Roughness Parameters Commonly Used in Short

Mean roughness Ra (ISO 4287, DIN 4768)

The mean roughness Ra matches the arithmetical mean of the absolute values related to the profile deviation y within the reference length l.

Max. profile valley depth Rmax (DIN 4768)

The max. profile valley depth Rmax counts for the most significant single roughness depths Zi within the total length lm.

According to ISO 4288 and DIN 4287 - Part 1, this parameter is also specified as Ry max.

Mean roughness depth Rz DIN (DIN 4768)

The mean roughness depth Rz is the arithmetical mean of single roughness depths of successive sampling lengths le.

According to ISO 4287 and DIN 4762, the parameter Rz DIN is also specified as Ry5.

Since Rz changes its name in both DIN 4768 and ISO 4287, this parameter is also specified as Rz DIN or Rz ISO.

If the parameter Rz is measured according to DIN, it is generally admitted that the extreme value specified by ISO is matched providing that Rz ISO does not exceed Rz DIN.

Use of Roughness Comparison Specimens

These specimens used for testing any surface finish quality have long proven their value in praxis.

They serve for touch and/or sight comparisons with the surface of work pieces that are produced using the same manufacturing process. Condition is that materials have to be comparable.

When comparing the workpiece surface against the specimen, roughness is not quantitatively expressed. The assessment of the extent to which the surface finish of both is alike can only be subjective.

Sight comparison requires optimum light source angle. For small surfaces, the use of a magnifying glass with up to 8x magnification is recommended.

Touch comparison is made using the finger nail or a small cooper piece like a coin, for instance.