

ALUMINUM – THE MOST COMMON GRADES

1100 This grade is commercially pure aluminum. It is soft and ductile and has excellent workability. It is ideal for applications involving intricate forming because it work hardens more slowly than other alloys. It is the most weldable of aluminum alloys, by any method. It is non heat-treatable. It has excellent resistance to corrosion and is widely used in the chemical and food processing industries. It responds well to decorative finishes which make it suitable for giftware.

2011 This is the most free-machining of the common aluminum alloys. It also has excellent mechanical properties. Thus, it is widely used for automatic screw machine products in parts requiring extensive machining.

2014 & 2017 The 2017 alloy combines excellent machinability and high strength with the result that it is one of the most widely used alloys for automatic screw machine work. It is a tough, ductile alloy suitable for heavy-duty structural parts. Its strength is slightly less than that of 2014.

2024 This is one of the best known of the high strength aluminum alloys. With its high strength and excellent fatigue resistance, it is used to advantage on structures and parts where good strength-to-weight ratio is desired. It is readily machined to a high finish. It is readily formed in the annealed condition and may be subsequently heat treated. Arc or gas welding is generally not recommended, although this alloy may be spot, seam or flash welded. Since corrosion resistance is relatively low, 2024 is commonly used with an anodized finish or in clad form ("Alclad") with a thin surface layer of high purity aluminum. Applications: aircraft structural components, aircraft fittings, hardware, truck wheels and parts for the transportation industry.

3003 This is the most widely used of all aluminum alloys. It is essentially commercially pure aluminum with the addition of manganese which increases the strength some 20% over the 1100 grade. Thus, it has all the excellent characteristics of 1100 with higher strength. It has excellent corrosion resistance. It has excellent workability and it may be deep drawn or spun, welded or brazed. It is non heat treatable. Applications: cooking utensils, decorative trim, awnings, siding, storage tanks, chemical equipment.

5005 This alloy is generally considered to be an improved version of 3003. It has the same general mechanical properties as 3003 but appears to stand up better in actual service. It is readily workable. It can be deep drawn or spun, welded or brazed. It has excellent corrosion resistance. It is non heat-treatable. It is well suited for anodizing and has less tendency to streak or discolor. Applications same as 3003.

5052 This is the highest strength alloy of the more common non heat-treatable grades. Fatigue strength is higher than most aluminum alloys. In addition this grade has particularly good resistance to marine atmosphere and salt water corrosion. It has excellent workability. It may be drawn or formed into intricate shapes and its slightly greater strength in the annealed condition minimizes tearing that occurs in 1100 and 3003. Applications: Used in a wide variety of applications from aircraft components to home appliances, marine and transportation industry parts, heavy duty cooking utensils and equipment for bulk processing of food.

5083 & 5086 For many years there has been a need for aluminum sheet and plate alloys that would offer, for high strength welded applications, several distinct benefits over such alloys as 5052 and 6061. Some of the benefits fabricators have been seeking are greater design efficiency, better welding characteristics, good forming properties, excellent resistance to corrosion and the same economy as in other non heat-treatable alloys. Metallurgical research has developed 5083 and 5086 as superior weldable alloys which fill these needs. Both alloys have virtually the same characteristics with 5083 having slightly higher mechanical properties due to the increased manganese content over 5086. Applications: unfired pressure vessels, missile containers, heavy-duty truck and trailer assemblies, boat hulls and superstructures.

6061 This is the least expensive and most versatile of the heat-treatable aluminum alloys. It has most of the good qualities of aluminum. It offers a range of good mechanical properties and good corrosion resistance. It can be fabricated by most of the commonly used techniques. In the annealed condition it has good workability. In the T4 condition fairly severe forming operations may be accomplished. The full T6 properties may be obtained by artificial aging. It is welded by all methods and can be furnace brazed. It is available in the clad form ("Alclad") with a thin surface layer of high purity aluminum to improve both appearance and corrosion resistance. Applications: This grade is used for a wide variety of products and applications from truck bodies and frames to screw machine parts and structural components. 6061 is used where appearance and better corrosion resistance with good strength are required.

6063 This grade is commonly referred to as the architectural alloy. It was developed as an extrusion alloy with relatively high tensile properties, excellent finishing characteristics and a high degree of resistance to corrosion. This alloy is most often found in various interior and exterior architectural applications, such as windows, doors, store fronts and assorted trim items. It is the alloy best suited for anodizing applications - either plain or in a variety of colors.

7075 This is one of the highest strength aluminum alloys available. Its strength-to weight ratio is excellent and it is ideally used for highly stressed parts. It may be formed in the annealed condition and subsequently heat treated. Spot or flash welding can be used, although arc and gas welding are not recommended. It is available in the clad ("Alclad") form to improve the corrosion resistance with the over-all high strength being only moderately affected. Applications: Used where highest strength is needed.

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