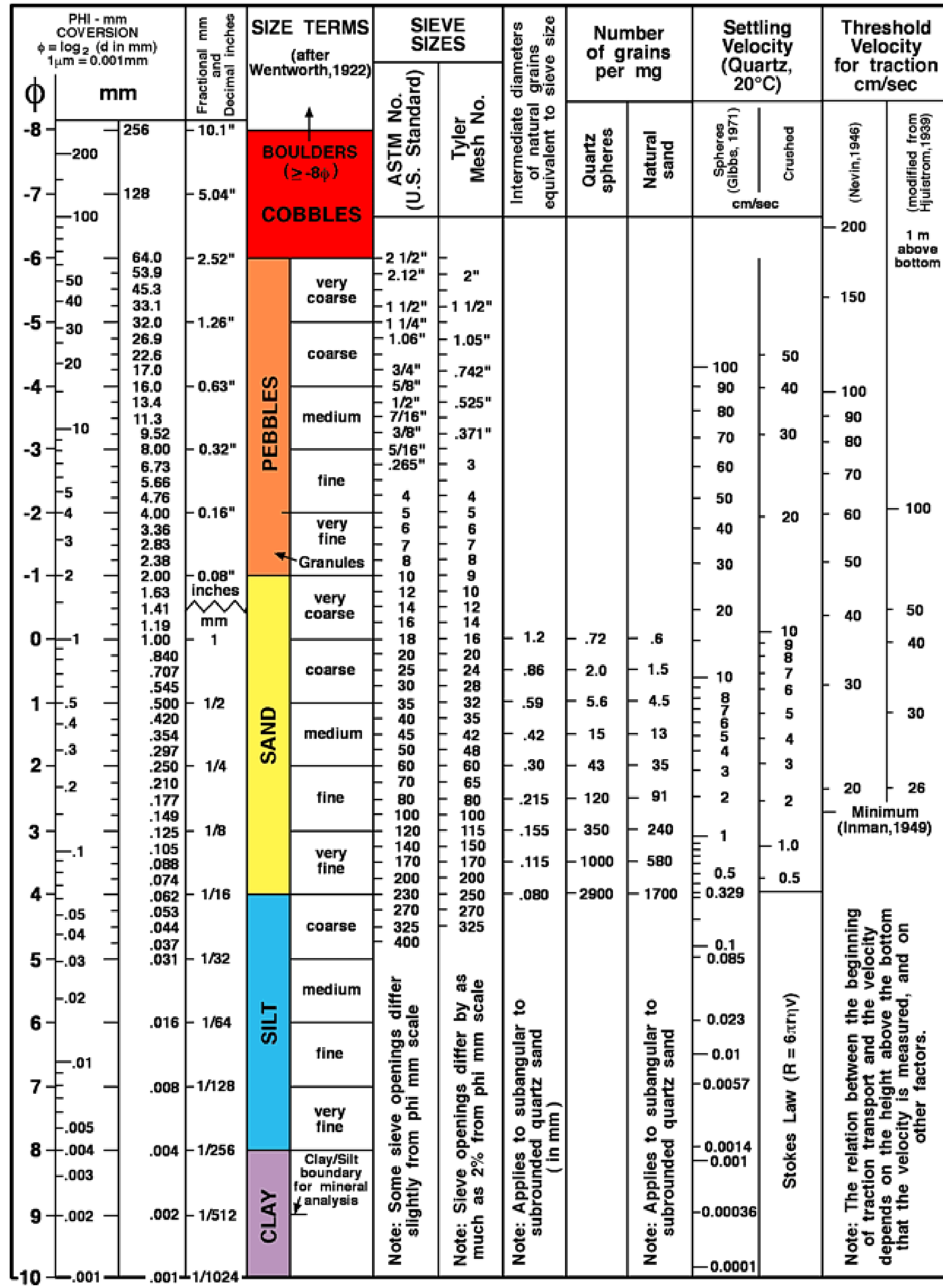
Part II: Physical Properties of Sedimentary Rocks

Chapter 3. Sedimentary Textures

Sedimentary texture (usually is of “grain-scale”) refers to the size, shape, and arrangement of the grains that make up a sedimentary rock.

3.2 **Grain size** (gravel to mud, grain-size variation (sorting))
3.3 **Particle shape** (form, roundness, surface texture)
3.4 **Grain fabric** (grain orientation, grain-to-grain relations)



3.2 Grain size

Table 3.1 The Wentworth grain-size scale for sediments, showing Wentworth size classes, equivalent phi (ϕ) units, and sieve numbers of U.S. Standard Sieves corresponding to various millimeter and ϕ sizes

	U.S. Standard sieve mesh	Millimeters		Phi (ϕ) units	Wentworth size class
GRAVEL		4096		−12	
GRAVEL		1024		−10	Boulder
GRAVEL		256	256	−8	
GRAVEL		64	64	−6	Cobble
GRAVEL		16		−4	Pebble
GRAVEL	5	4	4	−2	
GRAVEL	6	3.36		−1.75	
GRAVEL	7	2.83		−1.5	Granule
GRAVEL	8	2.38		−1.25	
GRAVEL	10	2.00	2	−1.0	
SAND	12	1.68		−0.75	
SAND	14	1.41		−0.5	Very coarse sand
SAND	16	1.19		−0.25	
SAND	18	1.00	1	0.0	
SAND	20	0.84		0.25	
SAND	25	0.71		0.5	Coarse sand
SAND	30	0.59		0.75	
SAND	35	0.50	½	1.0	
SAND	40	0.42		1.25	
SAND	45	0.35		1.5	Medium sand
SAND	50	0.30		1.75	
SAND	60	0.25	¼	2.0	
SAND	70	0.210		2.25	
SAND	80	0.177		2.5	Fine sand
SAND	100	0.149		2.75	
SAND	120	0.125	⅛	3.0	
SAND	140	0.105		3.25	
SAND	170	0.088		3.5	Very fine sand
SAND	200	0.074		3.75	
SAND	230	0.0625	1/16	4.0	
MUD – SILT	270	0.053		4.25	
MUD – SILT	325	0.044		4.5	Coarse silt
MUD – SILT		0.037		4.75	
MUD – SILT		0.031	1/32	5.0	
MUD – SILT		0.0156	1/64	6.0	Medium silt
MUD – SILT		0.0078	1/128	7.0	Fine silt
MUD – SILT		0.0039	1/256	8.0	Very fine silt
MUD – CLAY		0.0020		9.0	
MUD – CLAY		0.00098		10.0	Clay
MUD – CLAY		0.00049		11.0	
MUD – CLAY		0.00024		12.0	
MUD – CLAY		0.00012		13.0	
MUD – CLAY		0.00006		14.0	

3.2.1 Grain-size scales

1. Geometric scales: fixed ratio between successive elements. Udden-Wentworth scale (from < 1/256 mm to > 256 mm): each value in the scale is twice as large as the preceding value.

2. Logarithmic phi scale: A modification of Udden-Wentworth scale. Useful for graphical plotting and statistical calculations:

$$\phi = -\log_2 d$$

where ϕ is phi size and d is the grain diameter.

Boggs (2006), p.53

3.2.2 Measuring grain size

Table 3.2 Methods of measuring sediment grain size

Type of sample	Sample grade	Method of analysis
Unconsolidated sediment and disaggregated sedimentary rock	Boulders Cobbles Pebbles	Manual measurement of individual clasts
	Granules Sand Silt	Sieving, settling-tube analysis, image analysis
	Clay	Pipette analysis, sedimentation balances, photohydrometer, Sedigraph, laser-diffractometer, electro-resistance (e.g., Coulter counter)
Lithified sedimentary rock	Boulders Cobbles Pebbles	Manual measurement of individual clasts
	Granules Sand Silt	Thin-section measurement, image analysi
	Clay	Electron microscope

Boggs (2006), p.54

Settling-tube analysis (mainly for clay-sized particles)

A custom-made settling column that analyzes the grain-size composition of sediment samples by measuring the settling velocities of grains. (Coastal Geology and Process Laboratory, 中山大學海洋地質及地球化學研究所)

雷射粒徑分析儀

Beckman Coulter LS 13 320 Particle Size Analyzer

Particle Size Range	0.017 **µ**m - 2000 **µ**m
Typical Analysis Time	15 - 90 secs per sample
Illuminating Sources	Diffraction: Solid State (780 nm) PIDS: Tungsten lamp with high quality band-pass filters (450,600 and 900 nm)
Humidity	0 – 90% without condensation
Temperature	10 – 40 °C
Sample Modules	Aqueous Liquid Module (ALM) Auto Prep Station (APS)

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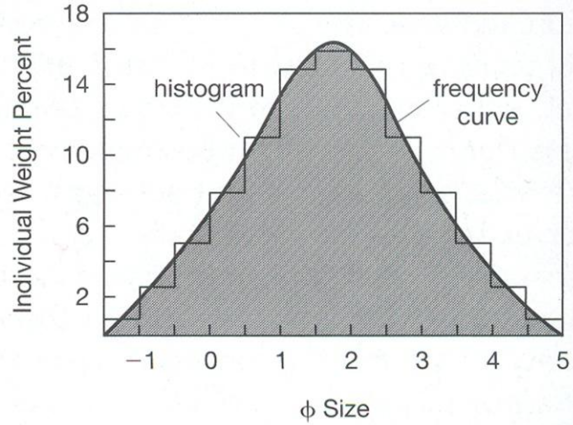
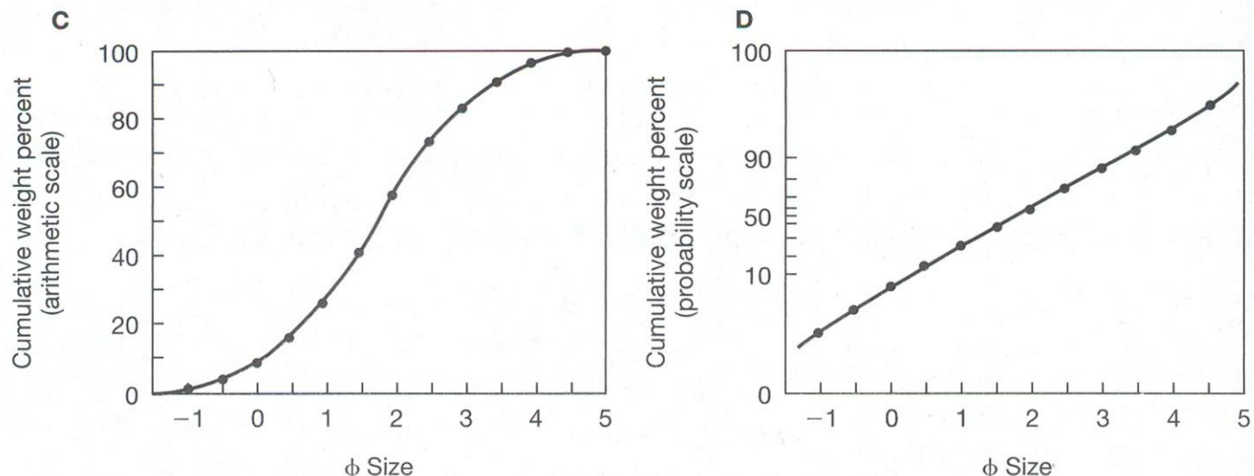
3.2.3 Graphical and mathematical treatment of grain-size data

Graphical methods (weight% vs. ψ)

ϕ Size	Raw weight (gm)	Individual weight percent	Cumulative weight percent
−1.0	0.43	0.5	0.5
−0.5	2.13	2.5	3.0
0.0	4.25	5.0	8.0
0.5	6.80	8.0	16.0
1.0	9.35	11.0	27.0
1.5	12.75	15.0	42.0
2.0	13.58	16.0	58.0
2.5	12.75	15.0	73.0
3.0	9.35	11.0	84.0
3.5	6.80	8.0	92.0
4.0	4.25	5.0	97.0
4.5	2.13	2.5	99.5
5.0	0.43	0.5	100.0
	85.00		





Cumulative curve (arithmetic ordinate): Typically S-shaped, the slope of the central part of this curve reflects the sorting of the sample.

Cumulative curve (log-probability ordinate): Typically straight line.

Fig. 3.1 Common visual methods of displaying grain-size data. A. Grain-size data table. B. Histogram and frequency curve plotted from data in A. C. Cumulative curve with an arithmetic ordinate scale. D. Cumulative curve with a probability ordinate scale.

Another example

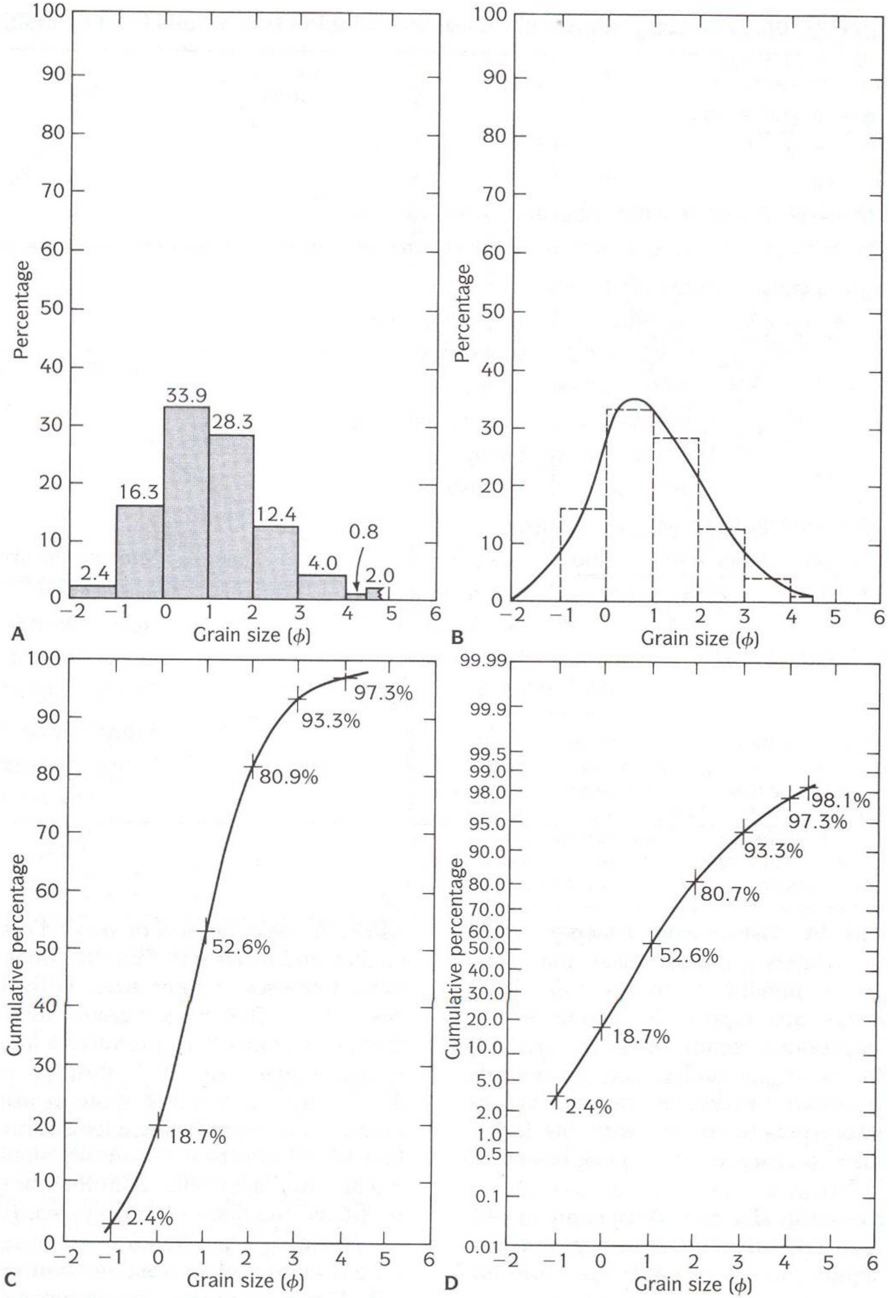


Figure 5.14

Results of a single sieve analysis displayed in various ways. (A) Histogram. (B) Noncumulative size-frequency curve. (C) Cumulative curve on normal graph paper with a standard arithmetic ordinate scale. (D) Cumulative curve on probability graph paper. The ordinate scale collapses the values in the center (the 10%–80% range) and stretches out the values on the tails (less than 10% and greater than 90%), making the curve in (C) into a straight line. On probability paper, therefore, each normal distribution plots as a straight line segment. The phi values can be read directly from these plots and plugged into the formulas shown in Table 5.3 to calculate statistics quickly and easily. (Modified from Blatt, 1992, *Sedimentary Petrology*, 2nd ed., Fig. 16-5, p. 474; by permission of W. H. Freeman, New York.)

Prothero & Schwab (1996) Sedimentary Geology, p. 87

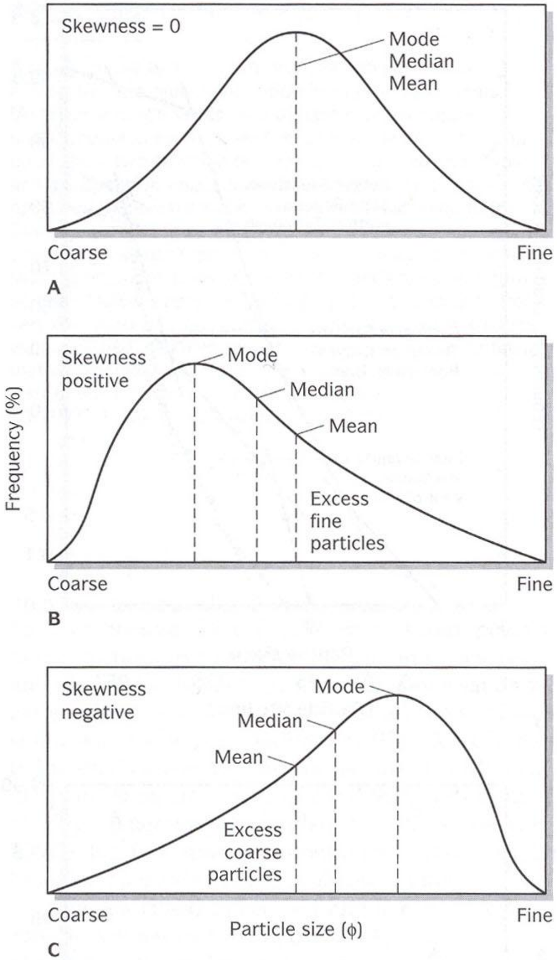


Figure 5.15

Size-frequency curves of three sediments having an identical sorting but different skewness. (A) Sediment is unskewed and shows a symmetrical distribution. Mean, mode, and median coincide. (B) Sediment is positively skewed; the coarser half of the population shows better sorting than the finer half (that is, both the median and the mode are shifted toward finer grain sizes). (C) Sediment is negatively skewed; the finer half of the population is better sorted than the coarser tail (both the median and the mean are shifted away from the mode toward the coarser grain sizes). (After Friedman and Sanders, 1978, *Principles of Sedimentology,* Fig. 3-18, p. 75; by permission of John Wiley, New York.)

Mathematical methods

- **Mode** - The most common grain size in the population (the highest point in the histogram plot or the steepest point (inflection point) on a cumulative curve).

- **Median** - The grain size for which 50% of the sample is finer. Note that these are *not* affected by the normality of the population.

- **Mean** - The average grain size in the deposit.

Graphic mean = $$\frac{\phi_{16} + \phi_{50} + \phi_{84}}{3}$$

For a normally (or log normally) distributed population; the mean, median, and mode are the same.

Prothero & Schwab (1996) Sedimentary Geology, p. 89

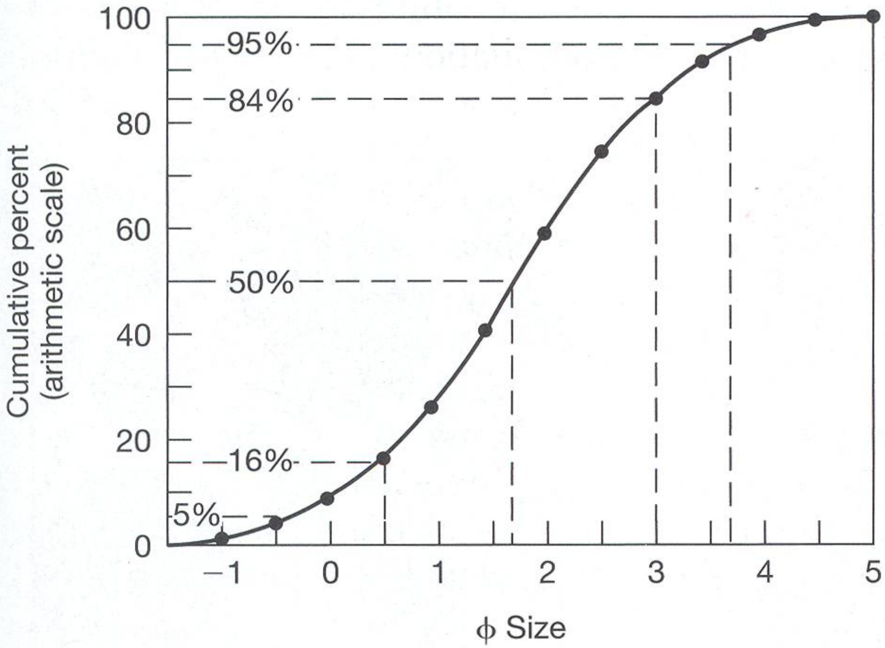


Fig. 3.2 Method for calculating percentile values from the cumulative curve.

Table. 3.1 Formulas for calculating grain-size statistical parameters by graphical methods.

Graphic mean	$M_z = \dfrac{\phi_{16} + \phi_{50} + \phi_{84}}{3}$	(1)
Inclusive graphic standard deviation	$\sigma_i = \dfrac{\phi_{84} - \phi_{16}}{4} + \dfrac{\phi_{95} - \phi_5}{6.6}$	(2)
Inclusive graphic skewness	$SK_t = \dfrac{(\phi_{84} + \phi_{16} - 2\phi_{50})}{2(\phi_{84} - \phi_{16})} + \dfrac{(\phi_{95} + \phi_5 - 2\phi_{50})}{2(\phi_{95} - \phi_5)}$	(3)
Graphic kurtosis	$K_G = \dfrac{(\phi_{95} - \phi_5)}{2.44(\phi_{75} - \phi_{25})}$	(4)

Source: Folk, R. L., and W. C. Ward, 1957, Brazos River bar: A study in the significance of grain-size parameters: *Jour. Sed. Petrology*, v. 27, p. 3–26.

Sorting – The range of grain sizes present and the magnitude of the spread or scatter of these sizes around the mean size. The mathematical expression of sorting is standard deviation, which is expressed in phi (ϕ).

Sorting (inclusive graphic standard deviation) =

$$\frac{\phi_{84}-\phi_{16}}{4}+\frac{\phi_{95}-\phi_{5}}{6.6}$$

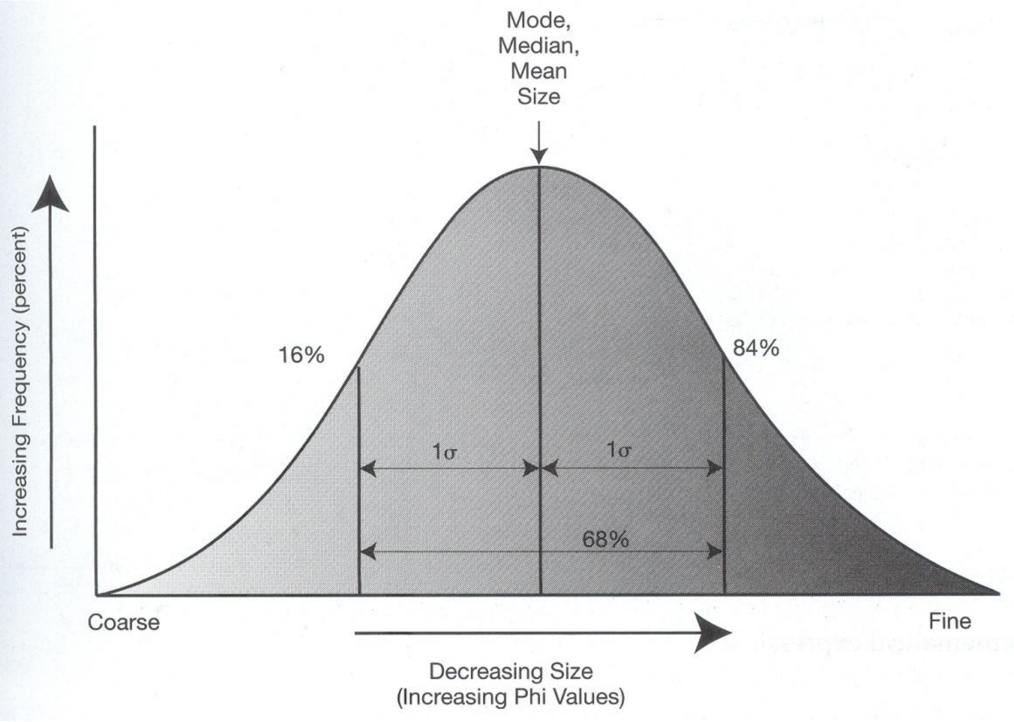


Fig. 3.4 Grain-size frequency curve for a normal distribution of phi values, showing the relationship of standard deviation to the mean, mode, and deviation (1σ) on either side of the mean size accounts for the frequency curve.

Standard Deviation (σ**)** - The measure of how large a range of variation of particle size occurs around the mean. In conventional statistics, one standard deviation encompasses the central 68% of the area under the frequency curve.

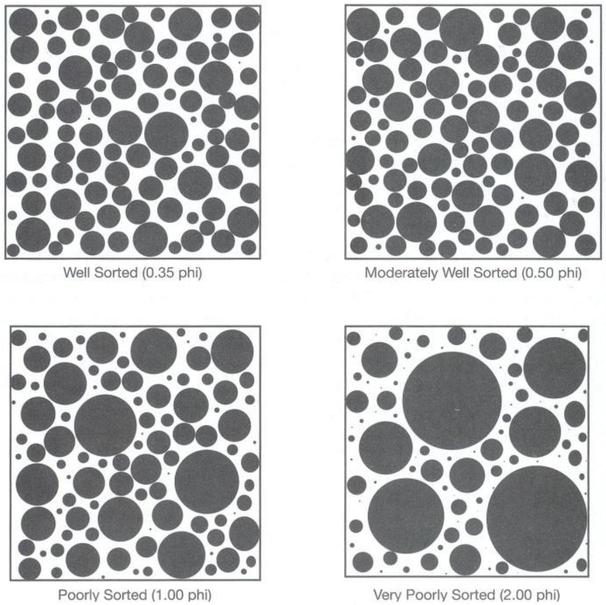


Fig. 3.3 Visual images for estimating grain-size sorting.

Standard Deviation	
$<0.35\phi$	very well sorted
$0.35-0.50\phi$	well sorted
$0.50-0.71\phi$	moderately well sorted
$0.71-1.00\phi$	moderately sorted
$1.00-2.00\phi$	poorly sorted
$2.00-4.00\phi$	very poorly sorted
$>4.00\phi$	extremely poorly sorted

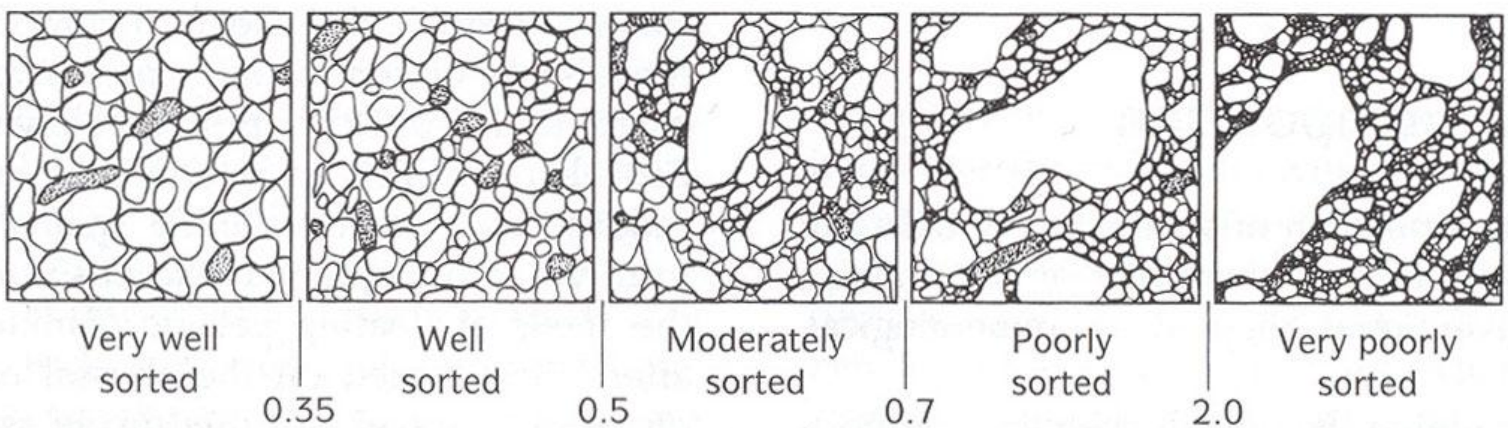


Figure 1.2

Sorting for cemented rocks

Prothero & Schwab (1996) Sedimentary Geology, p. 6

Standard images for visually estimating sorting. Numbers are sorting (standard deviation) values expressed in phi units that can be calculated using the standard formula shown in Table 5.3. (After Compton, 1962, *Manual of Field Geology*, p. 214; by permission of John Wiley, New York.)

Skewness (degree of asymmetry 歪斜度):

Skewness reflects sorting in the "tails" of a grain size population.

Skewness	
>+0.30	strongly fine skewed
+0.30 to +0.10	fine skewed
+0.10 to −0.10	near symmetrical
−0.10 to −0.30	coarse skewed
<−0.30	strongly coarse skewed

$$SK_t = \frac{(\phi_{84} + \phi_{16} - 2\phi_{50})}{2(\phi_{84} - \phi_{16})} + \frac{(\phi_{95} + \phi_5 - 2\phi_{50})}{2(\phi_{95} - \phi_5)}$$

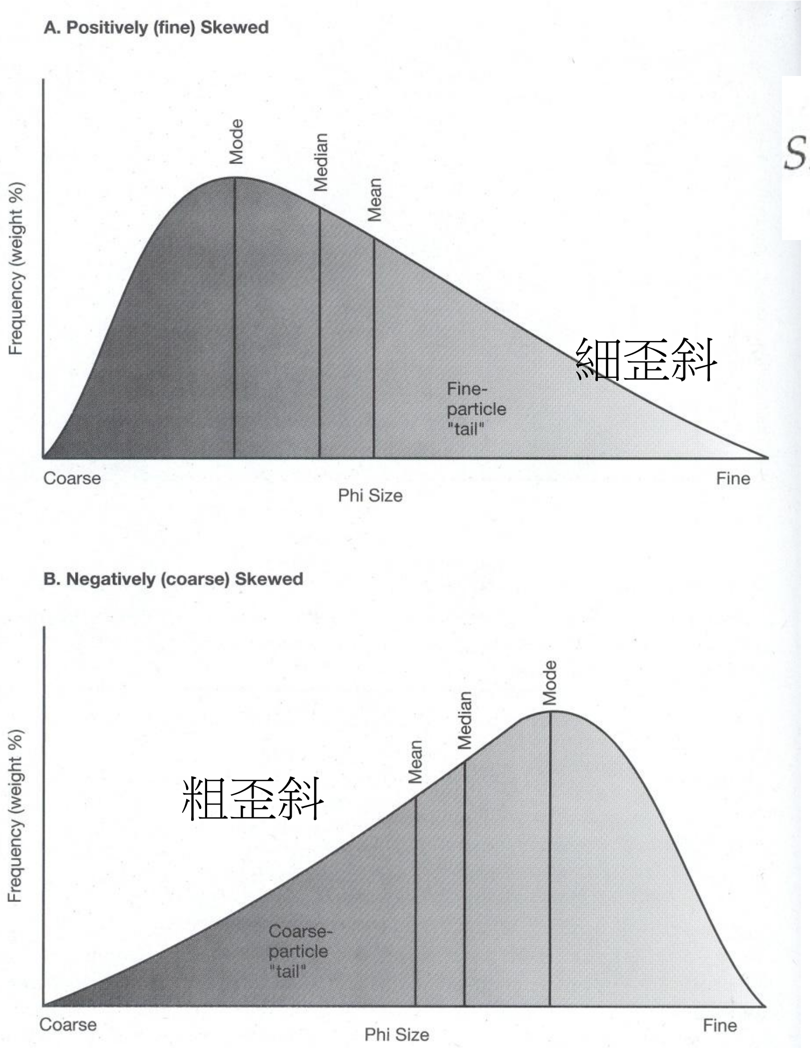


Fig. 3.5 Skewed grain-size frequency curve, illustrating the difference between positive (fine) and negative (coarse) skewness. Note the difference between these skewed, asymmetrical curves and the normal frequency curve shown in Figure 3.4.

Kurtosis (峰度)： 平峰、中峰、陡峰
The degree of peakness of a grain-size frequency curve.

$$K_G = \frac{(\phi_{95} - \phi_5)}{2.44(\phi_{75} - \phi_{25})}$$

3.2.4 Application and importance of grain-size data

1. To interpret coastal stratigraphy and sea-level fluctuations.
2. To trace glacial sediment transport and the cycling of glacial sediments from land to sea.
3. By marine geochemists to understand the fluxes, cycles, budgets, sources, and sinks of chemical elements in nature.
4. To understand the mass physical (geotechnical) properties of seafloor sediment, i.e., the degree to which these sediments are likely to undergo slumping, sliding, or other deformation.
5. To interpret the depositional environments of ancient sedimentary rocks.

The relationship between grain-size characteristics and depositional environments has **NOT** been firmly established.

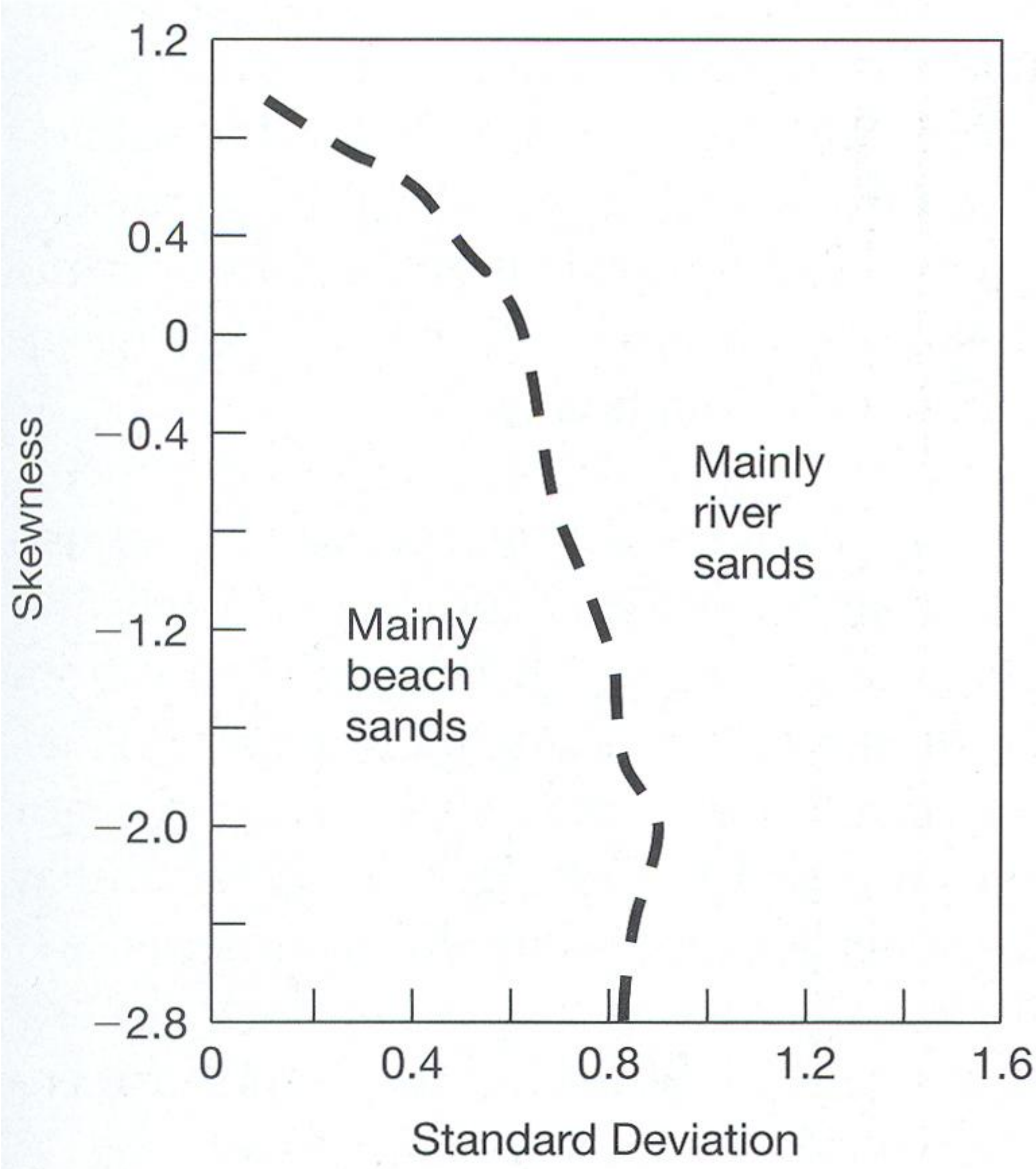
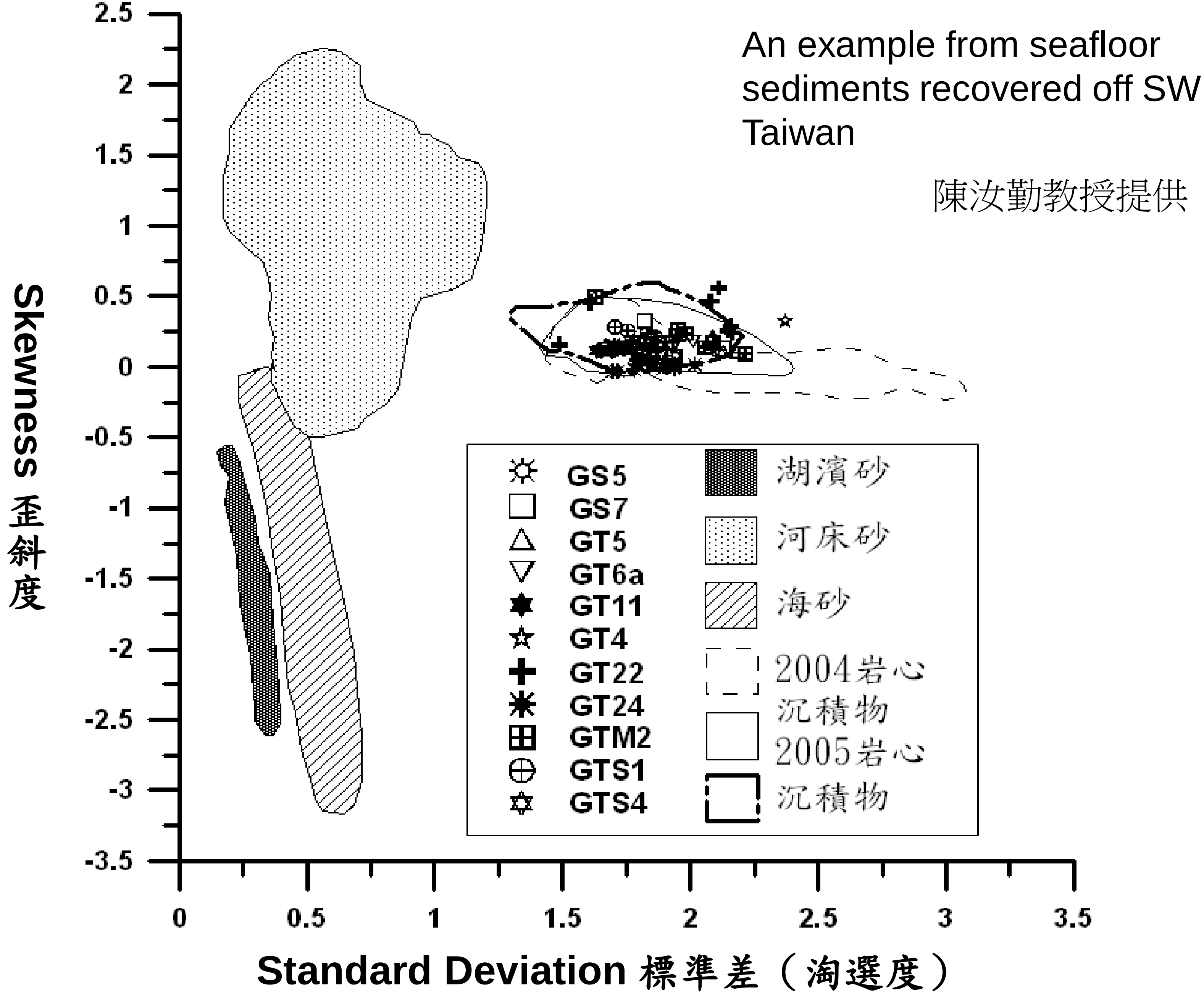


Fig. 3.6 Grain-size bivariate plot of moment skewness vs. moment standard deviations showing the fields in which most beach and river sands plot.



岩心沈積物標準差對歪斜度作圖，湖濱砂、河床砂與海砂分布範圍依據Friedman（1961）

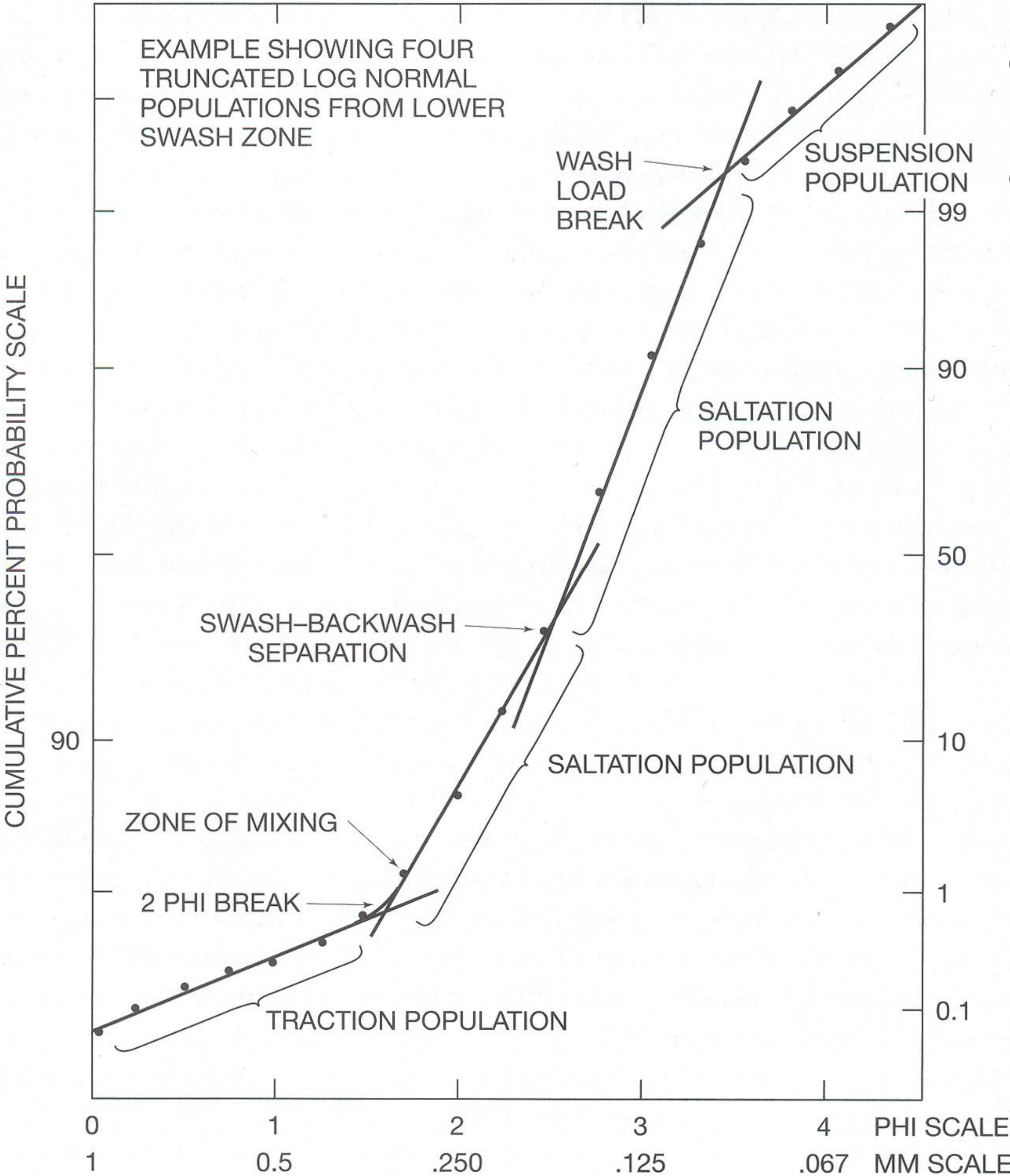


Fig. 3.7 Relation of sediment transport dynamics to populations and truncation points in a grain-size distribution as revealed by plotting grain-size data as a cumulative curve on log probability paper.

3.3 Particle shape

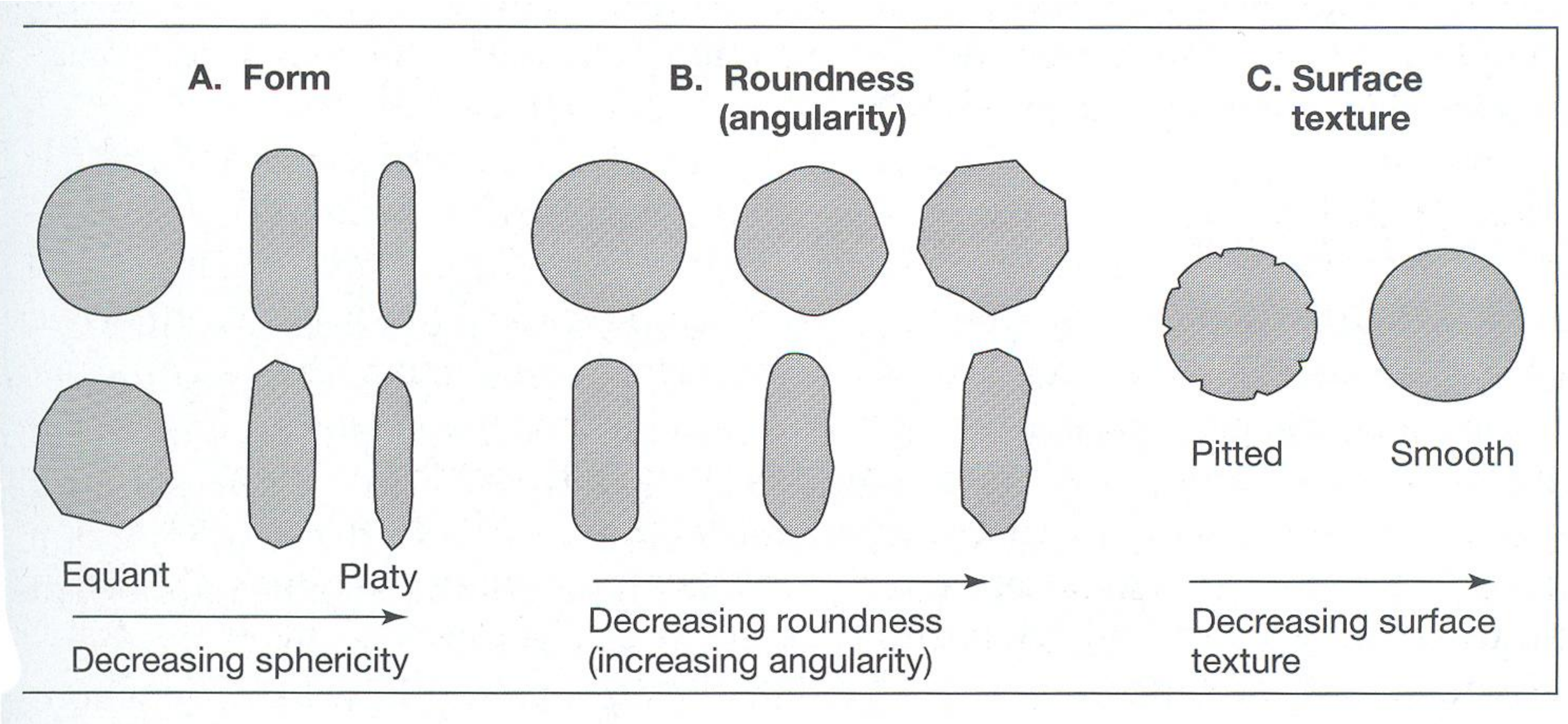


Fig. 3.8 Schematic representation of the principal aspects of particle shape: form, roundness, and surface texture. Note that sphericity and roundness are independent properties. For example, a highly spherical (equant) particle can be either well rounded or poorly rounded, and a well-rounded particle can have either high or low sphericity.

3.3.1 Particle form (sphericity)

Grain shape: The four classes of grain shape (mainly for gravel) based on the ratios of the long (*DL*) intermediate (*DI*) and short (*DS*) diameters.
Oblate (扁長形), bladed (扁平形)；equant (球形)；prolate (棍棒形)

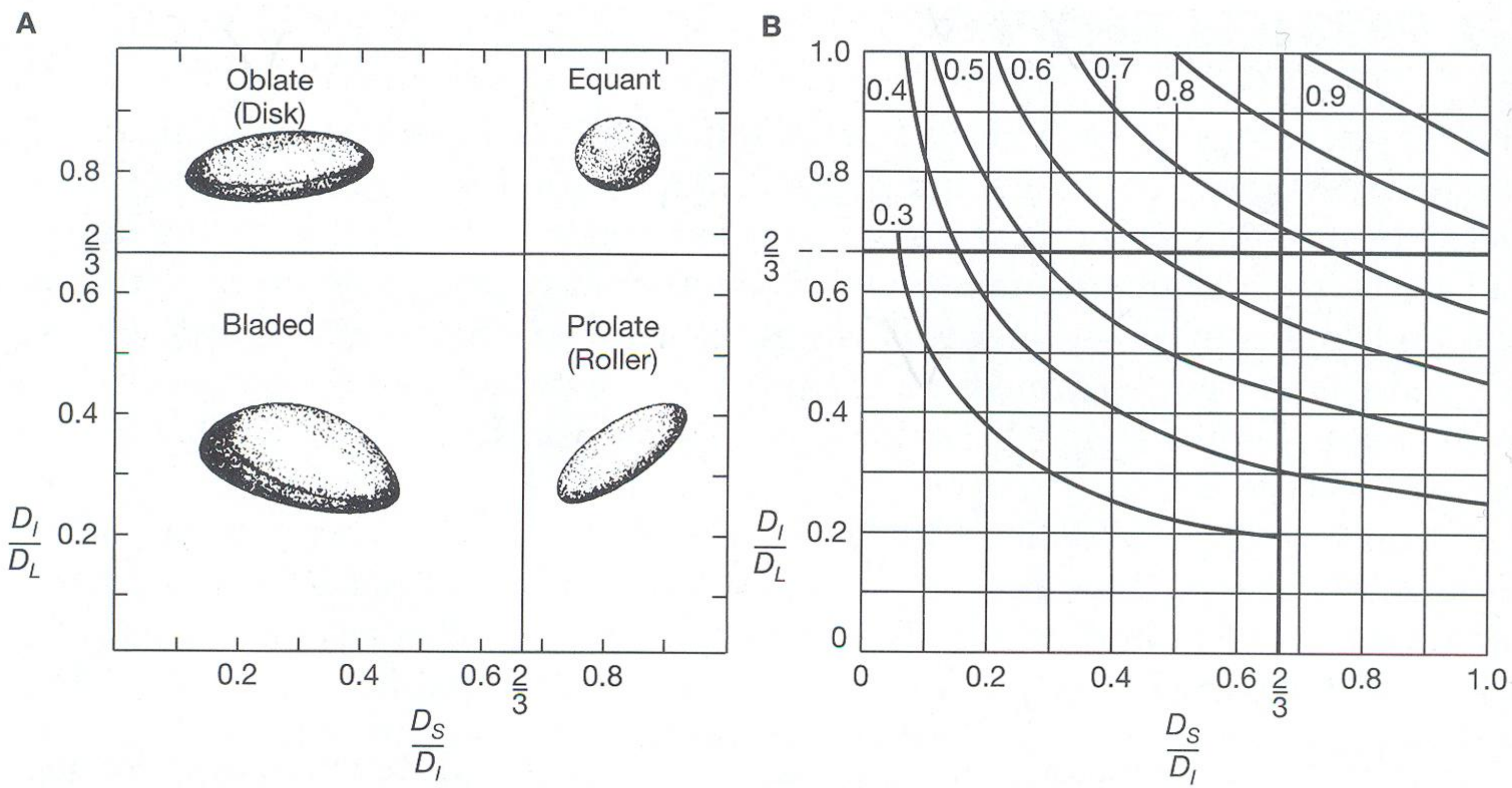
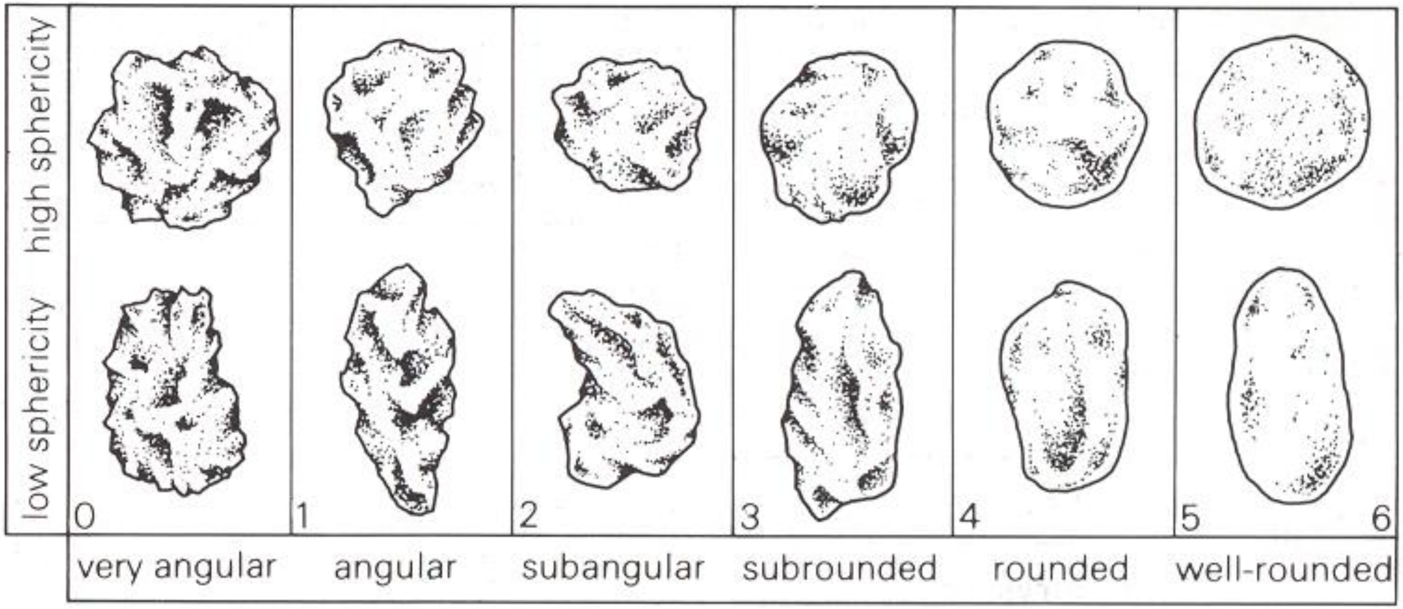


Fig. 3.9 A. Classification of shapes of pebbles after Zingg (1935). B. Relationship between mathematical sphericity and Zingg shape fields. The curves represent lines of equal sphericity.

3.3.2 Particle roundness



Tucker (2003) Sedimentary Rocks in the Field, p.72.

Fig. 4.5 Categories of roundness for sediment grains. For each category a grain of low and high sphericity is shown.

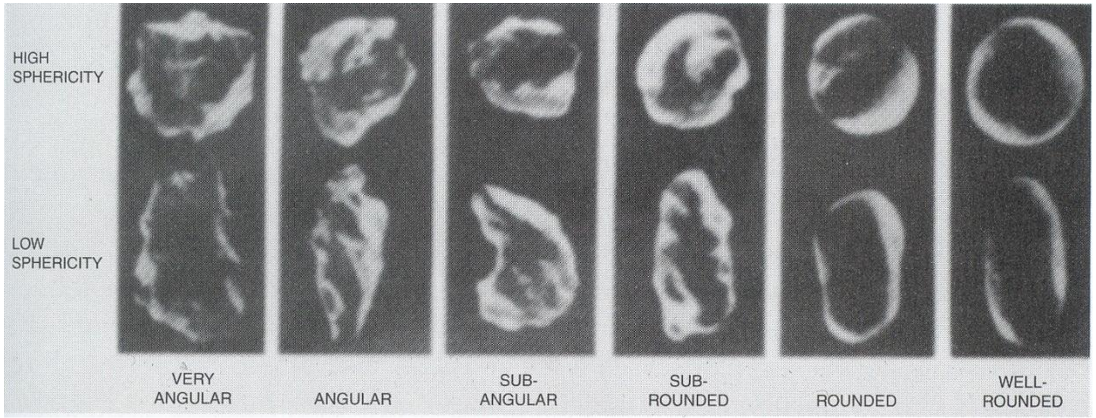


Fig. 3.10 Powers' grain images for estimating roundness of sedimentary particles.

3.3.5 Surface texture

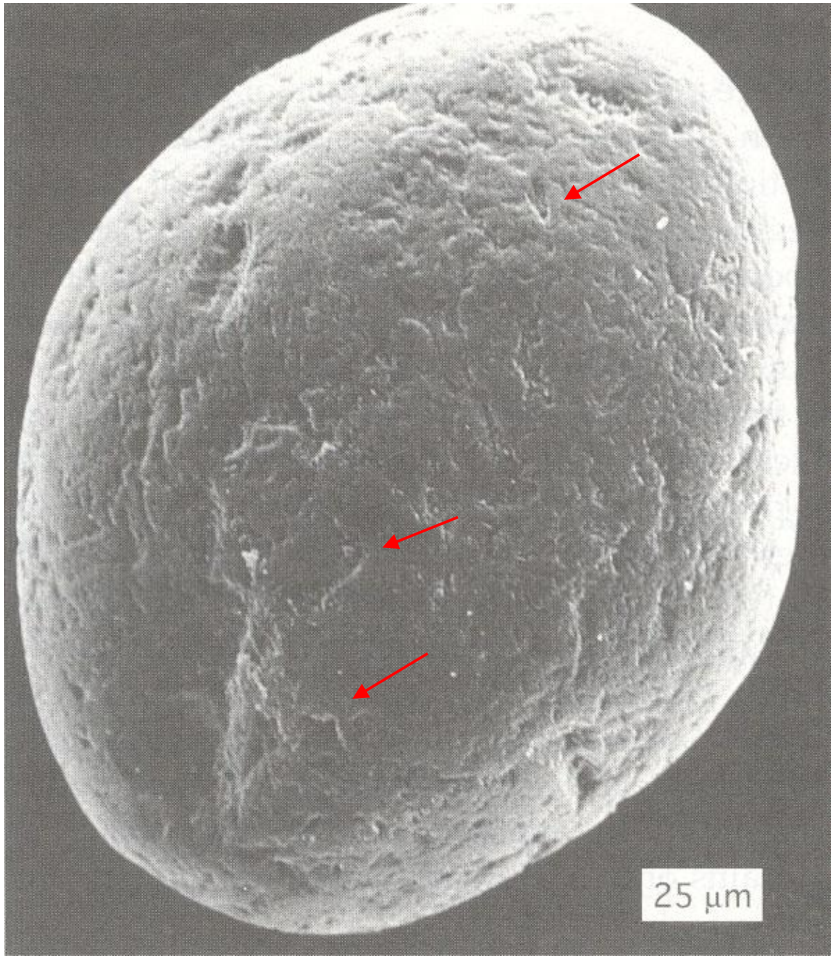


Fig. 3.11 Electron micrograph of a quartz grain from unconsolidated Plio-Pleistocene sand, Louisiana salt dome edge, southern Louisiana, showing details of the surface texture. The grain has been well rounded by wind transport and contains tiny “upturned plates” (pointed by arrows) characteristic of dune sands.

3.4 Fabric

3.4.1 Grain orientation

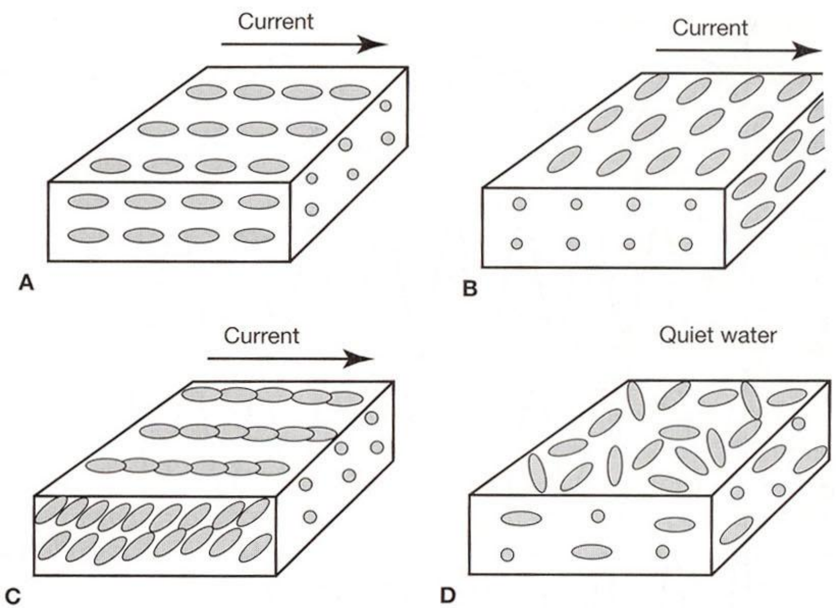


Fig. 3.12 Schematic illustration of the orientation of elongated particles in relation to flow. A. Particles oriented parallel to current flow. B. Particles oriented perpendicular to current flow. C. Imbricated particles. D. Randomly oriented particles, characteristic of deposition in quiet water.

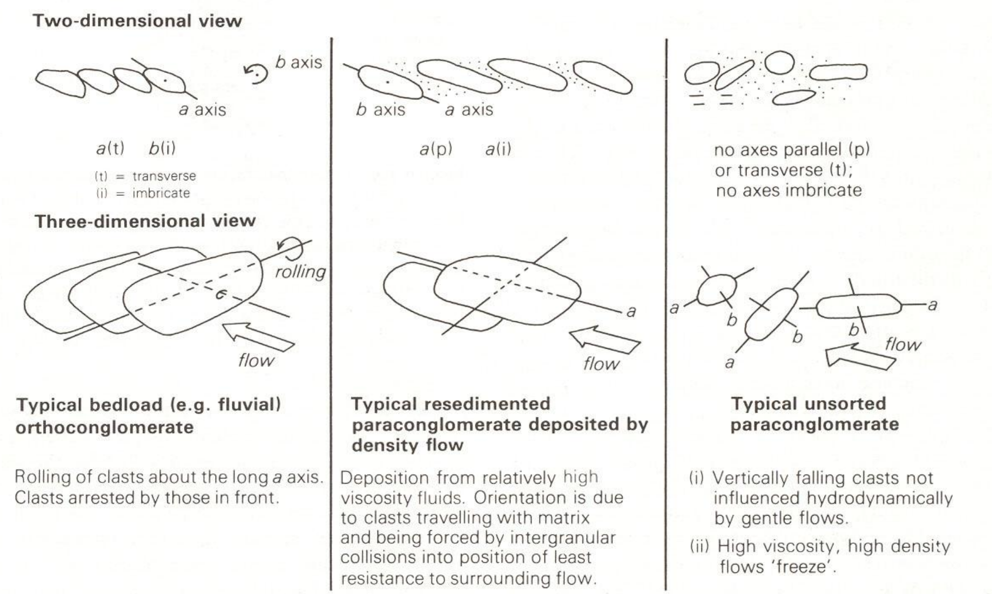


Figure 7.7 The nature and processes of origin of imbricated disc- and blade-like clasts.

Collinson & Thompson (1989), p. 119

Imbricated gravels in the Ta Cha River after flood (2004/7/2)

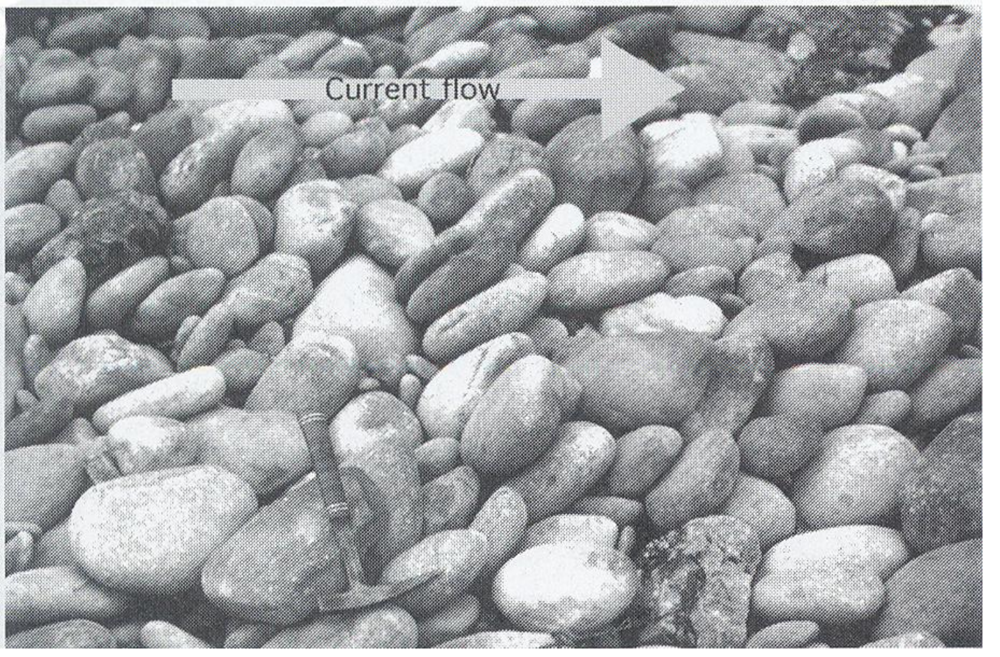


Fig. 3.13 Well-developed imbrication of river cobbles, Kiso River, Japan. Imbrication was produced by river currents flowing from left to right (arrow). Note hammer for scale.

3.4.2 Grain packing, grain-to-grain relations, and porosity

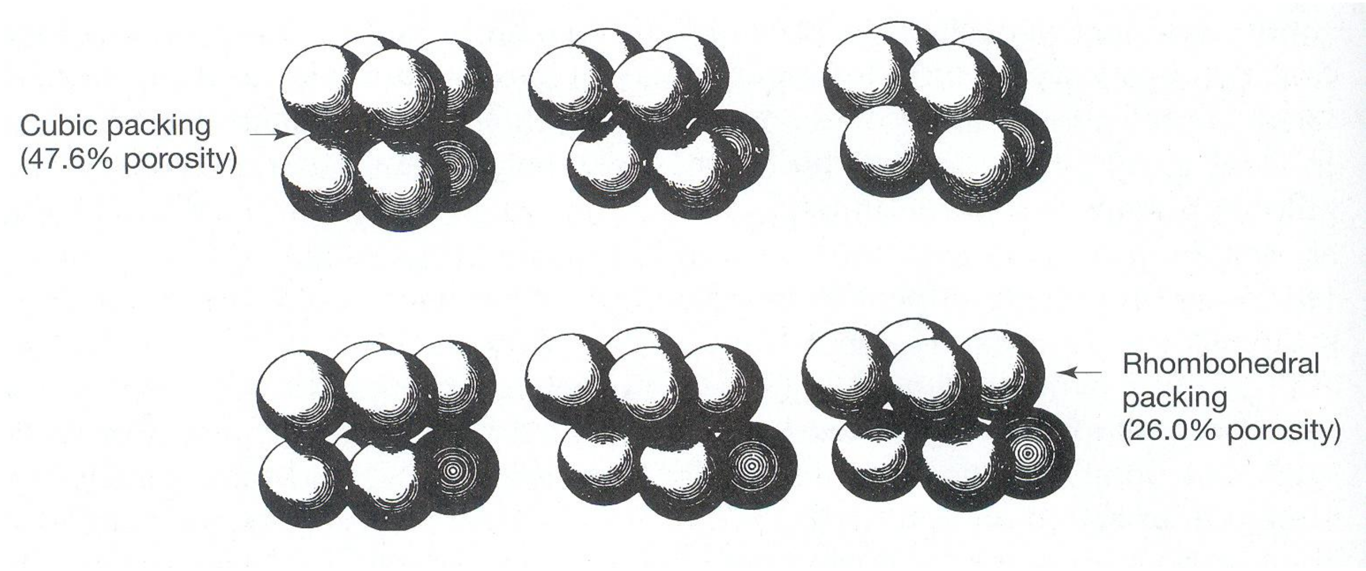


Fig. 3.14 Progressive decrease in porosity of spheres owing to increasingly tight packing.

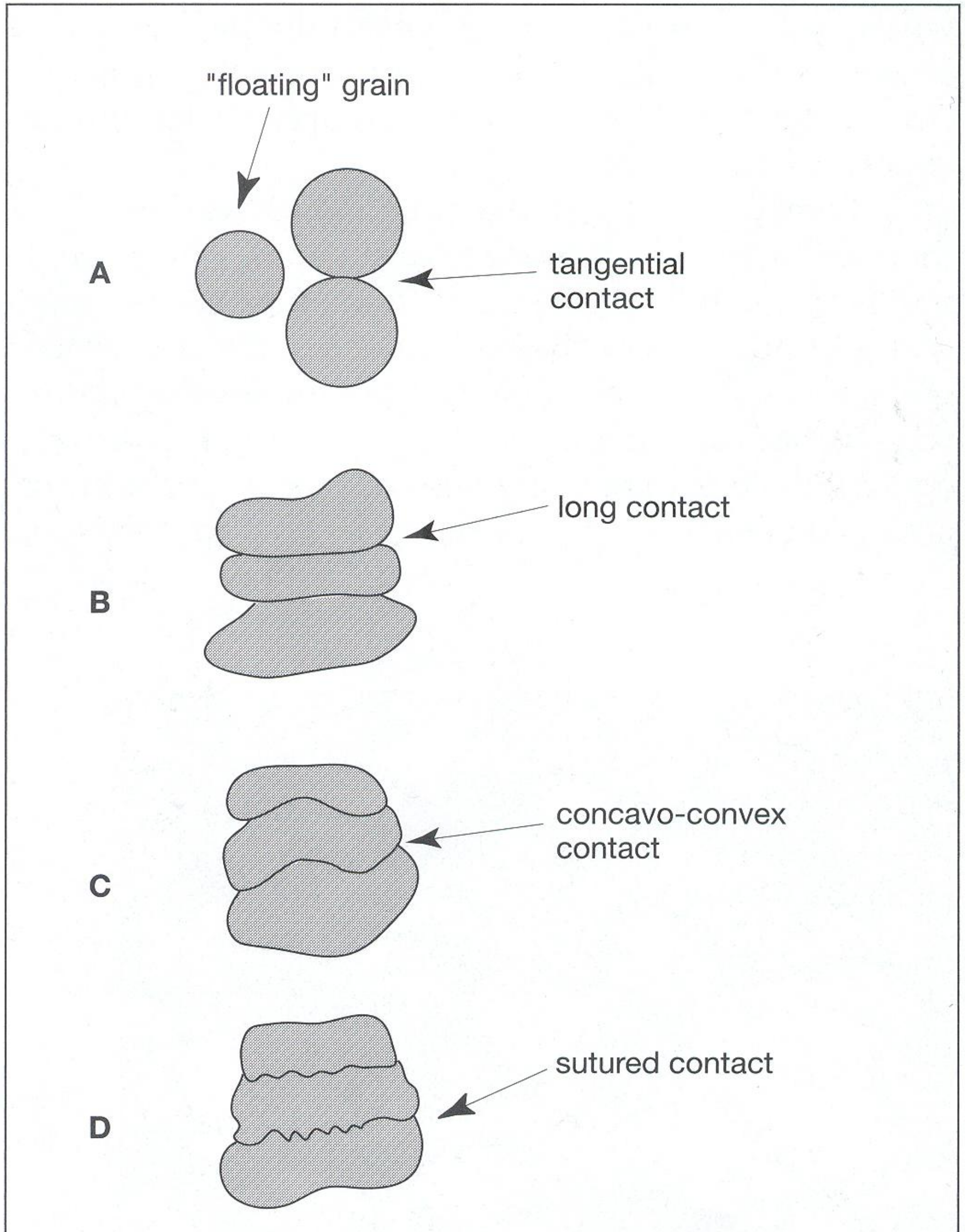


Fig. 3.15 Diagrammatic illustration of principal kinds of grain contacts. A. Tangential. B. Long. C. Concavo-convex. D. Sutured.