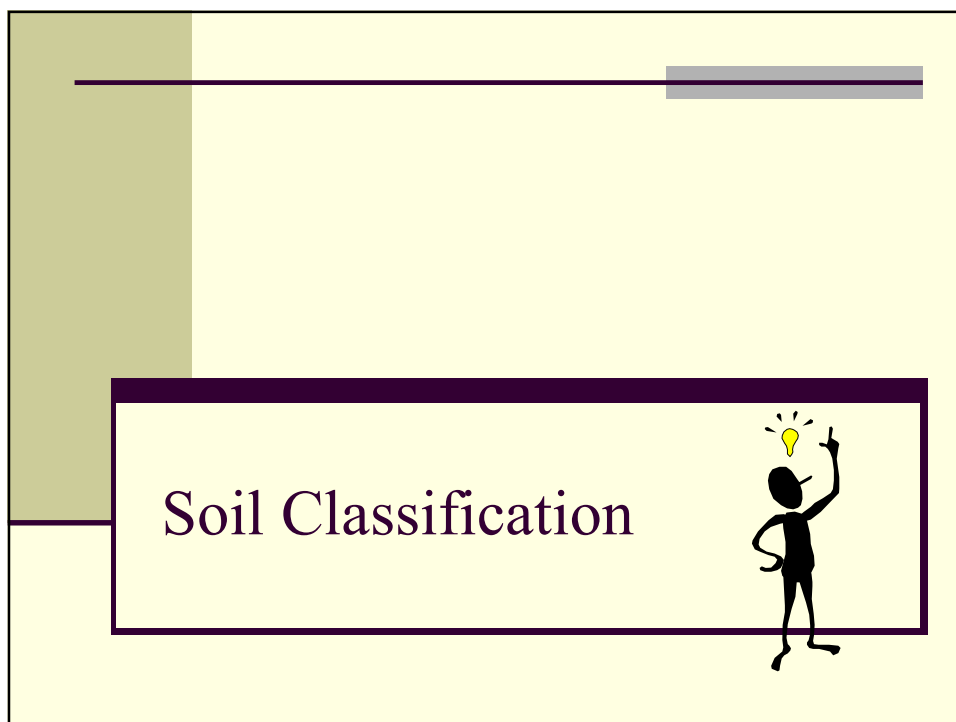




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2

Need for Simple Classification

- Usually soil on site has to be used.
 - Soils differ from other engineering materials in that one has little control over their properties
- Extent and properties of the soil have to be determined
- Cheap and simple tests are required to give an indication of engineering properties, e.g. stiffness, strength, for preliminary design

The classification must use core samples obtained from the ground. This information is often supplemented by in-situ tests such as cone penetration tests.

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3

Objectives

- To group soils of similar geotechnical characteristics; and
- To assign symbols.

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4

Classification based on Particle Size

- Particle size is used because it is related to mineralogy
 - e.g. very small particles usually contain clay minerals
- Broad Classification
 - Coarse grained soils
 - sands, gravels - visible to naked eye
 - Fine grained soils
 - silts, clays, organic soils

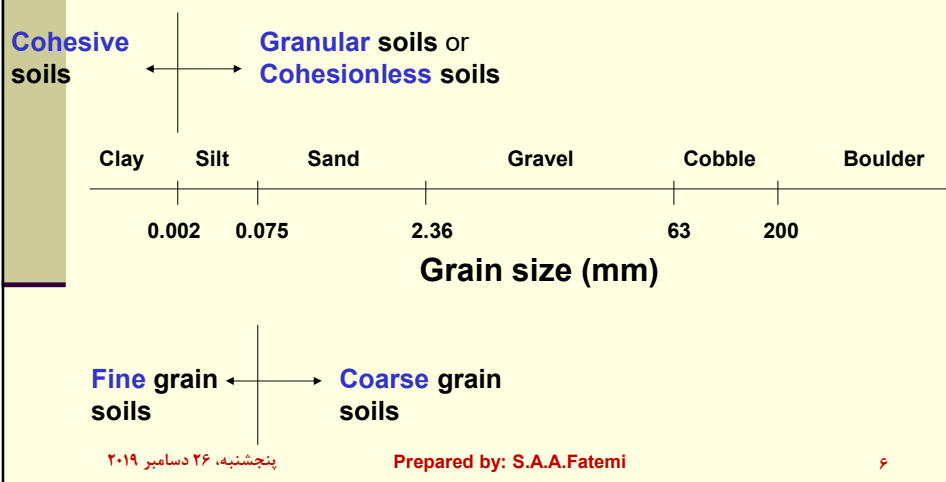
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5

Major Soil Groups



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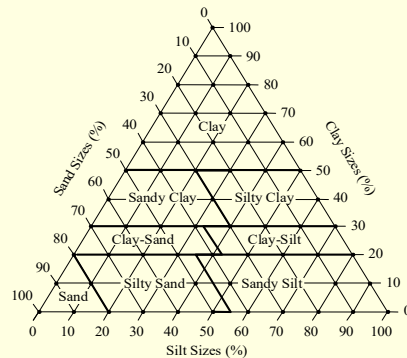
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6

Simple Classification

- In general soils contain a wide range of particle sizes
- Some means of describing the characteristics of soils with different proportions of sand/silt/clay is required.



■ Note the

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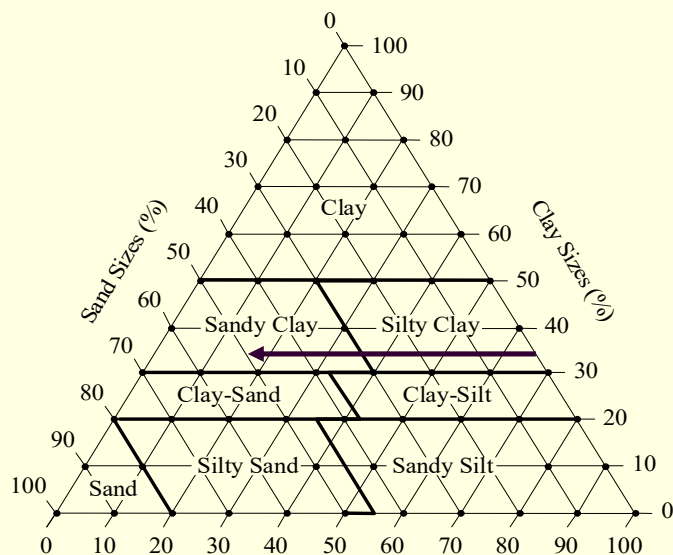
20% control behaviour

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Example: equal amounts sand/silt/clay

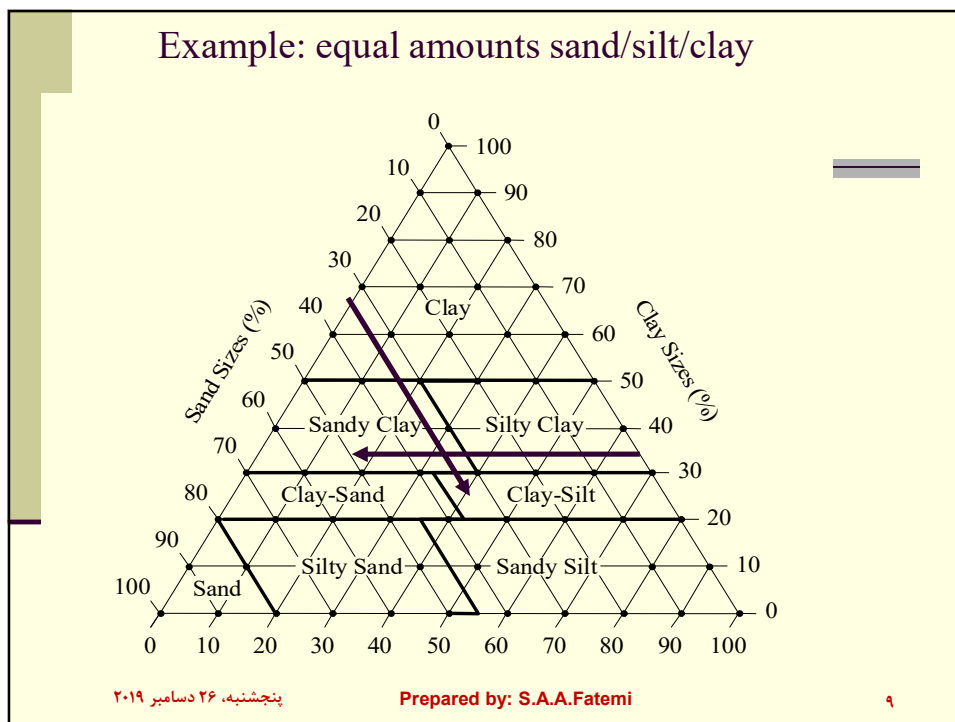


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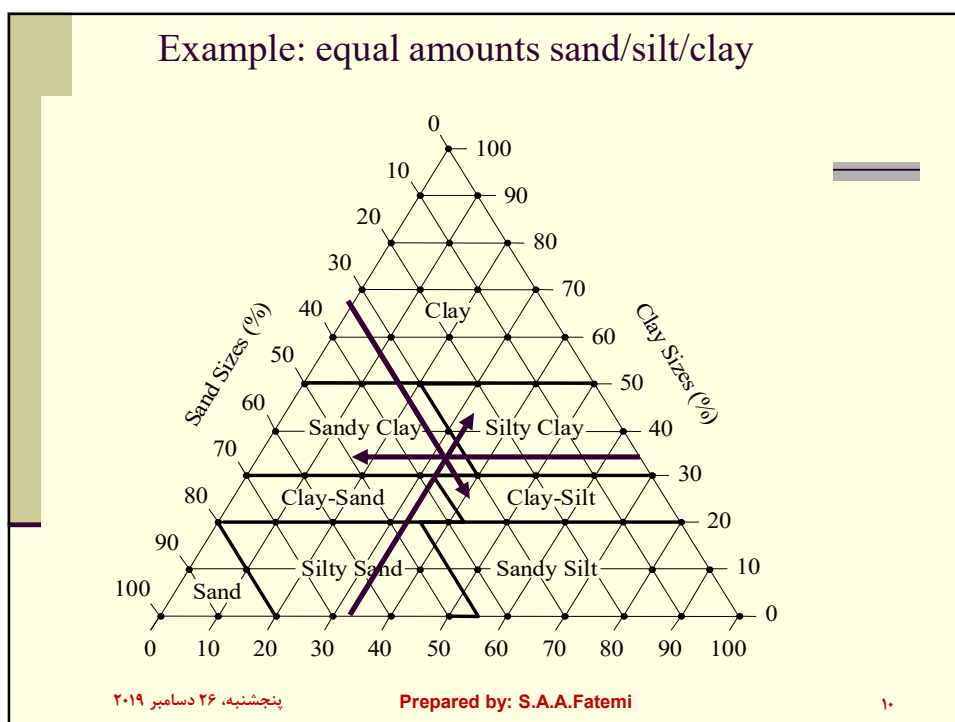
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9



10

Grain Size Distribution

Significance of GSD:

- To know the relative proportions of different grain sizes.
- ⌘ An important factor influencing the geotechnical characteristics of a **coarse** grain soil.
- ⌘ Not important in fine grain soils.

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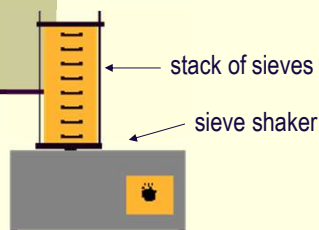
11

Grain Size Distribution

Determination of GSD:

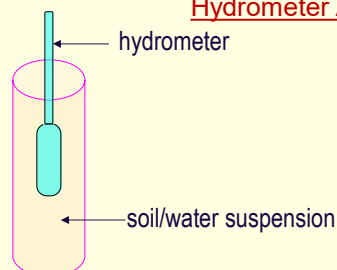
- In **coarse** grain soils By **sieve analysis**
- ⌘ In **fine** grain soils By **hydrometer analysis**

Sieve Analysis



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Hydrometer Analysis



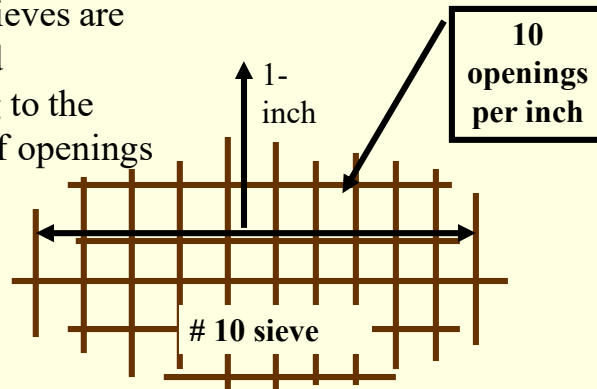
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Sieve Designation - Smaller

Smaller sieves are numbered according to the number of openings per inch



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Fine-Grained vs. Coarse-Grained Soils

- U.S. Standard Sieve - No. 200
 - 0.0029 inches
 - 0.074 mm
- "No. 200" means...



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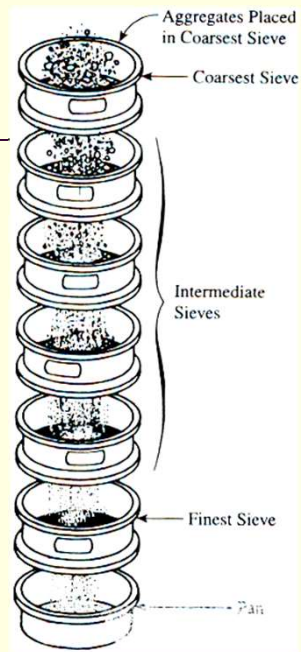
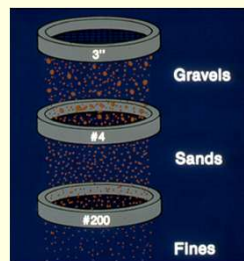
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Sieve Analysis (Mechanical Analysis)

- This procedure is suitable for coarse grained soils
- e.g. No.10 sieve ... has 10 apertures per linear inch



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ASTM Standard Sieves

Sieve Identification	Opening Size		Sieve Identification	Opening Size	
	(in)	(mm)		(in)	(mm)
3 inch	3.00	76.2	#16	0.0465	1.18
2 inch	2.00	50.8	#20	0.0335	0.850
1½ inch	1.50	38.1	#30	0.0236	0.600
1 inch	1.00	25.4	#40	0.0167	0.425
¾ inch	0.75	19.0	#50	0.0118	0.300
⅜ inch	0.375	9.52	#60	0.00984	0.250
#4	0.187	4.75	#100	0.00591	0.150
#8	0.0929	2.36	#140	0.00417	0.106
#10	0.0787	2.00	#200	0.00295	0.075

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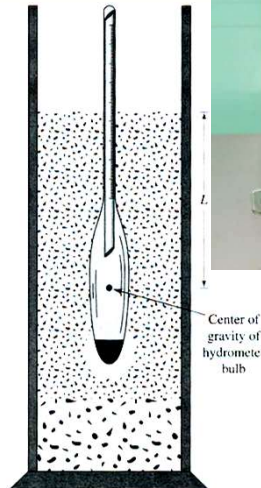
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Hydrometer Analysis

- Also called Sedimentation Analysis
- Stoke's Law

$$v = \frac{D^2 \gamma_w (G_s - G_L)}{18\eta}$$



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Particle Size Definition

- System based only on particles smaller than 3-inches
- Cobbles are 3"to 12"
- Boulders are > 12"

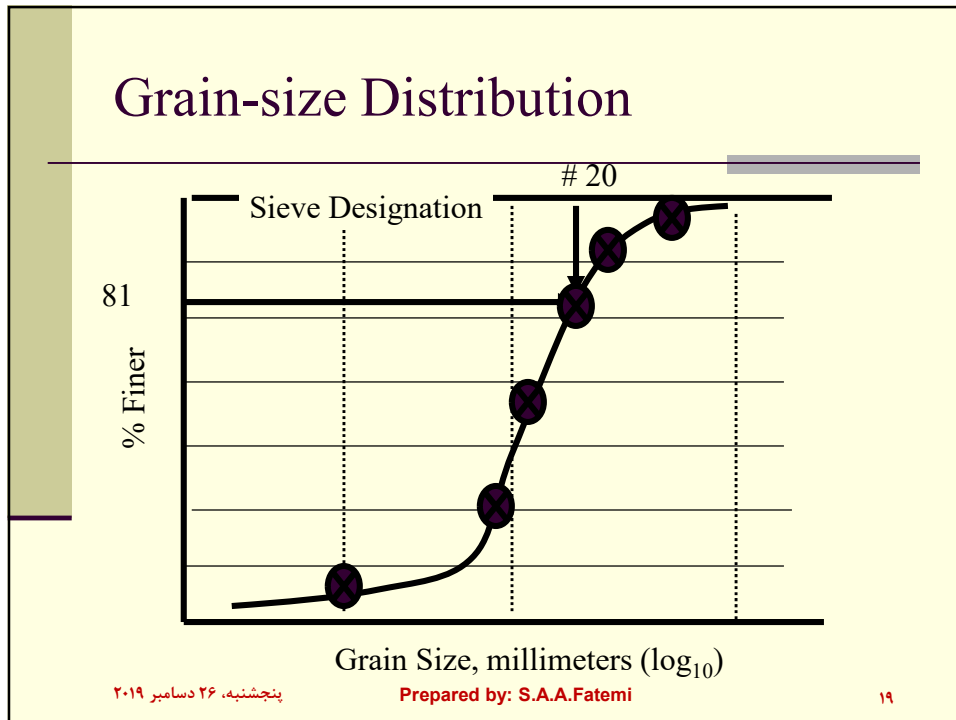


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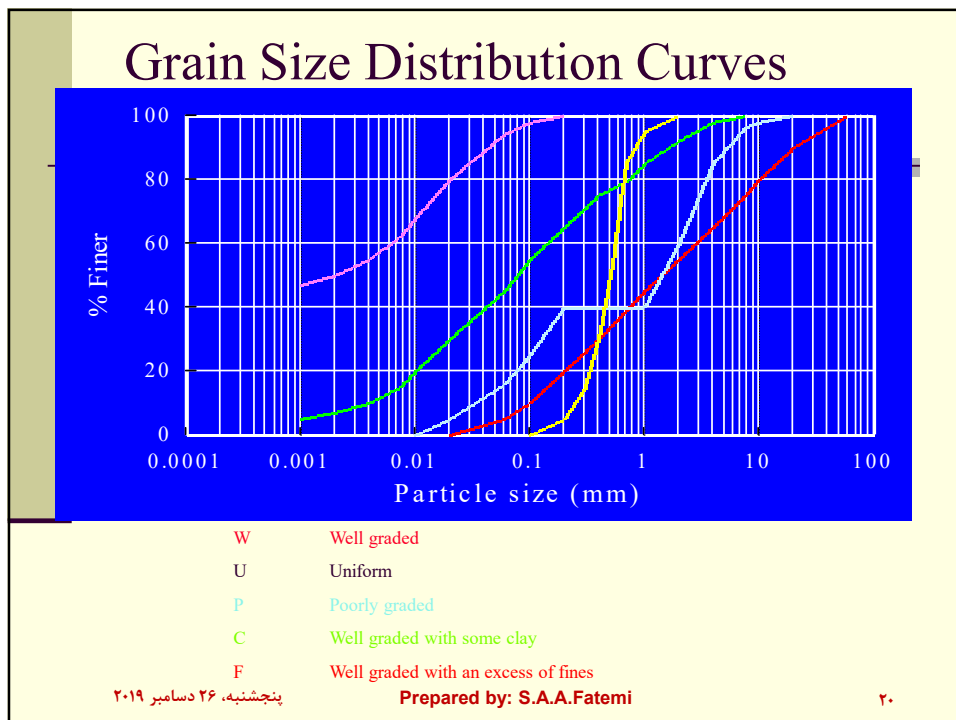
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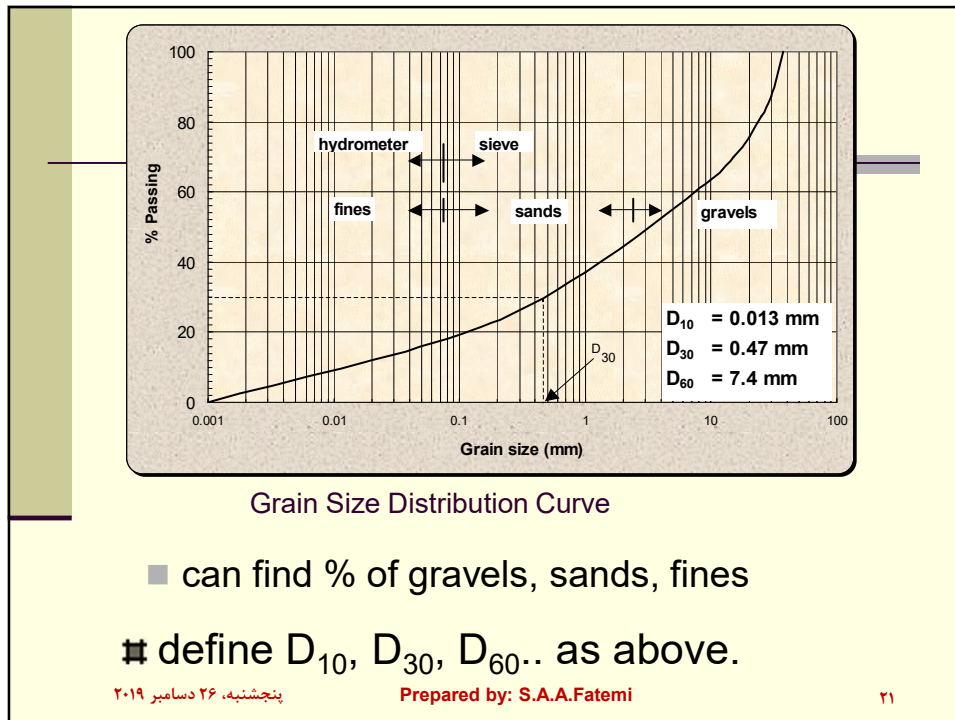
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Well or Poorly Graded Soils

Well Graded Soils

Wide range of grain sizes present

Gravels: $C_c = 1-3$ & $C_u > 4$

Sands: $C_c = 1-3$ & $C_u > 6$

$$C_u = \frac{D_{60}}{D_{10}}$$

$$C_c = \frac{D_{30}^2}{D_{60} \cdot D_{10}}$$

Poorly Graded Soils

Others, including two special cases:

(a) **Uniform** soils – grains of same size

(b) **Gap** graded soils – no grains in a specific size range

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Soil Plasticity

- Further classification within fine-grained soils (i.e. soil that passes #200 sieve) is done based on soil plasticity.
- Albert Atterberg, Swedish Soil Scientist (1846-1916).....series of tests for evaluating soil plasticity
- Arthur Casagrande adopted these tests for geotechnical engineering purposes

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Soil Consistency Limits

- **Albert Atterberg** (1846-1916)
Swedish Soil Scientist
..... Developed series of tests for evaluating consistency limits of soil (1911)
- **Arthur Casagrande** (1902-1981)
.....Adopted these tests for geotechnical engineering purposes



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Arthur Casagrande (1902-1981)

- Joined Karl Terzaghi at MIT in 1926 as his graduate student
- Research project funded by Bureau of Public Roads
- After completion of Ph.D at MIT Casagrande initiated Geotechnical Engineering Program at Harvard
- Soil Plasticity and Soil Classification (1932)



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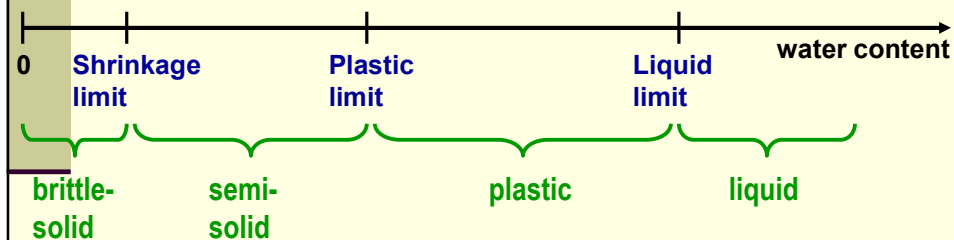
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Atterberg Limits

- Border line **water contents**, separating the different **states** of a fine grained soil

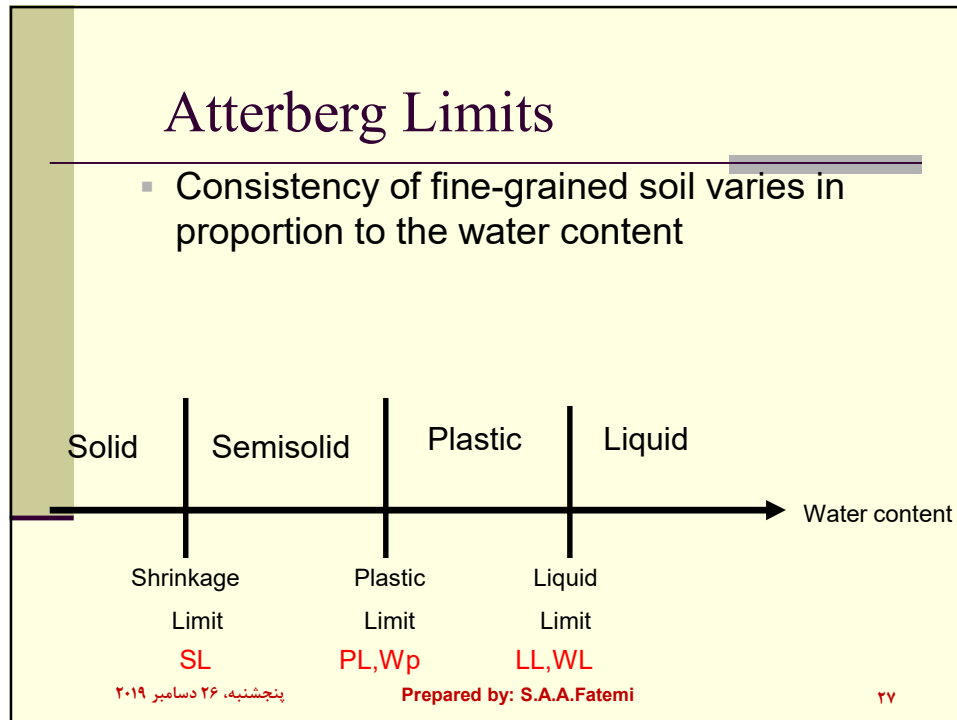


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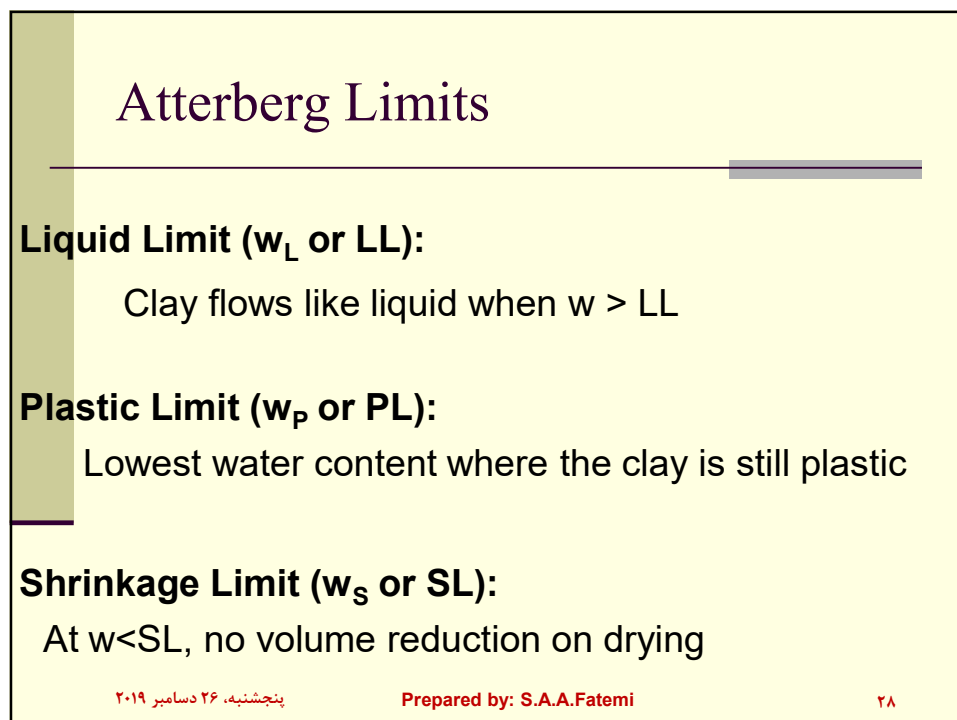
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Liquid Limit (LL or w_L)

- Empirical Definition
- The moisture content at which a 2 mm-wide groove in a soil pat will close for a distance of 0.5 in when dropped 25 times in a standard brass cup falling 1 cm each time at a rate of 2 drops/sec in a standard liquid limit device

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Casagrande Apparatus



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Casagrande Apparatus



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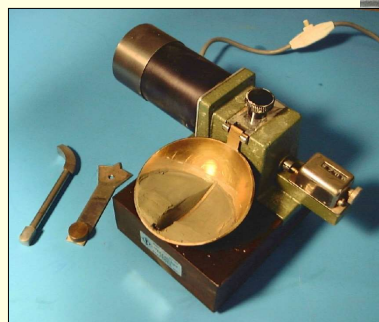
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Liquid Limit Definition

- The water content at which a groove cut in a soil paste will close upon 25 repeated drops of a brass cup with a rubber base



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LL Test Procedure

- Prepare paste of soil finer than # 4 sieve
- Place Soil in Cup



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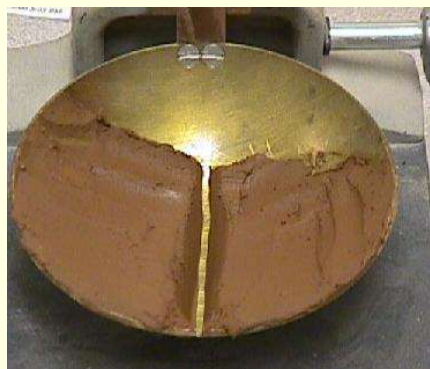
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LL Test Procedure

- Cut groove in soil paste with standard grooving tool



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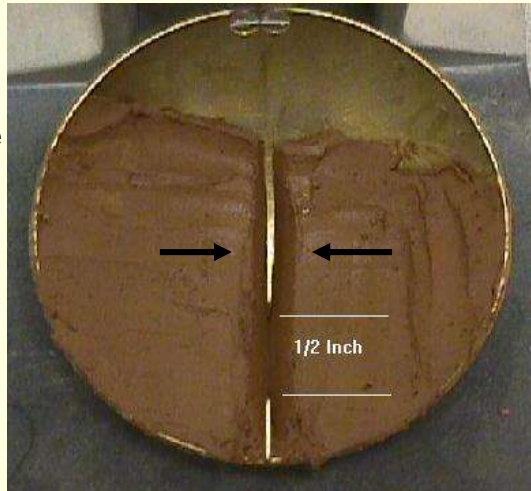
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LL Test Procedure

- Rotate cam and count number of blows of cup required to close groove by 1/2"



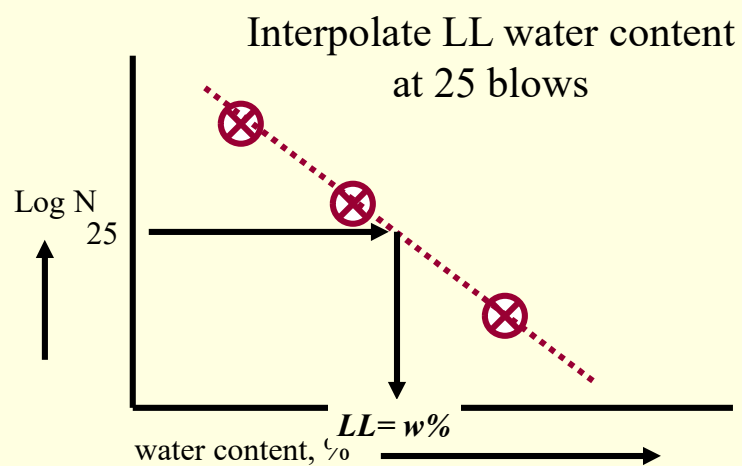
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LL Test Results



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Plastic Limit (PL, w_p)

- The moisture content at which a thread of soil just begins to crack and crumble when rolled to a diameter of 1/8 inches



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Plastic Limit (PL, w_p)

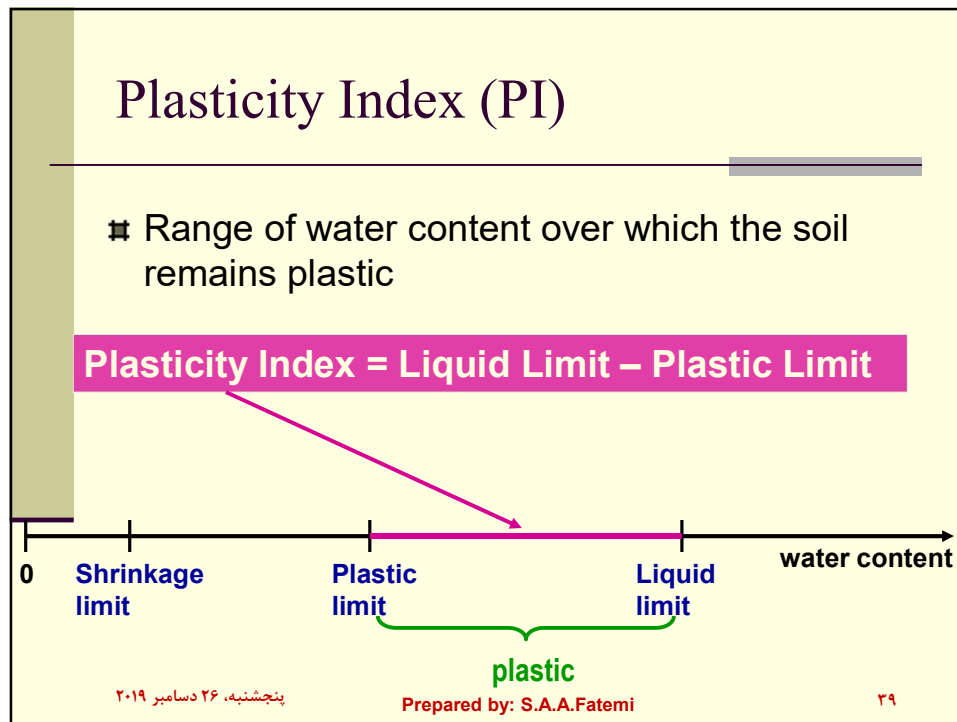


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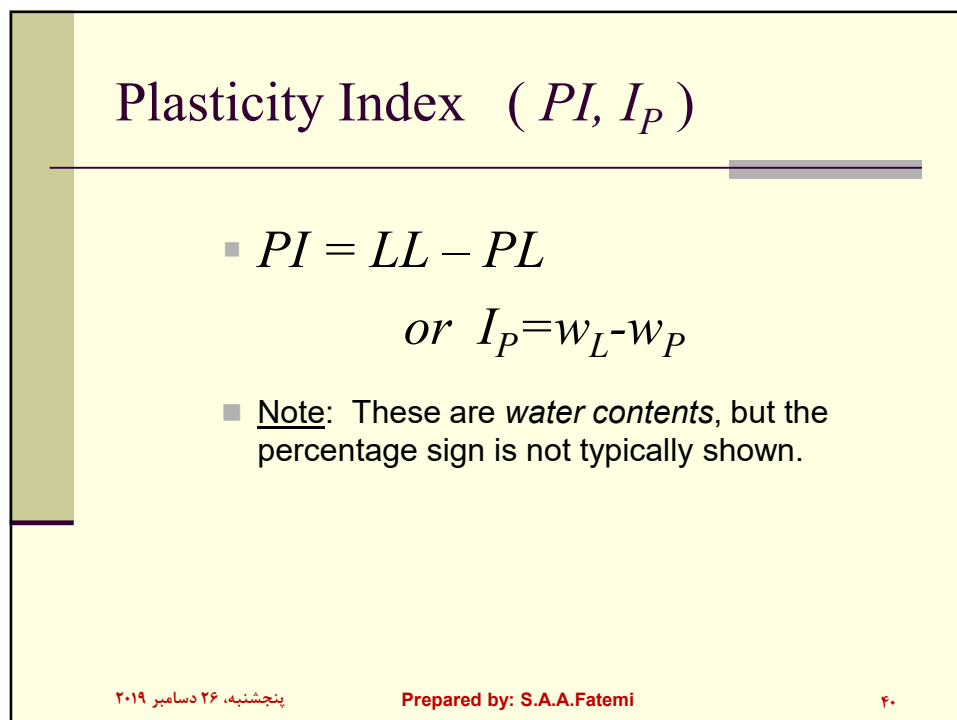
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Liquidity Index (LI, I_L)

Can be written as: $LI = \frac{w - PL}{PI}$

Or: $I_L = \frac{w - w_p}{I_p} = \text{relative Consistency}$

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Range of Plasticity Index

Plasticity Index, I_p	Classification	Dry Strength	Visual-Manual Identification of Dry Sample
0 - 3	Nonplastic	Very low	Falls apart easily
3 - 15	Slightly plastic	Slight	Easily crushed with fingers
15 - 30	Medium plastic	Medium	Difficult to crush with fingers
> 30	Highly plastic	High	Impossible to crush with fingers

Increasing clay content

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Activity

$$A = \frac{PI}{\text{Percentage of soil in clay size}}$$

Mineral	Activity
Smectites	1-7
Illite	0.5-1
Kaolinite	0.5

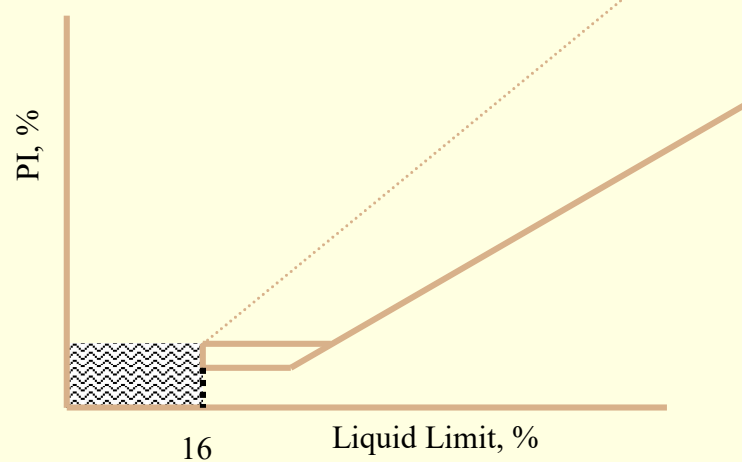
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LL Values < 16 % not realistic

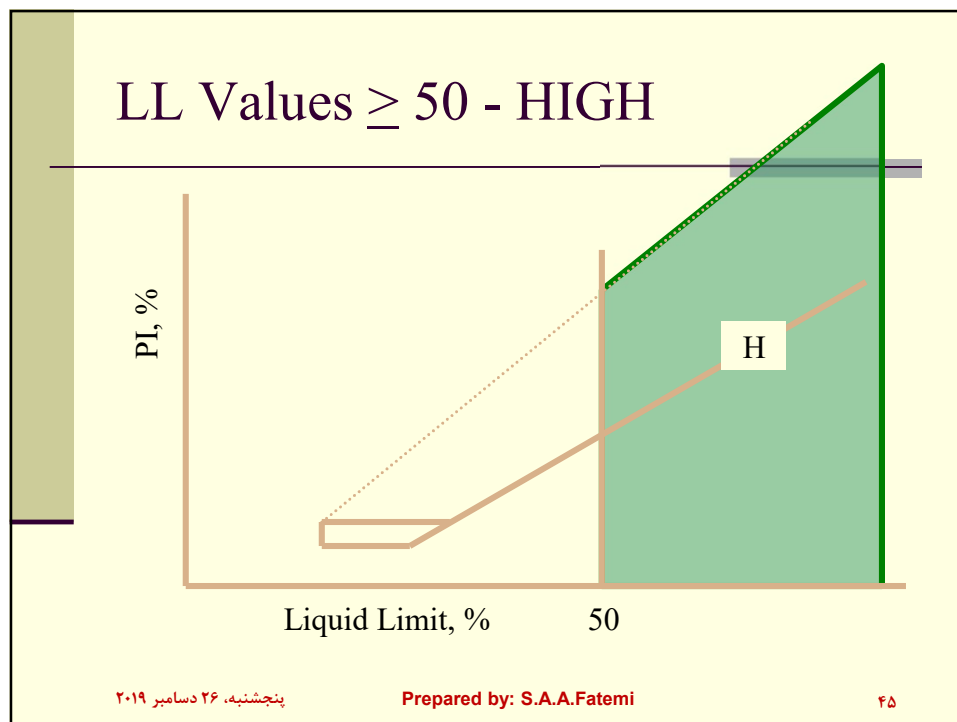


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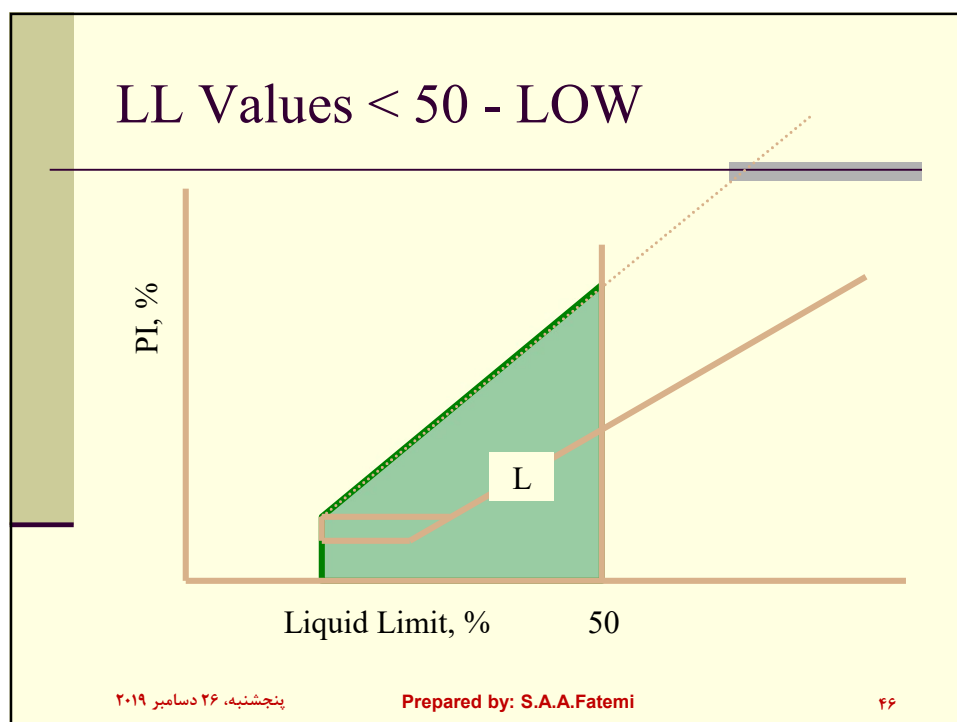
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Plasticity Chart

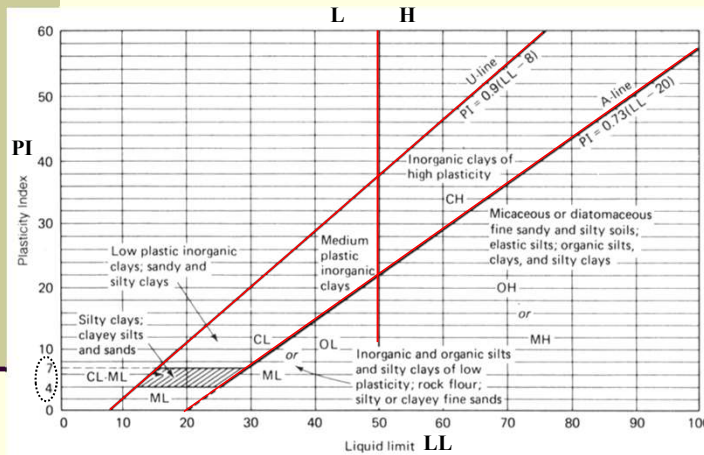


Fig. 3.2 Casagrande's plasticity chart, showing several representative soil types (developed from Casagrande, 1948, and Howard, 1977).

(Holtz and Kovacs, 1981)

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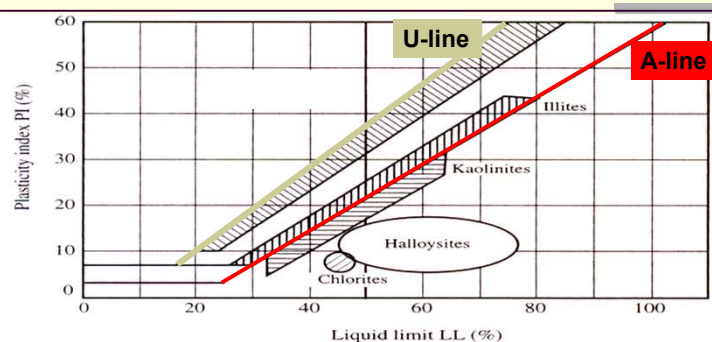
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- The A-line generally separates the more claylike materials from silty materials, and the organics from the inorganics.
- The U-line indicates the upper bound for general soils.

Note: If the measured limits of soils are on the left of U-line, they should be rechecked.

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Plasticity Chart



$$A \rightarrow PI = 0.73(LL - 20)$$

$$U \rightarrow PI = 0.9(LL - 8)$$

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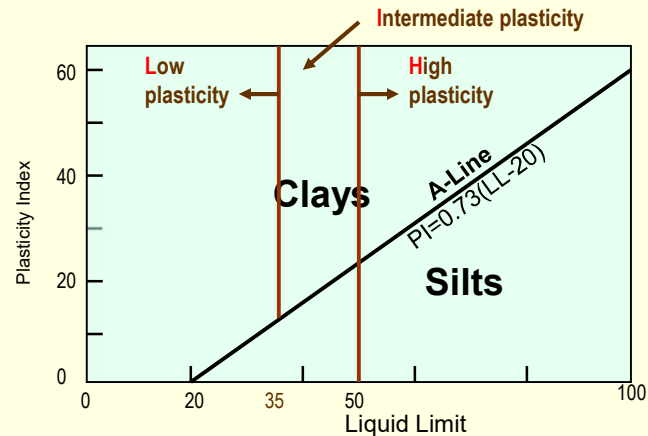
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Classifying Fines

Purely based on LL and PI



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Engineering Characterization of Soils used for Classification

Soil Properties that Control its Engineering Behavior

- Particle Size
 - Sieve Analysis
 - Hydrometer Analysis

coarse-grained

fine-grained

Particle/Grain Size Distribution
Particle Shapes (?)

Soil Plasticity

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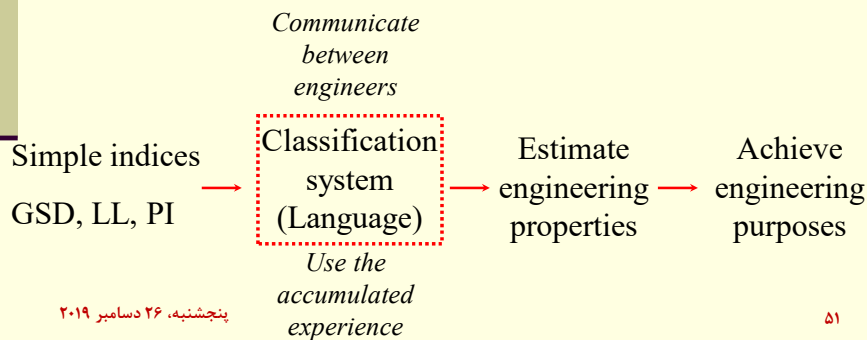
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Purpose of soil Classification

■ Classifying soils into groups with similar behavior, in terms of *simple* indices, can provide geotechnical engineers a general guidance about engineering properties of the soils through the *accumulated experience*.



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Soil Classification Systems

■ **Two commonly used systems:**

- Unified Soil Classification System (USCS).
- British Soil Classification System (BSCS)
- American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) System

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Unified Soil Classification System (USCS)

Origin of USCS:

This system was first developed by Professor A. Casagrande (1948) for the purpose of airfield construction during World War II. Afterwards, it was modified by Professor Casagrande, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to enable the system to be applicable to dams, foundations, and other construction.

Four major divisions:

- (1) Coarse-grained
- (2) Fine-grained
- (3) Organic soils
- (4) Peat

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Symbols

Soil symbols:

- G: Gravel
- S: Sand
- M: Silt
- C: Clay
- O: Organic
- Pt: Peat

Example: SW, Well-graded sand

SC, Clayey sand

SM, Silty sand,

MH, Elastic silt

Liquid limit symbols:

- H: High LL (LL>50)
- L: Low LL (LL<50)

Gradation symbols:

- W: Well-graded
- P: Poorly-graded

Well – graded soil

$1 < C_c < 3$ and $C_u \geq 4$
(for gravels)

$1 < C_c < 3$ and $C_u \geq 6$
(for sands)

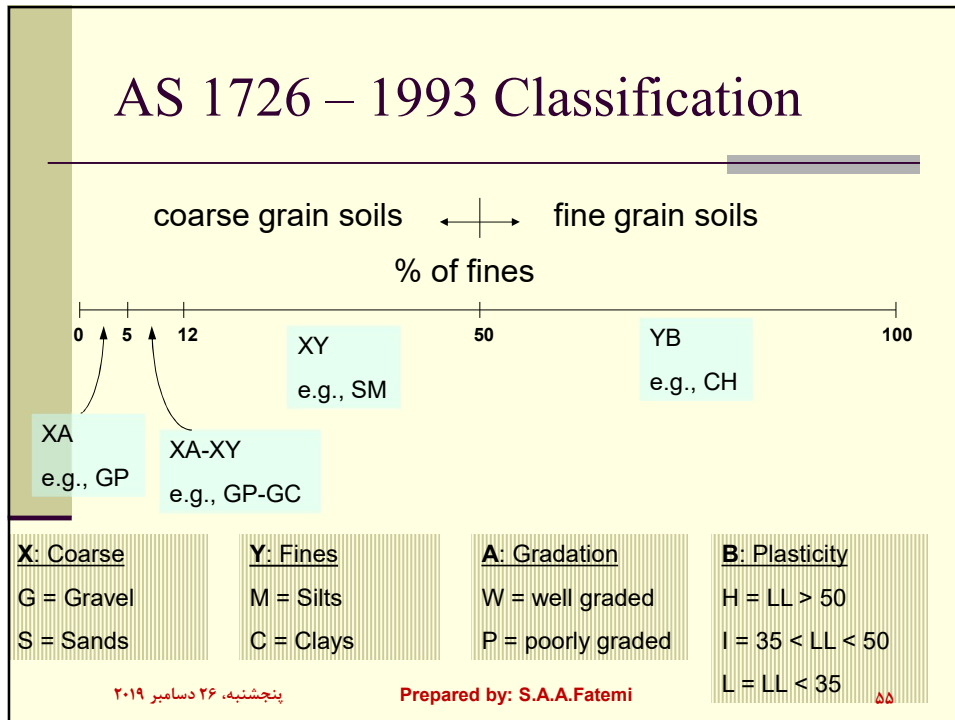
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AS 1726 – 1993 Classification



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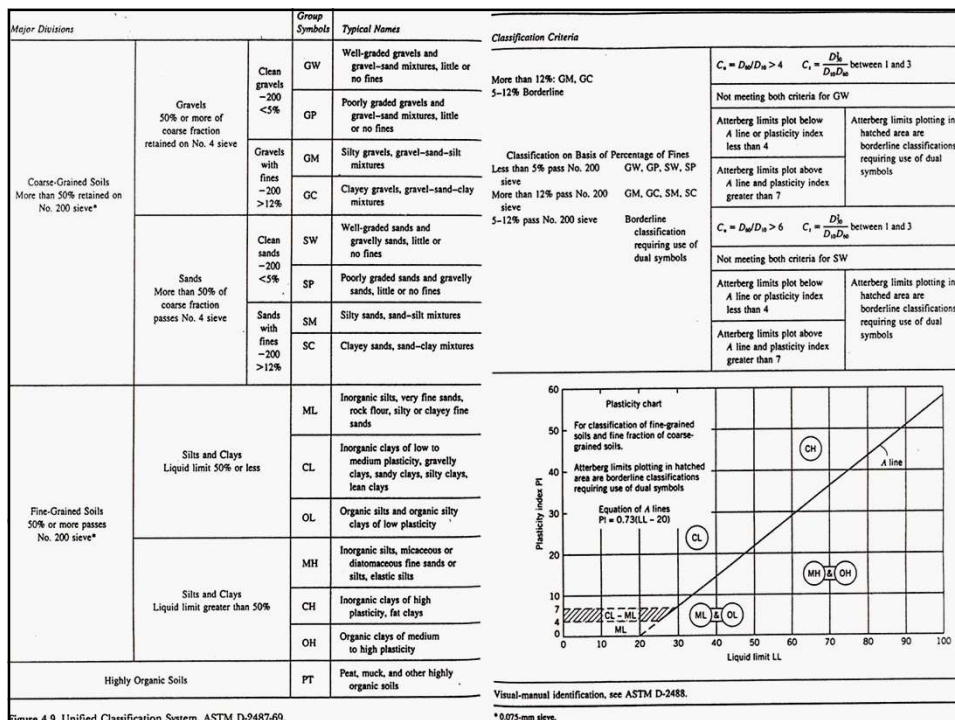


Figure 4.9 Unified Classification System, ASTM D-2487-69.

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Borderline Cases (Dual Symbols)

- For the following three conditions, a dual symbol should be used.
 - Coarse-grained soils with 5% - 12% fines.
 - About 7 % fines can change the hydraulic conductivity of the coarse-grained media by orders of magnitude.
 - The first symbol indicates whether the coarse fraction is well or poorly graded. The second symbol describe the contained fines. For example: SP-SM, poorly graded sand with silt.
 - Fine-grained soils with limits within the shaded zone. (PI between 4 and 7 and LL between about 12 and 25).
 - It is hard to distinguish between the silty and more claylike materials.
 - CL-ML: Silty clay, SC-SM: Silty, clayed sand.
 - Soil contain similar fines and coarse-grained fractions.
 - possible dual symbols GM-ML

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Organic Soils

- **Highly organic soils- Peat (Group symbol PT)**
 - A sample composed primarily of vegetable tissue in various stages of decomposition and has a fibrous to amorphous texture, a dark-brown to black color, and an organic odor should be designated as a highly organic soil and shall be classified as peat, PT.
- **Organic clay or silt(group symbol OL or OH):**
 - "The soil's liquid limit (LL) after oven drying is less than 75 % of its liquid limit before oven drying." If the above statement is true, then the first symbol is O.
 - The second symbol is obtained by locating the values of PI and LL (not oven dried) in the plasticity chart.

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Soil Engineering's Application

[illegible]

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Soil Engineering's Application

[illegible]

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Summary

- # Sieve analysis – for coarse grain soils
Hydrometer analysis - for fine grain soils
- # Classify coarse by GSD and
fines from Atterberg limits (PI-LL chart)

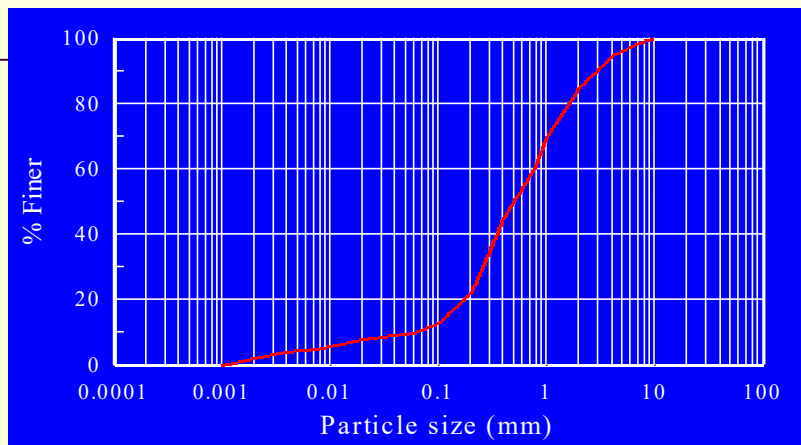
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Example 1



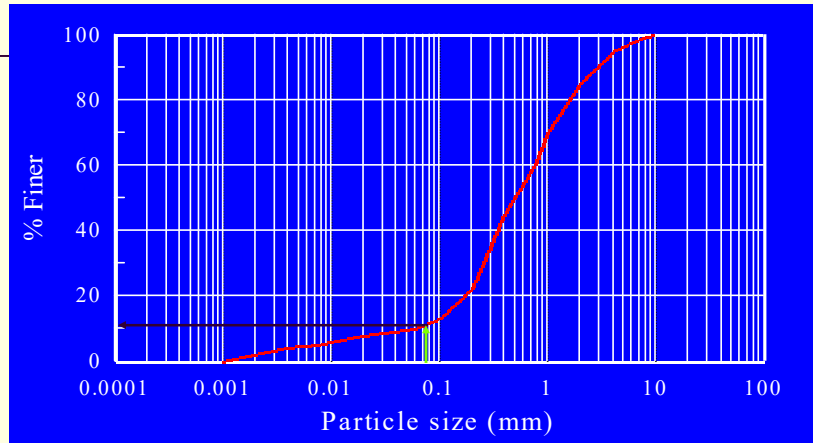
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Example 1



- %fines (% finer than 75 μm) = 11% - Dual symbols required

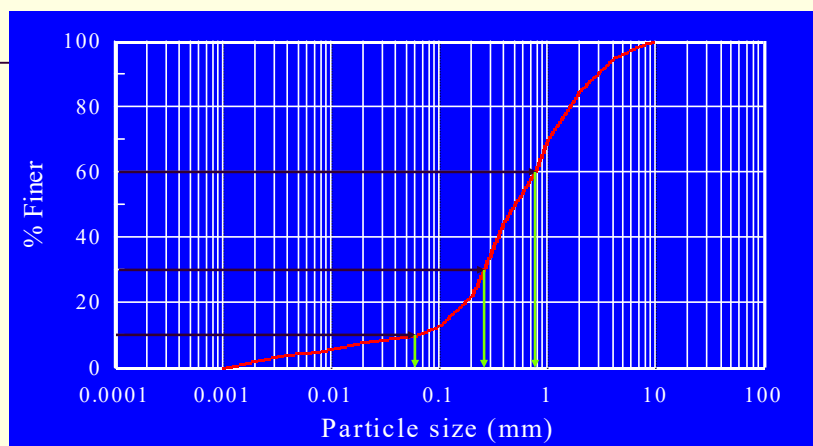
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Example 1



- %fines (% finer than 75 μm) = 11% - Dual symbols required
- $D_{10} = 0.06 \text{ mm}$, $D_{30} = 0.25 \text{ mm}$, $D_{60} = 0.75 \text{ mm}$

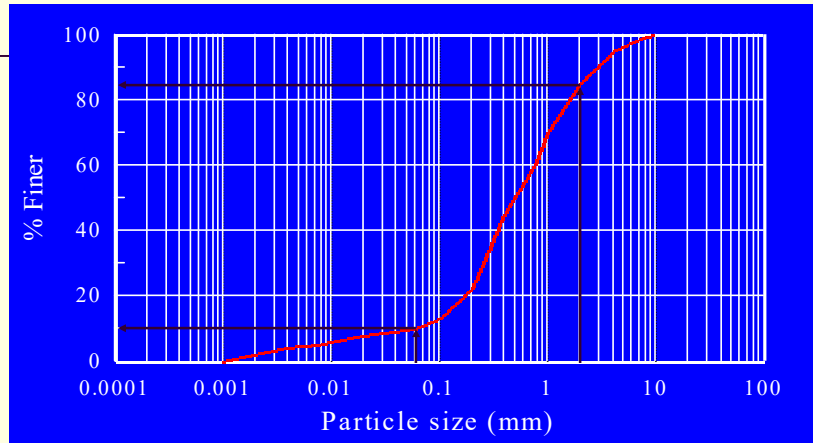
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Example 1



Particle size fractions: Gravel 17%
 Sand 73%
 Silt and Clay 10%

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Example 1

Of the coarse fraction about 80% is sand, hence Prefix is S

$$C_u = 12.5, C_c = 1.38$$

$$\text{Suffix}_1 = W$$

From Atterberg Tests

$$LL = 32, PL = 26$$

$$I_p = 32 - 26 = 6$$

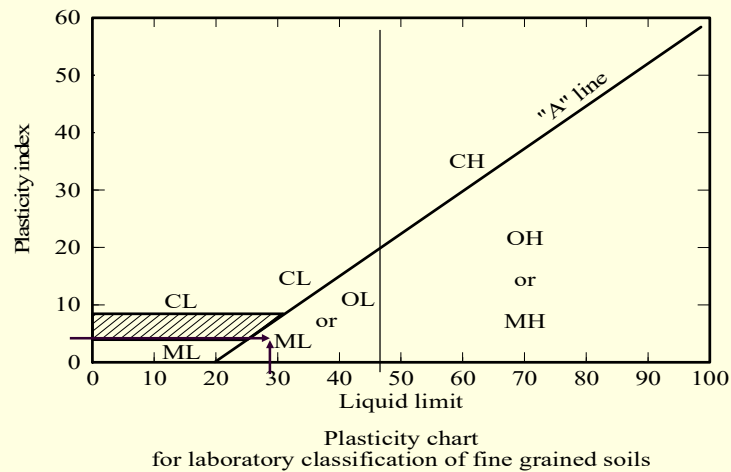
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Example 1



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Example 1

Of the coarse fraction about 80% is sand, hence Prefix is S

$$C_u = 12.5, C_c = 1.38$$

$$\text{Suffix}_1 = W$$

From Atterberg Tests

$$LL = 32, PL = 26$$

$$I_p = 32 - 26 = 6$$

From Plasticity Chart point lies below A-line

$$\text{Suffix}_2 = M$$

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Of the coarse fraction about 80% is sand, hence Prefix is S

$$C_u = 12.5, C_c = 1.38$$

$$\text{Suffix}_1 = W$$

From Atterberg Tests

$$LL = 32, PL = 26$$

$$I_p = 32 - 26 = 6$$

From Plasticity Chart point lies below A-line

$$\text{Suffix}_2 = M$$

Dual Symbols are SW-SM

To complete the classification the Symbols should be accompanied by a description

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Example 2

Passing No.200 sieve 30 %

LL= 33

Passing No.4 sieve 70 %

PI= 12

Passing No.200 sieve 30 %

Passing No.4 sieve 70 %

LL= 33

PI= 12

PI= 0.73(LL-20), A-line

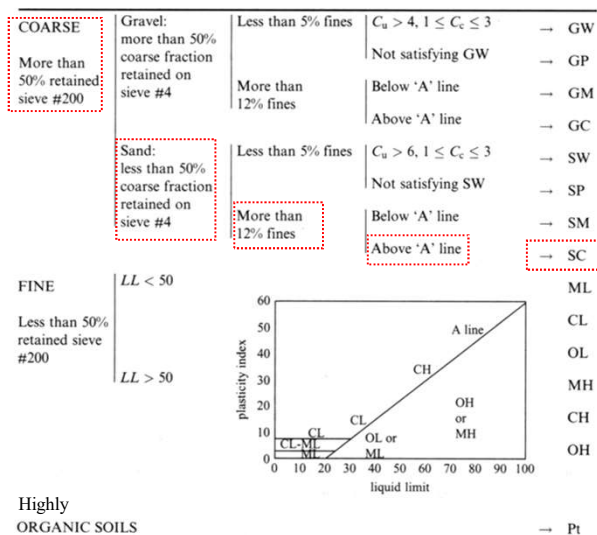
PI=0.73(33-20)=9.49

SC

(≥15% gravel)

Clayey sand with gravel

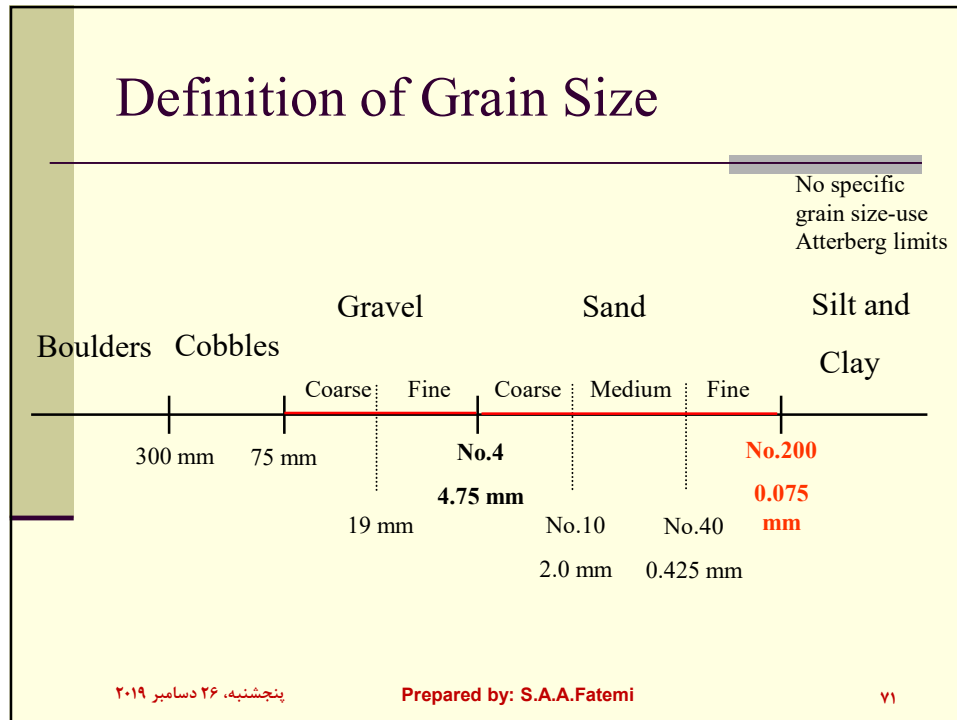
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(Santamarina et al., 2001)

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American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials system (AASHTO)

Origin of AASHTO: (For road construction)

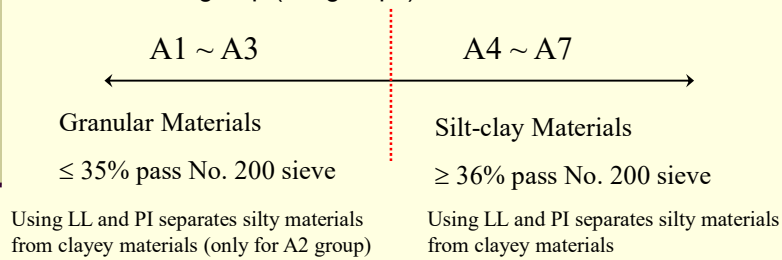
This system was originally developed by Hogentogler and Terzaghi in 1929 as the Public Roads Classification System. Afterwards, there are several revisions. The present AASHTO (1978) system is primarily based on the version in 1945. (Holtz and Kovacs, 1981)

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General Guidance

- 8 major groups: A1~ A7 (with several subgroups) and **organic soils A8**
- The required tests are sieve analysis and Atterberg limits.
- The group index, an empirical formula, is used to further evaluate soils within a group (subgroups).



- The original purpose of this classification system is used for road construction (subgrade rating).

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Group Index

$$GI = (F_{200} - 35)[0.2 + 0.005(LL - 40)] + 0.01(F_{200} - 15)(PI - 10)$$

For Group A-2-6 and A-2-7

$$GI = 0.01(F_{200} - 15)(PI - 10) \quad \text{use the second term only}$$

F200: percentage passing through the No.200 sieve

In general, the rating for a pavement subgrade is inversely proportional to the group index, GI.

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Classification

General classification	Granular materials (35% or less of total sample passing No. 200)						
	A-1			A-2			
Group classification	A-1-a	A-1-b	A-3	A-2-4	A-2-5	A-2-6	A-2-7
Sieve analysis (percentage passing)							
No. 10	50 max.						
No. 40	30 max.	50 max.	51 min.				
No. 200	15 max.	25 max.	10 max.	35 max.	35 max.	35 max.	35 max.
Characteristics of fraction passing No. 40							
Liquid limit				40 max.	41 min.	40 max.	41 min.
Plasticity index	6 max.		NP	10 max.	10 max.	11 min.	11 min.
Usual types of significant constituent materials	Stone fragments, gravel, and sand			Silty or clayey gravel and sand			
General subgrade rating				Excellent to good			

Das, 1998

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Classification (Cont.)

General classification	Silt-clay materials (more than 35% of total sample passing No. 200)			
				A-7 A-7-5 ^a A-7-6 ^b
Group classification	A-4	A-5	A-6	
Sieve analysis (percentage passing)				
No. 10				
No. 40				
No. 200	36 min.	36 min.	36 min.	36 min.
Characteristics of fraction passing No. 40				
Liquid limit	40 max.	41 min.	40 max.	41 min.
Plasticity index	10 max.	10 max.	11 min.	11 min.
Usual types of significant constituent materials	Silty soils		Clayey soils	
General subgrade rating	Fair to poor			

^a For A-7-5, $PI \leq LL - 30$

^b For A-7-6, $PI > LL - 30$

Das, 1998

Note:

The first group from the left to fit the test data is the correct AASHTO classification.

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Example

Passing No.200 86%
 LL=70, PI=32
 LL-30=40 > PI=32

$$GI = (F_{200} - 35) \left[0.2 + 0.005(LL - 40) \right] + 0.01(F_{200} - 15)(PI - 10)$$

$$= 33.47 \approx 33 \quad \text{Round off}$$

A-7-5(33)

General classification		Silt-clay materials (more than 35% of total sample passing No. 200)			
Group classification	A-4	A-5	A-6	A-7 A-7-5 ^a A-7-6 ^b	
Sieve analysis (percentage passing)					
No. 10					
No. 40					
No. 200					
Characteristics of fraction passing No. 40					
Liquid limit	40 max.	41 min.	40 max.	41 min.	
Plasticity index	10 max.	10 max.	11 min.	11 min.	
Usual types of significant constituent materials	Silty soils			Clayey soils	
General subgrade rating	Fair to poor				

For A-7-5, $PI \leq LL - 30$
 For A-7-6, $PI > LL - 30$

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Soil Description

Soil structure is related to:

- Shape
- Size
- Mineralogy
- Combination of water and soil

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