



Designation: B298 – 12 (Reapproved 2017)

Standard Specification for Silver-Coated Soft or Annealed Copper Wire¹

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This standard has been approved for use by agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification covers silver-coated, soft or annealed, round copper wire, intended for use in electrical equipment, as follows:

1.1.1 *Class A*—Wire whose silver coating is at least 1.25 % of the total weight of the coated wire.

1.1.2 *Class B*—Wire whose silver coating is at least 2.50 % of the total weight of the coated wire.

1.1.3 *Class C*—Wire whose silver coating is at least 4.00 % of the total weight of the coated wire.

1.1.4 *Class D*—Wire whose silver coating is at least 6.10 % of the total weight of the coated wire.

1.1.5 *Class E*—Wire whose silver coating is at least 10.00 % of the total weight of the coated wire.

1.2 Silver-coated wire having different minimum percentages of silver by weight may be obtained by mutual agreement between the manufacturer and the purchaser. For information purposes the thickness of coating in microinches provided by the percentages listed above is shown in **Table 1** (Explanatory **Note 1**).

1.3 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.3.1 *Exceptions*—The SI values for density, resistivity, and volume are to be regarded as standard.

1.4 The following precautionary caveat pertains only to the test method section of this specification: *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 precautionary statements see **8.4.1.2** and Explanatory **Note 2**.

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee B01 on Electrical Conductors and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee B01.04 on Conductors of Copper and Copper Alloys.

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1.5 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 The following documents of the issue in effect at the time of reference form a part of this specification to the extent referenced herein:

2.2 *ASTM Standards*:²

B49 Specification for Copper Rod for Electrical Purposes

B193 Test Method for Resistivity of Electrical Conductor Materials

B258 Specification for Nominal Diameters and Cross-Sectional Areas of AWG Sizes of Solid Round Wires Used as Electrical Conductors

E50 Practices for Apparatus, Reagents, and Safety Considerations for Chemical Analysis of Metals, Ores, and Related Materials

3. Ordering Information

3.1 Orders for material under this specification shall include the following information:

3.1.1 Quantity of each size,

3.1.2 Wire size, diameter in inches (see **5.3** and **Table 1**),

3.1.3 Class of coating (Section **1** and **Table 1**),

3.1.4 Type of copper, if special (see **4.2**),

3.1.5 Place of inspection (see **9.1**), and

3.1.6 Packaging and Package Marking (Section **10**).

3.1.7 In addition supplementary requirements shall apply only when specified by the purchaser in the inquiry, contract, or purchase order for direct procurement by agencies of the U.S. Government (see S1, S2, and S3).

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.

TABLE 1 Tensile Requirements

| Diameter, in. | Area at 20°C | | Elongation in 10 in., min, % | Thickness of Coating, μin. (For Information Only) | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| | cmils | in. ² | | Class A, 1.25 % Silver | Class B, 2.50 % Silver | Class C, 4.00 % Silver | Class D, 6.10 % Silver | Class E, 10.00 % Silver |
| 0.1285 | 16 510 | 0.01297 | 30 | 340 | 680 | 1 090 | 1 659 | 2 720 |
| 0.1144 | 13 090 | 0.01028 | 30 | 303 | 605 | 970 | 1 477 | 2 422 |
| 0.1019 | 10 380 | 0.008155 | 25 | 270 | 539 | 864 | 1 316 | 2 157 |
| 0.0907 | 8 230 | 0.00646 | 25 | 240 | 480 | 768 | 1 171 | 1 941 |
| 0.0808 | 6 530 | 0.00513 | 25 | 214 | 428 | 684 | 1 043 | 1 710 |
| 0.0720 | 5 180 | 0.00407 | 25 | 190 | 381 | 610 | 930 | 1 524 |
| 0.0641 | 4 110 | 0.00323 | 25 | 170 | 339 | 542 | 828 | 1 357 |
| 0.0571 | 3 260 | 0.00256 | 25 | 151 | 302 | 483 | 737 | 1 209 |
| 0.0508 | 2 580 | 0.00203 | 25 | 134 | 269 | 430 | 656 | 1 075 |
| 0.0453 | 2 050 | 0.00161 | 25 | 120 | 240 | 383 | 585 | 959 |
| 0.0403 | 1 620 | 0.00128 | 25 | 107 | 213 | 341 | 520 | 853 |
| 0.0359 | 1 290 | 0.00101 | 25 | 95 | 190 | 304 | 464 | 760 |
| 0.0320 | 1 020 | 0.000804 | 25 | 85 | 169 | 270 | 413 | 677 |
| 0.0285 | 812 | 0.000638 | 25 | 75 | 151 | 241 | 368 | 603 |
| 0.0253 | 640 | 0.000503 | 25 | 67 | 134 | 214 | 327 | 536 |
| 0.0226 | 511 | 0.000401 | 25 | 60 | 120 | 191 | 292 | 478 |
| 0.0201 | 404 | 0.00317 | 20 | 53 | 106 | 170 | 260 | 425 |
| 0.0179 | 320 | 0.000252 | 20 | 47 | 95 | 151 | 231 | 379 |
| 0.0159 | 253 | 0.000199 | 20 | 42 | 84 | 135 | 205 | 337 |
| 0.0142 | 202 | 0.000158 | 20 | ... | 75 | 120 | 183 | 301 |
| 0.0126 | 159 | 0.000125 | 20 | ... | 67 | 107 | 163 | 267 |
| 0.0113 | 128 | 0.000100 | 20 | ... | 60 | 96 | 146 | 239 |
| 0.0100 | 100 | 0.0000785 | 20 | ... | 53 | 85 | 129 | 212 |
| 0.0089 | 79.2 | 0.0000622 | 15 | ... | 47 | 75 | 115 | 188 |
| 0.0080 | 64.0 | 0.0000503 | 15 | ... | 42 | 68 | 103 | 169 |
| 0.0071 | 50.4 | 0.0000396 | 15 | ... | ... | 60 | 92 | 150 |
| 0.0063 | 39.7 | 0.0000312 | 15 | ... | ... | 53 | 81 | 133 |
| 0.0056 | 31.4 | 0.0000246 | 15 | ... | ... | 47 | 72 | 119 |
| 0.0050 | 25.0 | 0.0000196 | 15 | ... | ... | 42 | 65 | 106 |
| 0.0045 | 20.2 | 0.0000159 | 15 | ... | ... | ... | 58 | 95 |
| 0.0040 | 16.0 | 0.0000126 | 15 | ... | ... | ... | 52 | 85 |
| 0.0035 | 12.2 | 0.00000962 | 15 | ... | ... | ... | 45 | 74 |
| 0.0031 | 9.61 | 0.00000755 | 15 | ... | ... | ... | 40 | 66 |
| 0.0028 | 7.84 | 0.00000616 | 10 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 59 |
| 0.0025 | 6.25 | 0.00000491 | 10 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 53 |
| 0.0022 | 4.84 | 0.00000380 | 10 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 47 |
| 0.0020 | 4.00 | 0.00000314 | 10 | ... | ... | ... | ... | 42 |

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4. Materials and Manufacture

4.1 The material shall be silver-coated copper wire (Explanatory Note 2), of such quality and purity that the finished product shall have the properties and characteristics prescribed in this specification.

NOTE 1—The following specifications define copper suitable for use: Specification B49.

4.2 Copper of special qualities, forms, or types, as may be agreed upon between the manufacturer and the purchaser, and that will conform to the requirements prescribed in this specification may also be used.

5. General Requirements

5.1 *Tensile Properties*—The silver-coated wire shall conform to the requirements for elongation prescribed in Table 1. No requirements for tensile strength are specified. For wire whose nominal diameter is more than 0.001 in. (0.025 mm) greater than a size listed in Table 1, but less than that of the next larger size, the requirements of the next larger size shall apply.

5.2 *Resistivity*—The electrical resistivity of the coated wire at a temperature of 20°C shall not exceed 875.20 ohms-lb/mile².

5.3 *Dimensions and Permissible Variations*—The wire sizes shall be expressed as the diameter of the wire in decimal fractions of an inch to the nearest 0.0001 in. (0.0025 mm) (Explanatory Note 3). The coated wire shall not vary from the specified diameter by more than the following amounts:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Nominal Diameter, in. | Permissible Variations in Diameter, plus and minus |
| Under 0.0100 | 0.0001 in.(0.1 mil) |
| 0.0100 or over | 1 % |

5.4 *Continuity of Coating*—The coating shall be continuous. The continuity of the coating shall be determined on representative samples taken before stranding or insulating and shall be determined by the sodium polysulfide test, in accordance with 8.4. Wire whose coating weight corresponds to a thickness less than 40μ in. (0.00004 in.) shall not be subject to this test (Explanatory Note 4).

5.5 *Weight of Coating*—The weight of coating expressed in percent of the total weight of the wire shall be not less than 1.25 % for Class A; 2.50 % for Class B; 4.00 % for Class C; 6.10 % for Class D; and 10.00 % for Class E. When coatings other than these classes are required, the weight of the coating shall be not less than that specified. For ease of comparison, the thickness of coating for these classes has been included in Table 1 (Explanatory Note 4).

5.6 *Joints*—Necessary joints in the wire and rods prior to final plating and drawing shall be made in accordance with the best commercial practice. Joints made after plating shall not be allowed to remain in the final product.

5.7 *Finish*—The coating shall consist of a smooth continuous layer, firmly adherent to the surface of the copper. The wire shall be bright and free from all imperfections not consistent with the best commercial practice.

6. Conformance Criteria (Explanatory Note 5)

6.1 Any lot of wire, the samples of which comply with the conformance criteria of this section, shall be considered as complying with the requirements of Section 5. Individual production units that fail to meet one or more of the requirements shall be rejected. Failure of a sample group from a lot to meet one or more of the following criteria shall constitute cause for rejection of the lot. The conformance criteria for each of the prescribed properties given in Section 5 are as follows:

6.1.1 *Elongation*—The lot shall be considered conforming if the elongation of each of the selected specimens is not less than the elongation value in Table 1.

6.2 *Resistivity*—The electrical resistivity of each of the four specimens shall conform to the requirements of 5.2. Failure to meet these requirements shall constitute failure to meet the resistivity conformance criterion.

6.3 *Dimensions*—The dimensions of the first sample (Table 2) shall conform to the requirements of 5.3. If there are no failures, the lot conforms to this requirement. If there are failures, but the number of these do not exceed the allowable defect number, c_2 (Table 2), for the respective number of units in the sample, a second sample equal to n_2 shall be taken and the total defects of the n plus n_2 units shall not exceed the allowable defect number, c_2 . Failure to meet this requirement shall constitute failure to meet the dimensional conformance criterion.

6.4 *Continuity of Coating*—The continuity of the coating of each of the eight specimens shall conform to the requirements of 5.4. Failure of more than two specimens shall constitute failure to meet the continuity criterion. If not more than two specimens fail to meet the continuity criteria, eight additional specimens from the lot shall be tested, all of which shall conform to the continuity criteria. However, any individual production unit, the specimen from which failed to meet the continuity criteria, shall be rejected.

6.5 *Weight of Coating*—The weight of coating of each of the four specimens shall conform to the requirements of 5.5. Failure of more than one specimen shall constitute failure to meet the weight criteria. If only one specimen fails to meet the weight criteria, four additional specimens from the lot shall be tested, all of which shall conform to the weight criterion. However, any individual production unit, the specimen from which failed the weight criteria, shall be rejected.

6.6 *Packaging*—Conformance to the packaging requirements specified by the purchaser shall be determined in accordance with Table 3. The number of units in the sample showing nonconformance to the requirements shall not exceed the allowable defect number, c , in Table 3. Failure to meet this requirement shall constitute failure to meet the packaging conformance criterion.

7. Density

7.1 For the purpose of calculating weights, cross-sections, etc., the density of the copper shall be taken as 8.89 g/cm³ (0.32117 lb/in.³) at 20°C (Explanatory Note 6). The density of silver shall be taken as 10.5 g/cm³ (0.1 mil) (0.37933 lb/in.³).

8. Test Methods

8.1 *Tensile Strength and Elongation:*

8.1.1 No test for tensile strength shall be required.

8.1.2 The elongation of wire with a nominal diameter greater than 0.0808 in. (2.052 mm) shall be determined as the permanent increase in length due to the breaking of the wire in tension (see Explanatory Note 7). The elongation shall be measured between gage marks placed originally 10 in. (242 mm) apart upon the test specimen and expressed in percent of the original length.

8.1.3 The elongation of wire with a nominal diameter equal to or less than 0.0808 in. (2.053 mm) may be determined as described above or by measurements made between the jaws of the testing machine. When measurements are made between the jaws, the zero length shall be the distance between the jaws at the start of the tension test and be as near 10 in. (254 mm) as practicable. The final length shall be the distance between the jaws at the time of rupture. The fracture shall be between gage marks or jaws of the testing machine, depending on method used, and not closer than 1 in. (25.4 mm) to either gage mark or jaw.

8.2 *Resistivity*—The electrical resistivity of the material shall be determined in accordance with Test Method B193

TABLE 2 Sampling for Dimensional Measurements and Surface Finish

| Number of Units in Lot | First Sample | | Second Sample | | Allowable Number of Defects in Both Sample c^2 |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------|--|
| | Number of Units in Sample, n_1 | Allowable Number of Defects in First Sample, c_1 | Number of Units in Sample, n_2 | $n_1 + n_2$ | |
| 1 to 14, incl | All | 0 | ... | ... | ... |
| 15 to 50, incl | 14 | 0 | ... | ... | ... |
| 51 to 100, incl | 19 | 0 | 23 | 42 | 1 |
| 101 to 200, incl | 24 | 0 | 46 | 70 | 2 |
| 201 to 400, incl | 29 | 0 | 76 | 105 | 3 |
| 401 to 800, incl | 33 | 0 | 112 | 145 | 4 |
| Over 800 | 34 | 0 | 116 | 150 | 4 |

TABLE 3 Sampling for Packaging Inspection

| Number of Units in Lot | Number of Units in Sample, <i>n</i> | Allowable Number of Defective Units, <i>c</i> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 to 30, incl | all | 0 |
| 31 to 50, incl | 30 | 0 |
| 51 to 100, incl | 37 | 0 |
| 101 to 200, incl | 40 | 0 |
| 201 to 300, incl | 70 | 1 |
| 301 to 500, incl | 100 | 2 |
| 501 to 800, incl | 130 | 3 |
| Over 800 | 155 | 4 |

(Explanatory **Note 8**). The purchaser may accept certification that the wire was drawn from rod stock meeting the International Standard for Annealed Copper in lieu of resistivity tests on the finished wire.

8.3 Dimensional Measurements—Dimensional measurements shall be made with a micrometer caliper equipped with a vernier graduated in 0.0001 in. (0.0025 mm). Each coil shall be gaged at three places, one near each end and one near the middle. From each spool approximately 12 ft (3.7 m) shall be unreel and the wire gaged in six places between the second and twelfth foot from the end. The average of the measurements obtained shall meet the requirements of **5.3**.

8.4 Continuity of Coating:

8.4.1 Specimens:

8.4.1.1 Length of Specimens—Test specimens shall each have a length of about 6 in. (152 mm). They shall be tagged or marked to correspond with the coil, spool, or reel from which they were cut.

8.4.1.2 Treatment of Specimens—Thoroughly clean the specimens by immersion in a suitable organic solvent for at least 3 min; then remove and wipe dry with a clean, soft cloth (**Warning:** See Explanatory **Note 2**). Keep the specimens thus cleaned wrapped in a clean, dry cloth until tested. Do not handle that part of the specimen to be immersed in the test solution. Take care to avoid abrasion by the cut ends.

8.4.2 Special Solutions:

8.4.2.1 Sodium Polysulfide Solution (sp gr 1.142)—Make a concentrated solution by dissolving sodium sulfide crystals (cp) in distilled water until the solution is saturated at about 21°C, and adding sufficient flowers of sulfur (in excess of 250 g/L of solution) to provide complete saturation, as shown by the presence in the solution of an excess of sulfur after the solution has been allowed to stand for at least 24 h. Make the test solution by diluting a portion of the concentrated solution with distilled water to a specific gravity of 1.135 to 1.145 at 15.6°C. The sodium polysulfide test solution should have sufficient strength to blacken thoroughly a piece of clean uncoated copper wire in 5 s. The test solution used for testing samples shall be considered exhausted if it fails to blacken a piece of clean copper as described above (Explanatory **Note 9**):

8.4.2.2 Hydrochloric Acid Solution (sp gr 1.088)—Dilute commercial HCl (sp gr 1.12) with distilled water to a specific gravity of 1.088 measured at 15.6°C. A portion of the HCl solution having a volume of 180 mL shall be considered

exhausted if it fails to remove within 15 s the discoloration of the silver due to the polysulfide immersion.

8.4.3 Procedure:

8.4.3.1 Immersion in Polysulfide Solution—Immerse a length of at least 4½ in. (114 mm) from each of the clean specimens for 30 s in the sodium polysulfide solution, described in **8.4.2.1**, maintained at a temperature between 15.6 and 21°C.

8.4.3.2 Washing—After the immersion, thoroughly wash the specimens in clean water and wipe dry with a clean, soft cloth.

8.4.3.3 Immersion in Hydrochloric Acid—After washing, immediately immerse the specimen 15 s in the HCl solution described in **8.4.2.2**, thoroughly wash in clean water, and wipe dry with a clean, soft cloth.

8.4.3.4 Examination of Specimens—After immersion and washing examine the specimens to ascertain if copper exposed through openings in the silver coating has been blackened by action of the sodium polysulfide. Examine the specimen with the unaided eye (normal spectacles excepted) against a white background. The specimens shall be considered to have failed if, by such blackening exposed copper is revealed. No attention shall be paid to blackening within 0.5 in. (12.7 mm) of the cut end.

8.5 Weight of Coating—Conformance to the weight requirement for various classes and diameters of wire is best determined by using test equipment that is specifically designed for this purpose. These devices offer superior accuracy while performing the measurement in a variety of manners.

NOTE 2—The accuracy of the testing is reliant upon adherence to the procedures for testing that have been developed by the manufacturers as their standard test regimen. There are thickness testing machines available that can be used to perform this measurement. The use of these devices should be at the mutual agreement of the manufacturer and the purchaser.

8.6 Finish—Surface-finish inspection shall be made with the unaided eye (normal spectacles excepted).

9. Inspection

9.1 General (Explanatory Note 5)—All tests and inspections shall be made at the place of manufacture unless otherwise agreed upon between the manufacturer and the purchaser at the time of purchase. The manufacturer shall afford the inspector representing the purchaser all reasonable facilities to satisfy him that the material is being furnished in accordance with this specification.

9.1.1 Unless otherwise agreed by the manufacturer and the purchaser, conformance of the wire to the various requirements listed in Section **5** shall be determined on samples taken from each lot of wire presented for acceptance.

9.1.2 The manufacturer shall, if requested prior to inspection, certify that all wire in the lot was made under such conditions that the product as a whole conforms to the requirements of this specification as determined by regularly made and recorded tests.

9.2 Terms Applying to Inspection:

9.2.1 Lot—A lot is any amount of wire of one type and size presented for acceptance at one time, such amount, however, not to exceed 10 000 lb (4540 kg) (Explanatory **Note 10**).