



Designation: D7279 – 14

Standard Test Method for Kinematic Viscosity of Transparent and Opaque Liquids by Automated Houillon Viscometer¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D7279; 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 measurement of the kinematic viscosity of transparent and opaque liquids; such as base oils, formulated oils, diesel oil, biodiesel, biodiesel blends, and used lubricating oils using a Houillon viscometer in automated mode.

1.2 The range of kinematic viscosity capable of being measured by this test method is from 2 mm²/s to 1500 mm²/s (see Fig. 1). The range is dependent on the tube constant utilized. The temperature range that the apparatus is capable of achieving is between 20 °C and 150 °C, inclusive. However, the precision has only been determined for the viscosity range; 2 mm²/s to 478 mm²/s at 40 °C for base oils, formulated oils, diesel oil, biodiesel, and biodiesel blends; 3 mm²/s to 106 mm²/s at 100 °C for base oils and formulated oils; 25 mm²/s to 150 mm²/s at 40 °C and 5 mm²/s to 16 mm²/s at 100 °C for used lubricating oils. As indicated for the materials listed in the precision section.

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 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.* For specific warning statements, see Section 6.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D445 Test Method for Kinematic Viscosity of Transparent

and Opaque Liquids (and Calculation of Dynamic Viscosity)

D2162 Practice for Basic Calibration of Master Viscometers and Viscosity Oil Standards

D4057 Practice for Manual Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products

D4177 Practice for Automatic Sampling of Petroleum and Petroleum Products

D6299 Practice for Applying Statistical Quality Assurance and Control Charting Techniques to Evaluate Analytical Measurement System Performance

D6708 Practice for Statistical Assessment and Improvement of Expected Agreement Between Two Test Methods that Purport to Measure the Same Property of a Material

D6792 Practice for Quality System in Petroleum Products and Lubricants Testing Laboratories

D7042 Test Method for Dynamic Viscosity and Density of Liquids by Stabinger Viscometer (and the Calculation of Kinematic Viscosity)

2.2 ISO Standards:

ISO 5725 Accuracy (Trueness and Precision) of Measurement Methods and Results³

ISO/EC 17025 General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories³

2.3 NIST Standard:

NIST Technical Note 1297 Guideline for Evaluating and Expressing the Uncertainty of NIST Measurement Results⁴

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 The kinematic viscosity is determined by measuring the time taken for a sample to fill a calibrated volume at a given temperature. The specimen is introduced into the apparatus and then flows into the viscometer tube which is equipped with two detection cells. The specimen reaches the test temperature of the viscometer bath and when the leading edge of the specimen passes in front of the first detection cell, the automated instrument starts the timing sequence. When the leading edge

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D02 on Petroleum Products, Liquid Fuels, and Lubricants and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D02.07 on Flow Properties.

Current edition approved May 1, 2014. Published July 2014. Originally approved in 2006. Last previous edition approved in 2008 as D7279–08. DOI: 10.1520/D7279-14.

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

⁴ Available from National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), 100 Bureau Dr., Stop 1070, Gaithersburg, MD 20899-1070, http://www.nist.gov.

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

Sample Volume (μL)	Tube	Viscosity (mm ² /s)																										
	constant	Min	Max	2	3	7	10	15	20	30	35	45	50	60	70	75	100	120	150	200	210	250	300	450	500	700	1000	1500
90	0.07	2	7																									
	0.1	3	10																									
180	0.2	7	20																									
	0.3	10	30																									
	0.5	15	50																									
	0.7	20	70																									
	1	30	100																									
	1.2	35	120																									
360	1.5	45	150																									
	2	60	200																									
	2.5	75	250																									
	3	100	300																									
540	5	150	500																									
	7	210	700																									
	10	300	1000																									
	15	450	1500																									

Most practical viscosity range

NOTE 1—Viscosity range of a Houillon tube is based on most practical flow time of 30 s to 200 s.

FIG. 1 Houillon Viscometer Typical Viscosity Range of Tube Constants

of the specimen passes in front of the second detection cell, the instrument stops timing the flow. The time interval thus measured allows the calculation of the kinematic viscosity using a viscometer tube constant determined earlier by calibration with certified viscosity reference standards.

3.2 The kinematic viscosity is calculated using the formula:

$$v = C \times t \quad (1)$$

where:

- v = the kinematic viscosity in mm²/s,
- C = the viscometer tube constant in mm²/s, and
- t = the flow time in s measured during the test.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Many petroleum products and some non-petroleum products are used as lubricants in the equipment, and the correct operation of the equipment depends upon the appropriate viscosity of the lubricant being used. Additionally, the viscosity of many petroleum fuels is important for the estimation of optimum storage, handling, and operational conditions. Thus, the accurate determination of viscosity is essential to many product specifications.

4.2 The viscosity of used oils is a commonly determined parameter in the oil industry to assess the effect of engine wear on the lube oils used, as well as the degradation of the engine parts during operation.

4.3 The Houillon viscometer tube method offers automated determination of kinematic viscosity. Typically a sample volume of less than 1 mL is required for the analysis.

5. Apparatus

5.1 *Automated Viscometer*—The system shall consist of the following components:

5.1.1 *Viscometer Bath*:

5.1.1.1 *Bath*, to ensure optimal thermal equilibration of the system, the bath is filled with mineral or silicone oil and equipped with a stirring device.

5.1.2 *Temperature Regulation System*, to control the bath temperature to within 0.02 °C.

5.1.3 *Houillon Viscometer Tubes*, made of glass with a calibrated volume which varies depending on the tube size (see Fig. 2). This technique allows the viscosity to be measured over a wide range of values (see Fig. 1).

5.1.4 *Cleaning/Vacuum System*, consisting of one or more solvent reservoirs to transport the solvent(s) to the viscometer tubes, dry the viscometer tubes after the flushing cycle, to remove the sample, and for drainage of waste products.

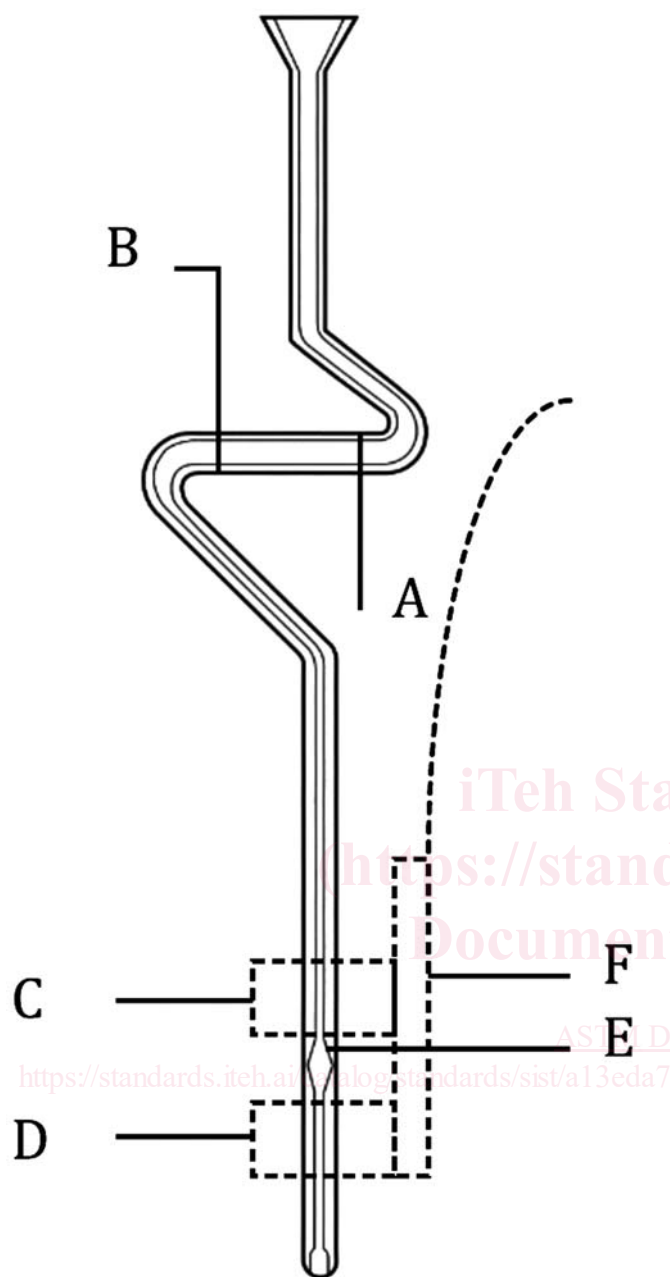
5.1.5 *Automated Viscometer Control System*—Suitable electronic processor capable of operating the apparatus, controlling the operation of the timers, regulating the bath temperature, cleaning the viscometer tubes, and recording and reporting the results.

5.1.6 *PC-compatible Computer System*, may be used for data acquisition, as per manufacturer's instructions.

5.1.7 *Temperature Measuring Devices*—Use either calibrated liquid-in-glass thermometers, of an accuracy after correction of ±0.02 °C or better, or other thermometric devices of equal or better accuracy.

5.1.8 *Timing Devices*—Use any timing device that is capable of taking readings with a discrimination of 0.01 s or better with an accuracy within ±0.07 % of the reading when tested over the minimum and maximum intervals of expected flow times.

5.1.9 *Volume Delivery Device*, such as a micropipette, capable of delivering a sufficient volume of sample to the Houillon tube being used. (See Fig. 1 for approximate sample volumes.)



A and B = sample reservoir
 C and D = calibrated volume—measurement zone
 E = bulb
 F = detection cell

Tube Filling Volume for a Measurement

The filling volume is OK when:

At the beginning of a measurement:

Sample lower meniscus is on C (start timing)

Sample upper meniscus should be below A

At the end of a measurement:

Sample lower meniscus is on D (stop timing)

Sample upper meniscus should be above B

FIG. 2 Houillon Tube Schematic Diagram

6. Reagents and Materials

6.1 Certified viscosity reference standards shall be certified by a laboratory that has been shown to meet the requirements

of ISO/EC 17025 by independent assessment. The certified viscosity reference standards shall be traceable to master viscometer procedures described in Test Method D2162.

6.1.1 The uncertainty of the certified viscosity reference standard shall be stated for each certified value ($k = 2$ @ 95 % confidence). See ISO 5725 or NIST 1297.

6.2 Non-chromium-containing, strongly oxidizing acid cleaning solution. (Warning—Non-chromium-containing, strongly oxidizing acid cleaning solutions are highly corrosive and potentially hazardous in contact with organic materials, but do not contain chromium which has special disposal problems.)

6.3 Solvent(s) for cleaning, drying, reagent grade. Refer to manufacturer’s recommendations. Filter before use if necessary. Typical solvent(s) include:

6.3.1 Toluene. (Warning—Flammable. Vapor harmful.)

6.3.2 Petroleum spirit or naphtha. (Warning—Flammable. Health hazard.)

6.3.3 Acetone. (Warning—Extremely flammable. Health hazard.)

6.3.4 Heptane. (Warning—Flammable. Health hazard.)

6.4 Technical grade silicone oil or white oil of appropriate viscosity (for example, about 100 mm²/s @ 25 °C or equivalent) to maintain the test temperature.

7. Sampling

7.1 Obtain a representative test specimen in accordance with Practice D4057 or Practice D4177.

8. Preparation of Apparatus

8.1 Place the automated viscometer on a stable and level horizontal surface. Make appropriate piping, drainage, and vacuum connections. Refer to the manufacturer’s instructions.

8.2 If not already mounted, install the detection cells.

8.3 After installing and securing all viscometer tubes in the bath, fill the bath with appropriate amount of bath fluid (see 6.4).

8.4 Add the appropriate amount of solvent(s) to the solvent reservoir(s).

8.5 Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the operation of the instrument.

8.6 Select a clean, dry, and calibrated viscometer tube having a range covering the estimated kinematic viscosity of the specimen to be tested, if known. The appropriate viscometer tube to use depends on the estimated viscosity of the sample to be tested. The calculation in 8.6.1 may be used to decide which tube to use.

8.6.1 Using Eq 1, the viscometer tube should be chosen so that its constant C falls between $v/200 < C < v/30$ to give flow times, T , between 30 s and 200 s.

NOTE 1—In the interlaboratory study⁵ conducted for the development of this test method, the flow times were between 30 s and 200 s.

⁵ Supporting data have been filed at ASTM International Headquarters and may be obtained by requesting Research Report RR:D02-1604.