



Designation: B633 – 11

Standard Specification for Electrodeposited Coatings of Zinc on Iron and Steel¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation B633; 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 This specification covers requirements for electrodeposited zinc coatings applied to iron or steel articles to protect them from corrosion. It does not cover electrodeposited zinc-coated steel wire or sheets (see Specification [A591/A591M](#) for sheets).

1.2 The coatings are provided in four standard thickness classes (4.1), in the as-plated condition or with one of three types of supplementary finish (4.2).

1.3 High strength metals, unless otherwise specified, including high strength steels having a tensile strength greater than 1700 MPa (247 ksi R_c 46) shall not be electroplated.

1.4 The values stated in SI units shall be regarded as standard.

1.5 *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.*

1.6 *This standard has been revised to address RoHS requirements that seek to limit the exposure of workers and the public from exposure to toxic metals. Additional types have been added to permit non-chromate passivate treatments to be used in replacement of hexavalent chromium.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

[A591/A591M](#) Specification for Steel Sheet, Electrolytic Zinc-Coated, for Light Coating Weight [Mass] Applications (Withdrawn 2005)³

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee B08 on Metallic and Inorganic Coatings and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee B08.06 on Soft Metals.

Current edition approved Oct. 1, 2011. Published October 2011. Originally approved in 1978. Last previous edition approved in 2007 as B633–07. DOI: 10.1520/B0633-11.

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

- [B117](#) Practice for Operating Salt Spray (Fog) Apparatus
- [B183](#) Practice for Preparation of Low-Carbon Steel for Electroplating
- [B201](#) Practice for Testing Chromate Coatings on Zinc and Cadmium Surfaces
- [B242](#) Guide for Preparation of High-Carbon Steel for Electroplating
- [B254](#) Practice for Preparation of and Electroplating on Stainless Steel
- [B320](#) Practice for Preparation of Iron Castings for Electroplating
- [B322](#) Guide for Cleaning Metals Prior to Electroplating
- [B374](#) Terminology Relating to Electroplating
- [B487](#) Test Method for Measurement of Metal and Oxide Coating Thickness by Microscopical Examination of Cross Section
- [B499](#) Test Method for Measurement of Coating Thicknesses by the Magnetic Method: Nonmagnetic Coatings on Magnetic Basis Metals
- [B504](#) Test Method for Measurement of Thickness of Metallic Coatings by the Coulometric Method
- [B567](#) Test Method for Measurement of Coating Thickness by the Beta Backscatter Method
- [B568](#) Test Method for Measurement of Coating Thickness by X-Ray Spectrometry
- [B571](#) Practice for Qualitative Adhesion Testing of Metallic Coatings
- [B602](#) Test Method for Attribute Sampling of Metallic and Inorganic Coatings
- [B697](#) Guide for Selection of Sampling Plans for Inspection of Electrodeposited Metallic and Inorganic Coatings
- [B762](#) Test Method of Variables Sampling of Metallic and Inorganic Coatings
- [B849](#) Specification for Pre-Treatments of Iron or Steel for Reducing Risk of Hydrogen Embrittlement
- [B850](#) Guide for Post-Coating Treatments of Steel for Reducing the Risk of Hydrogen Embrittlement
- [D2092](#) Guide for Preparation of Zinc-Coated (Galvanized) Steel Surfaces for Painting (Withdrawn 2008)³
- [F1470](#) Practice for Fastener Sampling for Specified Mechanical Properties and Performance Inspection

TABLE 1 Thickness Classes for Coatings

Classification Number and Conversion Coating Suffix	Service Condition	Thickness, min μm
Fe/Zn 25	SC 4 (very severe)	25
Fe/Zn 12	SC 3 (severe)	12
Fe/Zn 8	SC 2 (moderate)	8
Fe/Zn 5	SC 1 (mild)	5

2.2 Military Standard:⁴

MIL-STD-1312 Fastener Tests, Methods (Test 12)

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 Definitions of the terms used in this specification are in accordance with Terminology **B374**.

3.1.2 *passivate*—for the purpose of this specification, a conversion coating on zinc shall not contain hexavalent chromium.

4. Classification

4.1 *Thickness*—The coating shall be provided in one of the four thickness classes defined in **Table 1**.

4.2 *Finish*—The coating shall have one of the finish types defined in **Table 2**.

5. Ordering Information

5.1 When ordering the electroplating of articles, the purchaser shall state ASTM B633, the date of issue, service condition number, and the Type (see **4.1**, **4.2**, and **7.1**).

5.2 If necessary, the purchaser shall include on his part drawings or purchase order the following:

5.2.1 Basis metal alloy designation and ultimate tensile strength of the steel,

5.2.2 Thickness, if other than specified (**4.1**, **7.1**),

5.2.3 Location of significant surface (**7.1.1**, **7.1.2**),

5.2.4 Luster (**7.3**),

5.2.5 Exceptions to stress relief heat treatment prior to plating, (**6.4**),

5.2.6 Exception to Hydrogen Embrittlement Relief after plating, (**6.5**).

5.2.7 Corrosion resistance test, if specified (**9.3**, **10.3**),

5.2.8 Hydrogen embrittlement test, if required (**9.4**, **10.4**), including the tensile strength of the items,

5.2.9 Sample size for inspection, if other than specified, and

5.2.10 Supplementary requirements, if applicable (see Supplementary Requirement).

6. Materials and Manufacture

6.1 The coatings shall be non-alloyed zinc produced by electrodeposition.

6.2 Defects in the surface of the basis metal, such as scratches, porosity, pits, inclusions, cracks, roll marks, and die marks, may adversely affect the appearance and performance

TABLE 2 Finish Type and Corrosion Resistance Requirements

Type	Description	Minimum Salt Spray h
I	As-plated without supplementary treatments	
II	With colored chromate coatings	96
III	With colorless chromate conversion coatings	12
IV	With phosphate conversion coatings	
V	With colorless passivate	72
VI	With colored passivate	120

of coatings applied thereto despite the observance of the best electroplating practices. Accordingly, the electroplater's responsibility for defects in the coating resulting from such conditions shall be waived, except when he is the prime contractor supplying electroplated parts. In this event, the basis metal shall be subjected to such polishing or buffing operations as are necessary to yield deposits with the desired final luster and appearance. To minimize problems of this sort, the specifications covering the basis material on the item to be electroplated shall contain appropriate limitations to such basis metal conditions.

6.3 *Cleaning of Basis Metal*—Proper preparatory procedures and thorough cleaning of the basis metal are essential to ensure satisfactory adhesion and corrosion resistance performance of the coating. It is recommended that the following appropriate recommended practices and guides be used: **B183**, **B242**, **B254**, **B320**, and **B322**.

6.4 *Pretreatment of Iron or Steel for the Purpose of Reducing the Risk of Hydrogen Embrittlement*—All steel parts having an ultimate tensile strength greater than 1000 MPa (31 HRC) and that have been machined, ground, cold formed, or cold straightened, shall be heat treated for stress relief to reduce the risk of hydrogen embrittlement in the part before clean and electroplate processes. If these heat treatments are not required, the purchaser shall specify in the ordering information their exception, (**5.2.5**). If the purchaser does not specify an exception to heat treatment, then the plater shall use **Table 1** in **B849** to determine the appropriate heat treatment for the steel based on its tensile strength.

6.5 *Post Coating Treatments of Iron and Steel for the Purpose of Reducing the Risk of Hydrogen Embrittlement*—All electroplated steel parts having a tensile strength greater than 1000 MPa (31 HRC) as well as surface hardened parts, shall be baked to reduce the risk of hydrogen embrittlement. If these heat treatments are not required, the purchaser shall specify in the ordering information their exception (**5.2.5**). If the purchaser does not specify an exception to heat treatment, then the plater shall use **Table 1** in **B850** to determine the appropriate heat treatment for the steel based on its tensile strength. The baking treatment shall be done before the application of the supplementary treatments and within 4 h of removal from the last process. Electroplated springs and other parts subject to flexure shall not be flexed before the hydrogen embrittlement relief treatment. Baked parts shall not crack or fail by fracture when tested in accordance with **10.4**.

⁴ Available from Standardization Documents Order Desk, DODSSP, Bldg. 4, Section D, 700 Robbins Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19111-5098, <http://www.dodssp.daps.mil>.

6.6 Reactivation Treatment—Electroplated surfaces passivated as a result of the baking operation shall be reactivated before receiving a supplementary treatment.

NOTE 1—Surfaces should be activated as soon as possible following baking and handled carefully to avoid contamination and maintain an active surface for post processing. Proprietary methods are available to prepare the surface or a 2% v/v sulfuric acid in deionized water or a 7-10 g/L solution of sulfamic acid in deionized water can be used.

6.7 Supplementary Treatments—The supplementary film treatment for Types II, III, V, and VI shall be in accordance with Practice B201 (see Notes 2 and 3). The treatment required for conversion to Type IV shall be in accordance with Guide D2092.

NOTE 2—The zinc surface is attacked by supplementary treatments, thereby diminishing the amount of metallic zinc present. With Classes Fe/Zn25 and Fe/Zn13, this reduction is insignificant; but it is significant with Fe/Zn8 and Fe/Zn5. Therefore, it is recommended that supplementary treatments not be applied to zinc coatings having a nominal thickness less than 5 μm .

NOTE 3—Although Types V and VI are technically not “chromate” films and they do not contain leachable hexavalent chromium ions, they are supplemental coatings that render the active zinc surface passive and provide added protection to the steel part.

7. Coating Requirements

7.1 Thickness—The thickness shall be specified in accordance with 4.1 and 5.1. (see Note 2)

7.1.1 Significant Surfaces—Significant surfaces are areas where minimum thicknesses to be met shall be designated on the applicable drawing or by the provision of a suitably marked sample. Significant surfaces may be defined as those normally visible, directly or by reflection, which are essential to the appearance or serviceability of the article when assembled in normal position or which are the source of corrosion products that deface visible surfaces on the assembled article.

7.1.2 Surfaces on which the specified thickness of deposit cannot readily be controlled, such as threads, holes, deep recesses, bases of angles, and similar areas, are normally exempt from minimum thickness requirements, unless they are specially designated as not exempt. When such areas are designated, and thus made subject to minimum thickness requirements, the purchaser and the manufacturer shall recognize the necessity for either thicker deposits on other areas or for special racking.

NOTE 4—The dimensional tolerance of most threaded articles, such as nuts, bolts, screws, and similar fasteners with complementary threads, normally does not permit the application of a coating thickness much greater than 8.0 μm . If heavier coatings are required, allowance for the deposit buildup must be made during the manufacture of the threaded articles.

7.2 Adhesion—The adhesion of the coating shall be such that when examined in accordance with 10.2, the coating shall not show separation from the basis metal at the interface.

7.3 Luster—Unless otherwise specified by the purchaser, a bright, semi-bright, or dull finish shall be acceptable.

7.4 Corrosion Resistance—Zinc coatings with Types II, III, V, and VI treatments shall show neither corrosion products of zinc nor basis metal corrosion products at the end of the test periods describe in Table 2 when tested by continuous expo-

sure to salt spray in accordance with 10.3. The appearance of corrosion products when examined with 20/20 eyesight at normal reading distance shall be cause for rejection, except that white corrosion products 6 mm or less from the edges of specimens shall not constitute failure. For corrosion resistance requirements, see Table 2.

7.5 Workmanship—The surface of the electroplated article shall be uniform in appearance, free of visible coating defects, such as blisters, pits, roughness, nodules, burning, cracks, or unplated areas, and other defects that will affect the function of the coating. The coating shall not be stained or discolored. However, superficial staining that results from rinsing or slight discoloration resulting from any drying or baking operation to relieve hydrogen embrittlement, shall not be cause for rejection. On articles in which a visible contact mark is unavoidable, its position shall be that chosen by the purchaser. The electroplated article shall be clean and free of damage.

8. Sampling

8.1 The purchaser and producer are urged to employ statistical process control in the coating process. Properly performed, statistical process control will assure coated products of satisfactory quality and will assure the amount of acceptance inspection. The sampling plan used for the inspection of the quality coated article shall be agreed upon between the purchaser and producer.

8.1.1 When a collection of coated articles (inspection lot, see 8.2) is examined for compliance with the requirements placed on the articles, a relatively small number of the articles (sample) is selected at random and is inspected. The inspection lot is then classified as complying with the requirements based on the results of the inspection of the sample. The size of the sample and the criteria for compliance are determined by the application of statistics. The procedure is known as sampling inspection. Test Method B602, Guide B697, and Test Method B762 contain sampling plans that are designed for sampling inspection of coatings.

8.1.2 Test Method B602 contains four sampling plans, three for use with tests that are nondestructive and one when they are destructive. Test Method B602 provides a default plan if one is not specified.

8.1.3 Guide B697 provides a large number of plans and also gives guidance in the selection of a plan. Guide B697 provides a default plan if one is not specified.

8.1.4 Test Method B762 can be used only for coating requirements that have a numerical limit, such as coating thickness. The test must yield a numeric value and certain statistical requirements must be met. Test Method B762 contains several plans and also gives instructions for calculating plans to meet special needs. Test Method B762 provides a default plan if one is not specified.

8.1.5 Guide F1470 may be used for fasteners such as internally threaded, externally threaded, and nonthreaded fasteners and washers. This guide provides for two plans: one designated the “detection process” and one designated the “prevention process.” The purchaser and producer shall agree on the plan to be used.