

RRB-JE

2024

Railway Recruitment Board
Junior Engineer Examination

Mechanical Engineering

Production Engineering

Well Illustrated **Theory** *with*
Solved Examples and **Practice Questions**



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Production Engineering

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Casting

1.1 Introduction

It generally means pouring molten metal into a refractory mould with a cavity of the shape to be made and allowing it to solidify. When Solidified, the desired metal object is taken out from the refractory mould by taking mould apart.

It is clear from the definition of the process that a successful **casting operation** needs a knowledge in the following areas:

- ❖ Preparation of moulds and patterns (used to make the mould).
- ❖ Melting and pouring of the liquefied metal
- ❖ Solidification and further cooling to room temperature
- ❖ Defects and inspection.

Advantages of Casting:

1. It is used to produce intricate shapes.
2. Both hard and soft, ductile and brittle materials can be produced.
3. Large size objects can be produced.

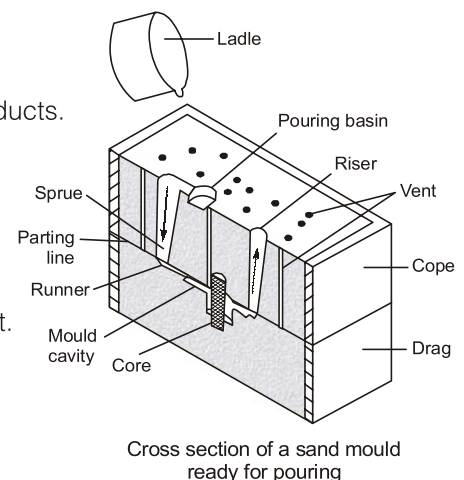
Limitations:

1. Dimensional accuracy and surface finish is poor.
2. It is laborious and time consuming process.
3. Gas defects are common in casting products.
4. There are non-uniform mechanical properties in casting products.

1.2 Casting Terms and Components

Flask:

- A **moulding flask** is one which holds the sand mould intact.
- Depending upon the position of the flask in the mould structure it is referred to by various names such as
 - ❖ Drag – lower moulding flask
 - ❖ Cope – upper moulding flask
 - ❖ Cheek – intermediate moulding flask used in three-piece moulding.
- It is made up of wood for temporary applications and more generally of metal for long-term use.



Pattern:

- **Pattern** is a replica of the final object to be made with some modification.
- The **mould cavity** is made with the help of the pattern.

Parting line:

- This is the dividing line between the two moulding flasks that makes up the sand mould.
- In **split pattern** it is also the dividing line between the halves of the pattern.

Bottom board:

- This is a board normally made of wood which is used at the start of the mould making.
- The **pattern** is first kept on the bottom board, sand is sprinkled on it and then the ramming is done in the **drag**.

Facing sand:

- The small amount of carbonaceous material sprinkled on the inner surface of moulding cavity to give a better surface finish to the casting.

Moulding sand:

- It is the freshly prepared **refractory material** used for making the mould cavity.
- It is a mixture of silica, clay and moisture in appropriate proportion to get the desired results and it surrounds the pattern while making the mould.

Core:

- It is used for making hollow cavities in **castings**.
- Core are placed in the mould to form hollow regions or otherwise define the interior surface of the castings.

Pouring basin:

- A small funnel shaped cavity at the top of the mould into which the **molten metal** is poured.

Sprue:

- The passage through which the molten metal from the **pouring basin** reaches the mould cavity.
- In many cases it controls the flow of the metal into the mould.

Runner:

- The passage ways in the parting plane through which molten metal flow.
- It regulate the flow before it reaches the **mould cavity**.

Gate:

- The actual entry point through which molten metal enters **mould cavity**.

Chaplet:

- **Chaplets** are used to support inside the **mould cavity** to take care of.
- It regulate the flow before it reaches the mould cavity.

Chill:

- Chills are metallic objects which are placed in the mould to increases the cooling rate of castings to provide uniform or desired cooling rate.

Riser:

- It is a **reservoir** of molten metal provided in the casting so that hot metal can flow back into the mould cavity when there is a reduction in volume of metal due to **solidification**.

1.2.1 Pattern Allowances

The main modification in pattern is addition of **pattern allowances**. There are five categories of pattern allowance i.e.

- (i) Shrinkage allowance
- (ii) Draft allowances
- (iii) Machining allowance
- (iv) Shake allowance
- (v) Distortion allowance

(i) Shrinkage Allowance

- The **shrinkage allowance** is provided to take care of the contractions of a casting. The total contraction of a casting takes place in three stages, and consists of
 - ❖ The contraction of the liquid from the **pouring temperature** to the **freezing temperature**.
 - ❖ The contraction associated with the change of phase from liquid to solid
 - ❖ The contraction of the solid casting from the freezing temperature to the room temperature.
- It must be noted, however that it is only the last stage of the contraction which is taken care of by **shrinkage allowance**. Obviously, the amount of shrinkage allowance depends on the linear coefficient of thermal expansion α_t of the material. The higher the value of this coefficient, the more the value of **shrinkage allowance**.
- First and second stage of shrinkage is compensated by providing riser.
- Table gives some quantitative idea about the shrinkage allowance for casting different materials.

Table 1.1 : Machining allowance for various metals

Material	Shrinkage	Machining allowance 30 - 60 cm
Cast iron	1/962.5 mm	4.5 mm
low carbon steel	1/483 mm	4.5 mm
Aluminium	3/1921.5 mm	3 mm
Bronze	3/1921.5 mm	3 mm
Brass	1/481.5 mm	3 mm

- Zinc requires maximum shrinkage allowance.
- Aluminium requires high volume of riser because liquid and solidification shrinkage (first and second stage) are maximum for aluminium.



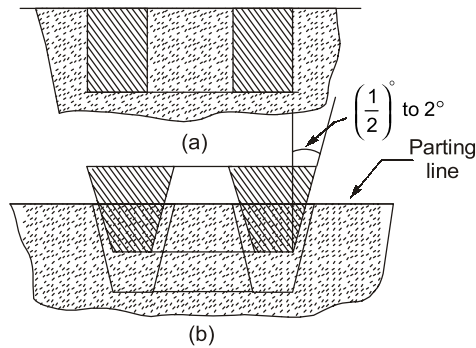
- The shrinkage allowance is always to be added to the linear dimension. Even in case of internal dimensions (e.g internal diameters of a cylinders), the material has tendency to contract towards the center and thus are to be increased.
- For grey cast iron, there is no need to provide riser because graphite (carbon) is present in H.C.P. lattice which has more volume i.e., expansion of material occurs in liquid and solidification. But there is need to provide shrinkage allowance.

- It is positive allowance i.e., extra material is used in pattern compared to required final product.

(ii) Draft Allowance

- At the time of withdrawing the pattern from the sand mould, the vertical faces of the pattern are in continual contact with the sand, which may damage the **mould cavity**, as shown in fig. To reduce the chances of this happening, the vertical faces of the pattern are always tapered from the **parting lines**. This provision is called **draft allowance**.

- It is also positive allowance.



(iii) Machining Allowance

- The finish or accuracy achieved in **sand casting** are generally poor and therefore when the casting is functionally required to be good **surface finish**, it is generally achieved by **machining**. Also, ferrous material could have scales on the skin which are to be removed by **cleaning**.
- The **machining allowance** depends on dimension the type of casting material and the finish required. This may range from 2 to 20 mm.
- It is positive allowance.

(iv) Shake Allowance

- Before withdrawal from the sand mould, the pattern is rapped all around the vertical forces to enlarge the mould cavity slightly which facilitates its removal.
- It is a negative allowance.

(v) Distortion Allowance

- A metal when it has just solidified is very weak and therefore is likely to be distortion prone. The foundry practice should be to make extra material provision for reducing the distortion.

Pattern Materials

- The usual pattern materials are wood, metals and plastics. The most common used pattern material is wood. But the most common disadvantages of wood is its absorption of moisture as a result of which distortion and dimensional changes occur.
- The choice of pattern materials depends:
 - ❖ On size of casting
 - ❖ Number of casting to be made from the pattern
 - ❖ Dimensional accuracy required.
- For very large castings, wood is preferred as pattern material.
- Because of their durability and smooth surface finish, **metal patterns** are extensively used for large scale casting production and for closer dimensional tolerances. Though many material such as cast iron, brass, etc can be used as pattern materials, aluminum and white metal are most commonly used. These are light, can be easily work, and are **corrosion resistance**. Since white metal has very small shrinkage the white metal pattern can be used for making additional patterns without worrying about the **double shrinkage allowance**. Most metal pattern are cast in sand moulds from a master wood pattern provided with the double **shrinkage allowance**.

- Plastics are also used as pattern materials because of their low weight, easier formability, smooth surface and durability. They do not absorb moisture and are therefore, dimensionally stable and can be cleaned easily. The making of a plastic pattern can be done in sand clay moulds or moulds made of plaster of paris. With a proper combination it is possible to obtain a no shrink plastic material and as such double **shrinkage allowance** may not be required.
- Wax patterns can also be used. These are commonly used in investment casting.
- Selection of pattern material depends on the size and shape of casting, dimensional accuracy, the quantity of castings required patterns are usually coated with a parting agent to facilitate their removal from the mould.
- Sand slingers fill the flask uniformly with sand under high pressure stream, throwing the sand with high speed by impeller.
- Impact moulding produces mould with uniform strength and good permeability.
- For casting of reactive metals as titanium, zirconium, rammed graphite is used to make moulds.

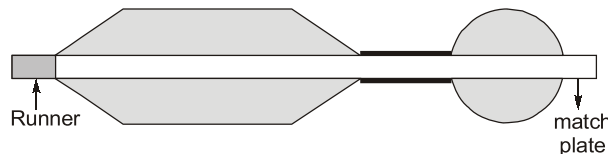
Type of Pattern

The commonly used patterns are classified as follows:

- (i) **Single piece pattern** : It is used when the job is very simple. In this method there is no withdrawal problem. It is less expensive.
- (ii) **Loose pattern**: This type of pattern used when the contour of the part is such that withdrawing the pattern from the mould is not possible. Hence during moulding the obstructing part of the contour is held as a loose piece by a wire.
- (iii) **Gated pattern**: This is simply one or more than one loose pattern with attached gates and runners and provides a channel through which the molten metal can flow from the pouring sprue to the mould cavity.

This pattern is frequently set on a follow board conforming to the **parting surface** of the mould. The follow board helps in an easy removal of the pattern after the mould has been prepared.

- (iv) **Match plate pattern**: The pattern is made in two halves mounted on both sides of a match plate (of wood or metal) conforming to the contour of the parting surface. The match plate is accurately placed between the **cope** and the **drag flasks** by means of locating pins. For small castings. Several patterns can be mounted on the same **match plate**.



- (v) **Cope and drag pattern**: Here, the cope and drag halves of a split pattern are separately mounted on two match plates. Thus, the **cope and the drag** are made separately and brought together (with accurate relative location) to produce the complete mould.
- (vi) **Sweep pattern**: Normally made of wood, it is used to generate surface of revolution in large casting, and to prepare moulds out of a pipe like material. Here, "**sweep**" refers to the section that rotates about the an edge to yield circular section.

To produce complex shape of 3-D mould cavities, 2-D patterns can be rotated on the surface of the mould. It is used to produce axisymmetric object only.

(vii) **Skeleton pattern:** This consists of a simple wooden frame outlining the shape of the casting. It is used to guide the modular for hand-shaping the mould and for large casting having simple geometrical shapes.

(viii) **Follow board pattern:** If the patterns are structurally weak then due to ramming force, there is a possibility of bending and breaking of the pattern. To overcome this, patterns are supported by providing follow boards.

1.2.2 Fundamental of Metal Casting

- The factors which affect solidification are the type of metal, thermal properties of both the metal and the mould, the geometric relationship between volume and surface area of casting and shape of the mould.
- Rapid cooling produces a solidified skin or shell of fine equiaxed grains.
- Those grains that have favorable orientation will grow preferentially and are called columnar grains.
- Solidification in alloys begins when the temperature drops below the liquids T_L , & is complete when it reaches the solidus T_S , within this temperature zone, the alloy is in mushy zone or pasty state with columnar dendrites. Freezing range = $(T_L - T_S)$.
- Cast irons casting generally have narrow mushy zones, whereas Al & Mg alloy have wide mushy zones.
- Lack of uniformity in grain size and grain distribution results in casting with anisotropic properties.
- Cored dendrites have a surface composition different from that at their centers, this difference is referred as concentration gradient.
- The inoculant (nucleating agent) induces nucleation of the grains throughout the liquid metal.
- Techniques for minimizing turbulence generally involve avoidance of sudden changes in flow direction. It causes drops.
- Drops and slag can be almost completely eliminated only by vacuum casting. Filters are also used to eliminate drops made of ceramics, mica or fiberglass.

1.3 Fluidity Properties

The capability of the molten metal to fill mould cavities is called fluidity. The following characteristic of molten metal influence fluidity:

- ❖ Mushy zone (alloy content)
- ❖ Viscosity
- ❖ Surface Tension
- ❖ Inclusions

Fluidity is measured by spiral test i.e., distance covered by the liquid metal before solidification in a standard spiral will give the value of fluidity.

Property effect on fluidity

1. Pouring temp.	(↑) ⇒ ↓ increases
2. Viscosity	(↑) ⇒ ↓ decreases
3. Density	(↑) ⇒ ↓ decreases
4. %age of water in metal	(↑) ⇒ ↓ decreases
5. Surface finish	(↑) ⇒ ↑ increases

$$\text{Fluidity} \propto \frac{1}{\text{Freezing range}} \Rightarrow \text{shorter the freezing range higher fluidity.}$$

The following casting parameters influence fluidity and also influence the fluid flow and thermal characteristic of the system.

- ❖ Mould design
- ❖ Mould material and its surface characteristic
- ❖ Degree of superheat
- ❖ Rate of pouring

With flat mould walls skin thickness is proportional to the square root of time. Doubling the time will make skin $\sqrt{2} = 1.41$ or 41% thicker.

$$\text{Thickness} \propto \sqrt{\text{Time}}$$

The solidification time is a function of the volume of a casting and its surface Area. (Chvorinov's rule).

$$\text{Solidification time} = C \left(\frac{V}{A} \right)^2$$

Example -1.1

Three metal pieces being cast have the same volume, but different shapes.

One is a sphere, one a cube and the other a cylinder with its height equal to its diameter. Which piece will solidify the fastest, and which one the slowest? Assume that $n = 2$.

Solution:

$$\text{Solidification time} \propto \left(\frac{V}{A} \right)^2 \Rightarrow t = C \left(\frac{V}{A} \right)^2$$

Take volume of the piece is taken as unity.

Sphere: $V = \left(\frac{4}{3} \right) \pi r^3, \quad r = \left(\frac{3}{4\pi} \right)^{\frac{1}{3}}$

$$A = 4\pi r^2 = 4\pi \left(\frac{3}{4\pi} \right)^{\frac{2}{3}} = 4.84$$

Cube: $V = a^3$

$$a = 1$$

and

$$A = 6a^2 = 6$$

Cylinder: $V = \pi r^2 h = 2\pi r^3$

$$r = \left(\frac{1}{2\pi} \right)^{\frac{1}{3}}$$

$$A = 2\pi r^2 + 2\pi r h = 6\pi r^2 = 6\pi \left(\frac{1}{2\pi} \right)^{\frac{2}{3}} = 5.54$$

The respective solidification times are therefore,

$$t_{\text{sphere}} = 0.043 \text{ C}$$

$$t_{\text{cube}} = 0.028 \text{ C}$$

$$t_{\text{cylinder}} = 0.033 \text{ C}$$

Hence, the cube-shaped piece will solidify the fastest and the spherical piece will solidify the slowest.

1.4 Moulding Sand

The principle constituents of moulding sands are as follows:

- Silica (SiO_2) - 86 to 90%, alumina (Al_2O_3) - 4 to 8%, Iron oxide (Fe_2O_3) - 2 to 5% and smaller amounts of oxides of Ti, Mn and La and some alkaline compounds.

Green Sand:

- When sand is in its natural more or less in moist state. It is referred to as green sand. It is a mixture of silica and 18 to 30% clay with 6 to 8% water. Green sand is generally used for casting small or medium sized moulds.

Dry Sand:

- Dry sand moulding is employed for large castings. After removing all moisture structure becomes stronger and compact.

Loam Sand:

- Loam sand contains upto 50% clay and dries hard. It also contains fire clay. It is used for casting larger regular shaped casting like, drums, large Bell etc.

Facing Sand:

- It is used directly next to the surface of the pattern and it comes into contact with the molten metal. It is made of silica sand and clay.

Backing Sand:

- The old repeatedly used moulding sand, black in colour due to addition of coal dust and burning or coming in contact with molten metal is known as backing sand. It is used to fill in the mould at the back of facing layer.

Shell Sands:

- Shell sands are synthetic sands coated with phenol or urea formaldehyde resins and cured against a heated pattern to produce very strong thin shell.

1.4.1 Properties of Moulding Sand

- Permeability:** The passage of gaseous materials, water and steam vapour through the moulding sand is related to porosity or permeability. It depends upon size of grain, shape of grain, compactness, density, moisture content.
- Plasticity:** Generally fine grained sand has better plasticity. It depends on the content of clay which absorb moisture when sand is dampened.
- Refractoriness:** It is the ability of the silica sand to withstand high heat without breaking down or fusing.
- Flowability:** It is the ability of sand to take up the desired shape.
- Green Strength:** It depend upon, grain size, shape and distribution of sand, clay, moisture content.
- Hot Strength:** After all the moisture is eliminated, the sand would reach at high temperature when the metal in the mould is still in the liquid state. The strength of the sand that is required to hold the shape of the mould cavity then, is the called Hot Strength.

Hardness:

- To minimize the erosion, and to withstand forces applied by liquid metal on the mould surface mould must have sufficient hardness.
- It is a surface property.
- Mould hardness number 0-100.
- If the hardness is more than 80 then permeability will decrease.
- If the hardness is less than 60, then dimensional stability of the mould will decrease.
- Therefore average hardness 60-80.

Cohesive property:

- Bond formation between similar materials.

Adhesive property:

- Bond formation between two different materials.

Thermal conductivity:

- There should be sufficient thermal conductivity of moulding sand.

Linear thermal coefficient:

- Low thermal coefficient is required.

Collapsibility:

- It is ability to collapse.
- Saw dust is added in the mould which will increase strength and hardness of the mould. But after pouring metal, saw dust starts burning and turns into ash, making voids, i.e., increasing permeability and collapsibility.

Gases in Metals:

The gases in metals normally lead to faulty castings. In metal castings the gases.

- ❖ May be mechanically trapped
- ❖ May be generated due to the variation in their solubility at different temperature & phases.
- ❖ May be produced due to chemical reactions.

The gases most commonly present are hydrogen and nitrogen. Metals are divided into two groups one is called endothermic and other is called exothermic. Endothermic metals absorb less hydrogen than exothermic metals but in endothermic metals the solubility of hydrogen increases with temperature.

Example - 1.2

An instrument to study the behaviour of moulding sand at high temperature

(a) Dilatometer

(b) Pointometer

(c) Cinometer

(d) None of these

Solution: (a)

Dilatometer is used to study behaviour of moulding sand at high temperature.



STUDENT'S ASSIGNMENTS

- Q.1** An expendable pattern is used in
 (a) Investment casting
 (b) Flush casting
 (c) Centrifugal casting
 (d) Shell moulding
- Q.2** Which of the following are most suitable material for die casting
 (a) Copper alloys
 (b) Steel
 (c) Lead and its alloys
 (d) None of these
- Q.3** Which of the following process produce a casting when pressure forces a molten metal into a mould cavity
 (a) Investment casting
 (b) Shell moulding
 (c) Centrifugal casting
 (d) Die casting
- Q.4** Automobile piston are casted by the method
 (a) Sand casting
 (b) Pressure die casting
 (c) Investment casting
 (d) Gravity die casting
- Q.5** In centrifugal casting the impurities are collected at
 (a) Periphery of casting
 (b) Centre of casting
 (c) In between the casting
 (d) None
- Q.6** Advantages of shell moulding process are
 1. Close dimensional tolerance.
 2. Good surface finish.
 3. Low cost.
 4. Easier.
 (a) 1, 2, 3 is correct
 (b) 2, 3, 4 is correct
 (c) 1, 2, 4 is correct
 (d) All is correct
- Q.7** Considering the ingredients use in moulding
 1. Dry silica sand
 2. Clay

3. Phenol formaldehyde
 4. Sodium silicate
 (a) 1 and 2 is correct
 (b) 1 and 3 is correct
 (c) 2 and 3 is correct
 (d) All is correct

- Q.8** Which of the following material is added to base sand to impart bonding strength
 (a) Sea coal (b) Silica
 (c) Bentonite (d) Wood flour
- Q.9** Fluidity is greatly influenced by
 (a) carbon content of molten metal
 (b) melting temperature of molten metal
 (c) inoculant addition
 (d) pouring temperature of molten metal
- Q.10** The casting defect which is not caused by the high pouring temperature of melt is
 (a) Cuts (b) Metal penetration
 (c) Fusion (d) Rat tails
- Q.11** Slush casting process is used to produce
 (a) hollow castings
 (b) intricate castings
 (c) Large size castings
 (d) Thin walled castings

ANSWER KEY // STUDENT'S ASSIGNMENTS

- 1.** (a) **2.** (c) **3.** (d) **4.** (d) **5.** (b)
6. (c) **7.** (b) **8.** (c) **9.** (d) **10.** (a)
11. (a)

HINTS & SOLUTIONS // STUDENT'S ASSIGNMENTS

2. (c)

Die casting process is preferred to relatively low melting metal and its alloys like zinc, lead, tin etc.

5. (b)

In centrifugal casting because of density difference, lighter elements such as dross, impurities, and pieces of the refractory lining tend to collect at the inner surface of the casting.

