

In the petroleum industry, however, the specific gravity of oil is normally expressed in degrees of API (American Petroleum Institute) gravity. In this measuring scheme, oil with a low specific gravity has a high API gravity and, other factors being equal, the higher the API gravity the more valuable the oil. The formula for calculating API gravity is

$$^{\circ}\text{API} = \frac{141.5}{\text{specific gravity } 60^{\circ}} - 131.5$$

where the divisor is the specific gravity of a 60°API gravity oil measured at 60°F (15.6°C). The following table shows the equivalence between API gravity and specific gravity.

Most crude oils fall within the range of 25° to 40° API gravity. Canada's conventional crude oil production averages a little higher than 35° API. Lloydminster heavy crude is about 16° and Athabasca bitumen roughly 8° to 9° API.

Table A-4: THE EQUIVALENCE BETWEEN API GRAVITY AND SPECIFIC GRAVITY

°API Gravity	Specific Gravity	Barrels/Tonne
0	1.076	5.86
10	1.000	6.30
15	0.9659	6.53
20	0.9340	6.75
26	0.8984	7.02
30	0.8762	7.19
36	0.8448	7.46
40	0.8251	7.64
46	0.7972	7.91
50	0.7796	8.09
60	0.7389	8.53

Source: Hunt, 1979, p. 544.