



Standard Test Method for Resistivity of Electrical Conductor Materials¹

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

1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of the electrical resistivity of metallic electrical conductor material. It provides for an accuracy of $\pm 0.30\%$ on test specimens having a resistance of $0.00001\ \Omega$ ($10\ \mu\Omega$) or more. Weight resistivity accuracy may be adversely affected by possible inaccuracies in the assumed density of the conductor.

1.2 *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.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

- A 111 Specification for Zinc-Coated (Galvanized) “Iron” Telephone and Telegraph Line Wire²
- A 326 Specification for Zinc-Coated (Galvanized) High Tensile Steel Telephone and Telegraph Line Wire²
- B 9 Specification for Bronze Trolley Wire³
- B 105 Specification for Hard-Drawn Copper Alloy Wires for Electric Conductors³
- B 298 Specification for Silver-Coated Soft or Annealed Copper Wire³
- B 355 Specification for Nickel-Coated Soft or Annealed Copper Wire³
- B 415 Specification for Hard-Drawn Aluminum-Clad Steel Wire³
- B 566 Specification for Copper-Clad Aluminum Wire³
- B 800 Specification for 8000 Series Aluminum Alloy Wire for Electrical Purposes—Annealed and Intermediate Temper³

2.2 NIST Document:

- NBS *Handbook 100—Copper Wire Tables*⁴

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee B01 on Electrical Conductors and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee B01.02 on Methods of Test and Sampling Procedure.

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 01.06.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 02.03.

⁴ Available from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Gaithersburg, MD 20899.

3. Resistivity

3.1 *Resistivity* (Explanatory Note 1) is the electrical resistance of a body of unit length, and unit cross-sectional area or unit weight.

3.2 *Volume Resistivity* is commonly expressed in ohms for a theoretical conductor of unit length and cross-sectional area; in inch-pound units in $\Omega\cdot\text{cmil}/\text{ft}$ and in acceptable metric units in $\Omega\cdot\text{mm}^2/\text{m}$. It may be calculated by the following equation:

$$\rho_v = (A/L)R$$

where:

- ρ_v = volume resistivity, $\Omega\cdot\text{cmil}/\text{ft}$ or $\Omega\cdot\text{mm}^2/\text{m}$,
- A = cross-sectional area, cmil or mm^2 ,
- L = gage length, used to determine R , ft or m, and
- R = measured resistance, Ω .

3.3 *Weight Resistivity* is commonly expressed in ohms for a theoretical conductor of unit length and weight. The method for calculating weight resistivity, based on resistance, length, and weight measurements, of a test specimen is given in Explanatory Note 2.

4. Apparatus

4.1 Resistance shall be measured with a Kelvin-type double bridge or a potentiometer if the resistance of the specimen is below $1\ \Omega$. If it is $1\ \Omega$ or more, a Wheatstone bridge may be used. Where applicable, a Hoopes conductivity bridge may be used.

5. Test Specimen

5.1 The test specimen may be in the form of a wire, strip, rod, bar, tube, or shape. It shall be of uniform cross section throughout its length within $\pm 0.75\%$ of the cross-sectional area. Wherever possible it shall be the full cross section of the material it represents, if the full cross section is such that the uniformity of the cross-sectional area can be accurately determined.

5.2 The test specimen shall have the following characteristics:

5.2.1 A resistance of at least $0.00001\ \Omega$ ($10\ \mu\Omega$) in the test length between potential contacts,

5.2.2 A test length of at least 1 ft or 300 mm,

5.2.3 A diameter, thickness, width, or other dimension suitable to the limitations of the resistance measuring instrument,

5.2.4 No surface cracks or defects visible to the unaided normal eye, and substantially free from surface oxide, dirt, and grease, and

5.2.5 No joints or splices.

6. Procedure

6.1 Make all determinations of the dimensions and weight of the test specimen using instruments accurate to $\pm 0.05\%$. In order to assure this accuracy in measuring the length between potential contacts, the surface in contact with the test specimen shall be a substantially sharp knife-edge when using a Kelvin-type bridge or a potentiometer.

6.2 The cross-sectional dimensions of the specimen may be determined by micrometer measurements, and a sufficient number of measurements shall be made to obtain the mean cross section to within $\pm 0.10\%$. In case any dimension of the specimen is less than 0.100 in. and cannot be measured to the required accuracy, determine the cross-section from the weight, density, and length of the specimen.

6.3 When the density is unknown, determine the density by weighing a specimen first in air and then in a liquid of known density at the test temperature, which shall be room temperature to avoid errors due to convection currents. Exercise care in removing all air bubbles from the specimen when weighing it in the liquid. Calculate the density from the following equation:

$$\delta = (W_a \times d) / (W_a - W_l)$$

where:

δ = density of the specimen, g/cm^3 ,

W_a = weight of the specimen in air, g,

W_l = weight of the specimen in the liquid, g, and

d = density of the liquid at the test temperature, g/cm^3 .

6.4 When potential leads are used, make sure the distance between each potential contact and the corresponding current contact is at least equal to $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the cross-sectional perimeter of the specimen. Make sure the yoke resistance (between reference standard and test specimen) is appreciably smaller than that of either the reference standard or the test specimen unless a suitable lead compensation method is used, or it is known that the coil and lead ratios are sufficiently balanced so that variation in yoke resistance will not decrease the bridge accuracy below stated requirements.

6.5 Make resistance measurements to an accuracy of $\pm 0.15\%$. To ensure a correct reading, allow the reference standard and the test specimen to come to the same temperature as the surrounding medium. (If the reference standard is made of manganin it is possible to obtain correct readings with the test specimen at reference temperatures other than room temperature). In all resistance measurements, the measuring current raises the temperature of the medium. Therefore, take care to keep the magnitude of the current low, and the time of its use short enough so that the change in resistance cannot be detected with the galvanometer. To eliminate errors due to contact potential, take two readings, one direct and one with current reversed, in direct succession. Check tests are recom-

mended whereby the specimen is turned end for end, and the test repeated. Surface cleaning of the specimen at current and potential contact points may be necessary to obtain good electrical contact.

7. Temperature Correction

7.1 When the measurement is made at any other than a reference temperature, the resistance may be corrected for moderate temperature differences to what it would be at the reference temperature, as follows:

$$R_T = \frac{R_t}{1 + \alpha_T(t - T)}$$

where:

R_T = resistance at reference temperature T ,

R_t = resistance as measured at temperature t ,

α_T = known or given temperature coefficient of resistance of the specimen being measured at reference temperature T ,

T = reference temperature, and

t = temperature at which measurement is made.

NOTE 1—The parameter α_T , in the above equation, varies with conductivity and temperature. For copper of 100% conductivity and a reference temperature of 20°C, its value is 0.00393. Values at other conductivities and temperatures will be found in *NBS Handbook 100*.⁴ Table 1 lists temperature coefficients for the common electrical conductor materials.

8. Report

8.1 For referee tests, report the following information:

8.1.1 Identification of test specimen,

8.1.2 Kind of material,

8.1.3 Test temperature,

8.1.4 Test length of specimen,

8.1.5 Method of obtaining cross-sectional area:

8.1.5.1 *If by micrometer*, the average values of micrometer readings, or

8.1.5.2 *If by weighing*, a record of length, weight, any density determinations that may be made, and calculated cross-sectional areas.

8.1.6 Weight, if used,

8.1.7 Method of measuring resistance,

8.1.8 Value of resistance,

8.1.9 Reference temperature,

8.1.10 Calculated value of resistivity at the reference temperature, and

8.1.11 Previous mechanical and thermal treatments. (Since the resistivity of a material usually depends upon them, these shall be stated whenever the information is available.)

8.2 For routine tests, only such of the items in 8.1 as apply to the particular case, or are significant, shall be reported.

9. Precision and Bias

9.1 *Precision*—This test method has been in use for many years. No statement of precision has been made and no work has been planned to develop such a statement.

9.2 *Bias*—This test method has no bias because the value for resistivity is determined solely in terms of this test method.

10. Keywords

10.1 conductivity; electrical conductor materials; resistivity;

TABLE 1 Resistivity and Conductivity Conversion

NOTE 1—These factors are applicable only to resistivity and conductivity values corrected to 20°C (68°F). They are applicable for any temperature when used to convert between volume units only or between weight units only. Values of density, δ , for the common electrical conductor materials, are listed in Table 3.

Given $N \rightarrow$ Perform indicated operation to obtain \downarrow	Volume Resistivity at 20°C				Weight Resistivity at 20°C		Conductivity at 20°C	
	Ω -cmil/ft	Ω -mm ² /m	$\mu\Omega$ -in.	$\mu\Omega$ -cm	Ω -lb/mile ²	Ω -g/m ²	% IACS (Volume Basis)	% IACS (Weight Basis)
Volume Resistivity at 20°C								
Ω -cmil/ft	...	$N \times 601.52$	$N \times 15.279$	$N \times 6.0153$	$N \times 0.10535 \times (l/\delta)$	$N \times 601.53 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 1037.1$	$(l/N) \times 9220.0 \times (l/\delta)$
Ω -mm ² /m	$N \times 0.0016624$	...	$N \times 0.025400$	$N \times 0.010000$	$N \times 0.00017513 \times (l/\delta)$	$N \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 1.7241$	$(l/N) \times 15.328 \times (l/\delta)$
$\mu\Omega$ -in.	$N \times 0.065450$	$N \times 39.370$	...	$N \times 0.39370$	$N \times 0.0068950 \times (l/\delta)$	$N \times 39.370 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 67.879$	$(l/N) \times 603.45 \times (l/\delta)$
$\mu\Omega$ -cm	$N \times 0.16624$	$N \times 100.00$	$N \times 2.5400$	...	$N \times 0.017513 \times (l/\delta)$	$N \times 100.00 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 172.41$	$(l/N) \times 1532.8 \times (l/\delta)$
Weight Resistivity at 20°C								
Ω -lb/mile ²	$N \times 9.4924 \times \delta$	$N \times 5710.0 \times \delta$	$N \times 145.03 \times \delta$	$N \times 57.100 \times \delta$	...	$N \times 5710.0$	$(l/N) \times 9844.8 \times \delta$	$(l/N) \times 87520$
Ω -g/m ²	$N \times 0.0016624 \times \delta$	$N \times \delta$	$N \times 0.025400 \times \delta$	$N \times 0.010000 \times \delta$	$N \times 0.00017513$	...	$(l/N) \times 1.7241 \times \delta$	$(l/N) \times 15.328$
Conductivity at 20°C								
% IACS (volume basis)	$(l/N) \times 1037.1$	$(l/N) \times 1.7241$	$(l/N) \times 67.879$	$(l/N) \times 172.41$	$(l/N) \times 9844.8 \times \delta$	$(l/N) \times 1.7241 \times \delta$	...	$N \times 0.11249 \times \delta$
% IACS (weight basis)	$(l/N) \times 9220.0 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 15.328 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 603.45 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 1532.8 \times (l/\delta)$	$(l/N) \times 87520$	$(l/N) \times 15.328$	$N \times 8.89 \times (l/\delta)$	...

resistivity of electrical conductor; volume resistivity; weight resistivity

EXPLANATORY NOTES

NOTE 1—Volume resistivity is used in place of “weight resistivity” and “percent conductivity.”

Resistivity units are based on the International Annealed Copper Standard (IACS) adopted by IEC in 1913, which is 1/58 Ω -mm²/m at 20°C (68°F) for 100 % conductivity. The value of 0.017241 Ω -mm²/m and the value of 0.15328 Ω -g/m² at 20°C (68°F) are respectively the international equivalent of volume and weight resistivity of annealed copper equal (to five significant figures) to 100 % conductivity. The latter term means that a copper wire 1 m in length and weighing 1 g would have a resistance of 0.15328 Ω . This is equivalent to a resistivity value of 875.20 Ω -lb/mile², which signifies the resistance of a copper wire 1 mile in length weighing 1 lb. It is also equivalent, for example, to 1.7241 $\mu\Omega$ /cm of length of a copper bar 1 cm² in cross section. A complete discussion of this subject is contained in *NBS Handbook 100*.⁴ The use of five significant figures in expressing resistivity does not imply the need for greater accuracy of measurement than that specified in Test Method B 193. The use of five significant figures is required for reasonably accurate reversible conversion from one set of resistivity units to another. The equivalent resistivity values in Table 2 were derived from the fundamental IEC value (1/58 Ω -mm²/m) computed to seven significant figures and then rounded to five significant figures.

NOTE 2—Weight resistivity is expressed in U.S. customary units in Ω -lb/mile² and in metric units in Ω -g/m². It may be calculated as follows:

$$\rho_w = (W/L_1 L_2)R$$

where:

- ρ_w = weight resistivity, Ω -lb/mile² or Ω -g/m²,
- W = weight of the test specimen, lb or g,
- L_2 = length of the test specimen, miles or m,
- L_1 = gage length, used to determine R , miles or m, and
- R = measured resistance, Ω

NOTE 3—Resistivity and Conductivity Conversion—Conversion of the

TABLE 2 Equivalent Resistivity Values for Copper^A

Conductivity at 20°C (68°F) percent IACS		100.0
Volume Resistivity		
Ω -cmil/ft		10.371
Ω -mm ² /m		0.017241
$\mu\Omega$ -in.		0.67879
$\mu\Omega$ -cm		1.7241
Weight Resistivity		
Ω -lb/mile ²		875.20
Ω -g/m ²		0.15328

^A The equivalent resistivity values for 100 % IACS (soft copper) were each computed from the fundamental IEC value (1/58 Ω -mm²/m) using conversion factors each accurate to at least seven significant figures. Corresponding values for other conductivities (aluminum, etc.) may be derived from these by multiplying by the reciprocal of the conductivity ratios and where applicable also by the density ratios, both accurate to at least seven significant figures.

various units of volume resistivity, weight resistivity, and conductivity, may be facilitated by employing the formulas and factors shown in Table 1. The factors given therein are applicable to all metallic electrical conductor material. Table 3 lists values of density, δ , for the common electrical conductor materials.

NOTE 4—Density—For the purpose of resistivity and conductivity conversion, the density of the various conductor materials may be taken as shown in Table 3, based on a temperature of 20°C (68°F).

However, if the conversion is for specification acceptance purposes, the density used shall be that specified in the product specification involved.

TABLE 3 Density and Temperature Coefficient of Resistance for Electrical Conductor Materials

Material	Approximate Density, δ , at 20°C, g/cm ³	Temperature Coefficient of Resistance, α , at 20°C	Material	Approximate Density, δ , at 20°C, g/cm ³	Temperature Coefficient of Resistance, α , at 20°C
Copper, % IACS:			Aluminum Alloy 8000,		
101	8.89	0.00397	Specification B 800, % IACS:		
100	8.89	0.00393	61.8	2.71	0.00408
98.40	8.89	0.00387	61.5	2.71	0.00406
98.16	8.89	0.00386	61.4	2.71	0.00406
97.80	8.89	0.00384	61.3	2.71	0.00405
97.66	8.89	0.00384	61.2	2.71	0.00404
97.40	8.89	0.00383	61.0	2.71	0.00403
97.16	8.89	0.00382	60.9	2.71	0.00402
96.66	8.89	0.00380	60.8	2.71	0.00402
96.16	8.89	0.00378	60.7	2.71	0.00401
94.16	8.89	0.00370	60.6	2.71	0.00400
93.15	8.89	0.00366			
Silver Coated Copper, Specification B 298:			Aluminum Alloy 6101, % IACS:		
Class A	8.91	0.00393	59.5	2.70	0.00393
Class B	8.93	0.00393	59.0	2.70	0.00390
Class C	8.95	0.00394	57.0	2.70	0.00377
Class D	8.99	0.00394	56.5	2.70	0.00373
Class E	9.05	0.00395	56.0	2.70	0.00370
Nickel Coated Copper, Specification B 355:			55.0	2.70	0.00363
Class 2	8.89	0.00395	54.0	2.70	0.00357
Class 4	8.89	0.00397	53.0	2.70	0.00350
Class 7	8.89	0.00400			
Class 10	8.89	0.00404	Aluminum Alloy, % IACS:		
Class 27	8.89	0.00422	5005-H19 53.5	2.70	0.00353
			6201-T81 52.5	2.69	0.00347
			Aluminum Clad Steel, % IACS:		
			20.3	6.59	0.0036
			27	5.91	0.0036
			30	5.61	0.0038
			40	4.64	0.0040
Bronze, Specification B 9:			Copper Clad Steel:		
Alloy 40	8.89	0.00157	Grade 30 A, HS, EHS	8.15	0.00378
Alloy 55	8.89	0.00224	Grade 40 A, HS, EHS	8.25	0.00378
Alloy 80	8.89	0.00322			
Copper Alloy, Specification B 105:			Galvanized Steel (Telephone and Telegraph), Specification A 111:		
Grade 8.5	8.78	0.00042	Class A Coating:		
Grade 13	8.78	0.00063	Grade EBB (Non cu-brg)	7.83	0.0056
Grade 15	8.54	0.00072	Grade BB (Cu-brg)	7.83	0.0046
Grade 20	8.89	0.00079	Grade BB (Non cu-brg)	7.83	0.0042
Grade 30	8.89	0.00118	Class B Coating:		
Grade 40	8.89	0.00157	Grade EBB (Non cu-brg)	7.80	0.0056
Grade 55	8.89	0.00224	Grade BB (Cu-brg)	7.80	0.0046
Grade 74	8.89	0.00299	Grade BB (Non cu-brg)	7.80	0.0042
Grade 80	8.89	0.00322	Class C Coating:		
Grade 85	8.89	0.00342	Grade EBB (Non cu-brg)	7.77	0.0056
			Grade BB (cu-brg)	7.77	0.0046
Aluminum 1350, % IACS:			Grade BB (Non cu-brg)	7.77	0.0042
61.8	2.705	0.00408			
61.5	2.705	0.00406	Copper Clad Aluminum, Specification B 566:		
61.4	2.705	0.00406	Class 10A and 10H	3.32	0.00405
61.3	2.705	0.00405	Class 15A and 15H	3.63	0.00404
61.2	2.705	0.00404	Galvanized Steel, Specification A 326:		
61.0	2.705	0.00403	Class A Coating:		
			Grade 85	7.83	0.0046
			Grade 135 and 195	7.83	0.0042
			Class B Coating:		
			Grade 85	7.80	0.0046
			Grade 135 and 195	7.80	0.0042
			Class C Coating:		
			Grade 85	7.77	0.0046
			Grade 135 and 195	7.77	0.0042

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