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Standard Specification for Alloy-Steel and Stainless Steel Bolting Materials for Low-Temperature Service¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation A320/A320M; 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 reappraisal. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the Department of Defense.

1. Scope*

1.1 This specification² covers alloy steel bolting materials for pressure vessels, valves, flanges, and fittings for low-temperature service. The term “bolting material” as used in this specification covers rolled, forged, or strain hardened bars, bolts, screws, studs, and stud bolts. The bars shall be hot-wrought. The material may be further processed by centerless grinding or by cold drawing. Austenitic stainless steel may be solution annealed or annealed and strain-hardened. When strain hardened austenitic stainless steel is ordered, the purchaser should take special care to ensure that Appendix X1 is thoroughly understood.

1.2 Several grades are covered, including both ferritic and austenitic steels designated L7, B8, etc. Selection will depend on design, service conditions, mechanical properties, and low-temperature characteristics. The mechanical requirements of Table 1 indicate the diameters for which the minimum mechanical properties apply to the various grades and classes, and Table 2 stipulates the requirements for Charpy impact energy absorption. The manufacturer should determine that the material can conform to these requirements before parts are manufactured. For example, when Grade L43 is specified to meet the Table 2 impact energy values at $-150\text{ }^{\circ}\text{F}$ [$-101\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$], additional restrictions (such as procuring a steel with lower P and S contents than might normally be supplied) in the chemical composition for AISI 4340 are likely to be required.

NOTE 1—The committee formulating this specification has included several grades of material that have been rather extensively used for the present purpose. Other compositions will be considered for inclusion by the committee from time to time as the need becomes apparent. Users should note that hardenability of some of the grades mentioned may restrict the maximum size at which the required mechanical properties are obtainable.

1.3 Nuts for use with this bolting material are covered in Section 10 and the nut material shall be impact tested.

1.4 Supplementary Requirements (S1, S2, and S3) of an optional nature are provided. They shall apply only when specified in the inquiry, contract and order.

~~1.5 This specification is expressed in both inch-pound units and in SI units. However, unless the order specifies the applicable “M” specification designation (SI units), the material shall be furnished to inch-pound units.~~

~~1.6 The values stated in either inch-pound units or SI units are to be regarded separately as standard. Within the text, the SI units are shown in brackets. The values stated in each system are not exact equivalents; therefore, each system must be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in nonconformance with the specification.~~

1.5 The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in non-conformance with the standard. Unless the order specifies the applicable “M” specification designation (SI units), the material shall be furnished to inch-pound units.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:³

A194/A194M [Specification for Carbon and Alloy Steel Nuts for Bolts for High Pressure or High Temperature Service, or Both](#)

A370 [Test Methods and Definitions for Mechanical Testing of Steel Products](#)

A962/A962M [Specification for Common Requirements for Bolting Intended for Use at Any Temperature from Cryogenic to the Creep Range](#)

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee A01 on Steel, Stainless Steel and Related Alloys and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee A01.22 on Steel Forgings and Wrought Fittings for Piping Applications and Bolting Materials for Piping and Special Purpose Applications.

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² For ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code applications, see related Specification SA-320 in Section II of that Code.

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.

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

- E566 Practice for Electromagnetic (Eddy-Current) Sorting of Ferrous Metals
 - F436 Specification for Hardened Steel Washers
 - F606 Test Methods for Determining the Mechanical Properties of Externally and Internally Threaded Fasteners, Washers, Direct Tension Indicators, and Rivets
- 2.2 *ANSI Standards:*
- B1.1 Screw Threads⁴
 - B18.22.1 Plain Washers⁴

3. Ordering Information

3.1 It is the purchaser's responsibility to specify in the purchase order all information necessary to purchase the needed materials. Examples of such information include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 3.1.1 Quantity and size,
- 3.1.2 Heat-treated condition, that is, for the austenitic stainless steels, solution-treated (Class 1); solution-treated after finishing (Class 1A); and annealed and strain-hardened (Class 2),
- 3.1.3 Description of items required (bars, bolts, screws, or studs),
- 3.1.4 Nuts and washers, if required by the purchaser, in accordance with Section 10, and
- 3.1.5 Special requirements, in accordance with 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3, and 12.1.

4. Common Requirements

4.1 Material and fasteners supplied to this specification shall conform to the requirements of Specification ~~A 962/A 962MA962/A962M~~. These requirements include methods, finish, thread dimensions, marking certification, optional supplementary requirements, and others. Failure to comply with the requirements of Specification ~~A 962/A 962MA962/A962M~~ constitutes nonconformance with this specification. In case of conflict between the requirements in this specification and Specification ~~A 962/A 962MA962/A962M~~, this specification shall prevail.

4.2 For L7M bolting, the final heat treatment, which may be the tempering operation if conducted at 1150 °F [620 °C] minimum, shall be done after machining and forming operations, including thread rolling and any type of cutting.

5. Materials and Manufacture

5.1 Heat Treatment:

5.1.1 The bolting material shall be allowed to cool to room temperature after rolling or forging. Grades L7, L7A, L7B, L7C, L7M, L43, L1, L70, L71, L72, and L73 shall be reheated to above the upper critical temperature and liquid quenched and tempered. Grades B8, B8C, B8M, B8T, B8F, B8P, B8LN, and B8MLN shall receive a carbide solution treatment. Products made from such material are described as Class 1. This shall consist of holding the material for a sufficient time at a temperature at which the chromium carbide will go into solution and then cooling in air or in a liquid medium at a rate sufficient to prevent reprecipitation of the carbide. Material thus treated is described as Class 1. If specified in the purchase order, material shall be solution treated in the finished condition; material so treated is described as Class 1A.

5.1.2 When increased mechanical properties are desired, the austenitic bolting materials shall be solution annealed and strain hardened if specified in the purchase order; material so treated is identified as Class 2.

5.1.3 If scale-free bright finish is required, this shall be specified in the purchase order.

5.1.4 For L7M bolting, the final heat treatment, which may be the tempering or stress-relieving operation conducted at 1150 °F [620 °C] minimum, shall be done after machining or rolling of the threads and any type of cutting.

6. Mechanical Requirements

6.1 Tensile Properties:

6.1.1 The material as represented by the tension specimens shall conform to the requirements as to tensile properties prescribed in Table 1 at room temperature after heat treatment (see 5.1.1). Alternatively, Class 2 Strain Hardened Headed Fasteners shall be tested full size after strain hardening to determine tensile strength and yield strength and shall conform to the requirements prescribed in Table 1. Should the results of full size tests conflict with results of tension specimen tests, full size test results shall prevail.

6.1.2 Number of Tests:

6.1.2.1 For heat-treated bars, one tension test and one impact test consisting of three specimens shall be made for each diameter of each heat represented in each tempering charge. In the continuous type treatment, a charge shall be defined as 6000 lb [2700 kg].

6.1.2.2 For studs, bolts, screws, etc., one tension test and one set of three impact specimens shall be made for each diameter of each heat involved in the lot. Each lot shall consist of the following:

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

Diameter, in. [mm]	Lot Size, lb [kg]
1½ [30] and under	1500 [680] or fraction thereof
Over 1½ [30] to 1¾ [45], incl	4500 [2040] or fraction thereof
Over 1¾ [45] to 2½ [65], incl	6000 [2700] or fraction thereof
Over 2½ [65]	100 pieces or fraction thereof

6.1.2.3 *Full Size Specimens, Headed Fasteners*—Headed fasteners 1 ½ in. in body diameter and smaller, with body length three times the diameter or longer, and which are produced by upsetting or forging (hot or cold) shall be subjected to full size testing in accordance with 6.1.3. This testing shall be in addition to tensile testing as specified in 6.1.1. The lot size shall be shown in 6.1.2.2. Failure shall occur in the body or threaded sections with no failure, or indications of failure, such as cracks, at the junction of the head and shank.

6.1.3 *Full Size Fasteners, Wedge Tensile Testing*—When applicable, see 6.1.2.3. Headed fasteners shall be wedge tested full size in accordance with Annex A3 of Test Methods and Definitions A-370A370 and shall conform to the tensile strength shown in Table 1. The minimum full size breaking strength (lbf) for individual sizes shall be as follows:

$$T_s = UTS \times A_s \quad (1)$$

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where:

T_s = Wedge tensile strength

UTS = Tensile strength specified in Table 1, and

A_s = Stress area, square inches, as shown in ANSI B1.1 or calculated as follows:

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where:

D = Nominal thread size, and

n = The number of threads per inch.

6.2 *Impact Properties:*

6.2.1 *Requirements:*

6.2.1.1 Material of Grades L7, L7A, L7B, L7C, L7M, L43, L70, L71, L72, and L73 shall show a minimum impact energy absorption of 20 ft · lbf [27 J] and of Grade L1 a minimum impact energy absorption of 40 ft · lbf [54 J] at the test temperature when tested by the procedure specified in the applicable portions of Sections 19 to 28 of Test Methods and Definitions A-370A370. The temperature of the coolant used for chilling the test specimens shall be controlled within ±3 °F [1.5 °C]. Impact tests are not required for carbide solution treated or strain hardened Grades B8, B8F, B8P, B8M, B8T, B8LN, and B8MLN for temperatures above –325 °F [–200 °C]; for carbide solution treated Grades B8, B8P, B8C, and B8LN above –425 °F [–255 °C]; for all ferritic and austenitic steel grades of bolting ½ in. [12.5 mm] and smaller in diameter. All other material furnished under this specification shall be tested. Test temperatures for ferritic grades are listed in Table 3. Exceptions to this requirement are permissible, and the impact tests may be made at specified temperatures different than those shown in Table 3, provided the test temperature is at least as low as the intended service temperature and the bolting is suitably marked to identify the reported test temperature. When impact testing is required for austenitic grades, test criteria shall be agreed upon between the supplier and purchaser.

6.2.1.2 The impact test requirements for standard and subsize Charpy test specimens are prescribed in Table 2.

6.2.2 *Number of Tests:*

6.2.2.1 The test requirements for heat-treated bars are given in 6.1.2.1.

6.2.2.2 For test requirements on studs, bolts, screws, etc., see 6.1.2.2.

6.2.2.3 Impact tests are not required to be made on heat-treated bars, bolts, screws, studs, and stud bolts ½ in. [12.5 mm] and under in diameter.

6.2.3 *Test Specimens*—For sections 1 in. [25 mm] or less in diameter, test specimens shall be taken at the axis; for sections over 1 in. [25 mm] in diameter, midway between the axis and the surface.

6.3 *Hardness Requirements:*

6.3.1 The hardness shall conform to the requirements prescribed in Table 1. Hardness testing shall be performed in accordance with either Specification A-962/A-962MA962/A962M or with Test Methods F-606F606.

TABLE 3 Recommended Test Temperature for Stock Parts

Grade	Test Temperature	
	°F	°C
L7M, L70, L71, L72, L73	–100	–73
L7, L7A, L7B, L7C	–150	–101
L43	–150	–101
L1	–100	–73



TABLE 1 Mechanical Requirements

Class and Grade, Diameter, in [mm]	Heat Treatment	Minimum Tempering Temperature °F [°C]	Tensile Strength, min, ksi [MPa]	Yield Strength, min, ksi [MPa] (0.2 % offset)	Elongation in 2 in. or 50 mm min, %	Reduction of Area, min, %	Hardness max
Ferritic Steels							
L7, L7A, L7B, L7C, L70, L71, L72, L73			125 [860]	105 [725]	16	50	321 HB or 35 HRC
2½ [65] and under ^A	quenched and tempered	1100 [593]	[860]	[725]			
L43			125 [860]	105 [725]	16	50	321 HB or 35 HRC
4 [100] and under ^A	quenched and tempered	1100 [593]	[860]	[725]			
L7M			100 [690]	80 [550]	18	50	235 HB ^B or 99 HRB
2½ [65] and under ^A	quenched and tempered	1150 [620]	[690]	[550]			
L1			125 [860]	105 [725]	16	50	...
1 [25] and under ^A	quenched and tempered		[860]	[725]			
Austenitic Steels ^C							
Class 1: B8, B8C, B8M, B8P, B8F, B8T, B8LN, B8MLN, all diameters	carbide solution treated		75 [515]	30 [205]	30	50	223 HB ^D or 96 HRB
Class 1A: B8A, B8CA, B8MA, B8PA, B8FA, B8TA, B8LNA, B8MLNA, all diameters	carbide solution treated in the finished condition		75 [515]	30 [205]	30	50	192 HB or 90 HRB
Class 2: B8, B8C, B8P, B8F, B8T:	carbide solution treated and strain hardened						
¾ [20] and under			125 [860]	100 [690]	12	35	321 HB or 35 HRC
over ¾ to 1 [20 to 25], incl			115 [795]	80 [550]	15	30	321 HB or 35 HRC
over 1 to 1¼ [25 to 32], incl			105 [725]	65 [450]	20	35	321 HB or 35 HRC
over 1¼ to 1½ [32 to 40], incl ^A			100 [690]	50 [345]	28	45	321 HB or 35 HRC
Class 2: B8M:	carbide solution treated and strain hardened						
¾ [20] and under			110 [760]	95 [655]	15	45	321 HB or 35 HRC
over ¾ to 1 [20 to 25], incl			100 [690]	80 [550]	20	45	321 HB or 35 HRC
over 1 to 1¼ [25 to 32], incl			95 [655]	65 [450]	25	45	321 HB or 35 HRC
over 1¼ to 1½ [32 to 40], incl ^A			90 [620]	50 [345]	30	45	321 HB or 35 HRC

^A These upper diameter limits were established on the basis that these were the largest sizes commonly available that consistently met specification property limits. They are not intended as absolute limits beyond which bolting materials could no longer be certified to the specification.

^B To meet the tensile requirements, the Brinell hardness shall not be less than 200 HB or 93 HRB.

^C Class 1 products are made from solution-treated material. Class 1A products are solution treated in the finished condition for corrosion resistance; heat treatment is critical for enhancing this physical property and meeting the mechanical property requirements. Class 2 products are made from solution-treated material that has been strain hardened. Austenitic steels in the strain-hardened condition may not show uniform properties throughout the cross section, particularly in sizes over ¾ in. [20 mm] in diameter.

^D For sizes ¾ in. [20 mm] in diameter and smaller, a maximum hardness of 241 HB (100 HRB) is permitted.