



Designation: D1922 – 23

Standard Test Method for Propagation Tear Resistance of Plastic Film and Thin Sheeting by Pendulum Method¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D1922; 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 test method² covers the determination of the average force to propagate tearing through a specified length of plastic film or nonrigid sheeting after the tear has been started, using an Elmendorf-type tearing tester. Two specimens are cited, a rectangular type, and one with a constant radius testing length. The latter shall be the preferred or referee specimen.

1.2 Because of (1) difficulties in selecting uniformly identical specimens, (2) the varying degree of orientation in some plastic films, and (3) the difficulty found in testing highly extensible or highly oriented materials, or both, the reproducibility of the test results may be variable and, in some cases, not good or misleading. Provisions are made in the test method to address oblique directional tearing which may be found with some materials.

1.3 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are for information only.

1.4 *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.* Specific precautionary statements are given in 13.1.

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D20 on Plastics and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D20.19 on Film, Sheeting, and Molded Products.

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² This test method has been adapted from TAPPI Standard Method T 414M-49, Internal Tearing Resistance of Paper. In testing certain plastic films, problems of reproducibility and interpretation of results are encountered which require special treatment to make the test method of most value. This test method is revised here specifically for use with plastic film and thin sheeting. For more complete explanation of certain aspects of the equipment, its calibration and adjustment, refer to TAPPI Standard Method T 414M-49.

The following additional references may be of interest in connection with this test method:

Painter, E. V., Chu, C. C., and Morgan, H. M., "Testing Textiles on the Elmendorf Tear Tester," *Textile Research Journal*, Vol XX, No. 6, June 1950, pp. 410–417.
Elmendorf, A., "Strength Test for Paper," *Paper*, Vol 26, April 21, 1920, p. 302.

NOTE 1—Film has been arbitrarily defined as sheeting having nominal thickness not greater than 0.25 mm (0.010 in.).

NOTE 2—This standard is equivalent to ISO 6383-2.

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 ASTM Standards:³

D618 Practice for Conditioning Plastics for Testing
D689 Test Method for Internal Tearing Resistance of Paper
D1004 Test Method for Tear Resistance (Graves Tear) of Plastic Film and Sheeting
D4000 Classification System for Specifying Plastic Materials
D5947 Test Methods for Physical Dimensions of Solid Plastics Specimens
D6988 Guide for Determination of Thickness of Plastic Film Test Specimens
E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

2.2 ISO Standard:

ISO 6383-2 Plastics—Film and Sheeting—Determination of Tear Resistance—Part 2 Elmendorf Method⁴

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 The force in grams required to propagate tearing across a film or sheeting specimen is measured using a precisely calibrated pendulum device. Acting by gravity, the pendulum swings through an arc, tearing the specimen from a precut slit. The specimen is held on one side by the pendulum and on the other side by a stationary member. The loss in energy by the

³ 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.

⁴ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, <http://www.ansi.org>.

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

pendulum is indicated by a pointer. The scale indication is a function of the force required to tear the specimen.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method is of value in ranking relative tearing resistance of various plastic films and thin sheeting of comparable thickness. Experience has shown the test to have its best reliability on relatively less extensible films and sheeting. Variable elongation and oblique tearing effects on the more extensible films preclude its use as a precise production-control tool for these types of plastics. This test method should be used for specification acceptance testing only after it has been demonstrated that the data for the particular material are acceptably reproducible. This test method should be used for service evaluation only after its usefulness for the particular application has been demonstrated with a number of different films.

4.2 This test method has been widely used as one index of the tearing resistance of plastic film and thin sheeting used in packaging applications. While it is not always be possible to correlate film tearing data with its other mechanical or toughness properties, the apparatus of this test method provides a controlled means for tearing specimens at straining rates approximating some of those found in actual packaging service.

4.3 Due to orientation during their manufacture, plastic films and sheeting frequently show marked anisotropy in their resistance to tearing. This is further complicated by the fact that some films elongate greatly during tearing, even at the relatively rapid rates of loading encountered in this test method. The degree of this elongation is dependent in turn on film orientation and the inherent mechanical properties of the polymer from which it is made. These factors make tear resistance of some films reproducible between sets of specimens to $\pm 5\%$ of the mean value, while others potentially show no better reproducibility than $\pm 50\%$.

4.4 Data obtained by this test method may supplement that from Test Method **D1004**, wherein the specimen is strained at a rate of 50 mm (2 in.) per minute. However, specimen geometry and testing speed of the two test methods are dissimilar. The rate of tearing in this test method, while varying as a function of resistance to tear, is in the range from 7.6 to 46 m (300 to 1800 in.)/min.

4.5 There is not a direct, linear relationship between tearing force and specimen thickness. Data from this test method are expressed as tearing force in millinewtons (or grams-force, if desired), with specimen thickness also reported. But sets of data from specimens of dissimilar thickness are usually not comparable. Therefore, only data at the same thickness is compared.

4.6 For many materials, there may be a specification that requires the use of this test method, but with some procedural modifications that take precedence when adhering to the specification. Therefore, it is advisable to refer to that material specification before using this test method. Table 1 of Classification System **D4000** lists the ASTM materials standards that currently exist.

5. Apparatus

5.1 *Pendulum Impulse-Type Testing Apparatus*,⁵ consisting of the following:

5.1.1 *Stationary Clamp*.

5.1.2 *Movable Clamp*, carried on a pendulum, preferably formed by a sector of a wheel or circle, free to swing on a ball bearing or other substantially frictionless bearing.

5.1.3 *Stop Catch*, for holding the pendulum in a raised position and for releasing it instantaneously.

5.1.4 *Indicating Device*, for registering the maximum arc through which the pendulum swings when released. The pendulum shall carry a circumferential scale, graduated from 0 to 100 % of the machine capacity so as to read against the pointer the average force required to tear a specimen 43 mm (1.7 in.). The option to replace the pointer and scale by an electronic digital readout is available. Digital readouts are available which will give test results directly in millinewtons, directly in grams-force, or in percent of pendulum capacity. With the pendulum in its initial position ready for test, separate the two clamps by an interval of 2.54 mm (0.10 in.). So align them that the specimen clamped in them lies in a plane perpendicular to the plane of oscillation of the pendulum with the edges of the jaws gripping the specimen in a horizontal line, a perpendicular to which through the axis of suspension of the pendulum is 102.7 ± 0.05 mm (4.044 ± 0.002 in.) in length and makes an angle of 27.5° with the plane of the film specimen. The clamping surface in each jaw shall be at least 25.4 mm (1 in.) in width and at least 12.7 mm (0.5 in.) in depth.

5.1.5 *Capacity*—Instruments of several capacities, 1960, 3920, 7840, 15 600, 31 360, 62 720 mN (200, 400, 800, 1600, 3200, 6400 gf), and perhaps others are available. These capacities are achieved by individual instruments, interchangeable pendulum sectors, or augmenting weights.

5.2 *Template, Die, or Shear-Type Cutter*^{5,6}, for cutting specimens.

5.3 *Razor Blades*, single-edged, for cutting specimens where a template is used.

5.4 *Thickness-Measuring Device*—Micrometer, or other suitable thickness gauge for measuring the thickness of test specimens in accordance with Test Methods **D5947** or Guide **D6988** as appropriate.

6. Test Specimens

6.1 Test specimens shall be cut using a die or template, as shown in **Fig. 1**, to form a constant-radius testing length. This shall be the preferred or referee specimen type since its geometry is intended to compensate to some degree for the problem of oblique tearing (**Note 3** and **Note 4**). Alternatively, specimens shall be cut to form a rectangle 76 mm (3 in.) or

⁵ The sole source of supply of the apparatus known to the committee at this time is Thwing-Albert Instrument Co., Philadelphia, PA 19144. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee,¹ which you may attend.

⁶ The TA63 Sample Cutter, Catalog No. 98, available from the Thwing-Albert Instrument Co., Philadelphia, PA 19144, has been found satisfactory for cutting specimens.