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1 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Gauges

1.1 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book American Gauge ^{AG}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 118, 120.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 118. The table is titled "Wrought Iron, Steel, Copper, and Brass Plates.". These are the entries for American Gauge. On page 120 the same gauge values are there, but there are three additional fractional values added for gauges 24, 39 and 36.

Gauge	Thickness		Gauge	Thickness	
0 000	.46	7/16 Full	19	.035 89	
000	.409 64		20	.031 961	
00	.364 8	3/8 Light	21	.028 462	
0	.324 86	1/8 Light	22	.025 347	
1	.289 3		23	.022 572	
2	.256 63	1/4 Full	24	.020 1	1/50 Full
3	.229 42		25	.017 9	
4	.204 31	1/5 Full	26	.015 94	
5	.181 94	3/16 Light	27	.014 195	
6	.162 02		28	.012 641	
7	.144 28		29	.011 257	
8	.128 49	1/8 Full	30	.010 025	1/100 Full
9	.114 43		31	.008 928	
10	.101 89	1/10 Full	32	.007 95	
11	.090 742		33	.007 08	
12	.080 808		33	.006 304	
13	.071 961		35	.005 614	
14	.064 084		36	.005	1/200
15	.057 068		37	.004 453	
16	.050 82	1/20 Full	38	.003 965	
17	.045 257		39	.003 531	
18	.040 303		40	.003 144	

Table 1: American Gauge ^{AG}

A special note about "strange" thicknesses:

1.1.1 Notes about saw steel thicknesses ^{memo}

Updated on: 4:32 PM 2/9/2026

Source: Brown & Sharpe Small Tools in Catlog No. 29, 1924,

As there are many gauges in use differing from each other, and even the thickness of a certain specified gauge, as the Birmingham, are not assumed the same by all manufacturers, orders for sheets and wires should always state the weight per square foot, or the thickness in thousandths of an inch.

⁰AG.inc 10 February 2026 13:47

⁰Memo.inc 10 February 2026 13:47

1.1.2 Notes about gauge sizes

The difficulties experience in using Wire Gauges of the usual forms are well set forth in the following Circular issued by "Messrs. Miller, Metcalf, & Parkin", Steel Manufacturers, Pittsburg, Pa.

Memorandum on Gauges

Referring to the annexed tables, we would call attention to some of the absurdities and anomalies of the present system of gauges, denoted by numbers.

A perusal of these tables should satisfy us that we have a sufficient variety to choose from, and ample refinement, when we get down to one-millionth of an inch, which is the final figure in some cases.

In some cases the difference between two numbers falls as low as two one-thousandths of an inch, in others it is only one one-thousandth, &c.

It may be possible to make one gauge to any of these standards, which shall be so accurate as to defy the detection of an error, and with the same care it may be possible to make a thousand such gauges, but every mechanic and every person accustomed to making accurate measurements of the best work, knows that it is simply impossible to obtain absolute accuracy in such pieces of work, when produced in large quantities.

It is impossible commercially, on account of the cost, and that settles the question.

Every one knows of the wonderful accuracy of the Whitworth gauges and also their enormous price, which makes them almost unsalable.

In regard to ordinary wire gauges, they are notoriously inaccurate, because they cannot be made accurate and be at all salable.

We have two new gauges in our possession, which were kept in our offices for purposes of comparison, and to prevent their wearing they were not allowed to go into the mills.

In a recent case, a sample under discussion, measured on one gauge, Tight twenty-three, and on the other, Light twenty-four, and our customer said it was neither, by his gauge, and did not suit him, anyhow.

One of our new gauges has its No. 23 so much larger than its No. 22, that the difference can be easily detected by the naked eye; yet No. 23 ought to be two to four thousandths smaller than No. 22.

If we were to roll to No. 23 by that gauge, how would our customer get what he wanted, unless his gauge accidentally contained the same blunder? Yet our gauge is a new one, stamped with the maker's name, and cost about six dollars.

Another trouble is with the wearing of the gauges, for which there is no remedy; and we imagine that no man ever throws away gauge because it is worn out. On the contrary, it represents an outlay of six dollars; he is used to it; he measures everything by it; and he is mad when anything does not measure to suit it. A still more serious difficulty arises from a very common mode of ordering "Tight," "Full" or "Scant," "Heavy" or "Easy"; or such a number and one-half, for instance $15\frac{1}{2}$.

This latter is terribly confusing to a roller; he almost always takes it to mean that it is to be thicker than the whole number, and is pretty certain to make $14\frac{1}{2}$ for $15\frac{1}{2}$ if he is not warned beforehand.

Then in regard to the terms "Light," "Easy," &c., we have, for instance the differences between Nos. 27 and 28, in the three systems, as follows:—

.00225	.002	.001554
--------	------	---------

or two hundred and twenty-five one-hundred-thousandths, two one-thousandths, and fifteen hundred and fifty-four millionths.

How is it possible for a roller to know just how many millionths of an inch another man, whom he never saw, means when No. 28 "Full", or No. 27 "Easy"? And how is he to guess how many thousandths of an inch the other man's gauge is wrong in its make, or how many hundredths it has worn in years of steady use?

This is no fancy sketch; the above are every-day difficulties in this age, when every man knows just what he wants and will have nothing else, and yet has no better way of telling wants, that to say I want such a gauge "Tight" when probably his gauge differs from every other gauge that was ever made.

There is a very easy and simple way out of this whole snarl, and that is to abandon fixed gauges and numbers altogether.

The micrometer Sheet Metal Gauges made by the Brown & Sharpe Manufacturing Co of Providence, R. I., cost less than a common gauge, or no more. They measure thousandths of an inch very accurately, and even a quarter of a thousandth may be neatly measured.

They are very simple, so that any boy of ordinary intelligence can be taught to use one in a very few minutes. They have very easy arrangements for re-adjustment, when worn; and even when worn considerably, they can be used accurately, without adjustment, by making allowance for the error in reading at the zero line.

We find that mechanics like to work to them, and that there is very little trouble to get sheet rolling done to within a thousandth of an inch on fine sizes.

Our workers are fully supplied with these instruments, and we urge all parties in ordering to give us dimensions and not numbers.

We cannot now recall a single case of serous complaint having arisen where we have had dimentions exprssed in decimals to work to.

1.1.3 Notes about Stubs' Gauge

In using the gauges known as Stub's Gauges, there should be constantly born in mind the difference between the Stubs' Iron Wire Gauge and the Stubs' Steel Wire Gauge.

The Stubs' Iron Wire Gauge is the one commonly known as the English Standard Wire, or Birmingham Gauge, and designates the Stubs' *soft* wire sizes.

The Stubs' Steel Wire Gauge is the one that is used in measuring drawn steel wire or drill rods of Stubs' make, and is also used by many makers of American drill rods.

1.2 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Birmingham Gauge ^{BG}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 119, 121.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 119. The table is titled "Wrought Iron, Steel, Copper, and Brass Plates.". These are the entries for Birmingham Gauge.

Gauge	Thickness		Gauge	Thickness	
0 000	.454	7/16 Full	17	.058	1/20 Light
000	.424		18	.049	
00	.38	3/8 Full & 19	.042		
0	.34	1/3 Full	20	.035	
1	.3		21	.032	
2	.284		22	.028	
3	.259	1/4 Full	23	.025	1/40
4	.238		24	.022	1/50
5	.22		25	.02	
6	.203	1/5 Full	26	.018	
7	.18	3/16 Light	27	.016	
8	.165	1/6 Light	28	.014	
9	.148	1/7 Full	29	.013	
10	.134		30	.012	1/100
11	.12	1/8 Light	31	.01	
12	.109		32	.009	
13	.095	1/10 Light	33	.008	
14	.083		34	.007	
15	.072		35	.005	
16	.065		36	.004	1/250

Table 2: Birmingham Gauge ^{BG†}

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⁰BG.inc 10 February 2026 13:47

⁰Memo.inc 10 February 2026 13:47

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A perusal of these tables should satisfy us that we have a sufficient variety to choose from, and ample refinement, when we get down to one-millionth of an inch, which is the final figure in some cases.

In some cases the difference between two numbers falls as low as two one-thousandths of an inch, in others it is only one one-thousandth, &c.

It may be possible to make one gauge to any of these standards, which shall be so accurate as to defy the detection of an error, and with the same care it may be possible to make a thousand such gauges, but every mechanic and every person accustomed to making accurate measurements of the best work, knows that it is simply impossible to obtain absolute accuracy in such pieces of work, when produced in large quantities.

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In a recent case, a sample under discussion, measured on one gauge, Tight twenty-three, and on the other, Light twenty-four, and our customer said it was neither, by his gauge, and did not suit him, anyhow.

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Another trouble is with the wearing of the gauges, for which there is no remedy; and we imagine that no man ever throws away a gauge because it is worn out. On the contrary, it represents an outlay of six dollars; he is used to it; he measures everything by it; and he is mad when anything does not measure to suit it. A still more serious difficulty arises from a very common mode of ordering "Tight," "Full" or "Scant," "Heavy" or "Easy"; or such a number and one-half, for instance $15\frac{1}{2}$.

This latter is terribly confusing to a roller; he almost always takes it to mean that it is to be thicker than the whole number, and is pretty certain to make $14\frac{1}{2}$ for $15\frac{1}{2}$ if he is not warned beforehand.

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They are very simple, so that any boy of ordinary intelligence can be taught to use one in a very few minutes. They have very easy arrangements for re-adjustment, when worn; and even when worn considerably, they can be used accurately, without adjustment, by making allowance for the error in reading at the zero line.

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The Stubs' Iron Wire Gauge is the one commonly known as the English Standard Wire, or Birmingham Gauge, and designates the Stubs' *soft* wire sizes.

The Stubs' Steel Wire Gauge is the one that is used in measuring drawn steel wire or drill rods of Stubs' make, and is also used by many makers of American drill rods.

1.3 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Birmingham Gauge? Thickness of Plates BGP

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 121.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 121. The table on the bottom of the page is titled "Thickness of Plates.". These might be the entries for Birmingham Gauge Thickness of Plates.

No.	Inch.	No.	Inch.
1	.312 5	17	.056 25
2	.281 25	18	.08
3	.25	19	.043 75
4	.234 375	20	.037 5
5	.218 75	21	.034 375
6	.203 125	22	.031 25
7	.187 5	23	.028 125
8	.171 875	24	.025
9	.156 25	25	.023 44
10	.140 625	26	.021 875
11	.125	27	.020 312
12	.112 5	28	.018 75
13	.1	29	.017 19
14	.087 5	30	.015 625
15	.075	31	.014 06
16	.062 5	32	.012 5

Table 3: Birmingham Gauge? Thickness of Plates BGPt

1.4 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Birmingham Gauge Silver and Gold ^{BGSG}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 119.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 119. The table on the bottom of the page is titled "Thickness of Sheet Silver, Gold, etc.". These are the entries for Birmingham Gauge for Silver and Gold.

Note: In the original document that the values for gauges 5 and 6 are the same. It seems resonable that the gauge for 6 shoud be .014. But I didn't want to chage the value, preferring to remain as close to the original as I could.

No.	Inch.	No.	Inch.	No.	Inch.
1	.004	13	.036	25	.095
2	.005	14	.041	26	.103
3	.008	15	.047	27	.113
4	.01	16	.051	28	.12
5	.013	17	.057	29	.124
6	.013	18	.061	39	.126
7	.015	19	.064	31	.133
8	.016	20	.067	32	.143
9	.019	21	.072	33	.145
10	.024	22	.074	34	.148
17	.057	25	.077	35	.158
18	.061	24	.082	36	.167

Table 4: Birmingham Gauge for Silver and Gold ^{BGSGt}

1.5 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book French Gauges (*Jauges de Fils de Fer*) ^F

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 123.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 123. This is the start of the French wire gauges in the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book. In all there are three different gauges listed.

1.5.1 Wire-Gauge (*Jauge de Limoges*) ^{JLG}

No.	mm	Inch.	No.	mm	Inch.	No.	mm	Inch.
0	.39	.0154	9	1.35	.0532	18	3.4	.134
1	.45	.0177	10	1.46	.0575	19	3.95	.156
2	.56	.0221	11	1.68	.0661	20	4.5	.177
3	.67	.0264	12	1.8	.0706	21	5.1	.201
4	.79	.0311	13	1.91	.0752	22	5.65	.222
5	.9	.0354	14	2.02	.0795	23	6.2	.244
6	1.01	.0398	15	2.14	.0843	24	6.8	.268
7	1.12	.0441	16	2.25	.0886			
8	1.24	.0488	17	2.84	.112			

Table 5: *Jauge de Limoges* Gauge ^{JLG}

1.5.2 For Galvanized Iron Wire Gauge ^{GIWG}

No.	mm	Inch.	No.	mm	Inch.	No.	mm	Inch.
1	.6	.0236	9	1.4	.0551	17	3.	.118
2	.7	.0276	10	1.5	.0591	18	3.4	.134
3	.8	.0315	11	1.6	.063	19	3.9	.154
4	.9	.0354	12	1.8	.0709	20	4.4	.173
5	1.	.0394	13	2.	.0787	21	4.9	.193
6	1.1	.0433	14	2.2	.0866	22	5.4	.213
7	1.2	.0473	15	2.4	.0945	23	5.9	.232
8	1.3	.0512	16	2.7	.106			

Table 6: Galvanized Iron Wire ^{GIWG}

1.5.3 For Wire and Bars Gauge WBG

Mark	mm								
P	5	7	12	13	20	19	39	25	70
1	6	8	13	14	22	20	44	26	76
2	7	9	14	15	24	21	49	27	82
3	8	10	15	16	27	22	54	28	88
4	9	11	16	17	30	23	59	29	94
5	10	12	18	18	34	24	64	30	100
6	11								

Table 7: Wire and Bars Gauge WBGt

1.6 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book New Standard Wire Gauge of Great Britan ^{NSWG}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 122.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 118. The table is titled “ New Standard Wire Gauge Great Britan, 1884” has the folloing wire gauges listed. The range is for 7/0 to 50.

No.	Inch.	No.	Inch	No.	Inch.
7/0	.5	13	.092	32	.0108
6/0	.464	14	.08	33	.01
5/0	.434	15	.072	34	.0092
4/0	.4	16	.064	35	.0084
3/0	.372	17	.056	36	.0076
2/0	.348	18	.048	37	.0068
0	.324	19	.04	38	.006
1	.3	20	.036	39	.0052
2	.276	21	.032	40	.0048
3	.252	22	.028	41	.0044
4	.232	23	.024	42	.004
5	.212	24	.022	43	.0036
6	.192	25	.02	44	.0032
7	.176	26	.018	45	.0028
8	.160	27	.0164	46	.0024
9	.144	28	.0148	47	.002
10	.128	29	.0136	48	.0016
11	.116	30	.0124	49	.0012
12	.104	31	.0116	50	.001

Table 8: New Standard Wire Gauge of Great Britan, 1884 ^{NSWGt}

1.7 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Sir Joseph Whitworth & Co's Gauge

SJW

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 122.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 122. At the top of the page a table of English Wire Gauges.

Note: The diameter value for gauge No. 95 may be incorrect and might be .095. However I left it as it is in the book to try and maintain accuracy to the original. Also note that many gauges are "skipped" over. Again this in the original.

Sir Joseph Whitworth, in 1857, introduced a Standard Wire-Gauge, ranging from half an inch to a thousandth, and comprising 62 measurements. It commences with least thickness, and increases by thousandths of an inch up to half an inch. Smallest thickness, $\frac{1}{1000}$ of an inch, is No. 1; No. 2 is $\frac{2}{1000}$, and so on, increasing up to No. 20 by intervals of $\frac{1}{1000}$; from No. 20 to No. 40 by $\frac{2}{1000}$; and from No. 40 to No. 100 by $\frac{5}{1000}$. The thicknesses are designated or marked by their respective numbers in thousands of an inch.

This gauge is entering into general use in England.

No.	Inch.								
1	.001	14	.014	34	.034	85	.085	240	.24
2	.002	15	.015	36	.036	90	.09	260	.26
3	.003	16	.016	38	.038	95	.09	280	.28
4	.004	17	.017	40	.04	100	.1	300	.3
5	.005	18	.018	45	.045	110	.11	325	.325
6	.006	19	.019	50	.05	120	.12	350	.35
7	.007	20	.02	55	.055	135	.135	375	.375
8	.008	22	.022	60	.06	150	.15	400	.4
9	.009	24	.024	65	.065	165	.165	425	.425
10	.01	26	.026	70	.07	180	.18	450	.45
11	.011	28	.028	75	.075	200	.2	475	.475
12	.012	30	.03	80	.08	220	.22	500	.5
13	.013	32	.032						

Table 9: Sir Joseph Whitworth & Co's Gauge SJW

1.8 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book South Staffordshire Gauge ^{SSG}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 129 "Weight of Sheet Iron (English)". As by Wire-gauge used in South Staffordshire, England.

Note that the reverse gauge order which was in the original.

No.	Inch	No.	Inch	No.	Inch
32	.0125	21	.0344	10	.1406
31	.0141	20	.0375	9	.1563
30	.0156	19	.0438	8	.1719
29	.0172	18	.05	7	.1875
28	.0188	17	.0563	6	.2031
27	.0203	16	.0625	5	.2188
26	.0219	15	.075	4	.2344
25	.0234	14	.0875	3	.25
24	1	13	.1	2	.2813
23	1.13	12	.1125	1	.3125
22	1.25	11	.125		

Table 10: South Staffordshire Gauge ^{SSG}

Note: The values here differ from those shown in Accurate Measurement and Design Standards ??, page ??.

1.9 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Roebing? RAS

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 163

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 163. The page heading is "Galvanized Charcoal Iron Wire Rope" With a sub heading of John A. Roebing's Sons Co. On the lower part of the page there is table for "Gauge, Weight, and Length of Iron Wire." I have assumed that the gauge numbers are from the Roebing" company.

Gauge	Diam	Gauge	Diam.
6/0	.46	16	.063
5/0	.43	17	.054
4/0	.393	18	.047
3/0	.362	19	.041
2/0	.331	20	.035
1/0	.307	21	.032
1	.283	22	.028
2	.263	23	.025
3	.244	24	.023
4	.225	25	.02
5	.207	26	.018
6	.192	27	.017
7	.177	28	.016
8	.162	29	.015
9	.148	30	.014
10	.135	31	.035
11	.12	32	.013
12	.105	33	.011
13	.092	34	.01
14	.08	35	.0095
15	.072	36	.009

Table 11: Roebing? RAS^t

1.10 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Vielle-Montagne ^{VM}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 151

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 151 there is a listing of Dimensions and Weight of Sheet Zinc with the thickness of the zinc plade given a gauge number from 9 \rightarrow 26. I haven't seen this set of gauges elsewhere so I have included it here.

No.	Thickness	
	Millim.	Inch.
9	.41	.0161
10	.51	.0201
11	.6	.0236
12	.69	.0272
13	.78	.0307
14	.87	.0343
15	.96	.0378
16	1.1	.0433
17	1.23	.0485
18	1.36	.0536
19	1.48	.0583
20	1.66	.0654
21	1.85	.0729
22	2.02	.0795
23	2.19	.0862
24	2.37	.0933
25	2.52	.0992
26	2.66	.1047

Table 12: Vielle-Montagne ^{VM}

1.11 Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book Warrington, Rylands Brothers Gauge ^{WRB}

Source: Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book, 1906, page 122.

In the Mechanics' and Engineers' Pocket-Book on Page 122. At the top of the page a a table of English Wire Gauges.

No.	Inch.	No.	Inch.	No.	Inch.
7/0	1/2	6	.191	17	.053
6/0	15/32	7	.174	18	.047
5/0	7/16	8	.159	19	.041
4/0	13/32	9	.146	20	.036
3/0	3/8	10	.133	21	.0315
2/0	11/32	10.5	.125	22	.028
0	.326	11	.117		
1	.3	12	.1		
2	.274	13	.09		
3	.25	14	.079		
4	.229	15	.69		
5	.209	16	.0625		

Table 13: Warrington, Rylands Brothers Gauge ^{WRBt}

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