



Designation: D4890 – 18

Standard Test Methods for Polyurethane Raw Materials: Determination of Gardner and APHA Color of Polyols¹

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1. Scope*

1.1 These test methods measure visually the color of clear polyester and polyether liquids. They apply only to materials whose colors have light-absorption characteristics similar to those of the standards. An alternative method is Test Method D1209 (see Note 1).

1.2 *Units*—The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as standard. No other units of measurement are included in this standard.

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.*

NOTE 1—Test Method A of this standard is equivalent to ISO 6271-1. Test Method B of this standard is equivalent to ISO 4630-1.

1.4 *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.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

D883 Terminology Relating to Plastics

D1193 Specification for Reagent Water

D1209 Test Method for Color of Clear Liquids (Platinum-Cobalt Scale)

D5386 Test Method for Color of Liquids Using Tristimulus Colorimetry

¹ These test methods are under the jurisdiction of Committee D20 on Plastics and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee D20.22 on Cellular Materials - Plastics and Elastomers.

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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.

D6166 Test Method for Color of Pine Chemicals and Related Products (Instrumental Determination of Gardner Color)

E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods

E308 Practice for Computing the Colors of Objects by Using the CIE System

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

E1164 Practice for Obtaining Spectrometric Data for Object-Color Evaluation

2.2 *ISO Standards:*³

ISO 4630-1 Clear Liquids—Estimation of Colour by the Gardner Colour Scale—Part 1: Visual Method

ISO 4630-2 Clear Liquids—Estimation of Colour by the Gardner Colour Scale—Part 2: Spectroscopic Method

ISO 6271-1 Clear Liquids—Estimation of Colour by the Platinum-Cobalt Scale—Part 1: Visual Method

ISO 6271-2 Clear Liquids—Estimation of Colour by the Platinum-Cobalt Scale—Part 2: Spectroscopic Method

3. Terminology

3.1 For definitions of terms used in these test methods see Terminology D883.

4. Summary of Test Method

4.1 In Test Method A, the color of the material to be tested is compared to a series of color standards with defined chromaticity coordinates, prepared in one of three ways. The results are reported as the color standard, which best matches the sample.

4.2 In Test Method B, the color of the material to be tested is compared to a series of platinum-cobalt color standards, designated by mg of Pt/mL of standard solution. The results are reported as the color standard, which best matches the sample (see Note 2).

NOTE 2—Color of liquids are also measured by visible spectroscopy and the results converted to any of several color scales. These results are converted to the APHA scale by appropriate manipulations, as for example

³ Available from American National Standards Institute (ANSI), 25 W. 43rd St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036, http://www.ansi.org.

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

in Test Method [D5386](#) and ISO 6271-2. These results are converted to the Gardner scale by appropriate manipulations, as for example in Test Method ISO 4630-2.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 These test methods are suitable for quality control, as specification tests, and for research. Color is an important property of urethane products.

6. Sampling

6.1 Polyesters and polyethers usually contain molecules covering an appreciable range of molecular weights. These have a tendency to fractionate during solidification. Unless the material is a liquid or finely ground solid it is necessary to melt (using no higher temperature than necessary) and mix the resin well before removing a sample for analysis. Many polyols are hygroscopic and care must be taken to provide minimum exposure to atmospheric moisture during the sampling.

7. Purity of Reagents

7.1 *Purity of Reagents*—Reagent-grade chemicals shall be used in all tests. Unless otherwise indicated, it is intended that all reagents shall conform to the specifications of the Committee on Analytical Reagents of the American Chemical Society, where such specifications are available.⁴ Other grades are acceptable, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without reducing the accuracy of the determination.

7.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean reagent water as defined by Type IV or better of Specification [D1193](#).

TEST METHOD A—GARDNER COLOR

8. Apparatus

8.1 *Gardner-Holdt Tubes*, of clear glass, with closed, flat, even bottoms, and having the following approximate dimensions and markings:

8.1.1 A uniform internal length of 112 mm,

8.1.2 A uniform internal diameter throughout the length of the tube of 10.75 mm, and

8.1.3 An etched line around the outside of the tube 5 mm from the open end and a second etched line around the outside of the tube 13 mm from the open end.

9. Reagents

9.1 *Cobalt Chloride Solution*—Prepare a solution containing 1 part by weight of cobalt chloride ($\text{CoCl}_2 \times 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$) to 3 parts of HCl (1 to 17).

9.2 *Ferric Chloride Solution*—Prepare a solution containing approximately 5 parts by weight of ferric chloride ($\text{FeCl}_3 \times 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$) and 1.2 parts of HCl (1 to 17). Adjust to exact

color equivalence to a freshly prepared solution containing 3 g of $\text{K}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$ in 100 mL of H_2SO_4 (sp gr 1.84).

9.3 *Hydrochloric Acid (1 to 17)*—Mix 1 volume of concentrated hydrochloric acid (HCl, sp gr 1.19) with 17 volumes of water.

9.4 *Hydrochloric Acid (0.1 N)*—Prepare 0.1 N HCl.

9.5 *Potassium Chloroplatinate* (PtCl_6).

9.6 *Potassium Dichromate* ($\text{K}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$).

9.7 *Sulfuric Acid* (sp gr 1.84)—Concentrated sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4).

10. Gardner Color Reference Standards⁵

10.1 The primary standards for color shall consist of solutions defined by their spectral transmittance in 1-cm cell with parallel sides. The chromaticity coordinates of these solutions shall conform to those given in [Table 1](#) when determined on a 1-cm layer of the solution in accordance with Practice [E1164](#) and Test Methods [E308](#) and [D6166](#).

10.2 For comparison, permanent solutions of known color are more satisfactory. The approximate composition of solutions giving each of the 18 Gardner colors is also given in [Table 1](#). The solutions shall be made from K_2PtCl_6 in 0.1 N HCl, or, in the darker colors, from stock solutions of FeCl_3 , CoCl_2 , and HCl (see [9.1](#), [9.2](#), and [9.3](#)). Pre-prepared Gardner color standard solutions are commonly available for purchase.

10.3 If the solutions in [10.2](#) are unavailable, solutions of $\text{K}_2\text{Cr}_2\text{O}_7$ (sp gr 1.84) are used as reference standards. The approximate composition of these standards is also given in [Table 1](#). Each solution must be freshly made for the color comparison, using gentle heat, if necessary, to effect solution.

10.4 Secondary reference standards are available in the form of 18 colored glass disks, which are set into a pair of larger, plastic disks and the latter mounted to rotate in a housing for holding the sample tube and glass disk in close and fixed proximity.

11. Procedure

11.1 Fill the tube with sample, free of solid particles or air bubbles, so that the apparent upper edge of the liquid meniscus is even with the lower etched line on the tube.

11.2 Determine the color by comparison with the reference standard solutions prescribed in [Table 1](#), by comparing the sample and the standard in Gardner-Holdt viscosity tubes as described. Make the comparison at $25 \pm 5^\circ\text{C}$ by placing tubes close together and looking through them against a white background or by comparison to the standards in a color disk.

12. Report

12.1 Report the color of the sample in terms of the Gardner standard number that is nearest to it in color. If the sample

⁴ *Reagent Chemicals, American Chemical Society Specifications*, American Chemical Society, Washington, DC. For suggestions on the testing of reagents not listed by the American Chemical Society, see *Analar Standards for Laboratory Chemicals*, BDH Ltd., Poole, Dorset, U.K., and the *United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary*, U.S. Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc. (USPC), Rockville, MD.

⁵ The sole source of supply of the glass color standards and color standard solutions known to the committee at this time is BYK-Gardner USA, 9104 Guilford Road, Columbia, MD 21046. If you are aware of alternative suppliers, please provide this information to ASTM International Headquarters. Your comments will receive careful consideration at a meeting of the responsible technical committee,¹ which you may attend.