



Standard Test Method for Benzene, Toluene, Xylene (BTX) Concentrates Analysis by Gas Chromatography¹

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1. Scope*

1.1 This test method covers the determination of the total nonaromatic hydrocarbons, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, and total C_9 + aromatic hydrocarbons in BTX concentrates by capillary column gas chromatography. This test method is applicable to materials with a final boiling point below 215°C.

1.2 This test method may also be used to determine the relative distribution of the individual C_8 aromatic hydrocarbon isomers in mixed xylenes.

1.3 Individual components can be determined from 0.01 to 90 %.

1.4 In determining the conformance of the test results using this method to applicable specifications, results shall be rounded off in accordance with the rounding-off method of Practice E29.

1.5 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

1.6 *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 a specific precautionary statement, see Section 9.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D3437 Practice for Sampling and Handling Liquid Cyclic Products

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D16 on Aromatic Hydrocarbons and Related Chemicals and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D16.01 on Benzene, Toluene, Xylenes, Cyclohexane and Their Derivatives.

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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.

D6809 Guide for Quality Control and Quality Assurance Procedures for Aromatic Hydrocarbons and Related Materials

E29 Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications

E355 Practice for Gas Chromatography Terms and Relationships

E691 Practice for Conducting an Interlaboratory Study to Determine the Precision of a Test Method

E1510 Practice for Installing Fused Silica Open Tubular Capillary Columns in Gas Chromatographs

2.2 Other Documents:

OSHA Regulations, 29 CFR paragraphs 1910.1000 and 1910.1200³

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.1.1 *extracted reformat*, *n*—an aromatic concentrate obtained by solvent extraction of reformat.

3.1.2 *reformat*, *n*—the product of a catalytic process that increases the concentration of aromatic hydrocarbons.

3.1.3 *pyrolysis gasoline*, *n*—depentanized by-product recovered from ethylene manufacture.

3.1.4 *synthetic blend*, *n*—blend of reagent hydrocarbons that simulate a process product.

3.1.5 *hydrogenated pyrolysis gasoline*, *n*—pyrolysis gasoline that has been treated with hydrogen to reduce the olefins content.

3.1.6 *crude ethylbenzene*, *n*—product produced from the reaction of impure fluid cat cracking, (FCC) ethylene and benzene.

3.1.6.1 *Discussion*—It typically contains greater than 40 % of ethylbenzene and benzene.

3.1.7 *light blending aromatics feedstock*, *n*—light aromatics fraction (with high amounts of benzene and toluene) typically recovered from the isomerization of a *p*-xylene or *m*-xylene depleted C_8 aromatics stream.

³ Available from U.S. Government Printing Office Superintendent of Documents, 732 N. Capitol St., NW, Mail Stop: SDE, Washington, DC 20401, <http://www.access.gpo.gov>.

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

3.1.8 *mixed xylenes, n*—a mixture of C₈ aromatic hydrocarbon isomers including ethylbenzene, but excluding styrene.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 The specimen to be analyzed is injected into a gas chromatograph equipped with a flame ionization detector (FID) and a capillary column. The peak area of each component is measured and adjusted using effective carbon number (ECN) response factors. The concentration of each component is calculated based on its relative percentages of total adjusted peak area and normalized to 100.00.

4.2 Results can be reported as either volume or weight percent. Volumetric results can be derived by dividing each component's weight percent by its relative density and re-normalizing to 100 %.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This test method was primarily developed to determine benzene, toluene, and xylenes in chemical intermediate and solvent streams such as reformat, BTX extracts, pyrolysis gasoline, hydrogenated pyrolysis gasoline, crude benzene, crude ethylbenzene, commercial toluene, and light blending aromatic feedstocks. This test method may not detect all components and there may be unknown components that would be assigned inappropriate response factors and thus, the results may not be absolute.

5.2 The relative distribution of C₈ aromatics is useful for determining conformance to *p*-xylene feedstock specifications.

6. Interferences

6.1 Nonaromatic hydrocarbons may interfere with the determination of benzene and toluene when certain columns are used.

6.2 Styrene may be present in some samples. It will elute with C₉+ aromatics.

7. Apparatus

7.1 *Gas Chromatograph*—Any gas chromatograph having a flame ionization detector and a splitter injector suitable for use with a fused silica capillary column may be used, provided the system has sufficient sensitivity, linearity, and range to obtain a minimum peak height response for a 0.01 % peak of five times the height of the signal background noise, while not exceeding the full scale of either the detector or the electronic integration for the highest peak. The split injection system shall not discriminate over the boiling range of the samples analyzed. The system shall be capable of operating at the conditions given in [Table 1](#).

7.2 *Columns*—The choice of column is based upon resolution requirements. Any column may be used that is capable of resolving all the components of interest. The column and conditions described in [Table 1](#) have been used successfully and will be the referee in case of dispute.

7.3 *Recorder/Electronic Integration*—Electronic integration with tangent capabilities is recommended.

TABLE 1 Recommended Operating Conditions

Column	
Tubing	fused silica capillary
Length, m	50 or 60
Internal diameter, mm	0.25
Stationary phase	bonded polyethylene glycol
Film thickness, μm	0.25
Carrier gas	helium
Flow, linear velocity at 70°C, cm/s	20
Split ratio	200:1
Detector gas	
Hydrogen flow rate, mL/min	30
Air flow rate, mL/min	300
Make-up flow rate, mL/min	30
Sample size, μL	0.5
Temperatures	
Injector, °C	250
Detector, °C	300
Column	
Initial, °C	70
Hold, min	10
Rate, °C/min	5
Final, °C	200
Hold, min	24

8. Reagents

8.1 *Carrier Gas*—Helium with a minimum purity of 99.999 mol %. See [11.1](#) for optional use of hydrogen carrier gas.

8.2 *Detector Gases:*

8.2.1 *Fuel Gas*—Hydrogen with a minimum purity of 99.999 mol %.

8.2.2 *Makeup Gas*—Nitrogen or helium, with a minimum purity of 99.999 mol %.

8.2.3 *Flame Support Gas*—Air, total hydrocarbon less than 0.1 ppm.

8.3 Purify carrier, fuel, and makeup gases by adding traps to reduce the concentration of any remaining oxygen, water, and hydrocarbons. Purify air by adding traps to reduce the concentration of any remaining hydrocarbons and water.

9. Hazards

9.1 Consult current OSHA regulations, supplier's Material Safety Data Sheets, and local regulations for all material used in this test method.

10. Sampling

10.1 Sample material in accordance with Practice [D3437](#).

11. Preparation of Apparatus

11.1 *Chromatograph*—Follow manufacturer's instructions for mounting and conditioning the column in the chromatograph. Adjust the instrument to the conditions as described in [Table 1](#) to give the desired separation using the suggested column. Other columns and conditions, including the use of hydrogen carrier gas, may be used to achieve the resolution requirements. Allow sufficient time for the instrument to reach equilibrium as indicated by a stable recorder/electronic baseline. See Practices [E355](#) and [E1510](#) for additional information on gas chromatography practices and terminology.

12. Procedure

12.1 Bring the sample to ambient room temperature.