



Designation: D 698 – 07^{e1}

Standard Test Methods for Laboratory Compaction Characteristics of Soil Using Standard Effort (12 400 ft-lbf/ft³ (600 kN-m/m³))¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 698; 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.

^{e1} NOTE—Figure 2 was editorially corrected in July 2007.

1. Scope*

1.1 These test methods cover laboratory compaction methods used to determine the relationship between molding water content and dry unit weight of soils (compaction curve) compacted in a 4 or 6-in. (101.6 or 152.4-mm) diameter mold with a 5.50-lbf (24.5-N) rammer dropped from a height of 12.0 in. (305 mm) producing a compactive effort of 12 400 ft-lbf/ft³ (600 kN-m/m³).

NOTE 1—The equipment and procedures are similar as those proposed by R. R. Proctor (*Engineering News Record*—September 7, 1933) with this one major exception: his rammer blows were applied as “12 inch firm strokes” instead of free fall, producing variable compactive effort depending on the operator, but probably in the range 15 000 to 25 000 ft-lbf/ft³ (700 to 1200 kN-m/m³). The standard effort test (see 3.1.3) is sometimes referred to as the Proctor Test.

1.1.1 Soils and soil-aggregate mixtures are to be regarded as natural occurring fine- or coarse-grained soils, or composites or mixtures of natural soils, or mixtures of natural and processed soils or aggregates such as gravel or crushed rock. Hereafter referred to as either soil or material.

1.2 These test methods apply only to soils (materials) that have 30 % or less by mass of particles retained on the ¾-in. (19.0-mm) sieve and have not been previously compacted in the laboratory; that is, do not reuse compacted soil.

1.2.1 For relationships between unit weights and molding water contents of soils with 30 % or less by mass of material retained on the ¾-in. (19.0-mm) sieve to unit weights and molding water contents of the fraction passing ¾-in. (19.0-mm) sieve, see Practice D 4718.

1.3 Three alternative methods are provided. The method used shall be as indicated in the specification for the material being tested. If no method is specified, the choice should be based on the material gradation.

1.3.1 Method A:

1.3.1.1 Mold—4-in. (101.6-mm) diameter.

1.3.1.2 Material—Passing No. 4 (4.75-mm) sieve.

1.3.1.3 Layers—Three.

1.3.1.4 Blows per Layer—25.

1.3.1.5 Usage—May be used if 25 % or less (see Section 1.4) by mass of the material is retained on the No. 4 (4.75-mm) sieve.

1.3.1.6 Other Usage—If this gradation requirement cannot be met, then Method C may be used.

1.3.2 Method B:

1.3.2.1 Mold—4-in. (101.6-mm) diameter.

1.3.2.2 Material—Passing ⅜-in. (9.5-mm) sieve.

1.3.2.3 Layers—Three.

1.3.2.4 Blows per Layer—25.

1.3.2.5 Usage—May be used if 25 % or less (see Section 1.4) by mass of the material is retained on the ⅜-in. (9.5-mm) sieve.

1.3.2.6 Other Usage—If this gradation requirement cannot be met, then Method C may be used.

1.3.3 Method C:

1.3.3.1 Mold—6-in. (152.4-mm) diameter.

1.3.3.2 Material—Passing ¾-in. (19.0-mm) sieve.

1.3.3.3 Layers—Three.

1.3.3.4 Blows per Layer—56.

1.3.3.5 Usage—May be used if 30 % or less (see Section 1.4) by mass of the material is retained on the ¾-in. (19.0-mm) sieve.

1.3.4 The 6-in. (152.4-mm) diameter mold shall not be used with Method A or B.

NOTE 2—Results have been found to vary slightly when a material is tested at the same compactive effort in different size molds, with the smaller mold size typically yielding larger values of density/unit weight (1, pp. 21+).²

1.4 If the test specimen contains more than 5 % by mass of oversize fraction (coarse fraction) and the material will not be included in the test, corrections must be made to the unit mass and molding water content of the specimen or to the appropriate field-in-place density test specimen using Practice D 4718.

¹ This standard is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D18 on Soil and Rock and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D18.03 on Texture, Plasticity and Density Characteristics of Soils.

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² The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this standard.

*A Summary of Changes section appears at the end of this standard.

1.5 This test method will generally produce a well-defined maximum dry unit weight for non-free draining soils. If this test method is used for free-draining soils the maximum unit weight may not be well defined, and can be less than obtained using Test Methods **D 4253**.

1.6 All observed and calculated values shall conform to the guidelines for significant digits and rounding established in Practice **D 6026**, unless superseded by this standard.

1.6.1 For purposes of comparing measured or calculated value(s) with specified limits, the measured or calculated value(s) shall be rounded to the nearest decimal or significant digits in the specified limits.

1.6.2 The procedures used to specify how data are collected/recorded or calculated, in this standard are regarded as the industry standard. In addition, they are representative of the significant digits that generally should be retained. The procedures used do not consider material variation, purpose for obtaining the data, special purpose studies, or any considerations for the user's objectives; and it is common practice to increase or reduce significant digits of reported data to be commensurate with these considerations. It is beyond the scope of this standard to consider significant digits used in analytical methods for engineering design.

1.7 The values in inch-pound units are to be regarded as the standard. The values stated in SI units are provided for information only, except for units of mass. The units for mass are given in SI units only, g or kg.

1.7.1 It is common practice in the engineering profession to concurrently use pounds to represent both a unit of mass (lbm) and a force (lbf). This implicitly combines two separate systems of units; that is, the absolute system and the gravitational system. It is scientifically undesirable to combine the use of two separate sets of inch-pound units within a single standard. This standard has been written using the gravitational system of units when dealing with the inch-pound system. In this system, the pound (lbf) represents a unit of force (weight). However, the use of balances or scales recording pounds of mass (lbm) or the recording of density in lbm/ft³ shall not be regarded as a nonconformance with this standard.

1.8 *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 and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:³

- C 127** Test Method for Density, Relative Density (Specific Gravity), and Absorption of Coarse Aggregate
- C 136** Test Method for Sieve Analysis of Fine and Coarse Aggregates
- D 653** Terminology Relating to Soil, Rock, and Contained Fluids

- D 854** Test Methods for Specific Gravity of Soil Solids by Water Pycnometer
- D 2168** Test Methods for Calibration of Laboratory Mechanical-Rammer Soil Compactors
- D 2216** Test Methods for Laboratory Determination of Water (Moisture) Content of Soil and Rock by Mass
- D 2487** Practice for Classification of Soils for Engineering Purposes (Unified Soil Classification System)
- D 2488** Practice for Description and Identification of Soils (Visual-Manual Procedure)
- D 3740** Practice for Minimum Requirements for Agencies Engaged in the Testing and/or Inspection of Soil and Rock as Used in Engineering Design and Construction
- D 4253** Test Methods for Maximum Index Density and Unit Weight of Soils Using a Vibratory Table
- D 4718** Practice for Correction of Unit Weight and Water Content for Soils Containing Oversize Particles
- D 4753** Guide for Evaluating, Selecting, and Specifying Balances and Standard Masses for Use in Soil, Rock, and Construction Materials Testing
- D 4914** Test Methods for Density of Soil and Rock in Place by the Sand Replacement Method in a Test Pit
- D 5030** Test Method for Density of Soil and Rock in Place by the Water Replacement Method in a Test Pit
- D 6026** Practice for Using Significant Digits in Geotechnical Data
- D 6913** Test Methods for Particle-Size Distribution (Gradation) of Soils Using Sieve Analysis
- E 11** Specification for Wire Cloth and Sieves for Testing Purposes
- E 177** Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods
- E 691** Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method
- IEEE/ASTM SI 10 Standard for Use of the International System of Units (SI): the Modern Metric System

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—See Terminology **D 653** for general definitions.

3.1.1 *molding water content, n*—the adjusted water content of a soil (material) that will be compacted/reconstituted.

3.1.2 *standard effort—in compaction testing*, the term for the 12 400 ft-lbf/ft³ (600 kN-m/m³) compactive effort applied by the equipment and methods of this test.

3.1.3 *standard maximum dry unit weight, $\gamma_{d,max}$ in lbf/ft³ (kN/m³)—in compaction testing*, the maximum value defined by the compaction curve for a compaction test using standard effort.

3.1.4 *standard optimum water content, w_{opt} in %—in compaction testing*, the molding water content at which a soil can be compacted to the maximum dry unit weight using standard compactive effort.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *oversize fraction (coarse fraction), P_C in %*—the portion of total specimen not used in performing the compaction test; it may be the portion of total specimen retained on the No. 4 (4.75-mm) sieve in Method A, $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. (9.5-mm) sieve in Method B, or $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. (19.0-mm) sieve in Method C.

³ 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.

3.2.2 *test fraction (finer fraction), P_F in %*—the portion of the total specimen used in performing the compaction test; it is the fraction passing the No. 4 (4.75-mm) sieve in Method A, passing the $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. (9.5-mm) sieve in Method B, or passing the $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. (19.0-mm) sieve in Method C.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 A soil at a selected molding water content is placed in three layers into a mold of given dimensions, with each layer compacted by 25 or 56 blows of a 5.50-lbf (24.47-N) rammer dropped from a distance of 12.00 in. (304.8 mm), subjecting the soil to a total compactive effort of about 12 400 ft-lbf/ft³ (600 kN-m/m³). The resulting dry unit weight is determined. The procedure is repeated for a sufficient number of molding water contents to establish a relationship between the dry unit weight and the molding water content for the soil. This data, when plotted, represents a curvilinear relationship known as the compaction curve. The values of optimum water content and standard maximum dry unit weight are determined from the compaction curve.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 Soil placed as engineering fill (embankments, foundation pads, road bases) is compacted to a dense state to obtain satisfactory engineering properties such as, shear strength, compressibility, or permeability. In addition, foundation soils are often compacted to improve their engineering properties. Laboratory compaction tests provide the basis for determining the percent compaction and molding water content needed to achieve the required engineering properties, and for controlling construction to assure that the required compaction and water contents are achieved.

5.2 During design of an engineered fill, shear, consolidation, permeability, or other tests require preparation of test specimens by compacting at some molding water content to some unit weight. It is common practice to first determine the optimum water content (w_{opt}) and maximum dry unit weight ($\gamma_{d,max}$) by means of a compaction test. Test specimens are compacted at a selected molding water content (w), either wet or dry of optimum (w_{opt}) or at optimum (w_{opt}), and at a selected dry unit weight related to a percentage of maximum dry unit weight ($\gamma_{d,max}$). The selection of molding water content (w), either wet or dry of optimum (w_{opt}) or at optimum (w_{opt}) and the dry unit weight ($\gamma_{d,max}$) may be based on past experience, or a range of values may be investigated to determine the necessary percent of compaction.

5.3 Experience indicates that the methods outlined in 5.2 or the construction control aspects discussed in 5.1 are extremely difficult to implement or yield erroneous results when dealing with certain soils. 5.3.1-5.3.3 describe typical problem soils, the problems encountered when dealing with such soils and possible solutions for these problems.

5.3.1 *Oversize Fraction*—Soils containing more than 30 % oversize fraction (material retained on the $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. (19-mm) sieve) are a problem. For such soils, there is no ASTM test method to control their compaction and very few laboratories are equipped to determine the laboratory maximum unit weight (density) of such soils (USDI Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, CO and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg, MS).

Although Test Methods D 4914 and D 5030 determine the “field” dry unit weight of such soils, they are difficult and expensive to perform.

5.3.1.1 One method to design and control the compaction of such soils is to use a test fill to determine the required degree of compaction and the method to obtain that compaction, followed by use of a method specification to control the compaction. Components of a method specification typically contain the type and size of compaction equipment to be used, the lift thickness, acceptable range in molding water content, and the number of passes.

NOTE 3—Success in executing the compaction control of an earthwork project, especially when a method specification is used, is highly dependent upon the quality and experience of the contractor and inspector.

5.3.1.2 Another method is to apply the use of density correction factors developed by the USDI Bureau of Reclamation (2,3) and U.S. Corps of Engineers (4). These correction factors may be applied for soils containing up to about 50 to 70 % oversize fraction. Each agency uses a different term for these density correction factors. The USDI Bureau of Reclamation uses *D* ratio (or *D*-VALUE), while the U.S. Corps of Engineers uses Density Interference Coefficient (I_c).

5.3.1.3 The use of the replacement technique (Test Method D 698-78, Method D), in which the oversize fraction is replaced with a finer fraction, is inappropriate to determine the maximum dry unit weight, $\gamma_{d,max}$, of soils containing oversize fractions (4).

5.3.2 *Degradation*—Soils containing particles that degrade during compaction are a problem, especially when more degradation occurs during laboratory compaction than field compaction, as is typical. Degradation typically occurs during the compaction of a granular-residual soil or aggregate. When degradation occurs, the maximum dry-unit weight increases (1, p. 73) so that the laboratory maximum value is not representative of field conditions. Often, in these cases, the maximum dry unit weight is impossible to achieve in the field.

5.3.2.1 Again, for soils subject to degradation, the use of test fills and method specifications may help. Use of replacement techniques is not correct.

5.3.3 *Gap Graded*—Gap-graded soils (soils containing many large particles with limited small particles) are a problem because the compacted soil will have larger voids than usual. To handle these large voids, standard test methods (laboratory or field) typically have to be modified using engineering judgement.

NOTE 4—The quality of the result produced by this standard is dependent on the competence of the personnel performing it, and the suitability of the equipment and facilities used. Agencies that meet the criteria of Practice D 3740 are generally considered capable of competent and objective testing/sampling/inspection, and the like. Users of this standard are cautioned that compliance with Practice D 3740 does not in itself assure reliable results. Reliable results depend on many factors; Practice D 3740 provides a means of evaluating some of those factors.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Mold Assembly*—The molds shall be cylindrical in shape, made of rigid metal and be within the capacity and dimensions indicated in 6.1.1 or 6.1.2 and Figs. 1 and 2. See also Table 1. The walls of the mold may be solid, split, or

As an option to the full length stud, a 2 1/2" x 3/8" stud may be used. Then as an alternative construction, the collar may be held down with a slotted bracket attached to the collar and a pin in the mold.

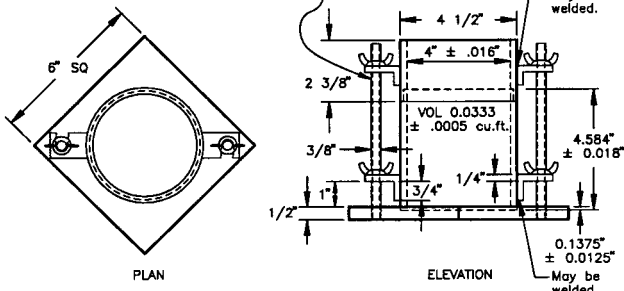


FIG. 1 4.0-in. Cylindrical Mold

As an option to the full length stud, a 2 1/2" x 3/8" stud may be used. Then as an alternative construction, the collar may be held down with a slotted bracket attached to the collar and a pin in the mold.

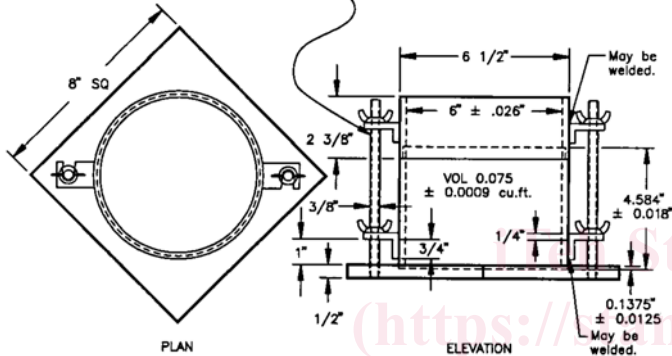


FIG. 2 6.0-in. Cylindrical Mold

TABLE 1 Metric Equivalents for Figs. 1 and 2

in.	mm
0.016	0.41
0.026	0.66
0.032	0.81
0.028	0.71
1/2	12.70
2 1/2	63.50
2 5/8	66.70
4	101.60
4 1/2	114.30
4.584	116.43
4 3/4	120.60
6	152.40
6 1/2	165.10
6 5/8	168.30
6 3/4	171.40
8 1/4	209.60
ft ³	cm ³
1/30 (0.0333)	943
0.0005	14
(0.0750)	2,124
0.0011	31

tapered. The "split" type may consist of two half-round sections, or a section of pipe split along one element, which can be securely locked together to form a cylinder meeting the requirements of this section. The "tapered" type shall have an internal diameter taper that is uniform and not more than 0.200 in./ft (16.7 mm/m) of mold height. Each mold shall have a base plate and an extension collar assembly, both made of rigid

metal and constructed so they can be securely attached and easily detached from the mold. The extension collar assembly shall have a height extending above the top of the mold of at least 2.0 in. (51 mm) which may include an upper section that flares out to form a funnel, provided there is at least a 0.75 in. (19 mm) straight cylindrical section beneath it. The extension collar shall align with the inside of the mold. The bottom of the base plate and bottom of the centrally recessed area that accepts the cylindrical mold shall be planar within ±0.005 in. (±0.1 mm).

6.1.1 *Mold, 4 in.*—A mold having a 4.000 ± 0.016-in. (101.6 ± 0.4-mm) average inside diameter, a height of 4.584 ± 0.018 in. (116.4 ± 0.5 mm) and a volume of 0.0333 ± 0.0005 ft³ (943.0 ± 14 cm³). A mold assembly having the minimum required features is shown in Fig. 1.

6.1.2 *Mold, 6 in.*—A mold having a 6.000 ± 0.026-in. (152.4 ± 0.7-mm) average inside diameter, a height of 4.584 ± 0.018 in. (116.4 ± 0.5 mm), and a volume of 0.0750 ± 0.0009 ft³ (2124 ± 25 cm³). A mold assembly having the minimum required features is shown in Fig. 2.

6.2 *Rammer*—A rammer, either manually operated as described further in 6.2.1 or mechanically operated as described in 6.2.2. The rammer shall fall freely through a distance of 12.00 ± 0.05 in. (304.8 ± 1 mm) from the surface of the specimen. The weight of the rammer shall be 5.50 ± 0.02 lbf (24.47 ± 0.09 N, or mass of 2.495 ± 0.023 kg), except that the weight of the mechanical rammers may be adjusted as described in Test Methods D 2168; see Note 5. The striking face of the rammer shall be planar and circular, except as noted in 6.2.2.1, with a diameter when new of 2.000 ± 0.005 in. (50.80 ± 0.13 mm). The rammer shall be replaced if the striking face becomes worn or bellied to the extent that the diameter exceeds 2.000 ± 0.01 in. (50.80 ± 0.25 mm).

NOTE 5—It is a common and acceptable practice to determine the weight of the rammer using either a kilogram or pound balance and assume 1 lbf is equivalent to 0.4536 kg, 1 lbf is equivalent to 1 lbm, or 1 N is equivalent to 0.2248 lbf or 0.1020 kg.

6.2.1 *Manual Rammer*—The rammer shall be equipped with a guide sleeve that has sufficient clearance that the free fall of the rammer shaft and head is not restricted. The guide sleeve shall have at least four vent holes at each end (eight holes total) located with centers 3/4 ± 1/16 in. (19 ± 2 mm) from each end and spaced 90 degrees apart. The minimum diameter of the vent holes shall be 3/8 in. (9.5 mm). Additional holes or slots may be incorporated in the guide sleeve.

6.2.2 *Mechanical Rammer-Circular Face*—The rammer shall operate mechanically in such a manner as to provide uniform and complete coverage of the specimen surface. There shall be 0.10 ± 0.03-in. (2.5 ± 0.8-mm) clearance between the rammer and the inside surface of the mold at its smallest diameter. The mechanical rammer shall meet the standardization/calibration requirements of Test Methods D 2168. The mechanical rammer shall be equipped with a positive mechanical means to support the rammer when not in operation.

6.2.2.1 *Mechanical Rammer-Sector Face*—The sector face shall be used with the 6-in. (152.4-mm) mold, in place of the circular face rammer. The striking face shall have the shape of

a sector of a circle of radius equal to 2.90 ± 0.02 in. (73.7 ± 0.5 mm) and an area about the same as the circular face, see 6.2. The rammer shall operate in such a manner that the vertex of the sector is positioned at the center of the specimen.

6.3 *Sample Extruder (optional)*—A jack, with frame or other device adapted for the purpose of extruding compacted specimens from the mold.

6.4 *Balance*—A Class GP5 balance meeting the requirements of Specification D 4753 for a balance of 1-g readability. If the water content of the compacted specimens is determined using a representative portion of the specimen, rather than the whole specimen, and if the representative portion is less than 1000 g, a Class GP2 balance having a 0.1-g readability is needed in order to comply with Test Methods D 2216 requirements for determining water content to 0.1 %.

NOTE 6—Use of a balance having an equivalent capacity and a readability of 0.002 lbm as an alternative to a class GP5 balance should not be regarded as nonconformance to this standard.

6.5 *Drying Oven*—Thermostatically controlled oven, capable of maintaining a uniform temperature of $230 \pm 9^\circ\text{F}$ ($110 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$) throughout the drying chamber. These requirements typically require the use of a forced-draft type oven. Preferably the oven should be vented outside the building.

6.6 *Straightedge*—A stiff metal straightedge of any convenient length but not less than 10 in. (250 mm). The total length of the straightedge shall be machined straight to a tolerance of ± 0.005 in. (± 0.1 mm). The scraping edge shall be beveled if it is thicker than $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (3 mm).

6.7 *Sieves*— $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (19.0 mm), $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (9.5 mm), and No. 4 (4.75 mm), conforming to the requirements of Specification E 11.

6.8 *Mixing Tools*—Miscellaneous tools such as mixing pan, spoon, trowel, spatula, spraying device (to add water evenly), and (preferably, but optional) suitable mechanical device for thoroughly mixing the subspecimen of soil with increments of water.

7. Standardization/Calibration

7.1 Perform standardizations before initial use, after repairs or other occurrences that might affect the test results, at intervals not exceeding 1,000 test specimens, or annually, whichever occurs first, for the following apparatus:

7.1.1 *Balance*—Evaluate in accordance with Specification D 4753.

7.1.2 *Molds*—Determine the volume as described in Annex A1.

7.1.3 *Manual Rammer*—Verify the free fall distance, rammer weight, and rammer face are in accordance with 6.2. Verify the guide sleeve requirements are in accordance with 6.2.1.

7.1.4 *Mechanical Rammer*—Verify and adjust if necessary that the mechanical rammer is in accordance with Test Method D 2168. In addition, the clearance between the rammer and the inside surface of the mold shall be verified in accordance with 6.2.2.

8. Test Specimen

8.1 The minimum specimen (test fraction) mass for Methods A and B is about 16 kg, and for Method C is about 29 kg

of dry soil. Therefore, the field sample should have a moist mass of at least 23 kg and 45 kg, respectively. Greater masses would be required if the oversize fraction is large (see 10.2 or 10.3) or an additional molding water content is taken during compaction of each point (see 10.4.2.1).

8.2 If gradation data is not available, estimate the percentage of material (by mass) retained on the No. 4 (4.75-mm), $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. (9.5-mm), or $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. (19.0-mm) sieve as appropriate for selecting Method A, B, or C, respectively. If it appears the percentage retained of interest is close to the allowable value for a given Method (A, B, or C), then either:

8.2.1 Select a Method that allows a higher percentage retained (B or C).

8.2.2 Using the Method of interest, process the specimen in accordance with 10.2 or 10.3, this determines the percentage retained for that method. If acceptable, proceed, if not go to the next Method (B or C).

8.2.3 Determine percentage retained values by using a representative portion from the total sample, and performing a simplified or complete gradation analysis using the sieve(s) of interest and Test Method D 6913 or C 136. It is only necessary to calculate the retained percentage(s) for the sieve or sieves for which information is desired.

9. Preparation of Apparatus

9.1 Select the proper compaction mold(s), collar, and base plate in accordance with the Method (A, B, or C) being used. Check that its volume is known and determined with or without base plate, free of nicks or dents, and will fit together properly.

NOTE 7—Mass requirements are given in 10.4.

9.2 Check that the manual or mechanical rammer assembly is in good working condition and that parts are not loose or worn. Make any necessary adjustments or repairs. If adjustments or repairs are made, the rammer must be re-standardized.

10. Procedure

10.1 Soils:

10.1.1 Do not reuse soil that has been previously compacted in the laboratory. The reuse of previously compacted soil yields a significantly greater maximum dry unit weight (1, p. 31).

10.1.2 When using this test method for soils containing hydrated halloysite, or in which past experience indicates that results will be altered by air-drying, use the moist preparation method (see 10.2). In referee testing, each laboratory has to use the same method of preparation, either moist (preferred) or air-dried.

10.1.3 Prepare the soil specimens for testing in accordance with 10.2 (preferred) or with 10.3.

10.2 *Moist Preparation Method (preferred)*—Without previously drying the sample/specimen, process it over a No. 4 (4.75-mm), $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. (9.5-mm), or $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. (19.0-mm) sieve, depending on the Method (A, B, or C) being used or required as covered in 8.2. For additional processing details, see Test Method D 6913. Determine and record the mass of both the retained and passing portions (oversize fraction and test fraction, respectively) to the nearest g. Oven dry the oversize fraction and determine and record its dry mass to the nearest g. If it appears more than 0.5 % of the total dry mass of the

TABLE 2 Required Standing Times of Moisturized Specimens

Classification	Minimum Standing Time, h
GW, GP, SW, SP	No Requirement
GM, SM	3
All other soils	16

specimen is adhering to the oversize fraction, wash that fraction. Then determine and record its oven dry mass to the nearest g. Determine and record the water content of the processed soil (test fraction). Using that water content, determine and record the oven dry mass of the test fraction to the nearest g. Based on these oven dry masses, the percent oversize fraction, P_C , and test fraction, P_F , shall be determined and recorded, unless a gradation analysis has already been performed, see Section 11 on Calculations.

10.2.1 From the test fraction, select and prepare at least four (preferably five) subspecimens having molding water contents such that they bracket the estimated optimum water content. A subspecimen having a molding water content close to optimum should be prepared first by trial additions or removals of water and mixing (see Note 8). Select molding water contents for the rest of the subspecimens to provide at least two subspecimens wet and two subspecimens dry of optimum, and molding water contents varying by about 2%. At least two molding water contents are necessary on the wet and dry side of optimum to define the dry-unit-weight compaction curve (see 10.5). Some soils with very high optimum water content or a relatively flat compaction curve may require larger molding water content increments to obtain a well-defined maximum dry unit weight. Molding water content increments should not exceed about 4%.

NOTE 8—With practice it is usually possible to visually judge a point near optimum water content. Typically, cohesive soils at the optimum water content can be squeezed into a lump that sticks together when hand pressure is released, but will break cleanly into two sections when “bent.” They tend to crumble at molding water contents dry of optimum; while, they tend to stick together in a sticky cohesive mass wet of optimum. The optimum water content is typically slightly less than the plastic limit. While for cohesionless soils, the optimum water content is typically close to zero or at the point where bleeding occurs.

10.2.2 Thoroughly mix the test fraction, then using a scoop select representative soil for each subspecimen (compaction point). Select about 2.3 kg when using Method A or B, or about 5.9 kg for Method C. Test Method D 6913 section on Specimen and Annex A2 gives additional details on obtaining representative soil using this procedure and why it is the preferred method. To obtain the subspecimen’s molding water contents selected in 10.2.1, add or remove the required amounts of water as follows. To add water, spray it into the soil during mixing; to remove water, allow the soil to dry in air at ambient temperature or in a drying apparatus such that the temperature of the sample does not exceed 140°F (60°C). Mix the soil frequently during drying to facilitate an even water content distribution. Thoroughly mix each subspecimen to facilitate even distribution of water throughout and then place in a separate covered container to stand (cure) in accordance with Table 2 prior to compaction. For selecting a standing time, the soil may be classified using Practice D 2487, Practice D 2488

or data on other samples from the same material source. For referee testing, classification shall be by Practice D 2487.

10.3 *Dry Preparation Method*—If the sample/specimen is too damp to be friable, reduce the water content by air drying until the material is friable. Drying may be in air or by the use of drying apparatus such that the temperature of the sample does not exceed 140°F (60°C). Thoroughly break up the aggregations in such a manner as to avoid breaking individual particles. Process the material over the appropriate sieve: No. 4 (4.75-mm), 3/8-in. (9.5-mm), or 3/4-in. (19.0-mm). When preparing the material by passing over the 3/4-in. sieve for compaction in the 6-in. mold, break up aggregations sufficiently to at least pass the 3/8-in. sieve in order to facilitate the distribution of water throughout the soil in later mixing. Determine and record the water content of the test fraction and all masses covered in 10.2, as applicable to determine the percent oversize fraction, P_C , and test fraction, P_F .

10.3.1 From the test fraction, select and prepare at least four (preferably five) subspecimens in accordance with 10.2.1 and 10.2.2, except for the following: Use either a mechanical splitting or quartering process to obtain the subspecimens. As stated in Test Method D 6913, both of these processes will yield non-uniform subspecimens compared to the moist procedure. Typically, only the addition of water to each subspecimen will be required.

10.4 *Compaction*—After standing (curing), if required, each subspecimen (compaction point) shall be compacted as follows:

10.4.1 Determine and record the mass of the mold or mold and base plate, see 10.4.7.

10.4.2 Assemble and secure the mold and collar to the base plate. Check the alignment of the inner wall of the mold and mold extension collar. Adjust if necessary. The mold shall rest, without wobbling/rocking on a uniform rigid foundation, such as provided by a cylinder or cube of concrete with a weight or mass of not less than 200-lbf or 91-kg, respectively. Secure the base plate to the rigid foundation. The method of attachment to the rigid foundation shall allow easy removal of the assembled mold, collar and base plate after compaction is completed.

10.4.2.1 During compaction, it is advantageous but not required to determine the water content of each subspecimen. This provides a check on the molding water content determined for each compaction point and the magnitude of bleeding, see 10.4.9. However, more soil will have to be selected for each subspecimen than stated in 10.2.2.

10.4.3 Compact the soil in three layers. After compaction, each layer should be approximately equal in thickness and extend into the collar. Prior to compaction, place the loose soil into the mold and spread into a layer of uniform thickness. Lightly tamp the soil prior to compaction until it is not in a fluffy or loose state, using either the manual rammer or a 2±-in. (50±-mm) diameter cylinder. Following compaction of each of the first two layers, any soil that has not been compacted; such as adjacent to the mold walls or extends above the compacted surface (up the mold walls) shall be trimmed. The trimmed soil shall be discarded. A knife or other suitable device may be used. The total amount of soil used shall be such that the third compacted layer slightly extends into the