

Standard Test Method for Trace Quantities of Carbonyl Compounds with 2,4-Dinitrophenylhydrazine¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This test method covers the determination of total carbonyl in the range from 0.5 to 50 μg calculated as CO.

1.2 This test method is intended to be general and does not include steps for sample preparation.

1.3 Acetals that hydrolyze under the conditions of the test are also determined.

1.4 Carbonyl derivatives such as acetals and imines that are easily hydrolyzed may be determined by an alternative procedure.

1.5 The developed color is not stable and must be measured within a specified period.

NOTE 1—Other test methods for the determination of traces of carbonyl compounds are given in Test Methods D 1089, D 1612, D 2119, and D 2191.

1.6 Review the current appropriate Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for detailed information concerning toxicity, first aid procedures, and safety precautions.

1.7 The values stated in SI units are to be regarded as the standard.

1.8 *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.* Specific hazards statements are given in Note 4 and Section 8.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

D 1089 Test Method for Carbonyl Content of Butadiene²

D 1193 Specification for Reagent Water³

D 1612 Test Method for Acetone in Methanol (Methyl Alcohol)⁴

D 2119 Test Method for Aldehydes in Styrene Monomer⁴

D 2191 Test Method for Acetaldehyde Content of Vinyl Acetate⁴

¹ This test method is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E15 on Industrial and Specialty Chemicals and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E15.01 on General Standards.

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² Discontinued; see 1985 *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 05.01.

³ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 11.01.

⁴ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 06.04.

E 60 Practice for Molecular Absorption Spectrometric Methods for Chemical Analysis of Metals, Ores, and Related Materials⁵

E 180 Practice for Determining the Precision of ASTM Methods for Analysis and Testing of Industrial Chemicals⁶

E 300 Practice for Sampling Industrial Chemicals⁶

3. Summary of Test Method

3.1 The sample containing traces of carbonyl compounds is reacted with an acidic solution of 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine to form the hydrazone which, upon reaction with potassium hydroxide, forms a wine-red color, presumably due to a resonating quinoidal ion. The intensity of the red color, which is a function of the carbonyl concentration, is determined photometrically and the amount of carbonyl is read directly from a previously prepared calibration curve. This test method is based upon the work of Lappin and Clark.⁷

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This test method is applicable to the determination of trace amounts of aldehydes and ketones in aqueous solutions and a wide variety of organic solvents.

5. Interferences

5.1 This test method has been found to be relatively free from interferences. It is necessary, however, to test a sample to ensure that it does not interfere.

5.2 Carbonyl compounds containing conjugated unsaturation interfere by absorbing at a different wavelength than other carbonyl compounds.

5.3 Acetals that are only partially hydrolyzed under the conditions of the test will interfere. A higher reaction temperature is required to effect complete hydrolysis.

5.4 Certain carbonyl compounds such as diisobutyl ketone have been found to undergo incomplete reactions and thus give low results. These compounds may be determined if a suitable calibration is made using the compound in question.

5.5 Because of the extreme sensitivity of this test method, it is necessary to perform the test in a room from which acetone or other carbonyl compound vapors are excluded.

⁵ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 03.05.

⁶ *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 15.05.

⁷ Lappin, G. R., and Clark, L. C., *Analytical Chemistry*, Vol 23, 1951, p. 541.

6. Apparatus

6.1 *Spectrophotometer or Photometer*, capable of measuring light absorption at 480 nm and holding a 1-cm cell.

NOTE 2—If a filter photometer is used, a narrow band filter having its maximum transmission at approximately 480 nm should be used. A discussion of photometers and photometric practice is given in Practice E 60.

6.2 *Absorption Cells*, 1-cm.

6.3 All glassware must be cleaned before use. Rinse thoroughly with water and finally with methanol. *Do not use acetone to dry the glassware.*

NOTE 3—The precision and bias reported in this test method were determined using chromic acid cleaning solution to clean the glassware. The effect on precision and bias of using other cleaning materials has not been determined.

7. Reagents

7.1 *Purity of Reagents*—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.⁸ Other grades may be used, provided it is first ascertained that the reagent is of sufficiently high purity to permit its use without lessening the accuracy of the determination.

7.2 *Purity of Water*—Unless otherwise indicated, references to water shall be understood to mean Types II or III reagent water as defined in Specification D 1193.

7.3 *Methanol, Carbonyl-free*—To 4 L of methanol add 20 g of 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine and 2 mL of hydrochloric acid (HCl, sp gr 1.19). Reflux for 2 h and then distill using a 2 to 3-ft fractionating column. Discard the first 200 mL of distillate. Continue the distillation until approximately 75 % of the methanol has distilled over.

7.3.1 **Warning**—Do not allow the pot to begin to go dry because there is danger of a violent decomposition of the residue. (See 8.2.) If stored in a tightly capped bottle, the methanol will remain carbonyl-free indefinitely. Properly prepared methanol will have an absorbance of 0.08 or less when used as a blank (11.2-11.4).

7.4 *Potassium Hydroxide Solution* (100 g/L)—Dissolve 100 g of potassium hydroxide (KOH) in 200 mL of water. Cool and dilute to 1 L with methanol.

7.5 *2,4-Dinitrophenylhydrazine* (1 g/L)—Dissolve 0.10 g of 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine (**Warning**—See 8.2) in 50 mL of carbonyl-free methanol containing 4 mL of hydrochloric acid (HCl, sp gr 1.19) and dilute to 100 mL with water. This solution is unstable and must be discarded after two weeks.

8. Safety Hazards

8.1 **Warning**—The toxicity of 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine has not been established. For this reason, handle with customary care. Avoid ingestion and contact of the compound with the skin and eyes.

⁸ *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.

8.2 **Warning**—2,4-Dinitrophenylhydrazine is an explosive and may ignite violently in contact with an open flame or electrical spark. Handle with caution. Avoid all sources of heat.

9. Sampling

9.1 Special precautions may be necessary to ensure that the sample taken for analysis is representative of the whole. Refer to Practice E 300 for a detailed discussion of sampling procedures.

10. Calibration

10.1 Add 50 mL of carbonyl-free methanol to a 100-mL glass stoppered volumetric flask. To the flask transfer an amount of the carbonyl compound being determined that will contain 25 mg of CO, weighing to the nearest 0.1 mg (see Note 4). Dilute the contents of the flask to the mark with carbonyl-free methanol and mix well (see Note 5). (See 5.5 and 6.3.)

NOTE 4—The correct weight may be calculated as follows:

$$W = 0.893 \times E \quad (1)$$

where:

W = weight, mg, and

E = equivalent weight of compound.

NOTE 5—For most routine work a calibration based on 2-butanone is satisfactory. (See 5.4.)

10.2 Prepare a series of standards by transferring 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10-mL aliquots of this stock solution to respective 100-mL glass-stoppered volumetric flasks. Dilute the contents of each flask to the mark with carbonyl-free methanol and mix well. Two millilitres of each of these standards contain approximately 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 μ g of carbonyl, respectively. Calculate the exact weight as follows:

$$S = 5.60 \times [(W \times V)/E] \quad (2)$$

where:

S = weight of carbonyl in 2 mL of solution, μ g,

W = weight of sample added to stock solution, mg,

E = equivalent weight of compound, and

V = volume of aliquot, mL.

10.3 Using suitable pipets, transfer 2 mL of each standard to respective 25-mL glass-stoppered volumetric flasks. Develop the color and measure the absorbance of each standard as described in 11.2-11.4.

10.4 Plot, on linear graph paper, micrograms of carbonyl as a function of the net absorbance.

NOTE 6—If the photometer reading is transmittance, convert to absorbance as follows:

$$A = \log_{10} 100/T \quad (3)$$

where:

A = absorbance, and

T = transmittance.

11. Procedure

11.1 Using a suitable pipet, transfer 2 mL of a sample containing 0.5 to 50 μ g of carbonyl to a 25-mL dry glass-stoppered volumetric flask that has previously been tared to the nearest 0.1 mg. Restopper and again weigh to the nearest 0.1 mg to obtain the exact sample weight. (See 5.5 and 6.3.)

NOTE 7—If 2 mL of the sample contains more than 50 µg of carbonyl, a suitable dilution in water or carbonyl-free methanol should be made.

11.2 Transfer 2 mL of carbonyl-free methanol to a second 25-mL glass-stoppered volumetric flask for use as a reagent blank.

11.3 To each flask, transfer, by means of a pipet, 2 mL of the 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine solution. Stopper and allow to set at room temperature for 30 ± 2 min (see Note 8). Dilute to the mark with the potassium hydroxide solution. Stopper and mix well.

NOTE 8—If a determination of easily hydrolyzed imines and acetals is required, use a reaction temperature of 60°C. A hot-water bath is a convenient source of heat. Cool before adding the potassium hydroxide solution.

11.4 At 12 ± 1 min after adding the potassium hydroxide solution, measure the absorbance of each solution at approximately 480 nm (see Note 9) in a 1-cm cell using a suitable photometer. Use a 1-cm cell filled with water to set the instrument at zero absorbance or 100 % transmittances.

NOTE 9—The maximum absorbance of the quinoidal ion occurs at about 430 nm. The absorbance-concentration relationship is more linear, however, at 480 nm. For this reason the latter wavelength is used.

11.5 Calculate the net absorbance due to carbonyl compounds in the sample by subtracting the absorbance of the reagent blank from that of the sample determinations.

11.6 Refer to a previously prepared calibration curve to determine the micrograms of carbonyl found.

12. Calculations

12.1 Calculate the carbonyl content of the sample as follows:

$$\text{CO, ppm} = \frac{A}{B} \quad (4)$$

where:

A = weight of carbonyl found, µg, and

B = sample weight, g, or sample volume, mL \times sp gr.

12.2 If it is desired to express the carbonyl content as a specific compound, multiply the content calculated above by the factor $E/28.01$, where E is the equivalent weight of the compound.

13. Report

13.1 Report the carbonyl content to the nearest 0.1 ppm. Duplicate runs that agree within 0.5 ppm absolute are acceptable for averaging (95 % probability).

14. Precision and Bias

14.1 *Precision*—The following criteria should be used for judging the acceptability of results (see Note 10).

14.1.1 *Repeatability (Single Analyst)*—The standard deviation for a single determination has been estimated to be 0.16 ppm at 26 df. The 95 % limit for the difference between two such determinations is 0.4 ppm absolute.

14.1.2 *Laboratory Precision (Within-Laboratory, Between-Days Variability) (Formerly Called Repeatability)*—The standard deviation of results (each the average of duplicates) obtained by the same analyst in different days, has been estimated to be 0.16 ppm absolute at 13 df. The 95 % limit for the difference between two such averages is 0.6 ppm absolute.

14.1.3 *Reproducibility (Multilaboratory)*—The coefficient of variation of results (each the average of duplicates), obtained by analysts in different laboratories has been estimated to be 6.04 % relative at 5 df. The 95 % limit for the difference between two such averages is 17 % relative.

NOTE 10—The precision estimates are based on an interlaboratory study performed in 1969 on two samples of methanol containing 4 and 24 ppm total carbonyl added as acetone. Seven laboratories analyzed the samples in duplicate on each of two days.⁹ Practice E 180 – 90 was used in developing these precision statements.

14.2 *Bias*—The bias of this test method has not been determined due to the unavailability of suitable reference materials.

15. Keywords

15.1 aldehydes; carbonyl; 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine; ketones

⁹ Supporting data are available from ASTM Headquarters. Request RR: E15-1006.

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