



Designation: D618 – 08

Standard Practice for Conditioning Plastics for Testing¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D618; 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 In general, the physical and electrical properties of plastics are influenced by temperature and relative humidity in a manner that materially affects test results. In order to make reliable comparisons between different materials and between different laboratories, it is necessary to standardize the humidity conditions, as well as the temperature, to which specimens of these materials are subjected prior to and during testing. This practice defines procedures for conditioning plastics (although not necessarily to equilibrium) prior to testing, and the conditions under which they shall be tested.

1.2 For some materials, it is possible that a material specification exists that requires the use of this practice, but with some procedural modifications. The material specification takes precedence over this practice. Refer to the material specification before using this practice. Table 1 in Classification **D4000** lists the ASTM material specifications that currently exist.

1.3 *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.*

NOTE 1—This standard and ISO 291 address the same subject matter, but differ in technical content. ISO 291 describes only two temperature and humidity conditions for conditioning or testing, or both.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D709 Specification for Laminated Thermosetting Materials

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee **D20** on Plastics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee **D20.50** on Durability of Plastics.

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² 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.

D756 Practice for Determination of Weight and Shape Changes of Plastics Under Accelerated Service Conditions (Withdrawn 1998)³

D4000 Classification System for Specifying Plastic Materials

D5032 Practice for Maintaining Constant Relative Humidity by Means of Aqueous Glycerin Solutions

E104 Practice for Maintaining Constant Relative Humidity by Means of Aqueous Solutions

2.2 *ISO Standard:*

ISO 291 Plastics—Standard Atmospheres for Conditioning and Testing⁴

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *room temperature*—a temperature in the range from 20 to 30°C (68 to 86°F).

3.1.2 *standard laboratory atmosphere*—an atmosphere having a temperature of 23°C (73.4°F) and a relative humidity of 50 % with standard tolerances as specified in Section 8 shall be the standard laboratory atmosphere.

3.1.3 *standard laboratory temperature*—a temperature of 23°C (73.4°F) with standard tolerance as specified in Section 7 shall be the standard laboratory temperature.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Conditioning of specimens is typically conducted: (1) for the purpose of bringing the material into equilibrium with normal or average room conditions, (2) simply to obtain reproducible results, regardless of previous history of exposure, or (3) to subject the material to abnormal conditions of temperature or humidity in order to predict its service behavior.

4.2 The conditioning procedures prescribed in this practice are designed to obtain reproducible results and have the potential to give physical values somewhat higher or somewhat lower than values under equilibrium at normal conditions,

³ The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on www.astm.org.

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

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

depending upon the particular material and test. Depending on the thickness, type of material and its previous history, it is possible that it would take 20 to 100 days or more to ensure substantial equilibrium under normal conditions of humidity and temperature. Consequently, conditioning for reproducibility must of necessity be used for general purchase specifications and product control tests.

5. Sampling

5.1 Sampling shall be in accordance with the ASTM test methods for the specific properties to be determined.

6. Test Specimens

6.1 The numbers and types of test specimens shall be in accordance with the ASTM test methods for the specific properties to be determined.

7. Requirements for Conditioning Atmospheres

7.1 When data are to be obtained for comparison purposes at a specific temperature, select the test temperature and associated tolerance from **Table 1**.

7.1.1 Unless otherwise specified, tolerance for temperature shall be as given in **Table 1**.

7.1.2 When a tolerance of $\pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ ($\pm 1.8^\circ\text{F}$) is required, it shall be specified and shall be reported.

7.1.3 The position for measurement of temperature and relative humidity measurement—measurements shall be made as close as possible to the center of the room or chamber.

7.1.3.1 It is possible that the temperature and relative humidity measured are not representative of a condition elsewhere in an enclosure or room because of local effects or deficiency in circulation of air. If required, additional measurements shall be made throughout the area to show compliance to the temperature and relative humidity conditions specified.

7.2 Relative Humidity:

7.2.1 When tolerance for temperature is $\pm 2^\circ\text{C}$, the tolerance for relative humidity shall be $\pm 10\%$.

7.2.2 When tolerance for temperature is $\pm 1^\circ\text{C}$, the tolerance for relative humidity shall be $\pm 5\%$.

NOTE 2—Annex B of ISO 291 provides background information on the calculation of tolerance for relative humidity based on the allowed fluctuation in set point temperature.

8. Designations for Conditioning

8.1 Designation for Conditioning Prior to Test:

8.1.1 Designate conditioning of test specimens as follows:

8.1.1.1 A number indicating in hours the duration of the conditioning,

8.1.1.2 A number indicating in degrees Celsius the conditioning temperature, or

8.1.1.3 A number indicating relative humidity, whenever relative humidity is controlled, or a word to indicate immersion in a liquid.

8.1.2 The numbers shall be separated from each other by slant marks. A sequence of conditions shall be denoted by use of a plus (+) sign between successive conditions. “Des” shall be used to indicate desiccation over anhydrous calcium chloride. Temperature and relative humidity tolerances shall be in accordance with Section 7, unless otherwise specified.

NOTE 3—Examples:

Condition 96/23/50—Condition 96 h at 23°C and 50 % relative humidity.

Condition 48/50/water—Condition 48 h at 50°C in water.

Condition 48/50 + 96/23/50—Condition 48 h at 50°C ; then condition 96 h at 23°C and 50 % relative humidity.

Condition 48/50 + Des—Condition 48 h at 50°C followed by desiccation.

8.2 Designation for Test Condition:

8.2.1 Designate test conditions as follows:

8.2.1.1 A capital letter “T” following the prior conditioning designation and separated therefrom by a colon.

8.2.1.2 A number indicating in degrees Celsius the test temperature;

8.2.1.3 A number indicating the relative humidity in the test whenever relative humidity is controlled.

8.2.2 The numbers shall be separated from each other by a slant mark, and from the “T” by a dash. Temperature and relative humidity tolerances shall be in accordance with Section 7, unless otherwise specified.

NOTE 4—Examples:

Condition 24/180: T—180—Condition 24 h at 180°C : Test at 180°C .

Condition 96/35/90: T—35—90—Condition 96 h at 35°C and 90 % relative humidity: Test at 35°C and 90 % relative humidity.

9. Standard Procedures for Conditioning Prior to Test

9.1 *Procedure A*—Condition 40/23/50 for specimens 7 mm (0.25 in.) or under in thickness, 88/23/50 for specimens over 7 mm—Condition test specimens 7 mm or under in thickness in the standard laboratory atmosphere for a minimum of 40 h

TABLE 1 Test Temperatures and Tolerances

Test Temperatures, $^\circ\text{C}$ ($^\circ\text{F}$) ^A	Tolerance, plus or minus, $^\circ\text{C}$ ($^\circ\text{F}$)
-70 (-94)	2.0 (3.6)
-55 (-67)	2.0 (3.6)
-40 (-40)	2.0 (3.6)
-25 (-13)	2.0 (3.6)
0 (32)	2.0 (3.6)
23 (73) ^B	2.0 (3.6)
35 (95)	2.0 (3.6)
50 (122)	2.0 (3.6)
70 (158)	2.0 (3.6)
90 (194)	2.0 (3.6)
105 (221)	2.0 (3.6)
120 (248)	2.0 (3.6)
130 (266)	2.0 (3.6)
155 (311)	2.0 (3.6)
180 (356)	2.0 (3.6)
200 (392)	3.0 (5.4)
225 (437)	3.0 (5.4)
250 (482)	3.0 (5.4)
275 (527)	3.0 (5.4)
300 (572)	3.0 (5.4)
325 (617)	4.0 (7.2)
350 (662)	5.0 (9.0)
400 (752)	6.0 (10.8)
450 (842)	8.0 (14.4)
500 (932)	10.0 (18.0)
600 (1112)	12.0 (21.6)

^AThe test temperature is the temperature at which the chamber or room is controlled. The tolerance is the maximum allowable variation of the temperature indicated by the temperature output device during equilibrium conditions. If the indicated temperature is outside the limit defined by the test temperature plus or minus the tolerance, immediately implement procedures to correct the problem.

^BStandard Laboratory Temperature.