



Designation: E1086 – 14

Standard Test Method for Analysis of Austenitic Stainless Steel by Spark Atomic Emission Spectrometry¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method² covers the analysis of austenitic stainless steel by spark atomic emission vacuum spectrometry for the following elements in the ranges shown

Element	Composition Range, %
Chromium	17.0 to 23.0
Nickel	7.5 to 13.0
Molybdenum	0.01 to 3.0
Manganese	0.01 to 2.0
Silicon	0.01 to 0.90
Copper	0.01 to 0.30
Carbon	0.005 to 0.25
Phosphorus	0.003 to 0.15
Sulfur	0.003 to 0.065

1.2 This test method is designed for the routine analysis of chill-cast disks or inspection testing of stainless steel samples that have a flat surface of at least 13 mm (0.5 in.) in diameter. The samples must be sufficiently massive to prevent overheating during the discharge and of a similar metallurgical condition and composition as the reference materials.

1.3 One or more of the reference materials must closely approximate the composition of the specimen. The technique of analyzing reference materials with unknowns and performing the indicated mathematical corrections may also be used to correct for interference effects and to compensate for errors resulting from instrument drift. A variety of such systems are commonly used. Any of these that will achieve analytical accuracy equivalent to that reported for this test method are acceptable.

1.4 *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 This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E01 on Analytical Chemistry for Metals, Ores, and Related Materials and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E01.01 on Iron, Steel, and Ferroalloys.

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² Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report RR:E02-1023.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:³

E135 Terminology Relating to Analytical Chemistry for Metals, Ores, and Related Materials

E305 Practice for Establishing and Controlling Atomic Emission Spectrochemical Analytical Curves

E406 Practice for Using Controlled Atmospheres in Spectrochemical Analysis

E1060 Practice for Interlaboratory Testing of Spectrochemical Methods of Analysis⁴

E1329 Practice for Verification and Use of Control Charts in Spectrochemical Analysis

E1806 Practice for Sampling Steel and Iron for Determination of Chemical Composition

2.2 Other ASTM Documents:

ASTM MNL 7 Manual on Presentation of Data and Control Chart Analysis⁵

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms used in this test method, refer to Terminology E135.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 A controlled discharge is produced between the flat surface of the specimen and the counter electrode. The radiant energy of selected analytical lines are converted into electrical energies by photomultiplier tubes and stored on capacitors. The discharge is terminated at a predetermined level of accumulated radiant energy from the internal standard iron line or after a fixed integration time. At the end of the integration period, the charge on each capacitor is measured, and displayed or recorded as a relative energy or mass fraction %.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The chemical composition of stainless steels must be determined accurately to ensure the desired metallurgical

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.

⁴ Withdrawn 1997.

⁵ ASTM Manual Series, ASTM International, 8th edition, 2010.

properties. This procedure is suitable for manufacturing control and inspection testing.

6. Apparatus

6.1 Sampling and Sample Preparation Equipment:

6.1.1 Refer to Practice **E1806** for devices and practices to sample liquid and solid steel.

6.1.2 *Abrasive Grinder*, a suitable belt grinder, horizontal disk grinder, or similar grinding apparatus. The resulting surface should be uniformly plane and free of defects. These may be either wet or dry grinding devices. Grinding materials with grit sizes ranging from 60 to 180 have been found satisfactory.

6.2 *Excitation Source*, with parameters capable of producing a usable spectrum in accordance with **11.1**.

6.3 *Excitation Stand*, suitable for mounting in optical alignment, a flat surface of the specimen in opposition to a counter electrode. The stand shall provide an atmosphere of argon and may be water cooled. Counter electrodes and argon are described in **7.1** and **7.2**.

6.4 *Spectrometer*, having sufficient resolving power and linear dispersion to separate clearly the analytical lines from other lines in the spectrum of a specimen in the spectral region 170.0 nm to 500.0 nm. Spectrometer characteristics for two of the instruments used in this test method are described as having dispersion of 0.697 nm/mm (first order), and a focal length of 1 m. Spectral lines are listed in **Table 1**.

6.5 *Measuring System*, consisting of photomultiplier tubes having individual voltage adjustment, capacitors on which the

output of each photomultiplier tube is stored and an electronic system to measure voltages on the capacitors either directly or indirectly, and the necessary switching arrangements to provide the desired sequence of operation.

6.6 *Readout Console*, capable of indicating the ratio of the analytical lines to the internal standard with sufficient precision to produce the accuracy of analysis desired.

6.7 *Vacuum Pump*, capable of maintaining a vacuum of 25 $\mu\text{m Hg}$ or less.

6.8 *Gas System*, consisting of an argon supply with pressure and flow regulation. Automatic sequencing shall be provided to actuate the flow at a given rate for a specific time interval. The flow rate may be manually or automatically controlled. The argon system shall be in accordance with Practice **E406**.

NOTE 1—It is not within the scope of this test method to prescribe all details of equipment to be used. Equipment varies among laboratories.

7. Reagents and Materials

7.1 *Argon*, either gaseous or liquid, must be of sufficient purity to permit proper excitation of the analytical lines of interest. Argon of 99.998 % purity has been found satisfactory. Refer to Practice **E406**.

7.2 *Counter Electrodes*, can vary in diameter from 1.5 mm to 6.5 mm (depending on the instrument manufacturer) and typically are machined to a 90° or 120° angled tip. Silver or thoriated tungsten rods are typically used. Other material may be used provided it can be shown experimentally that equivalent precision and accuracy are obtained.

8. Reference Materials

8.1 *Certified Reference Materials* are available from the National Institute of Standards and Technology⁶ and other international certification agencies.

8.2 *Reference Materials* with matrices similar to that of the test specimen and containing varying amounts of the elements to be determined may be used provided they have been chemically analyzed in accordance with ASTM standard test methods. These reference materials shall be homogeneous, and free of voids or porosity.

8.3 The reference materials shall cover the concentration ranges of the elements being sought. A minimum of three reference materials shall be used for each element.

9. Preparation of Samples

9.1 The specimens and reference materials must be prepared in the same manner. A specimen cut from a large sample section must be of sufficient size and thickness for preparation and to properly fit the spectrometer stand.

9.2 Ensure the specimens are homogenous and free from voids and pits in the region to be excited. Grind the surface with an abrasive belt or disc. Refer to **6.1.2**. Perform the final grind with a dry abrasive belt or disc.

TABLE 1 Analytical and Internal Standard Lines

Element	Wavelength, nm	Mass Fraction % Switch Over Points
Chromium	298.919	
	243.789	
	227.021	
	218.549	
Nickel	216.910	
	202.030	< 1 %
	281.615	
	308.561	> 1 %
	369.265	
Molybdenum	293.306	
	251.612 ^A	
Manganese	288.158	
	224.699	< 0.10 % > 0.10 %
Silicon	193.092	
	178.287 ^A	
Copper	180.731	
	271.441	
Carbon	271.441	
	322.775	
Phosphorus		
Sulfur		
Iron ^B		

^A Silicon 251.612 can have a small but significant interference from molybdenum 251.611. Phosphorus 178.287 may show small but significant interferences from unlisted lines or background due to molybdenum, chromium, and manganese. Interference corrections will not be necessary if: separate silicon and phosphorus curves are used for 316 and 317 alloys; the manganese content varies only between 0.7 % and 1.5 %; and the chromium concentration is held between 17 % and 20 %.

^B Either iron line 271.441 or 322.775 with narrow entrance and exit slits to avoid interference from manganese 322.809 can be used as internal standard with any of the listed analytical lines. Iron 271.441 is not appropriate for tungsten tool steels or super alloys with high cobalt because of interference from cobalt 271.442.

⁶ Available from National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), 100 Bureau Dr., Stop 1070, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-1070, <http://www.nist.gov>.