

Wire types and sizes - Use the correct wire type for the base metal being welded. Use stainless steel wire for stainless steel, aluminium wires for aluminium and steel wires for steel.

Use a smaller diameter wire for thin base metals. For thicker materials use a larger wire diameter and larger machine, check the recommended welding capability of you machine.

As a guide refer to the “Welding Wire Thickness Chart” below.

WELDING WIRE DIAMETER CHART							
MATERIAL THICKNESS	RECOMMENDED WIRE DIAMETERS						
	MIG SOLID WIRE				GASLESS FLUX CORED WIRE		
	0.6mm	0.8mm	0.9mm	1.0mm	0.8mm	0.9mm	1.2mm
24 Gauge (.60mm)	Yellow						
22 Gauge (.75mm)	Yellow	Yellow			Yellow		
20 Gauge (.90mm)	Yellow	Yellow			Yellow	Yellow	
18 Gauge (1.0mm)	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow		Yellow	Yellow	
16 Gauge (1.2mm)		Yellow	Yellow		Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
14 Gauge (1.6mm)		Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
3.0mm		Yellow	Yellow	Yellow		Yellow	Yellow
5.0mm			Yellow	Yellow		Yellow	Yellow
6.0mm			Yellow	Yellow			Yellow
8.0mm			Yellow	Yellow			Yellow
10.mm				Yellow			Yellow
12.0mm				Yellow			

For material thickness of 5.0mm and greater, multi-pass runs or a beveled joint design may be required depending on the amperage capability of your machine.

Gas selection - The purpose of the gas in the MIG process is to protect / shield the wire, the arc and the molten weld metal from the atmosphere. Most metals when heated to a molten state will react with the air in the atmosphere, without the protection of the shielding gas the weld produced would contain defects like porosity, lack of fusion and slag inclusions. Additionally some of the gas becomes ionised (electrically charged) and helps the current flow smoothly.

The correct gas flow is also very important in protecting the welding zone from the atmosphere. Too low flow will give inadequate coverage and result in weld defects and unstable arc conditions. Too high flow can cause air to be drawn into the gas column and contaminate the weld zone.

Use the correct shielding gas. Co2 is good for steel and offers good penetration characteristics, the weld profile is narrower and slightly more raised than the weld profile obtained from Argon Co2 mixed gas. Argon Co2 mix gas offers better weld ability for thin metals and has a wider range of setting tolerance on the machine. Argon 80% Co2 20% is a good all round mix suitable for most applications.

