

# Degasser Tower Design Calculation

**degasser tower design calculation** is a critical process in the design and operation of distillation, absorption, and stripping systems within chemical processing plants. Properly designing a degasser tower ensures the efficient removal of dissolved gases, such as oxygen, carbon dioxide, or other volatile impurities, from liquids before they proceed to downstream processes. An accurately calculated degasser tower not only enhances process efficiency but also minimizes operational costs and equipment wear. This comprehensive guide provides a detailed overview of the key elements involved in degasser tower design calculation, including foundational principles, calculation steps, and important considerations.

## Understanding Degasser Tower Fundamentals

### What is a Degasser Tower?

A degasser tower is a vertical vessel used to remove dissolved gases from liquids through aeration or stripping. It typically employs a combination of liquid and gas flow to facilitate mass transfer, enabling gases to escape from the liquid phase effectively.

### Applications of Degasser Towers

- Removal of oxygen from water in boiler feedwater systems - Stripping CO<sub>2</sub> from aqueous amine solutions in gas treatment - Eliminating dissolved gases in chemical manufacturing - Purification processes in petrochemical industries

### Principles of Operation

Degasser towers operate based on mass transfer principles, where the gas-liquid interface plays a pivotal role. The design aims to maximize the contact area and contact time between the liquid and stripping gas (often air or inert gases) to achieve

effective degassing.

## **Key Parameters in Degasser Tower Design Calculation**

Design calculations involve several parameters, which can be categorized as follows:

### **1. Feed Characteristics**

- Flow rate (Q): Volumetric or mass flow rate of the liquid to be degassed. - Constituents: Types and concentrations of dissolved gases. - Physical properties: Density, viscosity, and solubility of the liquid.

### **2. Gas Properties**

- Type of stripping gas: Usually air, nitrogen, or other inert gases. - Flow rate: To ensure sufficient stripping capacity. - Molecular weight and diffusivity: Affect mass transfer efficiency.

### **3. Operating Conditions**

- Temperature and pressure: Influence gas solubility and mass transfer rates. - Desired removal efficiency: Percentage of dissolved gases to be eliminated. - Liquid residence time: Time needed for effective degassing.

### **4. Tower Geometry and Design Parameters**

- Column height and diameter - Packing or tray type and arrangement - Weir height and distribution plates

## **Step-by-Step Calculation Process for Degasser Tower Design**

The following steps outline a systematic approach to degasser tower design calculation:

## 1. Determine the Gas Removal Requirement

- Calculate the initial dissolved gas concentration ( $C_{\text{initial}}$ ) - Set the target residual dissolved gas concentration ( $C_{\text{final}}$ ) - Find the amount of gas to be removed:  $\Delta C = C_{\text{initial}} - C_{\text{final}}$  - Convert this to a molar basis if necessary, considering the liquid flow rate.

## 2. Calculate the Gas Transfer Rate

Use Henry's law to relate gas concentrations to partial pressures and solubility:  $C = H \times P_{\text{gas}}$  Where: - ( $C$ ): concentration of the gas in the liquid - ( $H$ ): Henry's law constant - ( $P_{\text{gas}}$ ): partial pressure of the gas Estimate the required mass transfer rate ( $N_{\text{gas}}$ ):  $N_{\text{gas}} = Q \times (C_{\text{initial}} - C_{\text{final}})$  Expressed in mol/hr or other units.

## 3. Determine the Mass Transfer Coefficient and Interface Area

- Use empirical correlations or literature data to find the overall mass transfer coefficient ( $K_L a$ ) - ( $K_L$ ): liquid-phase mass transfer coefficient - ( $a$ ): specific interfacial area (area per unit volume) The overall transfer rate:  $N_{\text{gas}} = K_L a \times V \times (C_{\text{initial}} - C_{\text{final}})$  Where ( $V$ ) is the volume of the tower.

## 4. Calculate Tower Height and Diameter

- Height (H): Based on required contact time, gas-liquid flow rates, and packing or tray specifications. - Diameter (D): Determined from the liquid and gas flow rates, ensuring the flow velocities stay within desired ranges to prevent flooding or weeping. Use the following relation for tower diameter:  $D = \sqrt{\frac{4 \times Q_{\text{liquid}}}{\pi \times v_{\text{liquid}}}}$  Where ( $v_{\text{liquid}}$ ) is the superficial liquid velocity, typically kept below flooding velocity. Similarly, gas velocity considerations:  $v_{\text{gas}} = \frac{Q_{\text{gas}}}{\text{cross-sectional area}}$  Ensure velocities are within design limits to optimize transfer efficiency.

## **5. Select Packing or Tray Type and Size**

- For packing towers, choose appropriate packing material (structured or random packing) based on capacity and efficiency. - For tray towers, determine tray spacing, weir height, and type.

## **6. Validate the Design**

- Confirm that the calculated height and diameter accommodate the flow rates. - Check that the residence time allows for the desired gas removal efficiency. - Ensure velocities are within operational limits. - Perform a mass transfer simulation or utilize design software for validation.

## **Important Considerations in Degasser Tower Design**

- Material Compatibility: Use corrosion-resistant materials suitable for the process liquids. - Operational Flexibility: Design for fluctuations in flow rates and gas concentrations. - Pressure Drop: Minimize pressure loss to reduce energy consumption. - Maintenance and Accessibility: Incorporate features for cleaning and inspection. - Environmental and Safety Regulations: Ensure compliance with local standards.

## **Common Empirical Correlations and Tools**

Design engineers often rely on empirical correlations and software tools to streamline calculations: - Onda Correlation: For packing efficiency - Bell-Delaware Method: For tray design - Mass Transfer Correlations: Such as Whitman or Rachford-Rice equations - Simulation Software: Aspen Plus, HYSYS, or custom CFD models

## **Conclusion**

Effective degasser tower design calculation is fundamental to optimizing gas removal processes in chemical industries. By carefully analyzing feed characteristics, operating conditions, and selecting appropriate tower configurations, engineers can

ensure high removal efficiency, operational reliability, and cost-effectiveness. Following a structured calculation methodology—ranging from determining gas removal requirements to validating the final design—enables the development of robust degasser systems tailored to specific process needs. Continuous validation and adherence to engineering best practices will further enhance the performance and longevity of the degasser tower. Key Takeaways: - Accurate feed characterization is essential. - Understanding mass transfer principles guides design choices. - Proper sizing of tower height and diameter ensures operational efficiency. - Material and operational considerations impact long-term performance. - Use empirical correlations and simulation tools for validation. For optimal results, it is recommended to collaborate with experienced process engineers and utilize specialized design software to refine calculations and ensure compliance with industry standards. Meta Description: Learn how to perform comprehensive degasser tower design calculation with step-by-step guidance, key parameters, and essential considerations to optimize gas removal processes in chemical engineering applications.

Degasser Tower Design Calculation: A Comprehensive Guide for Engineers Designing an efficient degasser tower is a critical component in many chemical and petroleum processing plants. Properly calculated and optimized degasser towers ensure the effective removal of dissolved gases from liquids, enhancing process safety, product quality, and operational efficiency. This guide provides a detailed overview of the key principles, calculations, and considerations involved in degasser tower design.

## Understanding the Role of a Degasser Tower

A degasser tower, also known as a gas stripper or degassing column, is a vertical vessel used primarily to remove dissolved gases (like oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, or volatile hydrocarbons) from liquids such as crude oil, process water, or other hydrocarbon streams. Primary Functions: - Minimize corrosion by removing oxygen and other corrosive gases. - Prevent vapor lock and safety hazards caused by gas build-up. - Improve downstream process stability and product quality.

## Fundamentals of Degasser Tower Design

Designing a degasser involves several core principles rooted in mass transfer, fluid dynamics, thermodynamics, and process engineering. Key Objectives: - Achieve required gas removal efficiency. - Maintain optimal flow rates and residence times. - Ensure structural integrity and operational safety. - Minimize energy consumption and operational costs.

# Core Components and Design Considerations

Before diving into calculations, it's essential to understand the main components and parameters influencing the design: - Column Diameter (D): Determines flow capacity and residence time. - Column Height (H): Influences contact time between liquid and gas. - Packing or Internals: Provides surface area for mass transfer. - Inlet and Outlet Devices: For introducing feed and removing gases and liquids. - Reflux or Gas Outlet Systems: For venting or further separation.

## Design Calculation Steps for a Degasser Tower

The design process generally follows a systematic approach: 1. Define Process Requirements and Constraints - Liquid flow rate (Q): Usually in m<sup>3</sup>/h or bbl/day. - Dissolved gas content: Initial and desired residual levels. - Gas removal efficiency (E): Typically expressed as a percentage. - Operating pressure and temperature: Affects gas solubility and mass transfer. 2. Determine Gas Loading and Solubility Data - Obtain the Henry's Law constant or similar parameters for the specific gas-liquid system. - Calculate the initial dissolved gas concentration (C<sub>in</sub>) and the target residual concentration (C<sub>out</sub>). Example:  $C_{in} = \text{initial dissolved gas concentration}$   $C_{out} = \text{desired residual dissolved gas concentration}$  3. Calculate the Required Gas Removal Using Henry's Law and mass transfer principles, determine the amount of gas to be removed:  $\Delta C = C_{in} - C_{out}$  The total moles of gas to be stripped per unit time:  $G_{gas} = Q \times \Delta C$  4. Establish Mass Transfer Coefficients and Contact Area - Determine the mass transfer coefficient (k) based on empirical data or correlations. - Select the type of internals (structured packing, random packing, trays) which influences the overall mass transfer efficiency (K<sub>a</sub>). 5. Calculate the Number of Transfer Units (NTU) The NTU represents the stages of mass transfer necessary:  $NTU = \frac{1}{K_a} \times \ln \left( \frac{C_{in}}{C_{out}} \right)$  Alternatively, using the Langmuir or two-film theory, more detailed models can be employed. 6. Determine the Height of the Tower The height is based on the required contact stages or NTUs and the height equivalent to a theoretical transfer unit (HTU):  $H = NTU \times HTU$  Where HTU depends on packing type and operating conditions. 7. Calculate the Diameter of the Tower The diameter is dictated by the maximum liquid and gas flow rates, ensuring proper vapor and liquid velocities to prevent flooding or weeping:  $D = \sqrt{\frac{4 \times Q_{liquid}}{\pi \times v_{liquid}}}$  where (v<sub>liquid</sub>) is the designed superficial velocity, often set at a fraction of flooding velocity.

## Detailed Example Calculation

Given Data: - Liquid flow rate: 100 m<sup>3</sup>/h - Dissolved oxygen in crude oil: 8 mg/L - Target residual dissolved oxygen: 1 mg/L - Operating pressure: atmospheric - Gas-liquid contact: structured packing

Step 1: Calculate dissolved oxygen removal:  $\Delta C = 8 \text{ mg/L} - 1 \text{ mg/L} = 7 \text{ mg/L}$

Convert to molar basis (assuming water density  $\approx 1000 \text{ kg/m}^3$ ):  $G_{\text{gas}} = 100 \text{ m}^3/\text{h} \times 1000 \text{ kg/m}^3 \times 7 \times 10^{-3} \text{ kg/kg} = 700 \text{ kg/h}$  (Adjust units as necessary for specific gases and systems.)

Step 2: Determine NTU: Using empirical correlations for structured packing, assume a typical HTU of 0.3–0.5 m.

Step 3: Calculate tower height: Assuming NTU = 3 (for high removal efficiency):  $H = 3 \times 0.4 \text{ m} = 1.2 \text{ m}$

Step 4: Determine tower diameter: Calculate superficial velocity ( $v_{\text{super}}$ ) to avoid flooding: Suppose the maximum allowable vapor velocity is 0.6 m/s, then:  $D = \sqrt{\frac{4 \times 100 \text{ m}^3/\text{h}}{\pi \times 0.6 \text{ m/s} \times 3600 \text{ s/h}}}$   $D \approx 0.44 \text{ m}$  Round up to standard sizes, e.g., 0.5 m diameter.

## Additional Design Considerations

Beyond basic calculations, several other factors influence degasser tower design:

- Material Selection: Compatibility with corrosive liquids and gases.
- Internals Choice: Structured packing vs. random packing or trays, based on efficiency and pressure drop.
- Inlet/Outlet Design: Proper distribution to ensure uniform flow and prevent channeling.
- Gas Venting and Safety Devices: To handle excess gases safely.
- Control and Instrumentation: For monitoring dissolved gas levels, flow rates, and pressure.

## Operational and Maintenance Aspects

Effective operation requires:

- Regular monitoring of dissolved gas levels.
- Maintaining internals free of fouling or clogging.
- Ensuring pressure and temperature are within design limits.
- Periodic inspection for corrosion, wear, or damage.

# Conclusion

Designing a degasser tower is a nuanced process that combines fundamental mass transfer principles with practical engineering judgment. Accurate calculations of gas removal requirements, appropriate selection of internals, and proper sizing ensure the tower's effectiveness in removing dissolved gases. By systematically following the outlined steps and considering operational factors, engineers can develop reliable, efficient degasser systems that enhance overall process safety and performance. Remember: Each process is unique, and detailed simulations or pilot studies are often recommended to validate design assumptions before final implementation.

## Questions & Answers About degasser tower design calculation

| No | Question                                                                        | Answer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | What are the key parameters to consider in degasser tower design calculations?  | Key parameters include gas flow rate, liquid flow rate, gas-liquid contact area, tower height, packing or tray type, superficial gas velocity, and the required removal efficiency for dissolved gases.                                |
| 2  | How is the gas-liquid contact area determined in a degasser tower design?       | The contact area is calculated based on packing or tray specifications, including packing size and height, or tray dimensions and spacing, to ensure sufficient mass transfer for effective degassing.                                 |
| 3  | What role does superficial gas velocity play in degasser tower calculations?    | Superficial gas velocity influences flooding limits and mass transfer efficiency; it is used to size the tower and select appropriate packing or tray types to prevent entrainment and ensure optimal degassing performance.           |
| 4  | How do you calculate the required tower height in degasser design calculations? | Tower height is determined based on the required gas-liquid contact time, mass transfer coefficients, and the desired removal efficiency, often using mass transfer equations and empirical correlations to ensure sufficient contact. |

|   |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 | What are common methods or correlations used in degasser tower design calculations?           | Common methods include the use of empirical correlations like the Onda or Fair models for gas-liquid contacting, as well as the application of mass transfer theories such as the Ogden or McCabe-Thiele methods for sizing and efficiency estimation. |
| 6 | How do packing or tray selection impact degasser tower design calculations?                   | Packing or tray type affects the contact area, pressure drop, and mass transfer efficiency; these factors are incorporated into calculations to select appropriate internals that meet design specifications for degassing performance.                |
| 7 | What are typical safety and operational considerations in degasser tower design calculations? | Considerations include avoiding flooding, ensuring proper venting, controlling pressure and temperature, and designing for ease of maintenance, all of which influence the sizing and component selection in the calculations.                         |

degasser tower, design calculation, vapor-liquid separation, tower height, tray design, weir height, gas flow rate, liquid flow rate, pressure drop, tray efficiency