

Contents

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xxiii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	xxvi
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	xxix
CONTACT INFORMATION	xxix
DISCLAIMER	xxx
PART I CRYOSTAT DESIGN AND MATERIALS SELECTION	1
1 Introduction to Measurement Cryostats and Cooling Methods	3
1.1 Introduction	3
1.1.1 Organization of the book	4
1.1.2 The last step	5
1.1.3 Extra items	6
1.2 Cryogenic liquids	6
1.2.1 Pumping and pressurizing techniques for changing the bath temperature	9
Pumping	10
Pressurizing	12
1.2.2 Superfluid helium	12
1.3 Introduction to measurement cryostats	14
1.3.1 Checklist/guide to the most relevant sections of this book, depending on cryostat type	15
Temperature	16
Transport current	16
Magnetic field	17
Mechanical properties	18
1.4 Examples of measurement cryostats and cooling methods—low transport current (≤ 1 A)	18
1.4.1 Introduction	18
1.4.2 Dipper probes	19
1.4.3 Liquid-flow cryostats	24
1.4.4 Cryocoolers	25
1.4.5 Pulse-tube cryocooler	26
1.4.6 Gas-flow cryostats	28

1.5 Examples of measurement cryostats and cooling methods—high transport current (≥ 1 A)	30
1.5.1 Immersion test apparatus	30
1.5.2 Variable-temperature high-current measurement cryostats	32
1.5.3 Measurements near the superfluid-transition temperature	32
Lambda-point refrigerator	33
Saturated-liquid-container refrigerator	34
1.5.4 Variable-angle cryostats for measurements in a magnetic field	36
1.6 Addenda: safety and cryogen handling	37
1.6.1 Safety: how we can go wrong	37
Cryogenic problems	37
Less common cryogenic problems	38
Vacuum foibles	39
Unhealthy materials	39
1.6.2 Transferring cryogenic liquids	40
Liquid nitrogen	40
Liquid helium	41
Procedure for transferring liquid helium	42
Helium-transfer problems	43
1.7 References	45
1.7.1 Further reading	45
1.7.2 Chapter references	46
2 Heat Transfer at Cryogenic Temperatures	49
2.1 Introduction	49
2.2 Heat conduction through solids	50
2.3 Heat conduction through gases (and liquids)	52
2.3.1 Normal pressure (hydrodynamic case)	54
2.3.2 Low pressure (free-molecule case)	55
2.4 Radiative heat transfer	55
2.4.1 Superinsulation/multilayer insulation	57
2.5 Heat conduction across <i>liquid/solid</i> interfaces	59
2.5.1 Liquid-helium/solid interfaces	59
2.5.2 Liquid-nitrogen/solid interfaces	61
2.6 Heat conduction across <i>solid/solid</i> interfaces	62
2.6.1 Solder joints	64
2.6.2 Varnish and glue joints	64

2.6.3 Pressed contacts and heat switches	65
2.6.4 To grease, or not to grease?	66
2.7 Heat conduction across <i>solid/gas</i> interfaces	67
2.8 Other heat sources	69
2.8.1 Joule heating	69
2.8.2 Thermoacoustic oscillations	70
2.8.3 Superfluid-helium creep	71
2.8.4 Adsorption and desorption of exchange gas	71
2.9 Examples of heat-transfer calculation	72
2.9.1 Case 1: simple dipper probe immersed in liquid helium	72
2.9.2 Case 2: dipper probe operated in variable-temperature mode in a superconducting magnet	76
2.9.3 Case 3: variable-temperature sample chamber	81
2.10 References	82
2.10.1 Further reading	82
2.10.2 Material property information on the internet	83
2.10.3 Chapter references	83
3 Cryostat Construction	87
3.1 Introduction	87
3.2 Material selection for cryostat parts	88
3.2.1 Room-temperature intuition generally does not work	88
3.2.2 Personalities of materials at low temperatures	90
Thermal conductivity	90
Thermal contraction	92
Heat capacity	93
Mechanical properties	94
Magnetic susceptibility	97
3.3 Joining techniques	98
3.3.1 Introduction	98
Temporary joining techniques	98
Permanent joining techniques	100
3.3.2 Welding	101
3.3.3 Brazing	103
3.3.4 Soldering	104
The right flux	106
Superconducting properties of solder	107

Low-melting-temperature solders	107
Soldering aluminum—a tough case	108
3.3.5 Sticky stuff	108
3.4 Construction example for a basic dipper probe	109
3.5 Sizing of parts for mechanical strength	113
3.5.1 Yield strength	113
3.5.2 Euler buckling criterion	114
3.5.3 Deflection of beams and plates	116
3.5.4 Pressure and vacuum loading	118
3.6 Mechanical motion at cryogenic temperature	120
3.7 Vacuum techniques and seals for cryogenic use	122
3.7.1 Introduction to cryogenic vacuum technology	122
3.7.2 Preparing cryogenic vacuum spaces	123
3.7.3 Leak detectors	124
3.7.4 Cryogenic vacuum seals	125
Commercial vacuum seals for cryogenic use	126
Indium O-ring vacuum seals	127
3.7.5 Vacuum-duct sizing (hydrodynamic flow)	129
3.8 Addenda: high and ultrahigh vacuum techniques	131
3.8.1 Vacuum-duct sizing (free-molecular flow)	131
3.8.2 Pump speed and ultimate pressure	132
3.8.3 Sources of gas in a vacuum system	135
Vacuum vessel leaks	135
Virtual leaks	135
Degassing of materials	135
Vapor pressure of solids	138
Permeation of gases through materials	140
3.9 References	146
3.9.1 Further reading	146
3.9.2 Properties of solids: internet information	147
3.9.3 Chapter references	147
4 Wiring and Connections	150
4.1 Introduction	150
4.1.1 General guidelines	150
4.1.2 DC and low-frequency (≤ 10 kHz) wiring	151

4.1.3 AC high-frequency wiring	152
4.1.4 Wiring installation techniques	153
4.2 Wire selection	154
4.2.1 Wire selection for cryostat design	154
4.2.2 Wire material properties	155
4.3 Insulation selection	157
4.4 Heat sinks for instrumentation leads	157
4.4.1 Wire-anchoring techniques	159
4.4.2 Length of wire needed for thermal anchoring	159
4.4.3 Beryllium-oxide heat-sink chips	160
4.5 Solder connections	161
4.5.1 Solder-joint cracking after repeated thermal cycling	162
4.5.2 Soldering to thin silver or gold films—the magical disappearing act	162
4.5.3 Superconducting-solder artifacts	162
4.6 Sensitive dc voltage leads: techniques for minimizing thermoelectric voltages	163
4.6.1 Connection techniques for low-thermoelectric voltages	163
4.6.2 Voltmeter connections	165
4.7 Vacuum electrical lead-throughs	166
4.7.1 Room-temperature lead-throughs	166
Nonvacuum connector boxes	167
Vacuum connector boxes	168
Vacuum lead-throughs for low-thermoelectric-voltage leads	170
4.7.2 Cryogenic vacuum lead-throughs	171
4.8 Radio-frequency coaxial cables	172
4.8.1 Heat-sinking	172
4.8.2 Vacuum-sealing	173
4.8.3 Superconducting rf transmission lines	174
4.9 High-current leads	174
4.9.1 Copper wire: optimum diameters	174
4.9.2 Vapor-cooled leads, or how to beat the Wiedemann–Franz–Lorenz law	177
4.9.3 Superconductor leads	179
4.10 Flexible current leads	181
4.11 References	182
4.11.1 Further reading	182
4.11.2 Chapter references	183

5 Temperature Measurement and Control	185
5.1 Thermometer selection (1–300 K)	186
5.1.1 Thermometer overview	186
5.1.2 Thermometer-selection characteristics	189
5.1.3 General recommendations: examples of thermometer selection for several common measurement situations	192
Temperature measurements in zero magnetic field	192
Temperature measurements in <i>magnetic fields</i>	194
5.1.4 Small sensing elements	195
5.1.5 Thermometry in the presence of nuclear radiation	196
Gamma radiation	196
Neutron radiation	196
5.1.6 Calibration	196
5.2 Selection of thermometers for use in high magnetic fields	198
5.2.1 Comparison of magnetic errors for commercial thermometers	198
5.2.2 Correcting magnetic temperature error in the best sensors	200
5.3 Thermometer installation and measurement procedures	202
5.3.1 Thermal anchoring of thermometers and their leads	202
5.3.2 Thermal anchoring of samples (while maintaining electrical isolation)	204
5.3.3 Thermometer location	206
5.3.4 Thermal radiation and eddy-current heating	206
5.3.5 Electrical instrumentation for thermometer sensors	207
5.3.6 Operational checkout	208
Self-heating problems	208
Direct check of the temperature error between thermometer and sample	209
5.4 Controlling temperature	210
5.4.1 Pumped liquid refrigerants	210
5.4.2 Resistance heaters	210
5.4.3 Temperature controllers	211
5.5 Addendum: reference compendium of cryogenic-thermometer properties and application techniques	214
5.5.1 Platinum resistance thermometers	214
5.5.2 Rhodium–iron resistance thermometers	216
5.5.3 Germanium resistance thermometers	216
5.5.4 Zirconium–oxynitride resistance thermometers	218
5.5.5 Carbon–glass thermometers	219
5.5.6 Bismuth–ruthenate and ruthenium-oxide thermometers	219
5.5.7 Silicon diodes	220

5.5.8 GaAlAs diodes	221
5.5.9 Thermocouples	221
5.5.10 Capacitance thermometers	222
5.5.11 Carbon resistance thermometers	223
5.6 References	223
5.6.1 Further reading	223
5.6.2 Chapter references	225
6 Properties of Solids at Low Temperatures	226
6.1 Specific heat and thermal diffusivity	227
6.1.1 Design data and materials selection	227
6.1.2 Debye model	228
6.1.3 Estimating the cost of cooling cryostat parts using the Debye model	230
6.1.4 Thermal diffusivity	231
6.2 Thermal expansion/contraction	233
6.2.1 Design data and materials selection—great differences among resins, metals, and glasses	233
6.2.2 Estimating thermal expansion between arbitrary temperatures	238
6.2.3 Calculating thermal stresses	239
6.3 Electrical resistivity	240
6.3.1 Design data and materials selection: dependence of electrical resistivity on temperature and purity	240
6.3.2 Residual resistivity ρ_{res} and defect scattering	241
6.3.3 Ideal resistivity $\rho_i(T)$ and phonon scattering	243
Bloch–Grüneisen formula: it does not work	244
Umklapp scattering	245
6.3.4 Matthiessen’s rule—a simple method of estimating the total electrical resistivity of nearly pure metals at arbitrary temperatures	246
6.3.5 Summary of important points for normal metals	247
6.3.6 Superconductors	248
6.4 Thermal conductivity	248
6.4.1 Design data and materials selection	248
6.4.2 Electronic thermal conductivity in metals	250
Wiedemann–Franz–Lorenz law	251
6.4.3 Phonon thermal conductivity in insulators	252
6.5 Magnetic susceptibility	252
6.5.1 Design data and materials selection	252
6.5.2 High-field measurements—forces, forces	254

6.6 Mechanical properties	255
6.6.1 Tensile properties	256
6.6.2 Fracture toughness	261
6.6.3 Fatigue	262
6.6.4 Creep	264
6.6.5 Mechanical properties of technical materials: synopsis	264
6.7 References	265
6.7.1 Further reading	265
6.7.2 Properties of solids: internet information	266
6.7.3 Chapter references	267
PART II ELECTRICAL TRANSPORT MEASUREMENTS: SAMPLE HOLDERS AND CONTACTS	271
7 Sample Holders	273
 7.1 General principles for sample-holder design	273
 7.2 Four-lead and two-lead electrical transport measurements	274
 7.3 Bulk sample holders	276
7.3.1 Requirement 1: sample temperature uniformity and control	276
Temperature nonuniformity from variable convective cooling	276
Temperature nonuniformity from Joule heating	279
Practical illustrations of bulk sample holders	280
7.3.2 Requirement 2: thermal contraction of the sample holder and strain-free mounting techniques	282
Choosing a sample holder with a thermal contraction that matches the sample	283
7.3.3 Requirement 3: instrumentation wiring—keep the loop area small	288
7.3.4 Requirement 4: voltage-tap placement and current-contact lengths	290
Strange voltages of the first kind: the current-transfer length	291
More strange voltages: the twist-pitch effect	293
7.3.5 Requirement 5: support your sample!	296
7.3.6 Procedures for mounting long superconductor samples	298
 7.4 Thin-film sample holders	301
7.4.1 Requirement 1: temperature control and uniformity	301
7.4.2 Requirement 2: stress from differential thermal contraction	303
7.4.3 Requirement 3: lead attachment to the sample's contact pads	303
Wire/ribbon bonds	304
Pogo pins	306

Fuzz buttons	307
Beryllium–copper microsprings	308
Thin-film transport measurements without patterning	309
7.4.4 Requirement 4: voltage taps—noise pickup and current-transfer lengths	311
7.5 Addenda	312
7.5.1 Thermal runaway (quench)	312
7.5.2 Multifilamentary geometry of practical high-current superconductor composites	312
7.6 References	315
7.6.1 Further reading	315
7.6.2 Chapter references	316
8 Sample Contacts	317
8.1 Introduction	317
8.2 Definition of specific contact resistivity and values for practical applications	318
8.3 Contact techniques for high-current superconductors	320
8.3.1 Overview for high-current superconductors	320
8.3.2 Voltage contacts	320
Soldered voltage contacts	321
Wetting the oxides	321
Pressure contacts	322
Silver paint, paste, and epoxy	323
8.3.3 Current contacts for oxide high- T_c superconductors	323
Pressed-indium contacts	323
High-current contacts—failures	324
Interfacial chemistry	324
Fabrication procedures for high-quality HTS current contacts	326
Soldering to noble-metal contact pads	331
Silver-sheathed HTS materials	332
8.3.4 Measuring contact resistivity	332
8.4 Contact techniques for film superconductors	333
8.4.1 Overview for film superconductors	333
8.4.2 Contacts for oxide high- T_c superconductor films	334
In situ vs. ex situ contacts	334
Cleaning etch	335
Noble-metal deposition and thickness	337
Film contact annealing	337
8.4.3 Measuring film/contact interface resistivity	339

8.5 Example calculations of minimum contact area	341
8.5.1 Nb–Ti at 4 K	341
Contacts immersed in liquid helium	341
Contacts in helium gas or vacuum	342
8.5.2 Nb ₃ Sn at 4 K: resistive-matrix contribution	343
8.5.3 High- T_c superconductors at 77 K	344
Contacts in nitrogen gas or vacuum	346
8.6 Spreading-resistance effect in thin contact pads and example calculations	346
8.6.1 YBCO-coated-conductor contacts	347
8.6.2 Thin-film contacts	348
8.7 References	349
8.7.1 Further reading	349
8.7.2 Chapter references	350

PART III SUPERCONDUCTOR CRITICAL-CURRENT MEASUREMENTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

9 Critical-Current Measurements	353
9.1 Introduction	353
9.1.1 Transport method vs. contactless methods of measuring critical current	354
9.1.2 Defining critical-current density	355
9.1.3 The overall picture: dependence of critical current on magnetic field, temperature, and strain	357
9.1.4 Test configurations	359
Transmission-line applications	359
Magnet and rotating-machinery applications	359
Thin-film electronic applications	360
9.2 Instrumentation	361
9.2.1 Setting up a critical-current measurement system	361
Sample current supply	362
Thermal-runaway protection circuits	363
Voltmeter	364
Magnet power supplies	364
Pulsed-current measurements	365
9.2.2 Wiring check-out for a new system	366
9.3 Measurement procedures	366
9.3.1 General troubleshooting tips	367

9.3.2 Critical-current measurement procedures	367
The V -/curve reversal point	368
Sample stability	368
Data-acquisition protocol to avoid sample burnout and ensure good data	368
Curve shape: the “who’s who” in problem identification	370
9.3.3 Automatic data-acquisition programs	372
Introduction and general approach	372
Program architecture: simple data loggers	373
Program architecture: data acquisition with automated current control	374
9.4 Examples of critical-current measurement cryostats	377
9.4.1 Critical current vs. magnetic field	378
9.4.2 Critical current vs. the angle of magnetic field	378
9.4.3 Critical current vs. temperature	380
Low-current variable-temperature cryostats	380
High-current variable-temperature cryostats	381
9.4.4 Critical current vs. axial strain	383
Stress-free cooling cryostats	384
Bending-beam cryostats	386
Variable-temperature strain measurements	388
Ring-coil hoop-stress measurements	388
9.4.5 Critical current vs. bending strain	391
9.5 References	392
9.5.1 Further reading	392
9.5.2 Chapter references	393
10 Critical-Current Data Analysis	395
10.1 Practical critical-current definitions	396
10.1.1 Electric-field criterion	396
10.1.2 Resistivity criterion	399
10.1.3 Offset criterion	400
10.1.4 Summary of the advantages and disadvantages of the different criteria	402
10.1.5 Transforming to a more sensitive criterion	403
10.2 Current-transfer correction	404
10.2.1 Introduction	404
10.2.2 Back-extrapolation correction method: extend the V -/ I curve to high voltage	405
10.2.3 Baseline method: what to do if thermal runaway prevents extending the V -/ I curve to high voltages	407
10.3 Magnetic-field dependence of critical current	408
10.3.1 Introduction	408

10.3.2 General function for the magnetic-field dependence of critical current in low- T_c superconductors	412
10.3.3 Method for magnetic-field interpolations and extrapolations	413
10.3.4 Effect of B_{C2} inhomogeneity on the shape of the I_c - B characteristics of low- T_c superconductors	418
10.3.5 Effect of weak links on the shape of the I_c - B characteristics of high- T_c superconductors	419
10.3.6 Improvement of J_c - B characteristics from grain alignment in high- T_c superconductors	421
10.4 Temperature dependence of critical current	424
10.4.1 Introduction	424
10.4.2 Critical field vs. temperature	424
10.4.3 Critical current vs. temperature	425
10.4.4 Linear method for calculating temperature changes in the critical current	426
10.5 Strain-induced changes in the critical current	432
10.5.1 Introduction	432
Reversible strain effect	434
Irreversible strain limit	436
10.5.2 Bending strain effects	437
10.5.3 Axial-strain effects	439
10.5.4 Strain scaling law for low- T_c superconductors	440
10.5.5 Nearly universal effect of strain on the upper critical field	442
10.5.6 High-compressive-strain range	446
10.5.7 Example: application of the strain scaling law	449
10.6 Transformation method for simplified application of scaling relations	456
10.6.1 Transformation method	456
Stain-scaling transformations	458
10.6.2 Example: transformation method for calculating strain changes in the critical current	459
10.6.3 Temperature scaling law	461
Temperature-scaling transformations	462
10.7 Unified strain-and-temperature scaling law and transformations	464
10.7.1 Unified scaling law—basic relation	464
Separable form	466
10.7.2 Parameterization of the unified strain-and-temperature scaling law over the intrinsic peak range ($-0.5\% < \varepsilon_0 < +0.4\%$)	468
10.7.3 General parameterization of the unified strain-and-temperature scaling law for strains extending to high compression ($\varepsilon_0 < -0.5\%$)	471

10.7.4 Methods for determining parameter values	474
10.7.5 Transformation method for simplified application of the unified scaling law	478
Unified-scaling transformations	479
Intrinsic peak range ($-0.5\% < \varepsilon_0 < +0.4\%$)	480
High-compressive-strain range	481
Example: transformation method for calculating combined strain-and-temperature changes in the critical current	482
10.8 References	485
10.8.1 Further reading	485
10.8.2 Chapter references	486
Appendices	491–626
Data handbook of materials properties and cryostat design	
(see inside back cover for appendix contents)	
INDEX	627