

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CALTRANS)

UNIFIED SOIL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

UNIFIED SOIL CLASSIFICATION AND SYMBOL CHART			
COARSE-GRAINED SOILS (more than 50% of material is larger than No. 200 sieve size.)			
GRAVELS More than 50% of coarse fraction larger than No. 4 sieve size	Clean Gravels (Less than 5% fines)		
		GW	Well-graded gravels, gravel-sand mixtures, little or no fines
		GP	Poorly-graded gravels, gravel-sand mixtures, little or no fines
	Gravels with fines (More than 12% fines)		
		GM	Silty gravels, gravel-sand-silt mixtures
		GC	Clayey gravels, gravel-sand-clay mixtures
SANDS 50% or more of coarse fraction smaller than No. 4 sieve size	Clean Sands (Less than 5% fines)		
		SW	Well-graded sands, gravelly sands, little or no fines
		SP	Poorly graded sands, gravelly sands, little or no fines
	Sands with fines (More than 12% fines)		
		SM	Silty sands, sand-silt mixtures
		SC	Clayey sands, sand-clay mixtures
FINE-GRAINED SOILS (50% or more of material is smaller than No. 200 sieve size.)			
SILTS AND CLAYS Liquid limit less than 50%		ML	Inorganic silts and very fine sands, rock flour, silty of clayey fine sands or clayey silts with slight plasticity
		CL	Inorganic clays of low to medium plasticity, gravelly clays, sandy clays, silty clays, lean clays
		OL	Organic silts and organic silty clays of low plasticity
SILTS AND CLAYS Liquid limit 50% or greater		MH	Inorganic silts, micaceous or diatomaceous fine sandy or silty soils, elastic silts
		CH	Inorganic clays of high plasticity, fat clays
		OH	Organic clays of medium to high plasticity, organic silts
HIGHLY ORGANIC SOILS		PT	Peat and other highly organic soils

LABORATORY CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA		
GW	$C_u = \frac{D_{60}}{D_{10}}$ greater than 4; $C_c = \frac{D_{30}}{D_{10} \times D_{60}}$ between 1 and 3	
GP	Not meeting all gradation requirements for GW	
GM	Atterberg limits below "A" line or P.I. less than 4	Above "A" line with P.I. between 4 and 7 are borderline cases requiring use of dual symbols
GC	Atterberg limits above "A" line with P.I. greater than 7	
SW	$C_u = \frac{D_{60}}{D_{10}}$ greater than 4; $C_c = \frac{D_{30}}{D_{10} \times D_{60}}$ between 1 and 3	
SP	Not meeting all gradation requirements for GW	
SM	Atterberg limits below "A" line or P.I. less than 4	Limits plotting in shaded zone with P.I. between 4 and 7 are borderline cases requiring use of dual symbols.
SC	Atterberg limits above "A" line with P.I. greater than 7	

Determine percentages of sand and gravel from grain-size curve. Depending on percentage of fines (fraction smaller than No. 200 sieve size), coarse-grained soils are classified as follows:

Less than 5 percent GW, GP, SW, SP
More than 12 percent GM, GC, SM, SC
5 to 12 percent Borderline cases requiring dual symbols

