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# Standard Terminology of Packaging and Distribution Environments<sup>1</sup>

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

## INTRODUCTION

The terms and definitions in this standard are grouped into related areas under principal concepts. The broad descriptor term for each group is followed in alphabetical order by narrower terms and related terms. Cross-references are included where the concept group is not obvious.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This terminology is a compilation of definitions of technical terms used in the packaging and distribution environments. Terms that are generally understood or adequately found in other readily available sources are not included.

1.2 A definition is a single sentence with additional information included in discussions.

1.3 Definitions that are identical to those published by another standards organization or ASTM committee are identified with the name of the organization or ASTM committee.

1.4 The definitions in this terminology are grouped into related areas under principal concepts. The broad descriptor term for each group is followed in alphabetical order by narrower terms and related terms. Cross-references are included where the concept group is not obvious.

1.5 Terminology related to flexible barrier packaging is found in Terminology [F17](#).

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.*

<sup>1</sup> This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D10](#) on Packaging and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D10.11](#) on Terminology (definitions).

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## 2. Referenced Documents

### 2.1 ASTM Standards:<sup>2</sup>

[C717 Terminology of Building Seals and Sealants](#)

[D907 Terminology of Adhesives](#)

[D1596 Test Method for Dynamic Shock Cushioning Characteristics of Packaging Material](#)

[D3288 Test Methods for Magnet-Wire Enamels](#)

[E176 Terminology of Fire Standards](#)

[F17 Terminology Relating to Primary Barrier Packaging](#)

[G15 Terminology Relating to Corrosion and Corrosion Testing](#) (Withdrawn 2010)<sup>3</sup>

### 2.2 Federal Standard:

[PPP-F-320 Fiberboard, Corrugated and Solid, Sheet Stock \(Container Grade\), and Cut Shapes](#)<sup>4</sup>

### 2.3 Other Standards:

[Uniform Freight Classification Rule 30](#)<sup>5</sup>

[National Motor Freight Classification](#)<sup>6</sup>

## 3. Terminology

**absorbent packing**—See **packing**.

**adhesive, n**—a substance capable of holding materials together by surface attachment.

<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

<sup>3</sup> The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org).

<sup>4</sup> Available from Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

<sup>5</sup> Available from Uniform Classification Committee, 222 South Riverside Plaza, Chicago, IL 60606.

<sup>6</sup> Available from National Classification Board, 2200 Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22314.

**DISCUSSION**—Adhesive is the general term and includes among others, cement, glue, mucilage, and paste. All of these terms are loosely used interchangeably. Various descriptive adjectives are applied to the term adhesive to indicate certain characteristics as follows: (1) Physical form, that is, liquid adhesive, tape adhesive, (2) Chemical type, that is, silicate adhesive, resin adhesive, (3) Materials bonded, that is, paper adhesive, metal-plastic adhesive, can label adhesive, and (4) Conditions of use, that is, hot-setting adhesive (D907, D14).

**contact adhesive, n**—an adhesive that is apparently dry to the touch and that will adhere to itself instantaneously upon contact; also called contact bond adhesive or dry bond adhesive (D907, D14).

**aerosol package**—See **package**.

**ampoule, n**—a hermetically sealed, small bulbous glass or plastic vessel. Opening is achieved by breaking the stem. (Also *ampule* or *ampul*.)

**anchor, v**—to secure firmly (*Webster*).

**anti-skid plate**—See **loading**.

**available program, n**—a qualifying term which can be used in the definition of recyclable, reusable, refillable, returnable, compostable, establishing limits; for example, by population and access within geographic area.

**DISCUSSION**—This term is an essential component of recyclable, reusable, refillable, returnable, and compostable. Manufacturers should refer to FTC Guidelines to ensure claims are not deceptive. Claims should be qualified with appropriate phrases such as the following:

“Recyclable where facilities exist. Check to see if recycling facilities exist in your community.”

“Recyclable where facilities exist. Collection programs have been established in  $x\%$  of the country. Check to determine if they exist in your community.”

“Compostable in centralized facilities. Check to see if composting programs exist in your community.”

“Compostable at home. May be composted in as part of your composting pile at home.”

**bag, n**—a preformed **container** of tubular construction made of flexible material, generally enclosed on all sides except one forming an opening that may or may not be sealed after filling. (See also **pouch**.)

**DISCUSSION**—A bag may be made of any flexible material, or multiple plies of the same, or combination of various flexible materials. The term bag is used as a synonym for sack, but the term sack generally refers to the heavier duty or shipping sacks. It is made in various standard styles and may be open-mouth or valve type. The five basic standard types of bags are: (1) grocery bag, (2) merchandise paper, (3) industrial, (4) textile, and (5) paper shipping sack.

**paper multiwall-sack**—a flexible **container** made of several plies, usually of kraft paper. The various plies may be specially treated, such as waxed paper, glassine, greaseproof, polyethylene, **wet strength paper**, or other specialty sheets. The particular nature of the sack depends upon the material to be packed and the type of transportation to be employed.

**bag liner**—See **liner**.

**bail, n**—the usually arched handle of a pail or can.

**bale, n**—in packaging a shaped unit, bound with cord or metal ties under tension, and containing compressed articles or materials. It may be wrapped.

**banding**—Use **strapping**.

**barrel, n**—a bulged cylindrical **container** of greater length than breadth, made of wooden **staves** bound together with hoops and having two flat ends of equal diameter. (Compare **drum**.)

**cask, n**—a term used synonymously with **barrel** but usually of large size or capacity.

**keg, n**—a small slack or tight **barrel** of 30-gal capacity or less.

**barrier material:**

**grease-resistant barrier**—a material that prevents or retards the transmission of grease or oils.

**water-resistant barrier**—a material that retards the transmission of liquid water.

**water-vapor-resistant barrier**—a material that retards the transmission of water vapor.

**basket, n**—a semirigid **container** usually open at the top and provided with one or two handles for carrying. (Compare **hamper**.)

**DISCUSSION**—A **basket** is sometimes made of thin strips of wood, woven or stapled, or otherwise bound together, or it may be made of fiberboard or combinations of wood and fiber, or plastic. (See **stave**.) (2)

**batten**—See **box**.

**biodegradable, adj**—capable of undergoing decomposition into carbon dioxide, methane, water, inorganic compounds, or biomass in which the predominant mechanism is the enzymatic action of micro-organisms, that can be measured by standardized tests, in a specified period of time, reflecting available disposal conditions.

**blister pack**—See **pack**.

**blocking**—See **loading**.

**body**—See **container**.

**bottle**—See **container**.

**bottom**—See **box**.

**box, n**—a rigid **container** having closed faces and completely enclosing the contents. When this term is used in connection with fiberboard boxes, such fiber boxes must comply with all the requirements of the carrier rules. (See **carton**.)

**bottom, n**—the **face** of a **box** on which it usually rests while filling.

**DISCUSSION**—In terms of fiberboard shipping boxes, the face created by the flaps of regular (or similar style) slotted boxes are the top or bottom, regardless of loading or stacking.

**box batten, n**—a reinforcing member, (1) for a **wood box** internally or externally applied to the sides, top and bottoms. When applied externally it should be applied in pairs; (2) in a **wirebound box**, a batten is a reinforcement used on the ends of the container only.

**cleated fiberboard box**—a rigid **container** having five or six **panel faces** with wood strips fastened to them, the panels being made of **solid** or **corrugated fiberboard**.

**cleated plywood box**—a rigid **container** having five or six **panel faces** with wood strips fastened to them, the panels being made of plywood.