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Standard Test Methods for Chemical Analysis of Blue Pigments¹

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

1. Scope

1.1 These test methods cover procedures for the chemical analysis of blue pigments known commercially as iron blue, copper phthalocyanine blue, and ultramarine blue.

1.2 The analytical procedures appear in the following order:

	Sections
I RON BLUE P IGMENTS	
Identification	6
Moisture by the Brabender Moisture Tester	7 and 8
Moisture by Toluene Distillation	9
Water-Soluble Matter by Extraction	10
Water-Soluble Salts by Electrical Conductivity	11
Detection of Acid-Insoluble Extenders	12 and 13
Detection of Acid-Soluble Extenders	14 to 17
Detection of Organic Colors and Lakes	18
C OPPER PHTHALOCYANINE BLUE PIGMENTS	
Identification	19
Moisture and Other Volatile Matter	20
Detection of Basic Dye Derivatives	21
Detection of Other Organic Coloring Matter	22
Detection of Ultramarine Blue	23
Detection of Iron Blue	24
U LTRAMARINE BLUE	
Identification	25
Moisture and Other Volatile Matter	26
Water-Soluble Matter	27
Detection of Basic Dye Derivatives	28
Detection of Other Organic Coloring Matter	29

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.4 *This standard does not purport to address the safety concerns 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.*

¹ These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D01 on Paint and Related Coatings, Materials, and Applications and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D01.31 on Pigment Specifications.

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2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

- D280 Test Methods for Hygroscopic Moisture (and Other Matter Volatile Under the Test Conditions) in Pigments
- D1193 Specification for Reagent Water
- D1208 Test Methods for Common Properties of Certain Pigments
- D2448 Test Method for Water-Soluble Salts in Pigments by Measuring the Specific Resistance of the Leachate of the Pigment
- E11 Specification for Woven Wire Test Sieve Cloth and Test Sieves

3. Significance and Use

3.1 These test methods are suitable for determining if impurities are present and establishing that the required pigments are present. These test methods may be used for manufacturing quality control.

4. Purity of Reagents and Water

4.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available.³ Other grades may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

4.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean reagent water conforming to Type II of Specification D1193.

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.

³ *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Analar Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

5. Preparation of Sample

5.1 Mix the sample thoroughly and take a representative portion for analysis. Reduce any lumps or coarse particles to a fine powder by grinding.

5.2 Grind extracted pigments to pass a No. 80 (180- μ m) sieve.⁴ Discard any skins that do not pass through the sieve. Mix the finely ground pigment thoroughly.

⁴ Detailed requirements for this sieve are given in Specification E11.

IRON BLUE

(Prussian Blue, Chinese Blue, Milori Blue)

IDENTIFICATION

6. Procedure

6.1 To approximately 0.1 g of pigment in a 50-mL beaker, add 15 mL of NaOH solution (50 g/L). Heat to boiling. In a few minutes the blue color should be completely destroyed, giving in its place the characteristic reddish brown precipitate of ferric hydroxide. Add HCl (1+1) until faintly acid to litmus. The iron blue should be reformed, yielding again the characteristic blue color.

NOTE 1—If the NaOH treatment does not completely destroy the blue color, the evidence is strong that a foreign pigment is present. If this occurs, it is best to filter the alkaline solution, weakly acidify the filtrate with HCl (1+1), and add approximately 2 mL of a ferric salt solution (ferric sulfate or ferric alum (20 g/L)). The formation of a blue precipitate established the pigment as consisting, at least in part, of iron blue.

MOISTURE BY THE BRABENDER MOISTURE TESTER

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Brabender Moisture Tester*—The Brabender moisture tester (Fig. 1) consists of a constant-temperature oven with weighing apparatus attached. Specimens placed in the oven may be weighed without opening the oven door or removing the specimen from the oven, as the balance scale is calibrated to read directly in percent of moisture.

8. Procedure

8.1 Set the temperature control at 160°C and allow the oven to reach this temperature before checking or making any weighing. Check the scale by placing a sample dish containing 9.200 g standard analytical balance weights in the oven. The apparatus should read 8.0 % moisture. If it does not, adjust to a reading of 8.0 % by turning either the right hand or left hand foot screw.

8.2 Weigh 10.000 g of the sample into the aluminum dish and place in the oven. For a series of specimens, all should be placed in the oven at as nearly the same time as possible. No specimen should occupy the position directly in front of the door. Weigh the specimen at the end of each hour for 5 h. After each weighing, return the specimen to its original place in the oven.

NOTE 2—The dried pigment is very hygroscopic. In order to obtain consistent results, the specimen position must not be changed and the oven door must not be opened.

8.3 *Calculation and Report*—Plot time against percent loss in weight on rectilinear cross-section paper. Extrapolate the linear portion of the curve to zero time. That portion beyond about 2 h will be essentially linear. Report the percent loss in weight at the extrapolated zero time as the percent moisture in the pigment.

NOTE 3—The pigment undergoes a slight loss in weight due to decomposition during the heating. The method of plotting and extrapolation corrects for this loss. An approximate value for moisture content may be obtained by taking the reading at the end of the first hour's heating. An occasional pigment may decompose rapidly at the oven temperature. In such cases, determine moisture by the toluene distillation method (Section 9).

MOISTURE BY TOLUENE DISTILLATION

9. Procedure

9.1 Determine the moisture content in accordance with Sections 7 and 8 of Test Method D1208, but using 25 g of pigment and 200 mL of toluene and adjusting the calculation accordingly.

WATER-SOLUBLE MATTER BY EXTRACTION

10. Procedure

10.1 Determine whether or not the pigment is easily wet by water at room temperature by adding a little to some water in a beaker. If it tends to float on top of the water with very little, if any, tendency to sink to the bottom or disperse throughout the solution, even after agitation, it contains a hydrophobic treating agent.

10.2 Weigh to 1 mg about 2.5 g of the pigment into a 250-mL volumetric flask. If the pigment is hydrophobic as tested above, moisten thoroughly with a few mL of ethyl alcohol (Note 4). If the pigment is easily wet with water, no alcohol is necessary. Fill the flask about half full with water and shake to disperse the pigment thoroughly. Fill to the mark and again shake. Allow to remain at room temperature for not less than 15 h, shaking from time to time, preferably with an automatic shaking device.

NOTE 4—Ethyl alcohol denatured with acetone (Formula No. 23A) or denatured with methyl alcohol (Formula No. 3A) has been found suitable.



FIG. 1 Brabender Moisture Tester

10.3 Let settle, filter through a dry filter paper, and discard the first 20 mL of the filtrate. Transfer 100 mL of the clear filtrate to a weighed dish, and evaporate to dryness on a steam bath. Dry for 1 h in an oven at $105 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$, cool, and weigh.

10.4 *Calculation*—Calculate the percent of water-soluble matter as follows:

$$\text{Water-soluble matter, \%} = \text{grams of residue} \times 100$$

WATER-SOLUBLE SALTS BY ELECTRICAL CONDUCTIVITY

11. Procedure

11.1 Determine water-soluble salt content in accordance with Test Method [D2448](#).

DETECTION OF ACID-INSOLUBLE EXTENDERS

12. Scope

12.1 Acid-insoluble extenders include barium sulfate, silica, and silicates. Alumina may also be found, in part, with this group.

13. Procedure

13.1 Ignite about 1 g (weighed to 0.1 mg) of the sample at a low temperature, just enough to decompose the last trace of pigment but not high enough to render the iron difficultly soluble in HCl ([Note 5](#)). Cool, and add 15 mL of HCl (sp gr 1.19) and a few drops of bromine. Cover with a watch glass and evaporate to a sirup. Add about 15 mL of water, and boil. It may be necessary to add a drop or two of HCl to effect complete solution of the ferric iron residue. Filter and wash with hot water. Save the filtrate for the determination of alumina hydrate ([Section 16](#)).

NOTE 5—The ignition can conveniently be carried out in a 250-mL beaker or a porcelain dish over a free flame. Oxidation of the specimen is evidenced by a dull glowing. While being heated, it is advisable to roll the specimen around in the beaker or dish exposing all of the surface to the oxygen of the air. A moderately low flame should be used and the ignition is complete when the specimen ceases to glow and acquires a uniform brown color.

13.2 A residue of less than 3 mg that appears as small black specks can be neglected, since quite frequently a small amount of iron is rendered insoluble or a small amount of blue pigment