
**Metallic materials — Conversion of
hardness values**

Matériaux métalliques — Conversion des valeurs de dureté



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Contents

	Page
Foreword	iv
Introduction	v
1 Scope	1
2 Principles of conversion	1
3 Application of conversion tables	4
3.1 General.....	4
3.2 Converting values.....	7
3.3 Designation of conversion results.....	9
3.4 Notes on use of conversion tables.....	10
Annex A (informative) Conversion table for unalloyed, low alloy steels and cast steel	12
Annex B (informative) Conversion tables for steels for quenching and tempering	17
Annex C (informative) Conversion tables for steels for cold working	37
Annex D (informative) Conversion tables for high speed steels	48
Annex E (informative) Conversion tables for hardmetals	61
Annex F (informative) Conversion tables for non-ferrous metals and alloys	65
Annex G (informative) Conversion tables for tool steels	76
Annex H (informative) Remarks on the effect of the changed test conditions	80
Bibliography	84

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2. www.iso.org/directives

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 164, *Mechanical testing of metals*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Hardness testing*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 18265:2003) which has been technically revised.

Introduction

The hardness conversion values given in [Table A.1](#) were obtained in interlaboratory tests by the *Verein Deutscher Eisenhüttenleute* (VDEh) (German Iron and Steel Institute) using verified and calibrated hardness testing machines. Statistically reliable information cannot be given on the uncertainty of these values because the test conditions were not reproducible, and the number of results used to calculate the mean hardness values is not known. The conversion values in this table are in accordance with the information presented in IC No. 3 (1980) and IC No. 4 (1982) of the European Coal and Steel Community, as well as in ISO 4964:1984 and ISO/TR 10108:1989.

[Annexes C, D and E](#) contain – in a revised format – the extensive results on the conversion of hardness values presented in TGL 43212/02 to 43212/04, standards published by the former East German standards body, the *Amt für Standardisierung, Meßwesen und Warenprüfung* (ASMW). The values presented in [Annex B](#) had also been determined by the ASMW, but were published in a report of the *Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt* (PTB),^[1] the German national institute for science and technology, not in a TGL standard.

The converted hardness values in the above-mentioned TGL standards were obtained in statistically reliable hardness and tensile tests. The hardness tests were performed using ASMW normal testing machines on plane-parallel, polished specimens of various materials in different heat treatment conditions. Tensile strength was tested on machines whose force measuring and extension measuring systems had been calibrated immediately before testing. The tensile test method used is equivalent to that specified in ISO 6892-1, and the calibration procedures conform with those specified in ISO 7500-1 and ISO 9513.

[Annex G](#) contains the results on the conversion of hardness values of two tool steels with the assistance of the *Verein Deutscher Eisenhüttenleute* (VDEh) which were obtained in the year 2007.

Users of this International Standard should take note of [Clause 2](#), especially the concluding warning.

Metallic materials — Conversion of hardness values

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies the principles of the conversion of hardness values to equivalent values in other hardness scales and to estimates of tensile strength. It gives general information on the use of the conversion tables.

The conversion tables in [Annexes A to G](#) apply to

- unalloyed and low alloy steels and cast steel,
- steels for quenching and tempering,
- steels for cold working,
- high speed steels,
- tool steels,
- hardmetals, and
- non-ferrous metals and alloys.

NOTE 1 The conversion tables in [Annexes B to G](#) are based on empirical results which were evaluated by means of regression analysis. Such analysis was not possible in the case of the values given in [Annex A](#) because a sufficient number of results was not available.

NOTE 2 [Annex H](#) gives information about the effects of changes of the test procedure in the standards specifying the hardness tests.

Converted values obtained using this International Standard are only directly applicable to the exact material tested. For all other materials, they provide an indicator only. In all cases, the converted values are not intended as replacements for values obtained by the correct standard method. In particular, tensile strength estimates are the least reliable converted values in this International Standard.

Sections of this International Standard are reprinted, with permission of ASTM International, from ASTM E140 *Standard Hardness Conversion Tables for Metals Relationship among Brinell Hardness, Vickers Hardness, Rockwell Hardness, Superficial Hardness, Knoop Hardness, and Scleroscope Hardness*.

2 Principles of conversion

Hardness testing is a form of materials testing that provides information on the mechanical properties of a material with limited destruction of the specimen and within a relatively short period of time. In practice, it is often desirable to use hardness results to draw conclusions on the tensile strength of the same material if tensile testing is too involved or the piece to be examined is not to be destroyed.

Since the means of loading in hardness testing is considerably different from that in tensile testing, it is not possible to derive a reliable functional relationship between these two characteristic values on the basis of a model. Nevertheless, hardness values and tensile strength values are positively correlated, and so it is possible to draw up empirical relationships for limited applications.

Often it is necessary to check a given hardness value against a value gained by a different test method. This is especially the case if only a certain method can be used due to the particular specimen or coating thickness, the size of the object to be tested, surface quality, or the availability of hardness testing machines.