



Designation: **C373—17 C373 – 18**

Standard Test Methods for Determination of Water Absorption and Associated Properties by Vacuum Method for Pressed Ceramic Tiles and Glass Tiles and Boil Method for Extruded Ceramic Tiles and Non-tile Fired Ceramic Whiteware Products¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation C373; 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 These test methods covers procedures for determining water absorption, bulk density, apparent porosity, and apparent specific gravity of non-tile fired unglazed ceramic whiteware² products, glazed or unglazed ceramic tiles, and glass tiles.

1.2 The values stated in metric units are normative. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to inch-pound units that are provided for information only and are not normative.

1.3 *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, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.4 *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 *ASTM Standards:*

<https://standards.iteh.ai/>
[E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method](#)

3. Significance and Use

3.1 Measurement of density, porosity, and specific gravity is a tool for determining the degree of maturation of a ceramic body, or for determining structural properties that may be required for a given application.

4. Apparatus and Materials

4.1 *Balance or scale*, of adequate capacity, suitable to weigh accurately to 0.01 g (0.00002 lb).

4.2 *Oven*, capable of maintaining a temperature of $150 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$ ($302 \pm 9^\circ\text{F}$).

4.3 *Wire Loop, Halter, or Basket*, capable of supporting specimens under water for making suspended mass measurements.

4.4 *Suspended Mass Container (if Determination of Suspended Mass is Desired)*—A glass beaker or similar container of such size and shape that the sample, when suspended from the balance by the wire loop, specified in 4.3, is completely immersed in water with the sample and the wire loop completely free of contact with any part of the container.

4.5 *Stainless Steel Boiling Container*, suitable for boiling water and with sufficient capacity to hold the test specimens and quantity of water specified in 6.2. The container shall be equipped with a loose removable cover which does not allow pressure to build.

4.6 *Deionized (DI) or Distilled Water*.

4.7 *Microfiber Cloth*.

¹ These test methods is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee C21 on Ceramic Whitewares and Related Products and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee C21.03 on Methods for Whitewares and Environmental Concerns.

Current edition approved Sept. 1, 2017/ Feb. 1, 2018. Published September 2017/ February 2018. Originally approved in 1955. Last previous edition approved in 2016/2017 as C373—16/ C373 – 17. DOI: 10.1520/C0373-17.10.1520/C0373-18.

² Non-tile ceramic whitewares are ceramic whitewares as defined in ASTM Terminology Standard C242, excluding ceramic tiles.

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

- 4.8 *Heat Source*, such as a hot plate, burner, or equivalent to heat the water to boiling.
- 4.9 *Desiccator*—a sealed chamber containing desiccants which is of sufficient size and capacity to allow specimens to cool while preventing the specimens from absorbing moisture from ambient air.
- 4.10 *Pressure Vessel*, capable of holding a vacuum of 91 ± 5 kPa (26.9 ± 1.5 inHg) below standard atmospheric pressure. The vessel shall be large enough to hold the required number of tile samples and the necessary volume of water to cover the tiles during testing. A modified 41.5 quart pressure cooker has been found to meet these requirements.
- 4.11 *Vacuum Pump*, capable of achieving and holding the required vacuum.
- 4.12 *Gauge*, capable of measuring the required vacuum. Gauge shall be installed on a manifold connected directly to the pressure vessel. Readings from any gauges present on the pump are not acceptable forms of measurement.
- 4.13 *Hoses, fittings, valves, solenoids, or combinations thereof*, assembled in such a way to allow manually or automatic operation.
- 4.14 *Timer*, accurate to 1 second.

5. Test Specimens:

5.1 *Non-tile Fired Ceramic Whitewares:*

5.1.1 At least five representative test specimens shall be selected that have not been previously tested. The specimens shall be unglazed and shall have as much of the surface freshly fractured as is practical. Sharp edges or corners shall be removed. The specimens shall contain no cracks. The individual test specimens shall weigh at least 50 g (0.11 lb).

5.2 *Ceramic Tiles and Glass Tiles:*

5.2.1 Sampling shall be carried out in accordance with Sections [Table 1 5.2.2—5.2.9](#) and [5.2.2](#) through [5.2.8](#) based on the length (x), width (y), and the area of the tiles to be tested (for irregularly shaped tiles, see [Note 1](#)). Tiles and relevant specimens must contain no visible damage or cracks prior to testing and have not been previously tested. Any loose or contaminating material shall be removed. This includes any mesh, paper and adhesive that has been applied to mosaics. Cutting of specimens, as described in the following sections, shall consist of scoring and snapping, or sawing when impossible to score and snap with conventional tile scoring equipment (as can be the case with some glass tiles and textured and structured porcelain tiles).

NOTE 1—For irregularly shaped tiles (hexagons, circles, and so forth), consider the area of the minimum rectangle in which the tile can be fit.

5.2.2 For tiles less than or equal to 205420 cm^2 (65 in.^2 – 205 mm ($8 \times 8 \text{ in.}$)), at least five representative test specimens shall be selected. Specimens shall be cut in half, within 10 mm (0.4 in.). Specimens shall be cut perpendicular to the longest side if the specimen has unequal sides. Select one half at random from each specimen for testing (see [Fig. 1a](#) and [Fig. 1b](#)).

5.2.3 For tiles greater than $205 \times 205 \text{ mm}$ ($8 \times 8 \text{ in.}$) and less than or equal to $410 \times 410 \text{ mm}$ ($16 \times 16 \text{ in.}$) at least five representative test specimens shall be selected. Each specimen shall be cut into four equal quadrants, within 10 mm (0.4 in.). Select one quadrant at random from each specimen for testing (see [Fig. 2](#)).

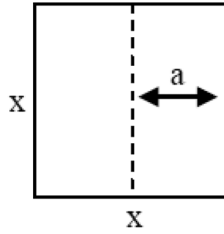
5.2.3 For tiles greater than 410420 cm^2 (65 in.^2 – 410 mm ($16 \times 16 \text{ in.}$)) and less than or equal to 6003600 cm^2 (558 in.^2 – 600 mm ($24 \times 24 \text{ in.}$)), with x and y $> 205 \text{ mm}$ (8 in.), at least five representative test specimens shall be selected. A $205 \times 205 \text{ mm}$ ($8 \times 8 \text{ in.}$) portion, within 10 mm (0.4 in.), shall be cut from one corner of each specimen for testing (see [Fig. 3](#)).

5.2.5 For tiles greater than $600 \text{ mm} \times 600 \text{ mm}$ ($24 \times 24 \text{ in.}$), at least three representative test specimens shall be selected. A $205 \times 205 \text{ mm}$ ($8 \times 8 \text{ in.}$) portion, within 10 mm (0.4 in.), shall be cut from each of the four corners of each specimen for testing (see [Fig. 4](#)).

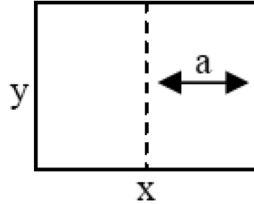
5.2.4 For non-square tiles which have a side less than or equal to tiles greater than 420 cm^2 (65 in.^2), with 205 mm (8 in.) and a side greater than $< x < 1000 \text{ mm}$ (39 in.) and $y \leq 205 \text{ mm}$ (8 in.), and less than 1000 mm (39 in.), at least five representative

TABLE 1 Sampling

Maximum Area	Reference Paragraph for Sample Cutting	# of Specimens per Tile to be Tested	Total # of Tiles	Total # of Specimens
Area $\leq 420 \text{ cm}^2$ (65 in.^2)	5.2.2	1	5	5
420 cm^2 (65 in.^2) < Area $\leq 3600 \text{ cm}^2$ (558 in.^2) (with x and y $> 205 \text{ mm}$ [8 in.]	5.2.3	1	5	5
Area $> 420 \text{ cm}^2$ (65 in.^2) (with 205 mm [8 in.] $< x < 1000 \text{ mm}$ [39 in.] and y $\leq 205 \text{ mm}$ [8 in.]	5.2.4	1	5	5
Area $> 420 \text{ cm}^2$ (65 in.^2) (x $\geq 1000 \text{ mm}$ [39 in.] and y $\leq 205 \text{ mm}$ [8 in.]	5.2.5	2	5	10
Area $> 3600 \text{ cm}^2$ (558 in.^2) (with x and y $\geq 410 \text{ mm}$ [16 in.]	5.2.6	4	3	12
Area $> 3600 \text{ cm}^2$ (558 in.^2) (with x $\geq 410 \text{ mm}$ [16 in.] and 205 mm [8 in.] $< y \leq 410 \text{ mm}$ [16 in.]	5.2.7	4	3	12



(a.) Equal Sides: $x \leq 205 \text{ mm}$, $a = \frac{1}{2} x$ (within 10 mm)



(b.) Unequal Sides: $x \leq 205 \text{ mm}$, $y \leq 205 \text{ mm}$, $x > y$, $a = \frac{1}{2} x$ (within 10 mm)

(b.) Unequal Sides: $\text{area} \leq 420 \text{ cm}^2$, $x > y$, $a = \frac{1}{2} x$ (within 10 mm)

FIG. 1 (a) & FIG. 1 (b)

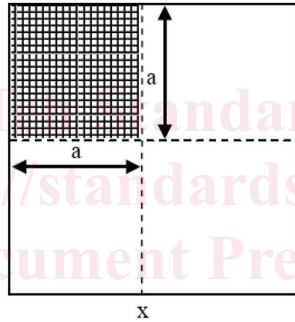


FIG. 32

$410 \text{ mm} < x \leq 600 \text{ mm}$, $410 \text{ mm} < x > 205 \text{ mm}$, $y > 205 \text{ mm}$, $420 \text{ cm}^2 < \text{area} \leq 3600 \text{ cm}^2$,
 $a = 205 \text{ mm}$ (within 10 mm)

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/5b177771-60af-4c72-ada3-5e60cb69f4eb/astm-c373-18>

test specimens shall be selected. Each specimen shall be cut once perpendicular to the longest side, such that a 205 mm (8 in.) portion, within 10 mm (0.4 in.), from the end remains in, is available for testing (see Fig. 53).

5.2.5 For non-square tiles which have a side less than or equal to 205 mm (8 in.) and a side greater than or equal to 1000 mm (39 in.), with $x \geq 1000 \text{ mm}$ (39 in.) and $y \leq 205 \text{ mm}$ (8 in.), at least five representative test specimens shall be selected. Each specimen shall be cut twice, once on each end, perpendicular to the longest side, such that two 205 mm (8 in.) portions within 10 mm (0.4 in.), one from each end, remain are available for testing (see Fig. 64).

5.2.6 For tiles greater than 3600 cm^2 (558 in.^2), with x and $y \geq 410 \text{ mm}$ (16 in.), at least three representative test specimens shall be selected. A $205 \times 205 \text{ mm}$ ($8 \times 8 \text{ in.}$) portion, within 10 mm (0.4 in.), shall be cut from each of the four corners of each specimen for testing (see Fig. 5).

5.2.7 For non-square tiles which have a side greater than 205 mm tiles greater than 3600 cm^2 (8 in.) and (558 in.^2 less than or equal to 410 mm (16 in.), and a side greater than 410 mm), with $x \geq 410 \text{ mm}$ (16 in.) and 205 mm (8 in.) $< y \leq 410 \text{ mm}$ (16 in.), at least five three representative test specimens shall be selected. Each specimen shall be cut once twice, at each end, perpendicular to the longest side, such that to produce two 205 mm (8 in.) portion, within 10 mm (0.4 in.), from the end remains. The 205 mm

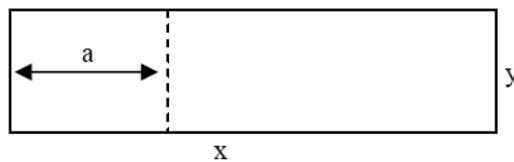


FIG. 53

$205 \text{ mm} < x < 1000 \text{ mm}$, $y \leq 205 \text{ mm}$, $\text{area} > 420 \text{ cm}^2$,
 $a = 205 \text{ mm}$ (within 10 mm)

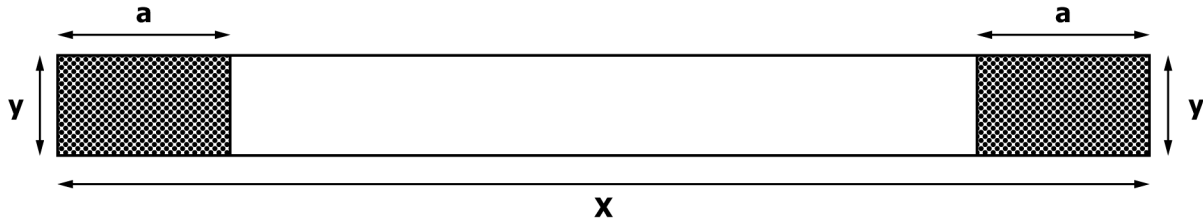


FIG. 4
 $x > 600 \geq 1000$ mm, $y > 600 \leq 205$ mm, area > 420 cm²-mm, $a = 205$ mm (within 10 mm)

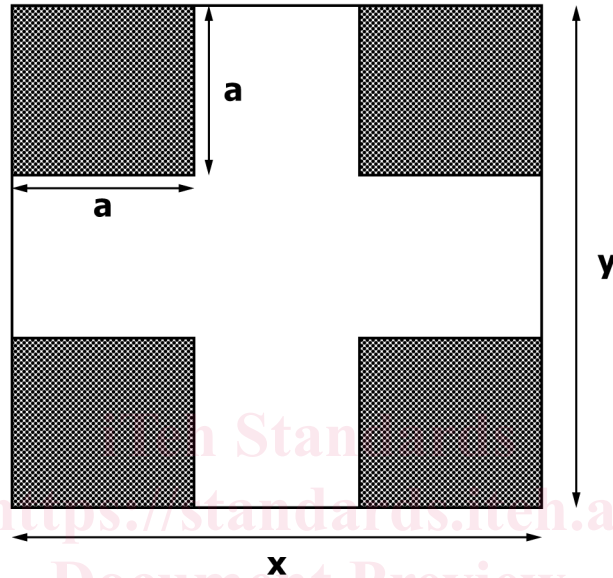


FIG. 75
 $x \geq 410$ mm, 205 mm $< y \leq 410$ mm, $y \geq 410$ mm, area > 3600 cm²,
 $a = 205$ mm (within 10 mm), $b = \frac{1}{2} y$ (within 10 mm)

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/3b17f7a1-e0af-4372-ada3-5e60cb69f4eb/astm-c373-18>
 (8 in.) (8 in.) portions, within 10 mm (0.4 in.). Each such 205 mm (8 in.) portion shall be cut a second time, in half, within 10 mm (0.4 in.) perpendicular to the first cut. Selectcut (see Fig. 6) one half at random). All four pieces from each specimen for testing (see shall be used for testing Fig. 7):

5.2.8 If a tile does not weigh at least 50 g (0.11 lb) prior to cutting, then multiple whole pieces may be used to equal one test specimen with a mass of at least 50 g (0.11 lb). At least five representative test specimens shall be assembled.

6. Procedure

6.1 Dry the test specimens to constant mass (Note 3) by heating in an oven at $150 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$ ($302 \pm 9^\circ\text{F}$) for a minimum of 24 h (or such other time as has been established for the oven in use and the mass of the tiles being dried), followed by cooling in a desiccator. Determine the dry mass, D , to the nearest 0.01 g (0.00002 lb) (see Note 2).

NOTE 2—Specimens being tested directly following their manufacture may be considered fully dried so long as they have not been subjected to any process that wets the specimen post firing (such as can occur in cutting and polishing operations) and are placed in a desiccator sufficiently quickly (usually within no more than 30 min of exiting the kiln) that no moisture has been absorbed from ambient air.

NOTE 3—The drying of the specimens and the determination of their masses may be done either before or after the specimens have been impregnated with water. Usually the dry mass is determined before impregnation. However, if the specimens are friable or evidence indicates that particles have broken loose during the impregnation, the specimens shall be dried and weighed after the suspended mass and the saturated mass have been determined, in accordance with 6.4 and 6.5. In this case, the second dry mass shall be used in all appropriate calculations.

6.2 Water Impregnation of Extruded Ceramic Tiles and Non-tile Fired Ceramic Whiteware Products Using the Boil Method:

6.2.1 For Non-tile Fired Ceramic Whitewares—Bring DI or distilled water to a boil in a stainless steel boiling container. (Warning—Handling water at boiling or near boiling temperature can present a safety hazard. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.) Place the specimens in the boiling DI or distilled water, and use setter pins, a rustproof rack, or equivalent to separate the specimens from the bottom and sides of the stainless steel boiling container and from each other. The DI or distilled water shall be unused and of sufficient quantity that the test specimens are fully submerged and the mass ratio of water to test specimens is at least 3:1.