



Designation: E 128 – 99

Standard Test Method for Maximum Pore Diameter and Permeability of Rigid Porous Filters for Laboratory Use¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E 128; 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.

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of maximum pore diameter and permeability of rigid porous filters used in the laboratory for filtration or diffusion. They are applicable to filters made of sintered glass, ceramic, metal, or plastic. This test method establishes a uniform designation for maximum pore diameter and also provides a means of detecting and measuring changes which occur through continued use.

1.2 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety problems, 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 845 Specifications for Five-Degree Xylene²

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *maximum pore diameter*—the diameter in micrometres of a capillary of circular cross section that is equivalent (with respect to characteristics related to surface-tension effects) to the largest pore in the filter under consideration.

NOTE 1—It is recognized that the maximum pore diameter as defined herein does not necessarily indicate the physical dimensions of the largest pore in the filter, and furthermore, that the pores are highly irregular in shape. Because of this irregularity in shape and other phenomena characteristic of filtration, a filter may be expected to retain all particles larger than the maximum pore diameter as defined and determined by this test method, and will generally retain particles which are much smaller than the determined diameter.

3.1.2 *permeability*—the flow of air, in millimetres per minute per square centimetre of filter area per 1 cm of water pressure differential.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E-41 on Laboratory Apparatus and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E 41.05 on Filtration Materials.

Current edition approved May 10, 1999. Published August 1999. Originally published as E 128 – 57 T. Last previous edition E 128 – 94.

² Discontinued, see 1981 Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Part 29.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 *Maximum Pore Diameter*, is determined by immersing the filter in a suitable test liquid and applying air pressure until the first bubble of air passes through the filter. The maximum pore diameter is calculated from the surface tension of the test liquid and the applied pressure.

4.2 *Permeability* is determined by measuring the flow of air through the filter when subjected to a pressure differential.

5. Apparatus

5.1 Because of the variety of shapes of apparatus in which porous filters are incorporated, the apparatus for this test method is not specified in detail. Apparatus that has been found satisfactory is illustrated in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

6. Procedure

6.1 *Maximum Pore Diameter*—Thoroughly wet the clean filter to be tested by soaking it in the prescribed test liquid (see Table 1). Connect the filter to a controllable source of clean, dry compressed air, and a manometer (Fig. 1). Immerse the filter just below the surface of the test liquid (Note 2) and gradually increase the air pressure at a rate of about 5 mm/min in the area of the test until the first dynamic bubble passes through the filter and rises through the liquid. The appearance of the first true dynamic bubble is readily recognized since it is followed by a succession of additional bubbles. Read the pressure from the manometer. If the test is to be repeated, thoroughly re-wet the filter by soaking it in the test liquid, before proceeding with the retest. Calculate the maximum pore diameter from the following equation (see Appendix X1 for derivation):

$$D = 30\gamma/p \quad (1)$$

where:

D = maximum pore diameter as defined in 3.1.1,

γ = surface tension of test liquid in dynes/cm at the temperature of the test, and

p = pressure, mm Hg (Note 3).

The uniformity of distribution of pores approaching the maximum pore size may be observed by gradually increasing the air pressure and noting the uniformity with which streams