more information, consult Appendix 1 of E 8 or E 8M.)

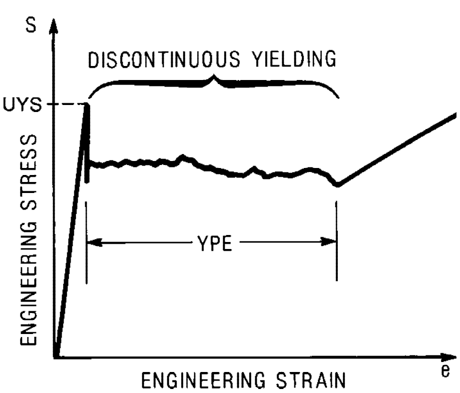

FIG. 3 Stress-Strain Diagram for Determination of Upper Yield Strength and Yield Point Elongation in a Material Exhibiting Discontinuous Yielding

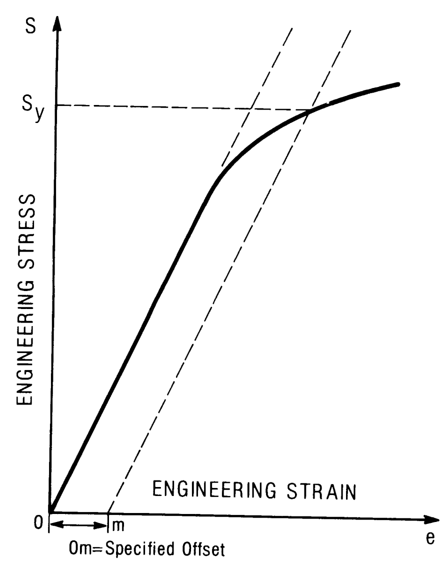

FIG. 4 Stress-Strain Diagram for Determination of Yield Strength by the Offset Method