



Designation: B962 – 23

Standard Test Methods for Density of Compacted or Sintered Powder Metallurgy (PM) Products Using Archimedes' Principle¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation B962; 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.

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

1. Scope*

1.1 This standard describes a method for measuring the density of powder metallurgy products that usually have surface-connected porosity.

1.2 The density of impermeable PM materials, those materials that do not gain mass when immersed in water, may be determined using Test Method [B311](#).

1.3 The current method is applicable to green compacts, sintered parts, and green and sintered test specimens.

1.4 With the exception of the values for density and the mass used to determine density, for which the use of the gram per cubic centimetre (g/cm^3) and gram (g) units is the long-standing industry practice, the values in SI units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses after SI units are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

1.5 *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.*

1.6 *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:²

[B243](#) Terminology of Powder Metallurgy

¹ These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [B09](#) on Metal Powders and Metal Powder Products and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [B09.04](#) on Bearings.

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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.

[B311](#) Test Method for Density of Powder Metallurgy (PM) Materials Containing Less Than Two Percent Porosity
[E456](#) Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics
[E691](#) Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions of powder metallurgy (PM) terms can be found in Terminology [B243](#). Additional descriptive material is available under “General Information on PM” on the ASTM B09 web page.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 The test specimen is first weighed in air. It is then oil impregnated or some other treatment is used to seal the surface-connected porosity and the specimen is reweighed. The test specimen is then weighed when immersed in water and its density calculated based on Archimedes' principle.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 The volume of a complex shaped PM part cannot be measured accurately using micrometers or calipers. Since density is mass per unit volume, a precise method for measuring the volume is needed. Archimedes' principle may be used to calculate the volume of water displaced by an immersed object. For this to be applicable to PM materials that contain surface connected porosity, the surface pores are sealed by oil impregnation or some other means.

5.2 The green density of compacted parts or test pieces is normally determined to assist during press set-up, or for quality control purposes. It is also used for determining the compressibility of base powders, mixed powders, and premixes.

5.3 The sintered density of sintered PM parts and sintered PM test specimens is used as a quality control measure.

5.4 The impregnated density of sintered bearings is normally measured for quality control purposes as bearings are generally supplied and used oil-impregnated.

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

6. Interferences

6.1 A gain in mass when a test specimen is immersed in water is an indication that the specimen contains surface-connected porosity. Unsealed surface porosity will absorb water and cause the calculated density values to be higher than the true value.

6.2 Test specimens that contain surface-connected porosity shall be oil impregnated or have the surface-connected porosity sealed by some other means prior to their immersion in water.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Analytical Balance*—Precision single-pan balance that will permit readings within 0.01% of the test specimen mass. See Table 1. The analytical balance shall be supported in a manner to eliminate mechanical vibrations and be shielded from air drafts.

7.2 *Water*—Distilled or deionized and preferably degassed water to which 0.05 to 0.1 volume percent of a wetting agent has been added to reduce the effects of surface tension. The density of distilled water changes as a function of water temperature and therefore should be accounted for when calculating the density of the specimen. Table 2.

NOTE 1—Degassing the water by evacuation, boiling, or ultrasonic agitation helps to prevent air bubbles from collecting on the test specimen and support when immersed in water.

7.3 *Water Container*—A glass beaker or other suitable transparent container should be used to contain the water.

NOTE 2—A transparent container makes it easier to see air bubbles adhering to the test specimen and specimen support when immersed in water.

NOTE 3—For the most precise density determination, the water container should be of a size that the level of the water does not rise more than 2.5 mm (0.10 in.) when the test specimen is lowered into the water.

7.4 *Test Specimen Support for Weighing in Water*—Two typical arrangements are shown in Fig. 1. The suspension wire may be twisted around the test specimen or the test specimen may be supported in a wire basket that is attached to the suspension wire. For either arrangement, a single corrosion-resistant wire—for example, austenitic stainless steel, copper, or nichrome—shall be used for the basket and suspension wire. For the maximum recommended diameter of suspension wire to be used for various mass ranges see Table 3.

NOTE 4—For the most precise density determinations, it is important that the mass and volume of all supporting wires immersed in water be minimized.

7.5 *Oil for Oil-Impregnation*—Oil with a viscosity of $20 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}$ to $65 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}^2/\text{s}$ (20 to 65 cSt (centistokes) or 100 to 300 Saybolt Universal Seconds (SUS)) at 38 °C (100 °F) has been found to be suitable.

7.5.1 In the case of oil-impregnated bearings, make an effort to match the oil that was originally used to impregnate them.

7.6 *Vacuum Impregnation Apparatus*—Equipment to impregnate the part or test specimen with oil.

7.7 *Thermometer*—A thermometer to measure the temperature of the water to the nearest 0.5 °C (1 °F).

8. Preparation of Test Specimens

8.1 The mass of the test specimen shall be a minimum of 1.0 g. For small parts, several parts may be combined to reach the minimum mass.

8.2 Thoroughly clean all surfaces of the test specimen to remove any adhering foreign materials such as dirt or oxide scale. Take care with cut specimens to avoid rough surfaces to which an air bubble may adhere. A 100-grit sanding or abrasive grinding is recommended to remove all rough surfaces.

9. Procedure

9.1 The part or test specimen, the analytical balance and surrounding air shall be at a uniform temperature when weighing is performed.

9.2 For the most precise density determinations, duplicate weighings should be made for all mass measurements. Adjust the analytical balance to zero prior to each weighing. Average the mass determinations before calculating the density.

9.3 For improved repeatability and reproducibility, verify the analytical balance periodically with a standard mass that is approximately equal to the part or test specimen mass.

9.4 This standard contains three separate test methods; determination of green density, determination of sintered density, and determination of impregnated density. Each is detailed in the following sections.

Determination of Green Density

9.5 This procedure is used to determine the green density of as-compacted PM parts and test specimens. In order to determine accurately the volume of the test specimens by water displacement, the specimens shall be oil impregnated, or the pores filled with a suitable alternative material of known density. The density determined is an average of the metal additives, and any solid lubricant originally present that was used to aid compaction.

9.5.1 Determine the mass of the green part or test specimen. This is mass A. This and all subsequent weighings shall be to the precision stated in Table 1.

9.5.2 Oil impregnate the green part or test specimen as follows:

Vacuum Oil Impregnate—Preferred Procedure

9.5.3 Immerse the part or test specimen in oil at room temperature.

9.5.4 Reduce the pressure over the sample to 7 kPa (1 psi) or less for 30 min, then increase the pressure back to atmospheric pressure and keep the sample immersed for at least 30 min.

TABLE 1 Balance Readability

Mass, g	Balance Readable to, g
less than 10	0.0001
10 to less than 100	0.001
100 to less than 1000	0.01
1000 to less than 10 000	0.1