



DESIGNATING MATERIAL THICKNESSES

in Steel and Stainless Steel

Designating Material Thicknesses

There are some odd habits that have developed over the years and throughout the trade of Metal Fabrication, including the system utilized to measure the thickness of the most common metals. When referring to steels and stainless steels it is common to refer to a “Gauge” (also spelled Gage) thickness but only up to 10 Gage (although the charts actually go down further) and then reference is made fractionally thereafter. These “GAGES” of steel are references used for the thickness of Steel and Stainless Steel but NEVER refer to Aluminum thicknesses which are always referred to in decimal or fractional form (although charts exist giving them a “Gage” designation).

When discussing sheet material thicknesses a phrase that includes:

”Oh-Eighty” or “One Twenty-Five Thick” will always be a reference to Aluminum as designation of a gage value to aluminum has yet to make it into the shop vocabulary. Each Gage value represents a certain thickness of material it must be understood that it actually represents an acceptable “range” and that range can vary between cold rolled and hot rolled steel.

Below is a chart showing the gages of Steel and Stainless Steel as well as the allowable deviation tolerance from the nominal thickness. Feel free to print out the chart for your future reference.

Hot & Cold Rolled Steel Sheets

Guage Number	Manufacturers' Standard Inches	Hot Rolled	Cold Rolled	Guage Number	Manufacturers' Standard Inches	Hot Rolled	Cold Rolled
3	0.2391	± 0.009	N/A	17	0.2242	N/A	± 0.004
4	0.2242	± 0.009	N/A	18	0.0478	N/A	± 0.004
5	0.2092	± 0.009	N/A	19	0.0418	N/A	± 0.004
6	0.1943	± 0.009	N/A	20	0.0359	N/A	± 0.003
7	0.1793	± 0.008	N/A	21	0.0329	N/A	± 0.003
8	0.1644	± 0.008	N/A	22	0.0299	N/A	± 0.003
9	0.1495	± 0.008	N/A	23	0.0269	N/A	± 0.003
10	0.1345	± 0.008	± 0.006	24	0.0239	N/A	± 0.003
11	0.1196	± 0.008	± 0.006	25	0.0209	N/A	± 0.003
12	0.1046	± 0.008	± 0.006	26	0.0179	N/A	± 0.002
13	0.0897	± 0.007	± 0.005	27	0.0164	N/A	± 0.002
14	0.0747	± 0.007	± 0.005	28	0.0149	N/A	± 0.002
15	0.0673	± 0.007	± 0.005	29	0.0135	N/A	± 0.002
16	0.0598	± 0.006	± 0.005	30	0.0120	N/A	± 0.002

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