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Standard Specification for Investment Castings, Steel and Alloy, Common Requirements, for General Industrial Use¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation A957/A957M; 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 specification covers a group of requirements that are mandatory for castings produced by the investment casting process to meet the metallurgical requirements of the following steel casting specifications issued by ASTM.

ASTM Designation	Title of Specification
A27/A27M	Steel Castings, Carbon, for General Application
A128/A128M	Steel Castings, Austenitic Manganese
A148/A148M	Steel Castings, High-Strength, for Structural Purposes
A297/A297M	Steel Castings, Iron-Chromium and Iron-Chromium-Nickel, Heat-Resistant, for General Application
A447/A447M	Steel Castings, Chromium-Nickel-Iron Alloy (25-12 Class), for High-Temperature Service
A494/A494M	Castings, Nickel and Nickel Alloy
A560/A560M	Castings, Chromium-Nickel Alloy
A732/A732M	Castings, Investment, Carbon and Low Alloy Steel for General Application, and Cobalt Alloy for High Strength at Elevated Temperatures
A743/A743M	Castings, Iron-Chromium, Iron-Chromium-Nickel, Corrosion-Resistant, for General Application
A744/A744M	Castings, Iron-Chromium-Nickel, Corrosion Resistant, for Severe Service
A747/A747M	Steel Castings, Stainless, Precipitation Hardening
A890/A890M	Castings, Iron-Chromium-Nickel-Molybdenum Corrosion-Resistant, Duplex (Austenitic/Ferritic) for General Application
A915/A915M	Steel Castings, Carbon and Alloy, Chemical Requirements Similar to Standard Wrought Grades
A958	Steel Castings, Carbon and Alloy, with Tensile Requirements, Chemical Requirements Similar to Standard Wrought Grades
A1002	Castings, Nickel-Aluminum Ordered Alloy

1.2 This specification also covers a group of supplementary requirements that may be applied to the above specifications as indicated therein. These are provided for use when additional

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testing or inspection is desired and apply only when specified individually by the purchaser in the order.

1.3 When investment castings are ordered, the requirements stated in this specification form an integral part of the material specification. In cases of conflict, the requirements of this specification shall take precedence over the individual material specification requirements.

1.4 The values stated in either SI units or inch-pound units are to be regarded separately as standard. The values stated in each system may not be exact equivalents; therefore, each system shall be used independently of the other. Combining values from the two systems may result in non-conformance with the standard.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

- A27/A27M Specification for Steel Castings, Carbon, for General Application
- A128/A128M Specification for Steel Castings, Austenitic Manganese
- A148/A148M Specification for Steel Castings, High Strength, for Structural Purposes
- A297/A297M Specification for Steel Castings, Iron-Chromium and Iron-Chromium-Nickel, Heat Resistant, for General Application
- A370 Test Methods and Definitions for Mechanical Testing of Steel Products
- A380 Practice for Cleaning, Descaling, and Passivation of Stainless Steel Parts, Equipment, and Systems
- A447/A447M Specification for Steel Castings, Chromium-Nickel-Iron Alloy (25-12 Class), for High-Temperature Service
- A488/A488M Practice for Steel Castings, Welding, Qualifications of Procedures and Personnel
- A494/A494M Specification for Castings, Nickel and Nickel Alloy
- A560/A560M Specification for Castings, Chromium-Nickel Alloy

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.

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

A609/A609M Practice for Castings, Carbon, Low-Alloy, and Martensitic Stainless Steel, Ultrasonic Examination Thereof

A732/A732M Specification for Castings, Investment, Carbon and Low Alloy Steel for General Application, and Cobalt Alloy for High Strength at Elevated Temperatures

A743/A743M Specification for Castings, Iron-Chromium, Iron-Chromium-Nickel, Corrosion Resistant, for General Application

A744/A744M Specification for Castings, Iron-Chromium-Nickel, Corrosion Resistant, for Severe Service

A747/A747M Specification for Steel Castings, Stainless, Precipitation Hardening

A751 Test Methods, Practices, and Terminology for Chemical Analysis of Steel Products

A800/A800M Practice for Steel Casting, Austenitic Alloy, Estimating Ferrite Content Thereof

A890/A890M Specification for Castings, Iron-Chromium-Nickel-Molybdenum Corrosion-Resistant, Duplex (Austenitic/Ferritic) for General Application

A903/A903M Specification for Steel Castings, Surface Acceptance Standards, Magnetic Particle and Liquid Penetrant Inspection

A915/A915M Specification for Steel Castings, Carbon, and Alloy, Chemical Requirements Similar to Standard Wrought Grades

A941 Terminology Relating to Steel, Stainless Steel, Related Alloys, and Ferroalloys

A958 Specification for Steel Castings, Carbon and Alloy, with Tensile Requirements, Chemical Requirements Similar to Standard Wrought Grades

A967 Specification for Chemical Passivation Treatments for Stainless Steel Parts

A991/A991M Test Method for Conducting Temperature Uniformity Surveys of Furnaces Used to Heat Treat Steel Products

A997 Practice for Investment Castings, Surface Acceptance Standards, Visual Examination

A1002 Specification for Castings, Nickel-Aluminum Ordered Alloy

A1058 Test Methods for Mechanical Testing of Steel Products—Metric

A1067 Specification for Test Coupons for Steel Castings

A1080 Practice for Hot Isostatic Pressing of Steel, Stainless Steel, and Related Alloy Castings

E29 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications

E94 Guide for Radiographic Examination

E125 Reference Photographs for Magnetic Particle Indications on Ferrous Castings

E165 Practice for Liquid Penetrant Examination for General Industry

E186 Reference Radiographs for Heavy-Walled (2 to 4½-in. (50.8 to 114-mm)) Steel Castings

E192 Reference Radiographs of Investment Steel Castings for Aerospace Applications

E280 Reference Radiographs for Heavy-Walled (4½ to 12-in. (114 to 305-mm)) Steel Castings

E340 Test Method for Macroetching Metals and Alloys

E353 Test Methods for Chemical Analysis of Stainless, Heat-Resisting, Maraging, and Other Similar Chromium-Nickel-Iron Alloys

E354 Test Methods for Chemical Analysis of High-Temperature, Electrical, Magnetic, and Other Similar Iron, Nickel, and Cobalt Alloys

E446 Reference Radiographs for Steel Castings Up to 2 in. (50.8 mm) in Thickness

E709 Guide for Magnetic Particle Testing

E2660 Digital Reference Images for Investment Steel Castings for Aerospace Applications

2.2 *SAE Aerospace Recommended Practice*:³

ARP 1341 Determining Decarburization and Carburization in Finished Parts of Carbon and Low-Alloy Steel

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 The definitions in Test Methods and Definitions **A370**, Test Methods, Practices, and Terminology **A751**, Terminology **A941**, and Test Methods **A1058** are applicable to this specification and to those listed in 1.1.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *investment casting, n*—a metal casting that is produced in a mold obtained by investing (surrounding) an expendable pattern with a ceramic slurry that is allowed to solidify. The expendable pattern may consist of wax, plastic, or other material and is removed prior to filling the mold with liquid metal.

3.2.2 *master heat, n*—a quantity of metal processed in a single furnace or refining vessel at one time in such a manner as to produce the desired composition and properties.

3.2.3 *sub-heat, n*—a portion of a master heat remelted without additional processing for pouring into castings. Synonyms: melt, production heat.

4. Materials and Manufacture

4.1 When the purchaser imposes the requirements of this specification, the manufacturer is responsible for compliance with the specification requirements during the production and processing of the casting by themselves and any of their subcontractors.

4.2 *Melting Process*—Master heats shall be made by the electric furnace process with or without separate refining such as argon-oxygen-decarburization (AOD), vacuum-oxygen-degassing (VOD), vacuum-induction-melting (VIM), and so forth, unless otherwise specified in the individual specification or agreed upon between the customer and producer. Master heats may be used directly for producing castings or converted into ingot, bar, shot, or other suitable form, not including gates and risers from casting production, for later remelting as a sub-heat.

4.3 *Re-Melting Process*—Sub-heats shall be produced from master heat metal in suitable batch sizes by electric induction

³ Available from Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), 400 Commonwealth Dr., Warrendale, PA 15096-0001, <http://www.sae.org>.

furnace with or without atmosphere protection such as vacuum or inert gas unless otherwise specified in the individual specification or agreed upon between the customer and producer. Revert (gates, sprues, risers, and rejected castings) shall not be re-melted except in master heats.

4.4 Sampling:

4.4.1 If castings are poured directly from one or more master heats, then the samples for chemical and other required testing shall also be poured directly from each of the master heats.

4.4.2 If castings are poured from a sub-heat, then the samples for chemical and other required testing shall also be poured from a sub-heat of that same master heat, but not necessarily from the same sub-heat as the castings. The sub-heat used for the test samples shall be produced using the same melting practices and additions as used to produce the castings.

4.4.3 Unless otherwise specified by the purchaser, test specimens may be taken from castings or from coupons cast integrally with the castings, in the same molds as the castings, or in separate molds.

4.5 Heat Treatment:

4.5.1 Castings shall be heat treated in the working zone of a furnace that has been surveyed in accordance with Test Method [A991/A991M](#).

4.5.2 When castings are heat treated at temperatures above 2000°F (1100°C), then the working zone shall have been established by a survey performed at not more than 25°F (15°C) below nor more than 200°F (110°C) above the minimum heat treatment temperature specified for the grade. If a minimum heat treatment temperature is not specified for the grade, then the survey temperature shall be not more than 50°F (30°C) below nor more than 175°F (100°C) above the furnace set point used.

4.5.3 The maximum variation in measured temperature as determined by the difference between the highest temperature and the lowest temperature shall be as agreed between the purchaser and producer except that during production heat treatment, no portion of the furnace shall be below the minimum specified temperature nor above the maximum specified temperature for the grade being processed.

5. Chemical Composition

5.1 *Chemical Analysis*—Chemical analysis of materials covered by this specification shall be in accordance with Test Methods, Practices, and Terminology [A751](#).

5.2 *Heat Analysis*—An analysis of samples obtained in accordance with [4.4](#) or Supplementary Requirement S20 as appropriate, shall be made by the manufacturer to determine the percentages of the elements specified in the individual specification for the grade being poured. When drillings are used, they shall be taken not less than 1/16 in. [2 mm] beneath the surface. The chemical composition thus determined shall conform to the requirements in the individual specification for the grade being poured.

5.3 *Product Analysis*—A product analysis may be made by the purchaser from material representing each master heat,

TABLE 1 Product Analysis Tolerances

Element	Range, % ^A	Tolerances ^{B,C} Over Maximum or Under Minimum Limit, %
C	up to 0.65	0.03 × % C _L + 0.02
	above 0.65	0.04
Mn	up to 1	0.08 × % Mn _L + 0.01
	above 1	0.09
Si	up to 0.60	0.22 × % Si _L – 0.01
	above 0.60	0.15
P	all	0.13 × % P _L + 0.005
S	all	0.36 × % S _L + 0.001
Ni	up to 2	0.10 × % Ni _L + 0.03
	above 2	0.25
Cr	up to 2	0.07 × % Cr _L + 0.04
	above 2	0.18
Mo	up to 0.6	0.04 × % Mo _L + 0.03
	above 0.6	0.06
V	up to 0.25	0.23 × % V _L + 0.004
	above 0.25	0.06
W	up to 0.10	0.08 × % W _L + 0.02
	above 0.10	0.02
Cu	up to 0.15	0.18 × % Cu _L + 0.02
	above 0.15	0.05
Al	up to 0.10	0.08 × % Al _L + 0.02
	above 0.10	0.03

^A The range denotes the composition limits up to which tolerances are computed by the equation, and above which the tolerances are given by a constant.

^B The subscript L for the elements in each equation indicates that the limits of the element specified by the applicable specification are to be inserted into the equation to calculate the tolerance for the upper limit and the lower limit (if applicable), respectively. Examples of computing tolerances are presented in footnote C.

^C To illustrate the computation of the tolerance, consider the manganese maximum of 0.70 for an 0.30 carbon grade 65-35 in Specification [A27/A27M](#). The maximum permissible deviation is (0.08 × 0.70 + 0.01) = 0.066. Therefore, the highest acceptable product analysis is 0.766. Similarly, for an 0.20 carbon grade 70-40 in Specification [A27/A27M](#), the maximum manganese content is 1.40; thus, the highest acceptable product analysis is (1.40 + 0.09) = 1.49.

sub-heat, lot, or casting. The analysis shall be made on representative material. Samples for carbon analysis of carbon and alloy steel shall be taken no closer than 1/16 in. [2 mm] to a cast surface, except that castings too thin for this shall be analyzed on representative material. The chemical composition thus determined shall meet the requirements specified in the applicable specification for the grade involved, or shall be subject to rejection by the purchaser, except that the chemical composition determined for carbon and low alloy steel castings may vary from the specified limits by the amounts shown in [Table 1](#). The product analysis tolerances of [Table 1](#) are not applicable as acceptance criteria for heat analysis by the casting manufacturer. When comparing product and heat analysis for other than carbon and low alloy steels, the reproducibility Data R2, in Test Methods [E353](#) or [E354](#), as applicable, shall be taken into consideration.

5.4 *Unspecified Elements*—When chemical analysis for elements not specified for the grade ordered is desired, Supplementary Requirement S13 may be specified.

NOTE 1—All commercial metals contain small amounts of various elements in addition to those that are specified. It is neither practical nor necessary to specify limits for every unspecified element that might be present, despite the fact that the presence of many of these elements is often routinely determined by the producer.

5.5 *Grade substitution*—Grade substitution is not permitted. Grade substitution occurs when the material being supplied

contains one or more elements that are not specified for the supplied material such that the material conforms to the requirements of a different grade.

6. Mechanical Test Requirements

6.1 The individual product specifications vary as to whether mechanical tests are required; for this reason, and to determine specific test requirements, the individual product specification should be reviewed. If mechanical testing is required by the product specification, sampling shall be in accordance with 4.4 or with Supplementary Requirement S21 as appropriate.

6.2 Unless otherwise specified by the purchaser, when mechanical properties are required by the product specification, test coupons may be taken from castings, may be cast integrally with the castings, or may be cast in separate molds of the same type and material as those used for the castings, in accordance with Specification A1067, Fig. 1, Fig. 2, Fig. 3, or Fig. 4, except when Supplementary Requirement S15 is specified. The test coupon in Specification A1067, Fig. 4 shall be employed only for austenitic alloy castings with cross sections less than 2½ in. [65 mm].⁴

NOTE 2—*TEST COUPONS FOR LARGE AND HEAVY STEEL CASTINGS*—The test coupons in A1067, Fig. 1 are to be used for large and heavy steel castings. However, at the option of the foundry the cross-sectional area and length of the standard coupon may be increased as desired.

NOTE 3—*BEND BAR*—If a bend bar is required, an alternate design (as shown by dotted lines in A1067, Fig. 1) is indicated.

NOTE 4—*A1067, FIG 2*—pour through head; cover molten head with powdered charcoal, coke dust, and so forth, immediately after pouring, in order to keep head fluid as long as possible.

NOTE 5—*A1067, FIG 4*—Coupons produced in this manner are suitable for austenitic alloys only. The mold may be preheated for pouring to produce a sound coupon.

6.3 Choice of testing track from the options listed in Test Methods A1058 when material is ordered to an M suffix (SI units) product standard, should be identified by the purchaser in the ordering information. If the choice of test track is not specified in the order, then the default ASTM track shall be used as noted in Test Methods A1058.

6.4 The coupon from which the test specimen is taken shall be heat treated in production furnaces to the same procedure as the castings it represents.

6.5 The specimens may be cast to shape or machined from coupons to dimensions in accordance with Test Methods and Definitions A370 or the ICI-type bar shown in A1067, Fig. 3.

6.6 If any specimen shows defective machining or develops flaws, it may be discarded and another substituted from the same master heat.

6.7 To determine conformance with the tension test requirements, an observed value or calculated value shall be

⁴ Information on the relationship of mechanical properties determined on test coupons obtained as specified in 6.2 with those obtained from the casting may be found in *The Steel Casting Handbook*, Fifth Edition, Steel Founders' Society of America, 1980, pp. 15–35 through 15–43.

rounded off in accordance with Practice E29 to the nearest 0.5 ksi [5 MPa] for yield and tensile strength and to the nearest 1 % for elongation and reduction of area.

6.7.1 In the special case of rounding the number “5” when no additional numbers other than “0” follow the “5,” rounding shall be done in the direction of the specification limits if following Practice E29 would cause rejection of material.

7. Workmanship, Finish, and Appearance

7.1 All castings shall be made in a workmanlike manner and shall conform to the dimensions on drawings furnished by the purchaser before manufacture is started. If the pattern is supplied by the purchaser or is produced using a die supplied by the purchaser, the dimensions of the casting shall be as predicated by the pattern or die.

8. Quality

8.1 The surface of the casting shall be free of adhering ceramic, scale, cracks, and hot tears as determined by visual examination. Other surface discontinuities shall meet the visual acceptance standards specified in the order. Practice A997 or other visual standards may be used to define acceptable surface discontinuities and finish. Unacceptable visual surface discontinuities shall be removed and their removal verified by visual examination of the resultant cavities.

8.2 When additional inspection is desired, Supplementary Requirements S1, S2, S3, S4, or S5 may be specified.

9. Repair

9.1 Repair by welding shall be in accordance with the requirements of the individual specification using procedures and welders qualified in accordance with Practice A488/A488M.

10. Inspection

10.1 The manufacturer shall afford the purchaser's inspector all reasonable facilities necessary to satisfy that the material is being produced and furnished in accordance with the applicable specification. Foundry inspection by the purchaser shall not interfere unnecessarily with the manufacturer's operations. All tests and inspections, with the exception of product analysis (5.3), are the responsibility of the manufacturer.

11. Rejection

11.1 Subsequent to acceptance at the manufacturer's works, material that is found to be unacceptable as determined by requirements specified in the order may be rejected by the purchaser. The manufacturer should be notified of such rejection. If the manufacturer is dissatisfied with the results of any tests performed by the purchaser, he may make claim for a reheating.

12. Keywords

12.1 casting; investment casting; master heat; steel; sub-heat