

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 Biofuels
(Million Btu per Barrel, Except as Noted)

Commodity	Heat Content	Commodity	Heat Content
Asphalt and Road Oil	6.636	Motor Gasoline (Finished)—see Tables A2 and A3	
Aviation Gasoline (Finished)	5.048	Motor Gasoline Blending Components (MGBC)	
Aviation Gasoline Blending Components	5.048	Through 2006	5.253
Crude Oil—see Table A2		Beginning in 2007	5.222
Distillate Fuel Oil—see Table A3 for averages		Oxygenates (excluding Fuel Ethanol)	4.247
15 ppm sulfur and under	5.770	Petrochemical Feedstocks	
Greater than 15 ppm to 500 ppm sulfur	5.817	Naphtha Less Than 401°F	5.248
Greater than 500 ppm sulfur	5.825	Other Oils Equal to or Greater Than 401°F	5.825
Hydrocarbon Gas Liquids		Petroleum Coke—see Table A3 for averages	
Natural Gas Liquids		Total, through 2003	6.024
Ethane	2.783	Catalyst, beginning in 2004	^a 6.287
Propane	3.841	Marketable, beginning in 2004	5.719
Normal Butane	4.353	Residual Fuel Oil	6.287
Isobutane	4.183	Special Naphthas	5.248
Natural Gasoline (Pentanes Plus)	4.638	Still Gas	
Refinery Olefins		Through 2015	^b 6.000
Ethylene	2.436	Beginning in 2016	^a 6.287
Propylene	3.835	Unfinished Oils	5.825
Butylene	4.377	Waxes	5.537
Isobutylene	4.355	Miscellaneous Products	5.796
Hydrogen	^c 6.287	Other Hydrocarbons	5.825
Jet Fuel, Kerosene Type	5.670	Biofuels, Fuel Ethanol—see Table A3	
Jet Fuel, Naphtha Type	5.355	Biofuels, Biodiesel	5.359
Kerosene	5.670	Biofuels, Renewable Diesel Fuel	5.494
Lubricants	6.065	Biofuels, Other	5.359

^a Per residual fuel oil equivalent barrel (6.287 million Btu per barrel).

^b Per fuel oil equivalent barrel (6.000 million Btu per barrel).

^c Hydrogen has a gross heat content of 323.6 Btu per standard cubic foot (at 60 degrees Fahrenheit and 1 atmosphere), and 6.287 million Btu per residual fuel oil equivalent barrel. For hydrogen, barrels can be converted to standard cubic feet by multiplying by 19,426 standard cubic feet per barrel of residual fuel oil equivalent.

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.