

# Appendix A

## British Thermal Unit Conversion Factors

The thermal conversion factors presented in the following tables can be used to estimate the heat content in British thermal units (Btu) of a given amount of energy measured in physical units, such as barrels or cubic feet. For example, 10 barrels of asphalt has a heat content of approximately 66.36 million Btu (10 barrels x 6.636 million Btu per barrel = 66.36 million Btu).

The heat content rates (i.e., thermal conversion factors) provided in this section represent the gross (or higher or upper) energy content of the fuels. Gross heat content rates are applied in all Btu calculations for the *Monthly Energy Review* and are commonly used in energy calculations in the United States; net (or lower) heat content rates are typically used in European energy calculations. The difference between the two rates is the amount of energy that is consumed to vaporize water that is created during the

combustion process. Generally, the difference ranges from 2% to 10%, depending on the specific fuel and its hydrogen content. Some fuels, such as unseasoned wood, can be more than 40% different in their gross and net heat content rates. See “Heat Content” and “British Thermal Unit (Btu)” in the Glossary for more information.

In general, the annual thermal conversion factors presented in Tables A2 through A6 are computed from final annual data or from the best available data and labeled “preliminary.” Often, the current year’s factors are labeled “estimate,” and are set equal to the previous year’s values until data become available to calculate the factors. The source of each factor is described in the section entitled “Thermal Conversion Factor Source Documentation,” which follows Table A6 in this appendix.

**Table A1. Approximate Heat Content of Petroleum and Other Liquids**  
(Million Btu per Barrel, Except as Noted)

Commodity	Heat Content	Commodity	Heat Content
Asphalt and Road Oil	6.636	Motor Gasoline Blending Components (MGBC)	
Aviation Gasoline (Finished)	5.048	Through 2006	5.253
Aviation Gasoline Blending Components	5.048	Beginning in 2007	5.222
Biodiesel	5.359	Oxygenates (excluding Fuel Ethanol)	4.247
Crude Oil—see Table A2		Petrochemical Feedstocks	
Distillate Fuel Oil—see Table A3 for averages		Naphtha Less Than 401°F	5.248
15 ppm sulfur and under	5.770	Other Oils Equal to or Greater Than 401°F	5.825
Greater than 15 ppm to 500 ppm sulfur	5.817	Petroleum Coke—see Table A3 for averages	
Greater than 500 ppm sulfur	5.825	Total, through 2003	6.024
Fuel Ethanol—see Table A3		Catalyst, beginning in 2004	<sup>a</sup> 6.287
Hydrocarbon Gas Liquids		Marketable, beginning in 2004	5.719
Ethane/Ethylene	3.082	Plant Condensate	5.418
Propane/Propylene	3.836	Renewable Fuels Except Fuel Ethanol	<sup>b</sup> 5.359; <sup>b</sup> 5.494
Normal Butane/Butylene	4.326	Residual Fuel Oil	6.287
Isobutane/Isobutylene	3.974	Special Naphthas	5.248
Natural Gasoline (Pentanes Plus)	4.620	Still Gas	<sup>c</sup> 6.287; <sup>c</sup> 6.000
Hydrogen	<sup>a</sup> 6.287	Unfinished Oils	5.825
Jet Fuel, Kerosene Type	5.670	Unfractionated Stream	5.418
Jet Fuel, Naphtha Type	5.355	Waxes	5.537
Kerosene	5.670	Miscellaneous Products	5.796
Lubricants	6.065	Other Hydrocarbons	5.825
Motor Gasoline (Finished)—see Tables A2/A3			

<sup>a</sup> Per residual fuel oil equivalent barrel (6.287 million Btu per barrel).

<sup>b</sup> The biodiesel heat content factor, 5.359 million Btu per barrel, is used for “Biomass-Based Diesel Fuel” and “Other Renewable Fuels”; however, a factor of 5.494 million Btu per barrel is used for “Other Renewable Diesel Fuel.”

<sup>c</sup> Through 2015, the still gas heat content factor is 6.000 million Btu per fuel oil equivalent barrel; beginning in 2016, the factor is 6.287 million Btu per residual fuel oil equivalent barrel.

Note: The values in this table are for gross heat contents. See “Heat Content” in Glossary.

Web Page: <http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/#appendices>.

Sources: See “Thermal Conversion Factor Source Documentation,” which follows Table A6.