



Standard Specification for Shellac Varnishes¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This specification covers shellac varnish consisting of a solution or “cut” of a specified type and grade of dry lac resin in specially denatured alcohol. Ninety-five percent (190 proof) ethyl alcohol, specially denatured according to Formula No. 1 of the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms of the Treasury Dept., is the solvent most commonly used. However, other specially denatured alcohols and proprietary solvents are also used for this purpose.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 29 Test Methods of Sampling and Testing Lac Resins²

D 207 Specification for Dry Bleached Lac²

D 237 Specification for Orange Shellac and Other Lacs²

3. Types, Grades, and Bodies

3.1 This specification covers two grades, A and B, of orange shellac varnish and two grades, regular and refined, of bleached lac varnish. Each type and grade may be furnished in very light, light, medium, heavy, very heavy, or extra heavy body varnish, as specified.

4. Color

4.1 The color of shellac varnish shall be no darker than the color of a standard varnish of the same nonvolatile matter content mutually agreed upon between the purchaser and the seller.

NOTE 1—Attention is called to the fact that the purchaser and the seller must agree upon one of the two methods for determining color appearing in Test Methods D 29.

5. Drying Time

5.1 Shellac varnish shall dry hard in 1 h. Shellac varnishes having a body greater than that for a light body varnish shall be thinned to the nonvolatile matter content of a light body varnish. Special conditions for this test may be made by mutual

agreement between the purchaser and the seller.

6. Body and Cut

6.1 The body and cut of the respective types and grades shall be based on the percent of nonvolatile matter and shall conform to the following minimum requirements:

	Nonvolatile Matter, min, %	
	Orange, Grades A and B	Bleached, Regular and Refined
Very light body (3-lb (1.4-kg) cut) varnish	28.5	28.0
Light body (4-lb (1.8-kg) cut) varnish	35.0	34.5
Medium body (4.5-lb (2.0-kg) cut) varnish	37.5	37.0
Heavy body (5-lb (2.3-kg) cut) varnish	40.0	39.5
Very heavy body (6-lb (2.7-kg) cut) varnish	44.0	43.5
Extra heavy body (8-lb (3.6-kg) cut) varnish	51.0	50.5

NOTE 2—The term “cut” is defined as the number of pounds of dry lac resin (containing only that amount of moisture acceptable for proper cutting with the solvent to ensure a satisfactory varnish) that were added to 1 gal (3.8 L) of specified solvent in manufacturing the varnish.

Allowance has, therefore, been made for 2 % maximum moisture and other volatile matter and 3 % insoluble matter in orange shellac, and for 6 % moisture and other volatile matter in bleached lac, in arriving at a minimum value. Varnishes of the above specified bodies or “cuts” should accordingly conform to the respective minimum requirements specified for nonvolatile matter.

7. Properties of Dry Lac

7.1 The nonvolatile matter in the varnish shall conform to the Properties section of Specification D 207 and Table 1 of Specification D 237.

8. Packaging and Marking

8.1 Shellac varnish shall be packaged in standard commercial containers of the type and size mutually agreed upon between the purchaser and the seller. The label of the container shall show the type, grade, body or cut, and date of manufacture of the varnish contained therein.

9. Test Methods

9.1 The sampling and methods of testing shall be conducted

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.03.