



# Testing concrete —

## **Part 107: Method for determination of density of compacted fresh concrete**

UDC 666.972.017:691.32:620.1

# Committees responsible for this British Standard

This British Standard was published under the direction of the Cement, Gypsum, Aggregates and Quarry Products Standards Committee CAB/-. Its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee CAB/4 upon which the following bodies were represented:

British Aggregate Construction Materials Industries  
 British Precast Concrete Federation Ltd.  
 British Ready Mixed Concrete Association  
 Cement Admixtures Association  
 Cement and Concrete Association  
 Cement Makers' Federation  
 Concrete Society Limited  
 County Surveyor's Society  
 Department of the Environment (PSA)  
 Department of the Environment (Building Research Establishment)  
 Department of the Environment (Transport and Road Research Laboratory)  
 Department of Transport  
 Electricity Supply Industry in England and Wales  
 Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors  
 Greater London Council  
 Institute of Concrete Technology  
 Institution of Civil Engineers  
 Institution of Highway Engineers  
 Institution of Municipal Engineers  
 Institution of Structural Engineers  
 Institution of Water Engineers and Scientists  
 National Federation of Building Trades Employers  
 Royal Institute of British Architects  
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors  
 Sand and Gravel Association Limited  
 Society of Chemical Industry

The following bodies were also represented in the drafting of the standard, through subcommittees and panels:

British Civil Engineering Test Equipment Manufacturers' Association  
 Coopted members

This British Standard, having been prepared under the direction of the Cement, Gypsum, Aggregates and Quarry Products Standards Committee, was published under the authority of the Board of BSI and comes into effect on 31 May 1983

© BSI 11-1998

The following BSI references relate to the work on this standard:  
 Committee reference CAB/4  
 Draft for comment 81/12319 DC

ISBN 0 580 11926 2

## Amendments issued since publication

Amd. No.	Date of issue	Comments
6085	July 1989	
6722	July 1991	Indicated by a sideline in the margin

# Contents

	Page
Committees responsible	Inside front cover
Foreword	ii
<hr/>	
1 Scope	1
2 Definitions	1
3 Apparatus	1
4 Calibration of the container	1
5 Sampling	1
6 Preparing the sample for test	1
7 Procedure	2
8 Calculation and expression of results	2
9 Report	3
<hr/>	
Table 1 — Dimensions of cylindrical container	1
Table 2 — Precision data for density of fresh concrete measurements	3
<hr/>	
Publications referred to	Inside back cover
<hr/>	

## Foreword

This Part of this British Standard, prepared under the direction of the Cement, Gypsum, Aggregates and Quarry Products Standards Committee, is a revision of clause 5 of BS 1881-2:1970. Testing in accordance with this Part of this standard will comply with ISO 6276. Together with Parts 102, 103, 104 and 106, this Part of BS 1881 supersedes BS 1881-2:1970, which is withdrawn. If other methods of determining density are used, it needs to be demonstrated that the results obtained are comparable with those obtained in the method described in this Part.

No estimate of repeatability or reproducibility is given in this Part of this British Standard. Reference should be made to BS 5497-1 for further information on the determination of repeatability and reproducibility.

A British Standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users of British Standards are responsible for their correct application.

**Compliance with a British Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.**

### Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 4, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

## 1 Scope

This Part of this British Standard describes a method for determining the density of compacted fresh concrete. The method applies to plain and air-entrained concrete, made with lightweight, normal weight or heavy aggregates having a nominal maximum size of 40 mm or less, but not to aerated concrete or very stiff concrete which cannot be compacted by vibration alone. Formulae are given for calculating the volume of concrete per batch and the cement content per cubic metre.

NOTE The titles of publications referred to in this standard are listed on inside back cover.

## 2 Definitions

For the purposes of this Part of this British Standard the definitions given in BS 5328 and BS 1881-101 apply together with the following.

### density

the mass of a quantity of compacted fresh concrete divided by its volume, expressed in kilograms per cubic metre

## 3 Apparatus

**3.1 Scales or balance.** Scales or balance capable of weighing up to 50 kg to an accuracy of 25 g or better.

The balance shall be calibrated on initial commissioning and at least annually thereafter using weights of which the accuracy can be traced to the national standard of mass. The balance shall be checked after relocation or disturbance. A certificate stating the accuracy shall be obtained from the organization carrying out the check.

**3.2 Container.** A watertight container, of sufficient rigidity to retain its shape, conforming to the dimensions specified in Table 1, made of metal not readily attacked by cement paste, having a smooth internal face, the rim machined to a plane surface, the rim and base at right angles to the axis and provided with handles.

**Table 1 — Dimensions of cylindrical container**

Nominal capacity	Inside diameter	Inside height	Minimum thickness of metal	Radius between wall and base
m <sup>3</sup>	mm	mm	mm	mm
0.01	200 ± 1.5	320 ± 1.5	4	20

**3.3 Scoop,** as described in 3.1 of BS 1881-101:1983.

**3.4 Compacting bar or vibrator.** Compacting bar made from iron or steel weighing  $1.8 \pm 0.1$  kg, at least 380 mm long and having a ramming face  $25.0 \pm 0.5$  mm square, or a vibrating hammer or table suitable for compacting the concrete in accordance with 7.2 or 7.3.

**3.5 Plasterer's steel float.**

**3.6 Straightedge,** made of steel, not less than 300 mm in length.

**3.7 Glass pipette** (if required), of known volume.

**3.8 Sampling tray,** minimum dimensions 900 mm × 900 mm × 50 mm deep of rigid construction and made from a non-absorbent material not readily attacked by cement paste.

**3.9 Square mouthed shovel,** size 2 in accordance with BS 3388.

## 4 Calibration of the container

Weigh the empty container, place it on a horizontal surface and fill with water at a temperature of  $20 \pm 5$  °C so that no meniscus is above the rim. If necessary, remove by means of a pipette, sufficient known volume of water to allow the container to be lifted and placed on the balance platform without loss of water. Weigh the container and water. Add the mass of any removed water to the mass of the water remaining in the container. Calculate the capacity of the container by dividing the mass of water, to the nearest 0.01 kg, required to fill the container, by  $1\,000 \text{ kg/m}^3$ . Express the capacity to nearest  $0.00001 \text{ m}^3$ .

Calibrate the container before initial use and at least annually thereafter.

## 5 Sampling

Obtain the sample of fresh concrete by the procedure given in BS 1881-101 or BS 1881-125. Commence the determination of the density as soon as possible after sampling.

## 6 Preparing the sample for test

Empty the sample from the container(s) onto the sampling tray. Ensure that no more than a light covering of slurry is left adhering to the container(s).

Thoroughly mix the sample by shovelling it to form a cone on the sampling tray and turning this over with the shovel to form a new cone, the operation being carried out three times. When forming the cones, deposit each shovelful of the material on the apex of the cone so that the portions which slide down the sides are distributed as evenly as possible and so that the centre of the cone is not displaced. Flatten the third cone by repeated vertical insertion of the shovel across the apex of the cone, lifting the shovel clear of the concrete after each insertion.

NOTE The following modifications to the mixing procedures may be necessary when preparing samples of very high workability concrete (e.g. superplasticized concrete) for test.

- a) *Sampling tray.* The vertical lips on the edges of the tray may have to be larger to contain the sample without spillage during mixing.
- b) *Mixing the sample.* The coning procedure is not suitable for very high workability concrete and the following alternative method of mixing is recommended. Having poured the concrete onto the sampling tray, use the shovel to turn the concrete from the outside toward the centre, working progressively once round all sides of the sampling tray.

CAUTION. When cement is mixed with water, alkali is released. Take precautions to avoid dry cement entering the eyes, mouth and nose when mixing concrete. Prevent skin contact with wet cement or concrete by wearing suitable protective clothing. If cement or concrete enters the eye, immediately wash it out thoroughly with clean water and seek medical treatment without delay. Wash wet concrete off the skin immediately.

## 7 Procedure

**7.1 General.** Fill the container with concrete in such a way as to remove as much entrapped air as possible (without significantly reducing the amount of entrained air, if present) and to produce full compaction of the concrete with neither excessive segregation nor laitance. For this purpose, by means of the scoop, place the concrete in the container in six layers approximately equal in depth and compact each layer by using either the compacting bar or the vibrator in the manner described in **7.2** or **7.3**. After the top layer has been compacted, smooth it level with the top of the container, using the plasterer's float, skim the surface with the straightedge and wipe clean the outside of the container. Weigh the container and its contents to the nearest 10 g, and by subtracting the mass of the empty container calculate and record the mass of the fully-compacted concrete to the nearest 10 g.

**7.2 Compacting with compacting bar.** When compacting each layer with the compacting bar, distribute the strokes of the compacting bar in a uniform manner over the cross section of the container, and ensure that the compacting bar does not penetrate significantly any previous layer nor forcibly strike the bottom of the container when compacting the first layer. The number of strokes per layer required to produce full compaction will depend upon the workability of the concrete but in no case shall the concrete be subjected to fewer than 60 strokes per layer. Record the number of strokes.

**7.3 Compacting with vibrator.** When compacting each layer by means of the vibrating hammer or table use applied vibration of the minimum duration necessary to achieve full compaction of the concrete. Over-vibration may cause excessive segregation and laitance or loss of entrained air, if present. The required duration of vibration will depend upon the workability of the concrete and the effectiveness of the vibrator and vibration shall cease as soon as the surface of the concrete becomes relatively smooth and has a glazed appearance. Record the duration of vibration.

## 8 Calculation and expression of results

**8.1 Calculation of density.** Calculate the density,  $D$ , (in  $\text{kg/m}^3$ ) from the formula:

$$D = \frac{m}{V}$$

where:

$m$  is the mass of the concrete sample in the container (in kg);

$V$  is the capacity of the container (in  $\text{m}^3$ ).

Express the result to the nearest  $10 \text{ kg/m}^3$ .

**8.2 Precision.** Precision data are given in Table 2. These apply to density measurements made on concrete taken from the same sample and when each test result is obtained a single density determination.

**Table 2 — Precision data for density of fresh concrete measurements**

Range	Repeatability conditions		Reproducibility conditions	
	$s_r$	$r$	$s_R$	$R$
kg/m <sup>3</sup>	kg/m <sup>3</sup>	kg/m <sup>3</sup>	kg/m <sup>3</sup>	kg/m <sup>3</sup>
2 300 to 2 400	5.5	15	10.2	29

NOTE 1 The precision data were determined as part of an experiment carried out in 1987 in which precision data were obtained for several of the tests described in BS 1881. The experiment involved 16 operators. The concretes were made using an ordinary Portland cement, Thames Valley sand, and Thames Valley 10 mm and 20 mm coarse aggregates.

NOTE 2 The difference between two test results from the same sample by one operator using the same apparatus within the shortest feasible time interval will exceed the repeatability value  $r$  on average not more than once in 20 cases in the normal and correct operation of the method.

NOTE 3 Test results on the same sample obtained within the shortest feasible time interval by two operators each using their own apparatus will differ by the reproducibility value  $R$  on average not more than once in 20 cases in the normal and correct operation of the method.

NOTE 4 For further information on precision, and for definitions of the statistical terms used in connection with precision, see BS 5497-1.

**8.3 Calculation of volume of concrete per batch.** If the volume of concrete produced per batch,  $V_b$ , is required, calculate it (in m<sup>3</sup>) from the formula:

$$V_b = \frac{m_c + m_s + m_a + m_w}{D}$$

where:

- $m_a$  is the mass per batch of coarse aggregate in condition used (in kg);
- $m_c$  is the mass per batch of cement (in kg);
- $m_s$  is the mass per batch of fine aggregate in condition used (in kg);
- $m_w$  is the mass of mixing water added to batch (in kg);
- $D$  is the density of fully-compacted fresh concrete (in kg/m<sup>3</sup>).

Express the result to an accuracy of 1 %.

**8.4 Calculation of cement content.** If the cement content,  $C$ , (in kg/m<sup>3</sup>) of the fresh concrete is required, calculate it from the formula (see 8.2 for definition of symbols):

$$C = \frac{m_c}{V_b} \text{ or } C = \frac{D m_c}{m_c + m_s + m_a + m_w}$$

Express the result to the nearest 5 kg/m<sup>3</sup>.

## 9 Report

**9.1 General.** The report shall affirm that the density was determined in accordance with this Part of this British Standard. The report shall also state whether or not a certificate of sampling is available. If available a copy of the certificate shall be provided.

### 9.2 Information to be included in the report

**9.2.1 Mandatory information.** The following information shall be included in the test report:

- a) date, time and place of sampling and sample identity number;
- b) time and place of test;
- c) capacity of container and date of latest calibration;
- d) method of compaction (hand or vibration) including type of equipment used, the number of strokes of the compacting bar or the duration of vibration;
- e) density of compacted sample;
- f) name of person carrying out test.

**9.2.2 Optional information.** If requested the following information shall be included in the test report:

- a) name of project and place where concrete was used;
- b) name of supplier and source of concrete;
- c) date and time of production of concrete or delivery to site;
- d) specification of concrete mix (e.g. strength grade and nominal air content);
- e) workability of the concrete;
- f) volume of concrete per batch;
- g) cement content of the concrete.



---

## Publications referred to

BS 1881, *Testing concrete*.

BS 1881-101, *Sampling fresh concrete on site*.

BS 1881-102, *Method for determination of slump*<sup>1)</sup>.

BS 1881-103, *Method for determination of compacting factor*<sup>1)</sup>.

BS 1881-104, *Method for determination of Vebe time*<sup>1)</sup>.

BS 1881-106, *Methods for determination of air content of fresh concrete*<sup>1)</sup>.

BS 1881-125, *Methods for mixing and sampling fresh concrete in the laboratory*.

BS 3388, *Forks, shovels and spades*.

BS 5328, *Methods for specifying concrete, including ready-mixed concrete*.

BS 5497, *Precision of test methods*<sup>1)</sup>.

BS 5497-1, *Guide for the determination of repeatability and reproducibility for a standard test method*<sup>1)</sup>.

ISO 6276, *Concrete, compacted fresh — Determination of density*.

---

<sup>1)</sup> Referred to in the foreword only.

---

# BSI — British Standards Institution

BSI is the independent national body responsible for preparing British Standards. It presents the UK view on standards in Europe and at the international level. It is incorporated by Royal Charter.

## Revisions

British Standards are updated by amendment or revision. Users of British Standards should make sure that they possess the latest amendments or editions.

It is the constant aim of BSI to improve the quality of our products and services. We would be grateful if anyone finding an inaccuracy or ambiguity while using this British Standard would inform the Secretary of the technical committee responsible, the identity of which can be found on the inside front cover. Tel: 020 8996 9000. Fax: 020 8996 7400.

BSI offers members an individual updating service called PLUS which ensures that subscribers automatically receive the latest editions of standards.

## Buying standards

Orders for all BSI, international and foreign standards publications should be addressed to Customer Services. Tel: 020 8996 9001. Fax: 020 8996 7001.

In response to orders for international standards, it is BSI policy to supply the BSI implementation of those that have been published as British Standards, unless otherwise requested.

## Information on standards

BSI provides a wide range of information on national, European and international standards through its Library and its Technical Help to Exporters Service. Various BSI electronic information services are also available which give details on all its products and services. Contact the Information Centre. Tel: 020 8996 7111. Fax: 020 8996 7048.

Subscribing members of BSI are kept up to date with standards developments and receive substantial discounts on the purchase price of standards. For details of these and other benefits contact Membership Administration. Tel: 020 8996 7002. Fax: 020 8996 7001.

## Copyright

Copyright subsists in all BSI publications. BSI also holds the copyright, in the UK, of the publications of the international standardization bodies. Except as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 no extract may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise – without prior written permission from BSI.

This does not preclude the free use, in the course of implementing the standard, of necessary details such as symbols, and size, type or grade designations. If these details are to be used for any other purpose than implementation then the prior written permission of BSI must be obtained.

If permission is granted, the terms may include royalty payments or a licensing agreement. Details and advice can be obtained from the Copyright Manager. Tel: 020 8996 7070.