



Standard Test Methods for Structural Panels in Tension¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation D3500; 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 These test methods cover the determination of the tensile properties of structural panels.

1.2 Structural panels in use include plywood, oriented strand board and composites of veneer, and other wood-based layers

1.3 Test Method A, Tensile Test for Small Specimens:

1.3.1 This test method employs small specimens that should have a reduced cross section at the center of their length to avoid failure in the grip area. The transition from full width of specimen to reduced section at the center should be gradual to minimize stress concentration.

1.3.2 When the measurements of elastic properties are to be made, the length of the reduced cross section at the center should be of sufficient length to accommodate an extensometer.

1.4 Test Method B, Tensile Test for Large Specimens:

1.4.1 This test method employs large specimens and responds well to manufacturing variables, panel grade characteristics, and other variables influencing the tensile properties of structural panels.

1.4.2 The test specimens are large enough to contain the maximum sized grade characteristics found in panels. The test specimens have a constant cross section since the size and location of grade characteristics control the location of failures and the effect of stress concentration at the grips is overshadowed.

1.4.3 This test method is recommended for the following:

1.4.3.1 Comparative tests of structural panels,

1.4.3.2 Determining the influence of any specific strength reducing variables on the tensile properties of structural panels,

1.4.3.3 Determination of tensile properties of panels for use in developing structural recommendations.

1.5 The values stated in inch-pound units are to be regarded as standard. The values given in parentheses are mathematical conversions to SI units that are provided for information only and are not considered standard.

¹ These test methods are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee D07 on Wood and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D07.03 on Panel Products.

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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.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

D2395 Test Methods for Density and Specific Gravity (Relative Density) of Wood and Wood-Based Materials

D4442 Test Methods for Direct Moisture Content Measurement of Wood and Wood-Based Materials

3. Significance and Use

3.1 These test methods determine the tensile properties of structural panels in response to stresses acting in the plane of the panel.

3.2 *Test Method A*—This test method is suited to material that is uniform with respect to tensile properties. It is normally applied to structural panels and plywood of clear, straight-grained veneers. It may also be used to evaluate the strength of scarf and finger joints and other manufacturing process variables that can be expected to influence the tensile properties of structural panels in a uniform manner across the width of the sheet.

3.3 *Test Method B*—This test method employs large test specimens and responds well to all manufacturing variables and growth characteristics that affect the tensile properties of structural panels.

3.4 It is recommended that where comparisons are to be made that the same test method and specimen size be used throughout. This is because the volume of material included in a test specimen can influence the tensile strength regardless of whether the material properties are uniform throughout the sheet or vary widely due to the presence of growth or manufacturing features.

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.

4. Control of Moisture Content

4.1 Structural panel specimens to be tested at specific moisture contents or after reaching equilibrium moisture content at specific temperature and relative humidity conditions shall be conditioned to approximate constant weight in controlled atmospheric conditions. For approximating moisture conditions of structural panels used under dry conditions, a relative humidity of $65 \pm 2\%$ at a temperature of $(68 \pm 6^\circ\text{F})$ ($20 \pm 3^\circ\text{C}$) is recommended.

5. Variables Influencing Tensile Properties of Structural Panels

5.1 *Moisture Content*—Moisture content shall be determined in accordance with Test Method D4442.

5.2 *Specific Gravity*—Determine specific gravity in accordance with Test Methods D2395. The specimen may be the same as that for moisture content determination but must have volume of at least 1 in.^3 (16 cm^3) if from small specimens (Test Method A), and at least 3 in.^3 (49 cm^3) if from large specimens

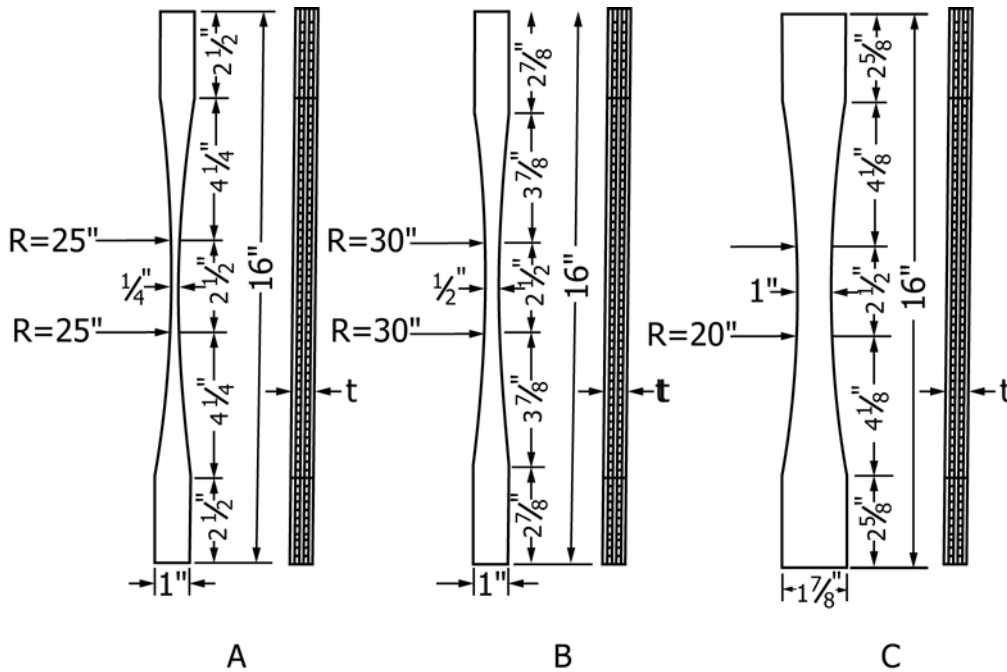
(Test Method B). Specimens containing veneer shall be free of visible knots or voids in any ply.

TEST METHOD A—TENSILE PROPERTIES OF SMALL SPECIMENS

6. Test Specimens

6.1 Specimens may be of Types A, B, or C in Fig. 1.

6.1.1 When the evaluation of elastic properties as well as ultimate tensile strength is required, the size and shape of the test specimen shall be selected on the basis of the construction and thickness of the material. For other structural panels, and plywood or composites with the grain of the individual veneer plies or laminations making grain angles of individual veneer lamina of 0 or 90°, Type A shall be used for material over $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (6 mm) in thickness and Type B for material $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (6 mm) or less in thickness. For plywood with an angle other than 0 or 90° between the length of the specimens and the grain orientation, Type C shall be used regardless of the thickness of the material. The specimens shall have a thickness equal to that of the



U.S. Customary Units, in.	Metric Equivalents mm	U.S. Customary Units, in.	Metric Equivalents mm
1/4	6	3/8	98
1/2	13	4/8	105
1	25	4/4	108
1 1/8	48	16	406
2 1/2	64	20	503
2 5/8	67	25	635
2 7/8	73	30	762

NOTE 1—A generous radius of curvature at the minimum section as provided in this specimen is highly desirable.

FIG. 1 Dimensions and Details of Tension Test Specimens

material. The thickness and the width of each specimen at the critical section shall be measured to an accuracy of not less than $\pm 0.3\%$ or 0.001 in. (0.02 mm) whichever is larger.

6.1.2 The test specimens shall be properly shaped, using a template in conjunction with a vertical-spindle wood-working shaper or any other method that will give equally satisfactory results.

7. Loading Procedure

7.1 Hold the specimen in wedge-type self-tightening and self-aligning grips. Rate of crosshead motion shall be constant throughout the test such that the specimen breaks within 3 to 10 min after initiation of loading. A crosshead motion rate of 0.035 in./min (0.9 mm/min) is usually satisfactory. If failure does not occur within the desired 3 to 10-min time span, adjust the loading rate.

7.2 Measure the elapsed time from initiation of loading to maximum load and record to the nearest $\frac{1}{2}$ min.

8. Load-Deformation Curves

8.1 Take data for load-deformation curves to determine the modulus of elasticity and the proportional limit. Choose increments of load so that not less than 12 and preferably 15 or more readings of load and deformation are taken to the proportional limit. Attach the deformation apparatus at the center of the specimen's length and width. Take deformation readings to the nearest 0.0001 in. (0.002 mm). Fig. 2 and Fig. 3 show 2-in. (51-mm) gauge length Tripolitis extensometers that have been found satisfactory for this test.

TEST METHOD B—TENSILE STRENGTH OF LARGE SPECIMENS

9. Apparatus

9.1 Hold the structural panel specimen in grips that apply the required forces to the specimen without influencing load at, or location of, failure. Such devices shall not apply a bending moment to the test section, allow slippage under load, or inflict damage or stress concentrations to the test section. Figs. 4 and 5 illustrate the test set-up and grips.

9.2 *Grip Alignment*—For ideal test conditions, the grips should be self-aligning, that is, they should be attached to the force mechanism of the machine in such a manner that they will move freely into axial alignment as soon as the load is applied and thus apply uniformly distributed forces along and across the test cross section. When self-aligning grips are not available, the specimen may be clamped in the heads of a universal-type testing machine with wedge-type jaws.

9.3 *Contact Surface*—The contact surface between grips and test specimen shall be such that slippage does not occur. It is recommended that 11-in. (279-mm) long gripping area be used (measured parallel to direction of force). Large projections that damage the contact surface of the wood should be avoided. Grips that have been used successfully include: diamond floor plate, grips surfaced with coarse emery paper, and urethane friction padding.

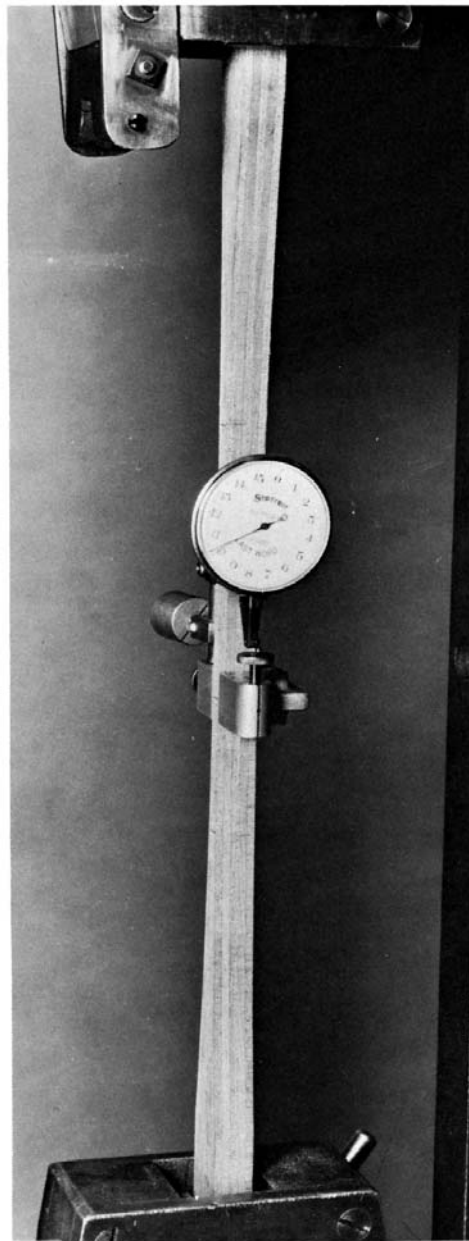


FIG. 2 Tension Test of Thick Plywood Showing Nonaveraging Type of Extensometer (2-in. Gauge Length)

10. Test Specimens

10.1 Specimens shall be precisely cut with all adjacent edges at right angles. The dimension of the specimen shall be at least 6 in. (152 mm) wide by 48 in. (1219 mm) long. The thickness and width shall be measured to an accuracy of not less than $\pm 0.3\%$ or 0.001 in. (0.02 mm), whichever is larger.

11. Loading Procedure

11.1 Apply the load continuously throughout the test at a uniform rate of moveable crosshead motion that will produce failure of the specimen within a 3 to 10-min time period after initiation of loading. A strain rate of 0.001 in./in.·min (0.001 mm/mm·min) $\pm 25\%$ has been found to give satisfactory

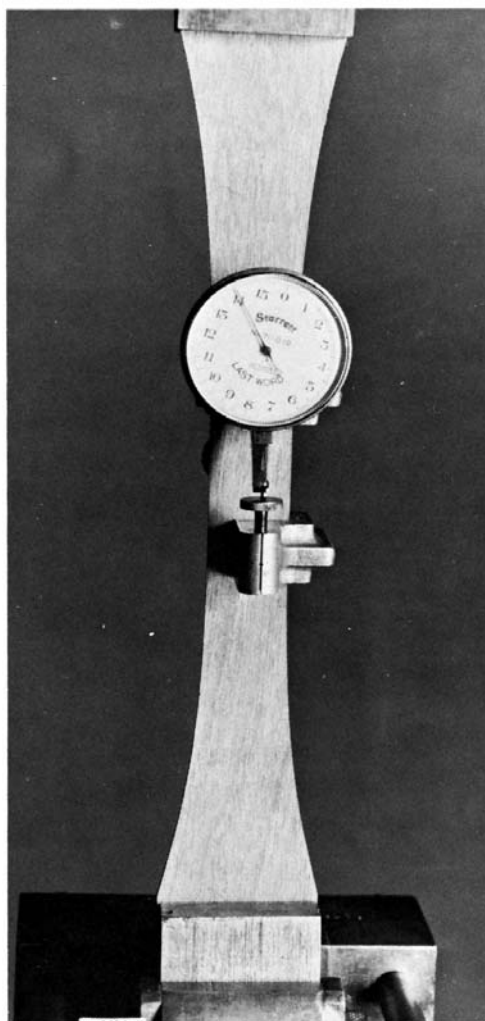


FIG. 3 Tension Test of Plywood with Extensometer Attachment Showing Specimen Used When Load is Applied at an Angle Other than 0° or 90° to the Direction of the Grain of the Plies

results. This rate corresponds to a crosshead motion of approximately 0.025 in./min (0.625 mm/min) for a net specimen length of 26 in. (600 mm). Widely varying material properties or deformation of loading equipment may cause failure times to fall outside this range, requiring an adjustment of loading rate.

11.2 Measure the elapsed time from initiation of loading to maximum load and record to the nearest ½ min.

12. Load-Deformation Curves

12.1 When deformation measurements are needed for determining elastic properties mount a pair of transducers on the

opposite faces of the specimen to minimize the effect of bending. Attach the transducers at the mid length and width of the specimen. It is recommended that the deflection be measured over a gauge length of at least 5 in. (127 mm) and deformations measured to the nearest 0.0001 in. (0.002 mm). It is recommended that an X-Y recorder be used to obtain a continuous load-deformation curve. Otherwise choose the increments of load so that not less than 12 and preferably 15 or more readings of load and deformation are taken to the proportional limit.

13. Report

13.1 The structural panel specimen shall be described as to size, species, construction, and adhesive type used in its manufacture, and (where applicable) direction of the face grain or orientation with respect to load direction. The test method shall be identified.

13.2 Data for individual specimens and, where applicable, specimen averages shall include:

- 13.2.1 Thickness,
- 13.2.2 Width,
- 13.2.3 Specific gravity,
- 13.2.4 Moisture content,
- 13.2.5 Elapsed time to failure,
- 13.2.6 Tensile stiffness (cross-sectional area × modulus of elasticity),
- 13.2.7 Maximum load,
- 13.2.8 Maximum tensile strength,
- 13.2.9 Load-deflection diagrams, and
- 13.2.10 Description of failure.

13.3 It may also be desirable to include additional data that may influence results such as, for plywood, cross-sectional area of parallel and perpendicular plies, thickness of individual plies, and natural and manufacturing features present relating to panel grade or thought to influence test results.

13.4 A description of the test method shall include equipment used to apply loads to the specimen, deformation measuring equipment, and geometry of deformation measured.

14. Precision

14.1 The precision of these test methods has not yet been determined, but when data are available a precision statement will be included.

15. Keywords

15.1 panels; structural panels; tensile properties; wood-based

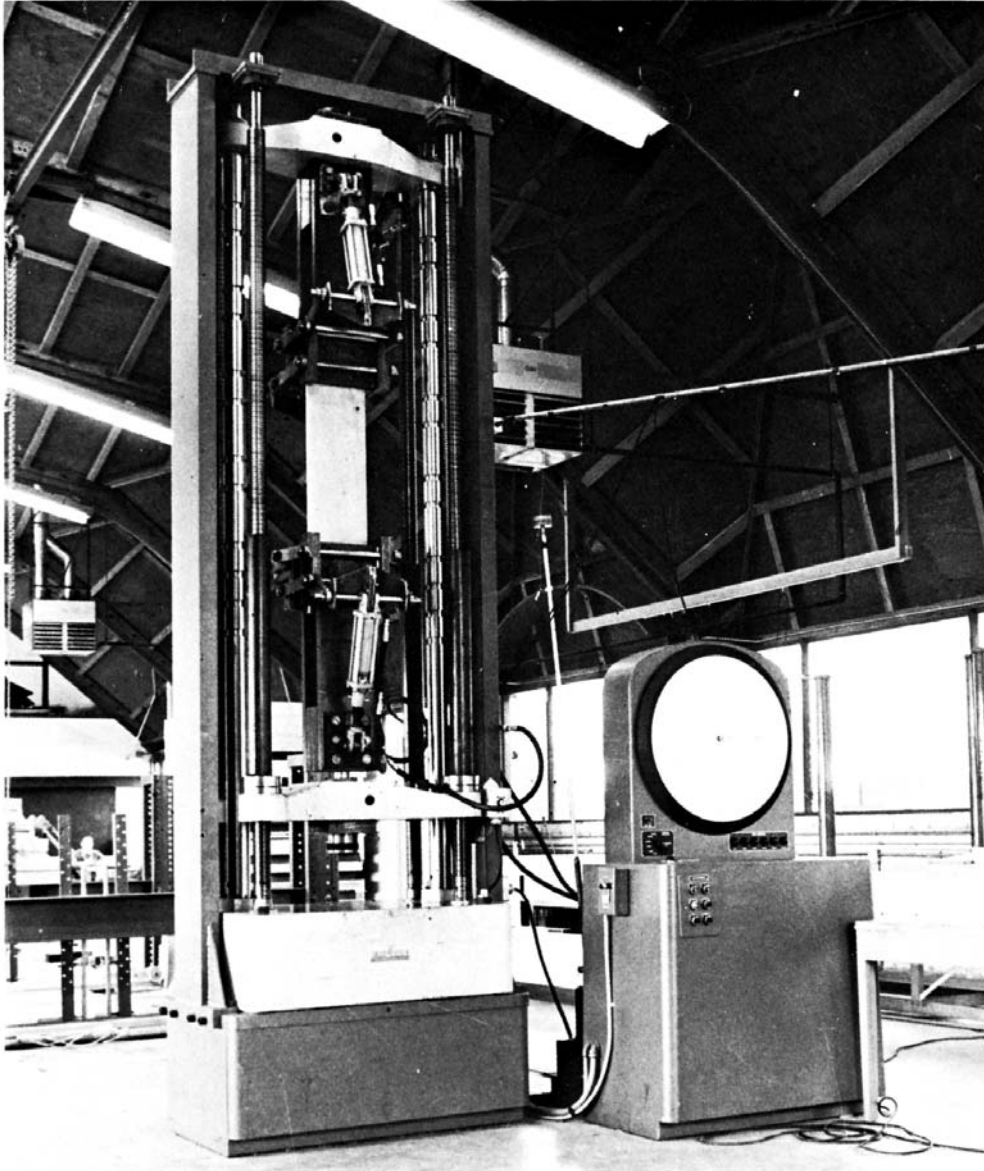


FIG. 4 Test Method B Tension Test Set-Up

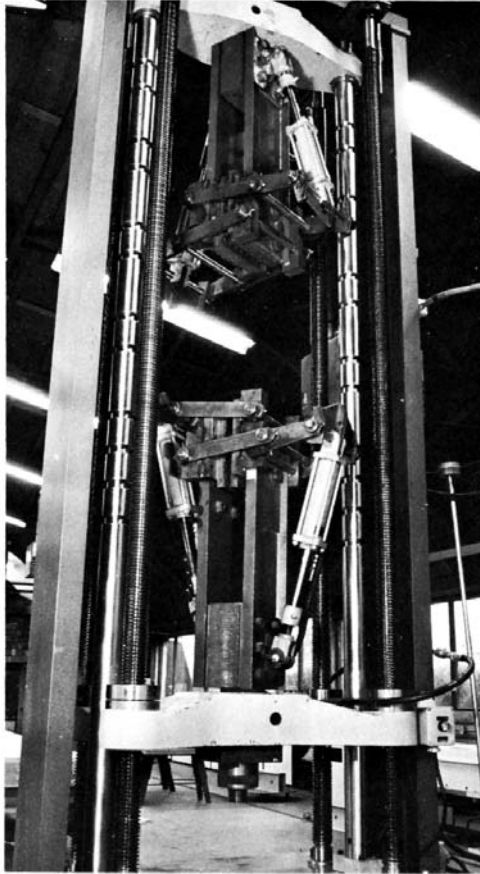


FIG. 5 Grips Suitable for Test Method B Tension Tests

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