

Preface

This is the book I never wanted to write, but always wanted to own. As a metallurgical engineer and long time user of steel standards, author of the four CASTI Metals Data Books, and member of ASTM A01 and B02 standard committees, I knew all too well the many pitfalls and challenges of writing such a handbook. There were many steel standards from around the world that were new to me, which created far too many surprises and delays in completing this book.

Comparing steel standards is not an exact science, so the biggest challenge of preparing such a book was deciding on the "rules of comparison." Of the similar books on the market today, none explain in detail why one steel is comparable to another. They simply appear together in a list of steels. I kept a daily diary to help construct a workable set of comparison rules that I could share with other users to assist them in understanding how and why one steel is comparable to another.

To say the least, these rules changed from chapter to chapter while the book was being written. It wasn't until the last chapter and appendix were completed that I was able to finalize the rules of comparison. In the end, a complete review of the book was performed resulting in the reorganization of some chapters and the fine-tuning of others. There were too many occasions when I thought the book was finished, only to have to change, add, or delete a rule which made yet another review of the book necessary.

After more than two years of researching steel standards and gathering data from around the world for the 2nd and 3rd editions of this handbook, then developing a comparison order to more than 100,000 pieces of data, this handbook is an ongoing and expanding project. The addition of a fully searchable e-book on CD-ROM makes this product even more valuable, since trying to find one piece of data in more than 100,000 is not an easy task. The e-book makes searching for a comparable steel a quick and easy process. In some cases, the user may find out that the steel is non-comparable.

I hope you enjoy using this handbook as much as I will. Tie a chain to it and anchor it to your desk, because once others see it, they'll want to use your copy. I am interested in your comments and suggestions to improve this handbook, so I encourage you to send your feedback directly to ASTM.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction to Comparing World Steel Standards	1
Myth and Methodology When Comparing Steel Standards	1
Comparative and Closest Match	2
Organization	5
Definition and Steel Terms	5
Cautionary Note	7
Questions Regarding the Rules of Comparison	8
Non-Comparable Steels	8
Criteria for Comparing Steels	8
List of Comparison Rules	10
Brief Introduction to Steel Standards and Designation Systems	12
ASTM Designation System	12
ASTM Reference Standards and Supplementary Requirements	13
SAE Designation System and Discontinued AISI Designation System	14
Carbon and Alloy Steels	14
UNS Designation System	15
Canadian Standards Association (CSA)	16
Introduction to European Standard Steel Designation System	17
EN 10027 Standard Designation System for Steels	18
Steel Names	18
Steel Numbers	18
Former National Standards Replaced by CEN Standards	19
2. Carbon and Alloy Steels for General Use	21
2.1 Chemical Composition of Carbon Steels for General Use	23
2.2 Chemical Composition of High Manganese Carbon Steels for General Use	34
2.3 Chemical Composition of Alloy Steels for General Use	35
2.3.1 Chromium (Cr) Steels	35
2.3.2 Chromium-Molybdenum (Cr-Mo) Steels	37
2.3.3 Chromium-Nickel (Cr-Ni) Steels	38
2.3.4 Nickel-Chromium-Molybdenum (Ni-Cr-Mo) Steels	39
2.3.5 Chromium-Molybdenum-Aluminum (Cr-Mo-Al) Steels	40
2.3.6 Boron (B) Steels	41
2.3.7 Chromium-Vanadium (Cr-V) Steels	42
2.4 Non-Comparable Carbon and Alloy Steels for General Use	43
3. Structural Steel Plates	47
3.1 Carbon Steels for Structural Steel Plates	50
3.1A Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steels for Structural Steel Plates	50
3.1B Chemical Composition of Carbon Steels for Structural Steel Plates	66
3.2 Alloy Steels for Structural Steel Plates	72
3.2.1A Mechanical Properties of High-Strength Low-Alloy Structural Steel Plates	73
3.2.1B Chemical Composition of High-Strength Low-Alloy Structural Steel Plates	75
3.2.2A Mechanical Properties of Alloy Steels for Structural Steel Plates	79
3.2.2B Chemical Composition of Alloy Steels for Structural Steel Plates	84
3.3 Structural Steels with Improved Atmospheric Corrosion-Resistance	88
3.3A Mechanical Properties of Structural Steels with Improved Atmospheric Corrosion-Resistance	88
3.3B Chemical Composition of Structural Steels with Improved Atmospheric Corrosion-Resistance	94

3.4	Non-Comparable Carbon Steels for Structural Steel Plates.....	97
3.5	Non-Comparable Alloy Steels for Structural Steel Plates.....	98
4.	Pressure Vessel Steel Plates	99
4.1	Carbon Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	103
4.1A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Pressure Vessel Plates.....	103
4.1B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Pressure Vessel Plates	109
4.2	Carbon Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates - With Impact Testing Below -20°C	113
4.2A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates - With Impact Testing Below -20°C	113
4.2B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates - With Impact Testing Below -20°C	115
4.3	½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	117
4.3A	Chemical Composition of ½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	117
4.3B	Mechanical Properties of ½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	119
4.4	Cr-Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	121
4.4.1A	Chemical Composition of ¾Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	121
4.4.1B	Mechanical Properties of ¾Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	121
4.4.2A	Chemical Composition of 1Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	122
4.4.2B	Mechanical Properties of 1Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	122
4.4.3A	Chemical Composition of 1¼Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	123
4.4.3B	Mechanical Properties of 1¼Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	123
4.4.4A	Chemical Composition of 2¼Cr-1Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	124
4.4.4B	Mechanical Properties of 2¼Cr-1Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	125
4.4.5A	Chemical Composition of 3Cr-1Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	126
4.4.5B	Mechanical Properties of 3Cr-1Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	126
4.4.6A	Chemical Composition of 5Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	127
4.4.6B	Mechanical Properties of 5Cr-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	127
4.4.7A	Chemical Composition of 9Cr-1Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	128
4.4.7B	Mechanical Properties of 9Cr-1Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	128
4.5	Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	129
4.5.1A	Chemical Composition of ½Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	129
4.5.1B	Mechanical Properties of ½Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	129
4.5.2A	Chemical Composition of 1½Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	130
4.5.2B	Mechanical Properties of 1½Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	130
4.5.3A	Chemical Composition of 2¼Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	131
4.5.3B	Mechanical Properties of 2¼Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	131
4.5.4A	Chemical Composition of 3½Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	132
4.5.4B	Mechanical Properties of 3½Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	133
4.5.5A	Chemical Composition of 5Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	134
4.5.5B	Mechanical Properties of 5Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	134
4.5.6A	Chemical Composition of 9Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	135
4.5.6B	Mechanical Properties of 9Ni Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	136
4.6	Ni-Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	137
4.6.1A	Chemical Composition of ½Ni-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	137
4.6.1B	Mechanical Properties of ½Ni-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	138
4.6.2A	Chemical Composition of ¾Ni-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates.....	139
4.6.2B	Mechanical Properties of ¾Ni-½Mo Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	140
4.7	Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	141
4.7A	Chemical Composition of Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	141
4.7B	Mechanical Properties of Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	142

4.8	Austenitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	143
4.8A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	143
4.8B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	146
4.9	Duplex Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	151
4.9A	Chemical Composition of Duplex (Ferritic-Austenitic) Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	151
4.9B	Mechanical Properties of Duplex (Ferritic-Austenitic) Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	152
4.10	Non-Comparable Carbon and Alloy Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	153
4.11	Non-Comparable Stainless Steels for Pressure Vessel Plates	156
5.	Steel Tubes and Pipes	157
5.1	Carbon Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	165
5.1A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	165
5.1B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	176
5.2	Alloy Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	185
5.2A	Chemical Composition of Alloy Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	185
5.2B	Mechanical Properties of Alloy Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	186
5.3	Stainless Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	188
5.3.1A	Chemical Composition of Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	188
5.3.1B	Mechanical Properties of Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	189
5.3.2A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	190
5.3.2B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	193
5.4	Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Low-Temperature Service	196
5.4A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes - With Impact Testing Below -20°C	196
5.4B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes - With Impact Testing Below -20°C	198
5.5	Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Low-Temperature Service	199
5.5A	Chemical Composition of Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Low-Temperature Service ..	199
5.5B	Mechanical Properties of Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Low-Temperature Service ..	200
5.6	Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes	202
5.6A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes	202
5.6B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes	204
5.7	Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	206
5.7A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	206
5.7B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	210
5.8	Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	213
5.8.1A	Chemical Composition of ¼Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	213
5.8.1B	Mechanical Properties of ¼Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	213
5.8.2A	Chemical Composition of ½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	214
5.8.2B	Mechanical Properties of ½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	215

5.8.3A	Chemical Composition of ½Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	216
5.8.3B	Mechanical Properties of ½Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	216
5.8.4A	Chemical Composition of 1Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	217
5.8.4B	Mechanical Properties of 1Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	218
5.8.5A	Chemical Composition of 1¼Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	219
5.8.5B	Mechanical Properties of 1¼Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	219
5.8.6A	Chemical Composition of 2¼-1Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	220
5.8.6B	Mechanical Properties of 2¼-1Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	220
5.8.7A	Chemical Composition of 5Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	221
5.8.7B	Mechanical Properties of 5Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	221
5.8.8A	Chemical Composition of 9Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	222
5.8.8B	Mechanical Properties of 9Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	222
5.9	Stainless Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes and High Temperatures	223
5.9.1A	Chemical Composition of Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes and High Temperatures	223
5.9.1B	Mechanical Properties of Ferritic and Martensitic Stainless Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes and High Temperatures	224
5.9.2A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes and High Temperatures	225
5.9.2B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes and High Temperatures	234
5.10	Line Pipe Steels	246
5.10.1A	Mechanical Properties of Line Pipe Steels Without Notch Toughness Requirements ...	246
5.10.1B	Chemical Composition of Line Pipe Steels Without Notch Toughness Requirements...	247
5.10.2A	Mechanical Properties of Line Pipe Steels With Notch Toughness Requirements	250
5.10.2B	Chemical Composition of Line Pipe Steels With Notch Toughness Requirements.....	253
5.11	Non-Comparable Carbon Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	257
5.12	Non-Comparable Alloy Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	258
5.13	Non-Comparable Stainless Steel Tubes for General and Structural Applications	259
5.14	Non-Comparable Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Low Temperature Service.....	259
5.15	Non-Comparable Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Low Temperature Service.....	260
5.16	Non-Comparable Carbon Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	260
5.17	Non-Comparable Alloy Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures ..	261
5.18	Non-Comparable Stainless Steel Tubes and Pipes for Pressure Purposes and High Temperatures	262
5.19	Non-Comparable Line Pipe Steels.....	263
6.	Steel Forgings	265
6.1	Carbon Steel Forgings	268
6.1.1A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Forgings for General Use.....	268
6.1.1B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Forgings for General Use	271

6.1.2A	Mechanical Properties of Carbon Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	272
6.1.2B	Chemical Composition of Carbon Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	275
6.2	Alloy Steel Forgings	277
6.2.1A	Chemical Composition of 1¼Cr-¼Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for General Use	277
6.2.1B	Mechanical Properties of 1¼Cr-¼Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for General Use.....	278
6.2.2	Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	279
6.2.2.1A	Chemical Composition of Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	279
6.2.2.1B	Mechanical Properties of Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	279
6.2.2.2A	Chemical Composition of ½Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	280
6.2.2.2B	Mechanical Properties of ½Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	280
6.2.2.3A	Chemical Composition of 1Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	281
6.2.2.3B	Mechanical Properties 1Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	281
6.2.2.4A	Chemical Composition of 1¼Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	282
6.2.2.4B	Mechanical Properties 1¼Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	282
6.2.2.5A	Chemical Composition of 2¼Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	283
6.2.2.5B	Mechanical Properties of 2¼Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	284
6.2.2.6A	Chemical Composition of 3Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	285
6.2.2.6B	Mechanical Properties of 3Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	285
6.2.2.7A	Chemical Composition of 5Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	286
6.2.2.7B	Mechanical Properties of 5Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	286
6.2.2.8A	Chemical Composition of 9Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	287
6.2.2.8B	Mechanical Properties of 9Cr-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	287
6.2.2.9A	Chemical Composition of 11Cr-½Ni-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	288
6.2.2.9B	Mechanical Properties of 11Cr-½Ni-1Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components.....	288
6.2.2.10A	Chemical Composition of Ni Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	289
6.2.2.10B	Mechanical Properties of Ni Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	290
6.2.2.11A	Chemical Composition of Ni-Mn Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	291
6.2.2.11B	Mechanical Properties of Ni-Mn Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	291

6.2.2.12A	Chemical Composition of C\Ni-½Cr-Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	292
6.2.2.12B	Mechanical Properties of C\Ni-½Cr-Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	292
6.2.2.13A	Chemical Composition of C\Ni-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	293
6.2.2.13B	Mechanical Properties of C\Ni-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	293
6.2.2.14A	Chemical Composition ¾Ni-1C\Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	294
6.2.2.14B	Mechanical Properties ¾Ni-1C\Cr-½Mo Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	294
6.3	Stainless Steel Forgings	295
6.3.1A	Chemical Composition of Martensitic Stainless Steel Forgings	295
6.3.1B	Mechanical Properties of Martensitic Stainless Steel Forgings	296
6.3.2A	Chemical Composition of Ferritic Stainless Steel Forgings	297
6.3.2B	Mechanical Properties of Ferritic Stainless Steel Forgings	297
6.3.3A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steel Forgings	298
6.3.3B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steel Forgings	302
6.3.4A	Chemical Composition of Precipitation-Hardening Stainless Steel Forgings	307
6.3.4B	Mechanical Properties of Precipitation-Hardening Stainless Steel Forgings	308
6.3.5A	Chemical Composition of Duplex (Ferritic-Austenitic) Stainless Steel Forgings	309
6.3.5B	Mechanical Properties of Duplex (Ferritic-Austenitic) Stainless Steel Forgings	310
6.4	Non-Comparable Carbon Steel Forgings for General Use	311
6.5	Non-Comparable Carbon Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	311
6.6	Non-Comparable Alloy Steel Forgings for General Use	311
6.7	Non-Comparable Alloy Steel Forgings for Piping, Pressure Vessel and Components	312
6.8	Non-Comparable Stainless Steel Forgings	313
7.	Steel Castings	315
7.1	Cast Carbon Steels	319
7.1.1A	Mechanical Properties of Cast Carbon Steel for General and Structural Applications ..	319
7.1.1B	Chemical Composition of Cast Carbon Steel for General and Structural Applications ..	323
7.1.2A	Mechanical Properties of Cast Carbon Steel for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	326
7.1.2B	Chemical Composition of Cast Carbon Steel for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	326
7.1.3A	Mechanical Properties of Cast Carbon Steel for Pressure Purposes at Low Temperatures	327
7.1.3B	Chemical Composition of Cast Carbon Steel for Pressure Purposes at Low Temperatures	327
7.2	Cast Manganese Steels	328
7.2A	Chemical Composition of Cast Manganese Steels	328
7.2B	Mechanical Properties of Cast Manganese Steels	329
7.3	Cast Alloy Steels	330
7.3.1A	Chemical Composition of Cast Alloy Steels for General and Structural Purposes	330
7.3.1B	Mechanical Properties of Cast Alloy Steels for General and Structural Purposes	331
7.3.2A	Chemical Composition of Cast Alloy Steels for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	335
7.3.2B	Mechanical Properties of Cast Alloy Steels for Pressure Purposes at High Temperatures	336
7.3.3A	Chemical composition of Cast Alloy Steels for Pressure Purposes at Low Temperatures	337
7.3.3B	Mechanical Properties of Cast Alloy Steels for Pressure Purposes at Low Temperatures	338

7.4	Cast Stainless Steels	339
7.4.1	Cast Stainless Steels for General and Corrosion Resistant Applications.....	339
7.4.1.1A	Chemical Composition of Martensitic and Ferritic Stainless Steels for General and Corrosion Resistant Applications	339
7.4.1.1B	Mechanical Properties of Martensitic and Ferritic Stainless Steels for General and Corrosion Resistant Applications	340
7.4.1.2A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steels for General and Corrosion Resistant Applications	341
7.4.1.2B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steels for General and Corrosion Resistant Applications	344
7.4.2	Cast Stainless Steels for Pressure Purposes	347
7.4.2.1A	Chemical Composition of Martensitic and Ferritic Stainless Steels for Pressure Purposes.....	347
7.4.2.1B	Mechanical Properties of Martensitic and Ferritic Stainless Steels for Pressure Purposes.....	348
7.4.2.2A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Purposes .	349
7.4.2.2B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steels for Pressure Purposes .	350
7.5	Cast Heat Resistant Steels	351
7.5A	Chemical Composition of Cast Heat Resistant Steels.....	351
7.5B	Mechanical Properties of Cast Heat Resistant Steels	355
7.6	Non-Comparable Cast Carbon Steels	359
7.7	Non-Comparable Cast Manganese Steels	360
7.8	Non-Comparable Cast Alloy Steels	360
7.9	Non-Comparable Cast Stainless Steels for General and Corrosion Resistant Applications.....	361
7.10	Non-Comparable Cast Stainless Steels for Pressure Purposes.....	361
7.11	Non-Comparable Cast Heat Resistant Steels.....	362
8.	Wrought Stainless Steels	363
8.1	Stainless Steels: Plate, Sheet and Strip	366
8.1.1A	Chemical Composition of Martensitic Stainless Steels.....	366
8.1.1B	Mechanical Properties of Martensitic Stainless Steels	367
8.1.2A	Chemical Composition of Ferritic Stainless Steels	368
8.1.2B	Mechanical Properties of Ferritic Stainless Steels.....	370
8.1.3A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steels.....	372
8.1.3B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steels	377
8.1.4A	Chemical Composition of Precipitation-Hardening Stainless Steels	387
8.1.4B	Mechanical Properties of Precipitation-Hardening Stainless Steels.....	388
8.1.5A	Chemical Composition of Duplex (Ferritic-Austenitic) Stainless Steels.....	392
8.1.5B	Mechanical Properties of Duplex (Ferritic-Austenitic) Stainless Steels	393
8.2	Stainless Steels: Bar	394
8.2.1A	Chemical Composition of Martensitic Stainless Steels.....	394
8.2.1B	Mechanical Properties of Martensitic Stainless Steels	396
8.2.2A	Chemical Composition of Ferritic Stainless Steels	398
8.2.2B	Mechanical Properties of Ferritic Stainless Steels.....	399
8.2.3A	Chemical Composition of Austenitic Stainless Steels.....	400
8.2.3B	Mechanical Properties of Austenitic Stainless Steels	403
8.2.4A	Chemical Composition of Precipitation-Hardening Stainless Steels	409
8.2.4B	Mechanical Properties of Precipitation-Hardening Stainless Steels.....	410
8.2.5A	Chemical Composition of Duplex Stainless Steels	412
8.2.5B	Mechanical Properties of Duplex Stainless Steels	412
8.3	Non-Comparable Stainless Steel Standards: Plate, Sheet and Strip	413
8.4	Non-Comparable Stainless Steel Standards: Bar.....	415

9. Steels for Special Use.....	417
9.1 Free-Machining Steels	420
9.1.1 Chemical Composition of Resulfurized Carbon Steels for Free-Machining Applications.....	420
9.1.2 Chemical Composition of Rephosphorized and Resulfurized Carbon Steels for Free-Machining Applications.....	422
9.1.3 Chemical Composition of Resulfurized and Leaded Carbon Steels for Free-Machining Applications.....	423
9.1.4 Chemical Composition of Rephosphorized, Resulfurized, and Leaded Carbon Steels for Free-Machining Applications	424
9.1.5 Chemical Composition of Free-Machining Stainless Steels	424
9.2 Spring Steels.....	425
9.2.1 Chemical Composition of Cold Rolled Carbon Spring Steels.....	426
9.2.2 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Alloy Spring Steels.....	427
9.2.2.1 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Si Alloy Spring Steels.....	427
9.2.2.2 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Cr Alloy Spring Steels	427
9.2.2.3 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Cr-Si Alloy Spring Steels.....	427
9.2.2.4 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Cr-Mo Alloy Spring Steels	428
9.2.2.5 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Cr-V Alloy Spring Steels.....	428
9.2.2.6 Chemical Composition of Hot Rolled Cr-B Alloy Spring Steels.....	428
9.2.3 Chemical Composition of Stainless Spring Steels	429
9.3 Tool Steels	430
9.3.1 Chemical Composition of Carbon Tool Steels	430
9.3.2 Chemical Composition of High-Speed Tool Steels.....	431
9.3.2.1 Chemical Composition of Tungsten Type High Speed Tool Steels	431
9.3.2.2 Chemical Composition of Molybdenum Type High Speed Tool Steels	432
9.3.3 Chemical Composition of Cold Work Tool Steels	433
9.3.4 Chemical Composition of Hot Work Tool Steels.....	434
9.3.5 Chemical Composition of Special Purpose Tool Steels.....	434
9.4 Bearing Steels.....	435
9.4.1 Chemical Composition of Bearing Steels.....	435
9.5 Non-Comparable Free-Machining Steels.....	436
9.6 Non-Comparable Spring Steels	437
9.7 Non-Comparable Tool Steels.....	438
9.8 Non-Comparable Bearing Steels	439
 Appendix 1 - ASTM Ferrous Metal Standards	 441
Appendix 2 - ASTM Discontinued Ferrous Metal Standards	457
Appendix 3 - JIS Steel and Related Standards	469
Appendix 4 - JIS Discontinued Steel and Related Standards	475
Appendix 5 - CEN Current Steel Standards.....	479
Appendix 6 - CEN Standards with Superseded Former National Standards	485
Appendix 7 - Former National Standards Superseded by CEN Standards.....	503
Appendix 8 - ISO Iron and Steel Product Standards	523
Appendix 9 - ASTM A 941-03 Terminology Relating to Steel, Stainless Steel, Related Alloys, and Ferroalloys.....	531

Appendix 10 - ASTM E 527–83 (2003) Numbering Metals and Alloys (UNS).....	539
Appendix 11 - SI Quick Reference Guide	547
Steel Grade/Name Index	553
UNS Number Index.....	601
Steel Number Index.....	609
Specification Designation Index.....	617