



Standard Practice for Wet Preparation of Soil Samples for Particle-Size Analysis and Determination of Soil Constants¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D 2217; 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 Department of Defense.

1. Scope

1.1 This practice covers the wet preparation of soil samples as received from the field for particle-size analysis and determination of soil constants.

1.2 Procedure A provides for drying the field sample at a temperature not exceeding 140°F (60°C), making a wet separation on the No. 10 (2.00-mm) sieve, or No. 40 (425-μm) sieve, or both, as needed, and finally drying at a temperature not exceeding 140°F. Procedure B provides that the sample shall be kept at a moisture content equal to or greater than the natural water content. The procedure to be used should be indicated in the specification for the material being tested. If no procedure is specified, the provisions of Procedure B shall govern.

1.3 *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.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 421 Practice for Dry Preparation of Soil Samples for Particle-Size Analysis and Determination of Soil Constants²

D 422 Method for Particle-Size Analysis of Soils²

E 11 Specification for Wire-Cloth Sieves for Testing Purposes³

3. Significance and Use

3.1 Procedure A is used to prepare soil samples for plasticity tests and particle-size analysis when the coarse-grained particles of a sample are soft and pulverize readily, as in Practice D 421, or when the fine particles are very cohesive and tend to resist removal from the coarse particles.

3.2 Some soils never dry out in nature and may change their

characteristics greatly when dried. If the true natural gradation and plasticity characteristics of such soils are desired, these soils should be shipped to the laboratory in sealed containers and processed in accordance with Procedure B of this practice.

3.3 Liquid limit and plasticity index values derived from samples containing their natural moisture are usually, but not always, equal to or higher than values derived from similar samples of the dried soil. In the case of fine-grained organic soil, there is a radical drop in plasticity due to oven drying.

4. Apparatus

4.1 *Balance*, sensitive to 0.1 g.

4.2 *Mortar and Rubber-Covered Pestle*, suitable for breaking up the aggregations of soil particles.

4.3 *Sieves*, No. 10 (2.00-mm) and No. 40 (425-μm), of square mesh woven-wire cloth, conforming to Specification E 11.

4.4 *Sampler*—A riffle sampler or sample splitter for quartering the samples.

4.5 *Drying Apparatus*—Thermostatically controlled drying oven for use at 140°F (60°C) or below and at 230°F (110°C), infrared lamps; air drier; or other suitable device for drying samples.

4.6 *Filter Funnels or Candles*—Büchner funnels 10 in. (254 mm) in diameter and filter paper or filter candles.

4.7 *Miscellaneous Equipment*—Pans 12 in. (304.8 mm) in diameter and 3 in. (76.2 mm) in depth; a suitable container that will prevent loss of moisture during storage of the moist test sample prepared in Procedure B.

PROCEDURE A

5. Sampling

5.1 Dry the soil sample as received from the field, using one of the following methods: (1) in air at room temperature, (2) in a drying oven at a temperature not exceeding 140°F (60°C), or (3) using any warming device that will not raise the temperature of the sample above 140°F. Break up thoroughly any aggregations of particles using the mortar and rubber-covered pestle or other suitable device (Note 1). Select a representative portion by the method of quartering or by use of the sampler. This portion must be sufficient to provide samples for particle-size analyses of material retained on and passing the No. 10

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D-18 on Soil and Rock and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D18.03 on Texture, Plasticity, and Density Characteristics of Soils.

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² Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 04.08.

³ Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Vol 14.02.