GENERAL

aluminium alloy en aw 6063 almg0 7si

Published: September 19, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Understanding Aluminium Alloy EN AW 6063 ALMG0 /7Si

Aluminium is celebrated for its lightweight, corrosion resistance, and versatile workability. Among its many grades, **EN /AW /6063**—often referred to as aluminium alloy 6063—has earned a prominent position in construction, automotive, and architectural applications. This grade is also identified by the designation **ALMG0 /7Si** in certain standards, indicating its specific composition and properties. In this comprehensive guide, we'll explore the alloy's composition, mechanical behavior, processing techniques, and the sectors that rely on its unique combination of strength, formability, and aesthetic appeal.

1. Composition and Classification

1.1 The EN /AW 6063 Designation

The **EN /AW** (European Aluminium) classification system standardizes aluminium alloys across Europe. The "6063" number indicates the alloy's family (the 6000 series) and its specific elemental makeup. The suffix "ALMG0 7Si" is a more detailed descriptor used in some manufacturing contexts, highlighting the alloy's magnesium (Mg) and silicon (Si) content.

1.2 Elemental Makeup

EN /AW /6063 is a *magnesium–silicon alloy* in the 6000 series. Its typical composition (by weight) is:

- Aluminum (Al): 98–99%
- Magnesium (Mg): 0.7–1.1%
- Silicon (Si): 0.4–0.8%
- Iron (Fe): "d0.6%
- Copper (Cu): "d0.5%
- Chromium (Cr): "d0.15%
- Other trace elements:

These proportions provide a balanced combination of strength and ductility, making the alloy ideal for extrusion and machining.

1.3 Microstructure and Strengthening Mechanisms

During heat treatment, the alloy forms a *precipitate hardening system* of Mg ,Si particles. These fine particles impede dislocation motion, thereby enhancing yield strength. The distribution and size of these precipitates can be tailored through controlled cooling and aging, allowing manufacturers to fine tune the alloy for specific applications.

2. Physical and Mechanical Properties

2.1 Density and Thermal Conductivity

EN AW 6063 shares the aluminium family's low density of approximately 2.70 g/cm³, which translates into significant weight savings in structural components. Its thermal conductivity is around 170 W/m·K, making it suitable for heat spread applications where temperature regulation is critical.

2.2 Strength and Ductility

The alloy typically exhibits:

- Yield Strength: 140–170 /MPa (annealed)
- Ultimate Tensile Strength: 200–260 /MPa (annealed)
- Elongation: 15–25%

These figures can improve with heat treatment, offering a balance between formability and load bearing capacity.

2.3 Corrosion Resistance

Like other aluminium alloys, EN AW 6063 forms a protective oxide layer that resists atmospheric corrosion. Its performance is on par with 6061 but slightly lower than 6063 in marine environments. Protective coatings (e.g., anodizing, powder coating) can further enhance its durability in harsh conditions.

3. Processing Techniques

3.1 Extrusion

Extrusion is the primary manufacturing method for EN AW 6063. The alloy's excellent formability allows complex cross sections—such as window frames, gutters, and structural profiles—to be produced efficiently. The extrusion process typically involves:

1. Heating the billet to 450–500 /°C.
2. Applying a steady force through a die.
3. Cooling and cutting the extruded profile to size.

3.2 Annealing and Aging

Post extrusion, the alloy can be annealed to relieve stresses and enhance ductility. For applications requiring higher strength, an aging treatment (solution heat treatment followed by natural or artificial aging) can be employed. This process optimizes the precipitation of Mg ,Si, thereby increasing the alloy's mechanical performance.

3.3 Machining and Finishing

EN AW 6063 responds well to machining operations. Its moderate hardness ensures good tool life, while its uniform composition reduces the risk of burr formation. Finishing techniques such as anodizing, electroless nickel plating, or powder coating are commonly applied to improve surface appearance and corrosion resistance.

4. Common Applications

4.1 Architectural and Construction

One of the most visible uses of EN /AW /6063 is in **window and door frames**. Its lightweight nature allows for taller, slimmer frames without compromising structural integrity. The alloy's ability to be extruded into intricate shapes also makes it ideal for *roof gutters, fascia boards, and decorative trim*.

4.2 Automotive and Transportation

In the automotive sector, the alloy contributes to weight reduction in **chassis components, body panels, and interior trim**. Its good corrosion resistance ensures longevity, while its formability allows designers to achieve sleek, aerodynamic shapes.

4.3 Electrical and Electronics

Due to its high thermal conductivity and low electrical resistivity, EN /AW /6063 is used in **heat sinks, electrical**

connectors, and chassis housings. The alloy's stability at elevated temperatures makes it reliable for electronic device cooling solutions.

4.4 Marine and Outdoor Uses

Although not as corrosion resistant as marine grade aluminium, EN /AW /6063 can be protected with coatings to serve in **deck rails, boat fittings, and outdoor furniture**. Its light weight and ease of fabrication make it a practical choice for projects where weight savings are critical.

5. Comparison with Related Alloys

5.1 EN /AW /6063 vs. EN /AW /6061

Both alloys belong to the 6000 series, but EN /AW /6063 generally offers:

- Higher formability.
- Lower strength but better corrosion resistance.
- Greater suitability for extrusion.

In contrast, EN /AW /6061 is favored for structural applications requiring higher strength, such as *bridge components and aerospace parts.*

5.2 EN /AW /6063 vs. EN /AW /7075

EN /AW /7075, a zinc based alloy, provides significantly higher tensile strength (up to 580 /MPa) but sacrifices ductility and corrosion resistance. EN /AW /6063 remains the alloy of choice where **weight savings and ease of fabrication** outweigh the need for extreme strength.

6. Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

6.1 Recycling Potential

Aluminium's recycling rate is among the highest of all metals, and EN /AW /6063 is no exception. Recycled aluminium requires only 5% of the energy used to produce primary aluminium, reducing both carbon emissions and raw material consumption.

6.2 Life Cycle Analysis

When evaluating the life cycle of EN /AW /6063 components, designers often consider:

1. Energy consumption during extrusion and finishing.
2. Potential for surface protection to extend service life.
3. Recyclability at the end of the product's life.

By integrating these factors, manufacturers can reduce the overall environmental footprint of their products.

7. Quality Assurance and Standards

7.1 EN Standards

EN /AW /6063 conforms to **EN 573-3** for aluminium alloys, ensuring consistent chemical composition and mechanical properties across European manufacturers. Compliance with **EN 10204** documentation provides traceability and quality assurance for critical applications.

7.2 ASTM Equivalents

In the United States, the equivalent alloy is **AA6063** under the ASTM B221 standard. While the composition is

largely similar, certain minor differences in impurities may exist due to regional production practices.

8. Selecting the Right Grade for Your Project

8.1 Considerations for Structural Design

When choosing EN /AW /6063 for structural work, evaluate:

- Load requirements: Is the component load bearing or primarily decorative?
- Environmental exposure: Does the component face marine, industrial, or high humidity conditions?
- Finish: Will the component require anodizing or powder coating?

8.2 Cost and Availability

EN AW 6063 is widely available through major aluminium distributors and is often more cost effective than high strength grades. However, the final cost depends on factors such as:

1. Extrusion profile complexity.
2. Post processing (e.g., anodizing).
3. Volume of production.

9. Frequently Asked Questions

9.1 Can EN /AW /6063 be welded?

Yes, the alloy can be welded using TIG or MIG processes. However, due to its high silicon content, it's advisable to use low heat input welding techniques and to apply a post weld heat treatment to relieve residual stresses.

9.2 What is the best surface treatment for marine environments?

For marine use, **anodizing followed by a marine grade clear coat** is recommended. This combination protects against salt water corrosion while maintaining the alloy's aesthetic appeal.

9.3 How does EN /AW /6063 perform at low temperatures?

The alloy retains its ductility down to about –40 °C. However, its tensile strength slightly decreases, making it suitable for applications where extreme cold is a factor but not the primary concern.

10. Future Trends and Innovations

10.1 Advanced Coatings

Researchers are developing **nanocomposite coatings** that offer superior corrosion resistance and reduced weight. Integrating such coatings with EN /AW /6063 could extend the alloy's applicability in harsh environments.

10.2 Additive Manufacturing

While extrusion remains dominant, **3D printing of aluminium alloys** is gaining traction. Early studies indicate that EN AW 6063 can be processed via selective laser melting with promising mechanical properties, opening doors to complex, custom designs.

Conclusion

EN /AW /6063, or aluminium alloy 6063 (ALMG0 /7Si), exemplifies the balance between **lightweight construction, corrosion resistance, and manufacturability**. Whether shaping window frames, crafting automotive panels, or engineering heat sinks, this alloy delivers reliable performance across a spectrum of industries. Its compatibility

with extrusion, heat treatment, and a variety of surface finishes makes it a versatile choice for designers and engineers alike. As sustainability and advanced manufacturing techniques evolve, EN /AW /6063 will likely continue to play a pivotal role in the development of efficient, resilient, and environmentally conscious products.

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