



Designation: D 4533 – 91 (Reapproved 1996)

Standard Test Method for Trapezoid Tearing Strength of Geotextiles¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 4533; 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 approval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method is an index test used to measure the force required to continue or propagate a tear in woven or non-woven geotextiles by the trapezoid method. While useful for quality control and acceptance testing, the trapezoid tear test does not provide all the information needed for all design applications and other test methods should be used.

1.2 This test method is applicable to most geotextiles that include woven fabrics, nonwoven fabrics, layered fabrics, knit fabrics, and felts that are used for geotextile applications.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard.

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

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 76 Specification for Tensile Testing Machines for Textiles²

D 123 Terminology Relating to Textiles²

D 1776 Practice for Conditioning Textiles for Testing²

D 2905 Practice for Statements on Number of Specimens for Textiles²

D 4354 Practice for Sampling of Geosynthetics for Testing³

D 4439 Terminology for Relating to Geosynthetics³

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *atmosphere for testing geotextiles, n*—air maintained at a relative humidity of $65 \pm 5\%$ and a temperature of $21 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$ ($70 \pm 4^\circ\text{F}$).

3.1.2 *geotextile, n*—any permeable textile material used with foundation, soil, rock, earth, or any other geotechnical engineering related material as an integral part of a man-made product, structure, or system.

3.1.3 *tearing strength, n*—the force required to either (1) start, or (2) continue or propagate a tear in a fabric under specified conditions.

3.1.3.1 *Discussion*—This test method uses the maximum value of the tearing force as the tearing strength.

3.1.4 For definitions of other terms used in this test method, refer to Terminology D 123 or Terminology D 4439.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 An outline of an isosceles trapezoid is marked on a rectangular specimen cut for the determination of tearing strength (see Fig. 1), and the nonparallel sides of the trapezoid marked on the specimen are clamped in parallel jaws of a tensile testing machine. The separation of the jaws is continuously increased so the tear propagates across the specimen. At the same time, the force developed is recorded. The tearing strength, which is the maximum value of the tearing force, is obtained from the autographic force – extension curve (see Fig. 2).

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The trapezoid tear method is a test that produces tension along a reasonably defined course such that the tear propagates across the width of the specimen. The trapezoid tearing strength for woven fabrics is determined primarily by the properties of the yarns that are gripped in the clamps. In nonwoven fabrics, because the individual fibers are more or less randomly oriented and capable of some reorientation in the direction of the applied load, the maximum trapezoid tearing strength is reached when the resistance to further reorientation is greater than the force required to rupture one or more fibers simultaneously.

5.2 The trapezoid tearing strength method is useful for estimating the relative tear resistance of different fabrics or different directions in the same fabric.

5.3 This test method may be used for acceptance testing of commercial shipments; however, caution is advised since information about between-laboratory precision is incomplete. Comparative tests as directed in 5.3.1 may be advisable.

5.3.1 In case of a dispute arising from differences in reported test results when using this test method for acceptance testing of commercial shipments, the purchaser and the supplier should conduct comparative tests to determine if there is

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D-35 on Geosynthetics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D35.01 on Mechanical Properties.

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 07.01.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 04.13.

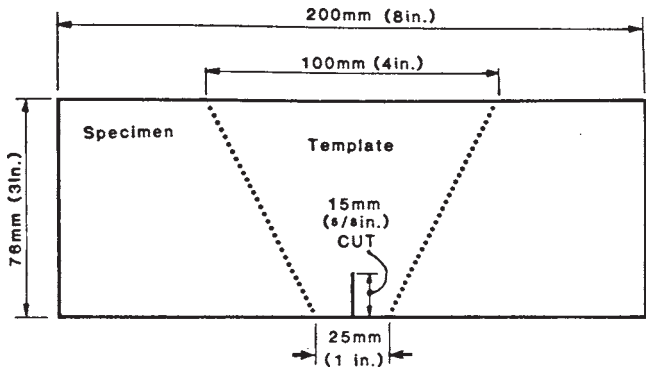


FIG. 1 Trapezoidal Template for Trapezoid Tearing Strength Test

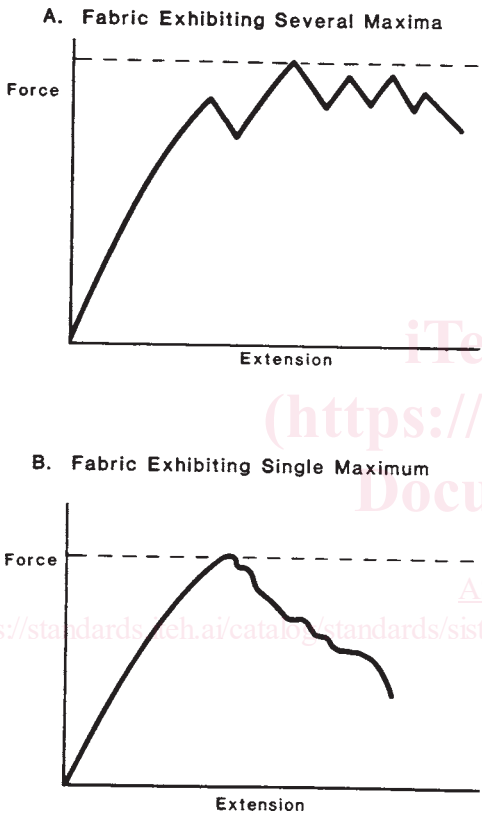


FIG. 2 Typical Tearing Force – Extension Curves for Individual Test Specimens

a statistical bias between their laboratories. Competent statistical assistance is recommended for the investigation of bias. As a minimum, the two parties should take a group of test specimens that are as homogeneous as possible and that are from a lot of material of the type in question. Test specimens should then be randomly assigned in equal numbers to each laboratory for testing. The average results from the two laboratories should be compared using the appropriate Student's *t*-test and an acceptable probability level chosen by the two parties before testing is begun. If a bias is found, either its cause must be found and corrected or the purchaser and the supplier must agree to interpret future test results in the light of the known bias.

5.4 Most geotextile fabrics can be tested by this test method. Some modification of clamping techniques may be necessary

for a given fabric, depending upon its structure. Special adaptation may be necessary with strong fabrics, or fabrics made from glass fibers, to prevent them from slipping in the clamps or being damaged as a result of being gripped in the clamps.

5.5 This test method may be used with constant-rate-of-traverse (CRT) or constant-rate-of-extension (CRE) type tension machines. However, there may be no overall correlation between the results obtained with the CRT machine and the CRE machine. Consequently, these two tension testers cannot be used interchangeably. In case of controversy, the CRE machine shall prevail.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Tensile Testing Machine*, of the constant-rate-of-extension (CRE) or constant-rate-of-traverse (CRT) type with autographic recorder conforming to the requirements of Specification D 76.

6.2 *Clamps*, having all gripping surfaces parallel, flat, and capable of preventing slipping of the specimen during a test, and measuring 50.8 by no less than 76.2 mm (2 by no less than 3 in.), with the longer dimension perpendicular to the direction of application of the load.

6.3 *Trapezoidal Template*, optional, having the dimensions shown in Fig. 1.

7. Sampling and Selection

7.1 *Lot Sample*—As a lot sample for acceptance testing, take at random the number of rolls of fabric directed in an applicable material specification or other agreement between the purchaser and the supplier, such as agreement to sample as directed in Practice D 4354. Consider rolls of fabric to be the primary sampling units.

NOTE 1—An adequate specification or other agreement between the purchaser and the supplier requires taking into account the variability between rolls of fabric and between specimens from a swatch from a roll of fabric so as to provide a sampling plan with a meaningful producer's risk, consumer's risk, acceptable quality level, and limiting quality level.

7.2 *Laboratory Sample*—Take for the laboratory sample a sample extending the width of the fabric and approximately 1 m (39.37 in.) along the selvage from each roll in the lot sample. The sample may be taken from the end portion of a roll, provided there is no evidence that it is distorted or different from other portions of the roll. In cases of dispute, take a sample that will exclude fabric from the outer wrap of the roll or the inner wrap around the core.

7.3 *Test Specimens*—Take test specimens as follows:

7.3.1 *Woven Fabrics*—Take the specimens to be used for the measurement of the tearing strength of machine direction yarns from different sets of machine direction yarns. Take the specimens to be used for the measurement of the tearing strength of cross-machine direction yarns from different sets of cross-machine direction yarns and, when possible, from fabric woven from different bobbins.

7.3.2 *Nonwoven Fabrics*—Take the specimens for the measurement of the machine direction tearing strength from different positions across the fabric. Take the specimens for the measurement of the cross-machine direction tearing strength from different positions along the length of the fabric.