



Designation: D 4632 – 91 (Reapproved 1996)

Standard Test Method for Grab Breaking Load and Elongation of Geotextiles¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method is an index test which provides a procedure for determining the breaking load (grab strength) and elongation (grab elongation) of geotextiles using the grab method. This test method is not suitable for knitted fabrics and alternate test methods should be used. While useful for quality control and acceptance testing for a specific fabric structure, the results can only be used comparatively between fabrics with very similar structures, because each different fabric structure performs in a unique and characteristic manner in this test. The grab test methods does not provide all the information needed for all design applications and other test methods should be used.

1.2 Procedures for measuring the breaking load and elongation by the grab method in both the dry and wet state are included; however, testing is normally done in the dry condition unless specified otherwise in an agreement or specification.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. The values stated in inch-pound units are provided for information only.

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 461 Methods of Testing Felt²
- D 1682 Test Methods for Breaking Load and Elongation of Textile Fabrics²
- D 1776 Practice for Conditioning Textiles for Testing²
- D 2905 Practice for Statements on Number of Specimens for Textiles²

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.

- D 4354 Practice for Sampling of Geosynthetics for Testing³
- D 4439 Terminology for Geotextiles³

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

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

3.1.2 *breaking load, n*—the maximum force applied to a specimen in a tensile test carried to rupture.

3.1.3 *cross-machine direction, n*—the direction in the plane of the fabric perpendicular to the direction of manufacture.

3.1.4 *elongation at break, n*—the elongation corresponding to the breaking load, that is, the maximum load.

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

3.1.6 *grab test, n*—*in fabric testing*, a tension test in which only a part of the width of the specimen is gripped in the clamps.

3.1.6.1 *Discussion*—For example, if the specimen width is 101.6 mm (4 in.) and the width of the jaw faces 25.4 mm (1 in.), the specimen is gripped centrally in the clamps.

3.1.7 *machine direction, n*—the direction in the plane of the fabric parallel to the direction of manufacture.

3.1.8 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 A continually increasing load is applied longitudinally to the specimen and the test is carried to rupture. Values for the breaking load and elongation of the test specimen are obtained from machine scales or dials, autographic recording charts, or interfaced computers.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The grab method is applicable whenever it is desired to determine the “effective strength” of the fabric in use, that is, the strength of the material in a specific width, together with the additional strength contributed by adjacent material. There is no simple relationship between grab tests and strip tests since

³ Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 04.13.

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the amount of fabric assistance depends on the construction of the fabric. It is useful as a quality control or acceptance test.

5.2 The procedure in Test Method D 4632 for the determination of grab strength of geotextiles may be used for acceptance testing of commercial shipments, but caution is advised since information about between-laboratory precision is incomplete. Comparative tests as directed in 5.2.1 are advisable.

5.2.1 In case of a dispute arising from differences in reported test results when using the procedures in Test Method D 4632 for acceptance testing of commercial shipments, the purchaser and the manufacturer should conduct comparative tests to determine if there is 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 which are from a lot of material of the type in question. The 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 manufacturer must agree to interpret future test results in the light of the known bias.

5.3 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, such as cushioning the clamp or boarding the specimen within the clamp.

5.4 This test method is applicable for testing fabrics either dry or wet. It 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. Each clamp shall have one jaw face measuring 25.4 by 50.8 mm (1 by 2 in.), with the longer dimension parallel to the direction of application of the load. The other jaw face of each clamp shall be at least as large as its mate. Each jaw face shall be in line, both with respect to its mate in the same clamp and to the corresponding jaw of the other clamp.

7. Sampling and Selection

7.1 *Division into Lots and Lot Samples*—Divide the material into lots and take a lot sample as directed in Practice D 4354. Rolls of fabric are the primary sampling unit.

7.2 *Laboratory Sample*—Take for the laboratory sample a swatch extending the width of the fabric and approximately 1 m (39.37 in.) along the selvage from each roll in the lot sample. The swatch 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 swatch that will exclude fabric from the outer wrap of the roll or the inner wrap around the core.

7.3 *Test Specimens*—Cut the number of specimens from each swatch in the laboratory sample determined as directed in Section 8. Take no specimens nearer the selvage of fabric edge than $\frac{1}{20}$ of the fabric width or 150 mm (6 in.), whichever is the smaller. Cut rectangular specimens 101.6 by 203.2 mm (4 by 8 in.). Cut the specimens to be used for grab tests in the machine direction with the longer dimension parallel to the machine direction and the specimens to be used for grab tests in the cross-machine direction with the longer dimension parallel to the cross-machine direction. Locate each group of specimens along a diagonal line on the swatch so that each specimen will contain different warp ends and filling picks. Draw a line 37 mm (1.5 in.) from the edge of the specimen running its full length. For woven and reinforced nonwoven fabrics, this line must be accurately parallel to the lengthwise yarns in the specimen.

8. Number of Specimens

8.1 Unless otherwise agreed upon as when provided in an applicable material specification, take a number of test specimens per swatch in the laboratory sample such that the user may expect at the 95 % probability level that the test result is no more than 5 % above the true average for each swatch in the laboratory sample for each the machine and cross-machine direction, respectively.

8.1.1 *Reliable Estimate of v* —When there is a reliable estimate of v based upon extensive past records for similar materials tested in the user's laboratory as directed in the method, calculate the required number of specimens using Eq 1, as follows:

$$n = (tv/A)^2 \quad (1)$$

where:

n = number of test specimens (rounded upward to a whole number),

v = reliable estimate of the coefficient of variation of individual observations on similar materials in the user's laboratory under conditions of single-operator precision, %,

t = the value of Student's *t* for one-sided limits (see Table 1), a 95 % probability level, and the degrees of freedom associated with the estimate of v , and

A = 5.0 % of the average, the value of the allowable variation.

8.1.2 *No Reliable Estimate of v* —When there is no reliable estimate of v for the user's laboratory, Eq 1 should not be used directly. Instead, specify the fixed number of 10 specimens for the machine direction tests and 10 specimens for the cross-machine direction tests. The number of specimens is calculated using $v = 9.5$ % of the average for both machine direction and cross-machine direction. These values for v are somewhat