Spot Size

In general, the performance of a lens or lens system in a specific circumstance should be determined by an exact trigonometric ray trace. CVI Melles Griot applications engineers can supply ray-tracing data for particular lenses and systems of catalog components on request. In certain situations, however, some simple guidelines can be used for lens selection. The optimum working conditions for some of the lenses in this catalog have already been presented. The following tables give some quantitative results for a variety of simple and compound lens systems, which can be constructed from standard catalog optics.

In interpreting these tables, remember that these theoretical values obtained from computer ray tracing consider only the effects of ideal geometric optics. Effects of manufacturing tolerances have not been considered. Furthermore, remember that using more than one element provides a higher degree of correction but makes alignment more difficult. When actually choosing a lens or a lens system, it is important to note the tolerances and specifications clearly described for each CVI Melles Griot lens in the product listings.

The tables give the diameter of the spot for a variety of lenses used at several different f-numbers. All the tables are for on-axis, uniformly illuminated, collimated input light at 546.1 nm. They assume that the lens is facing in the direction that produces a minimum spot size. When the spot size caused by aberrations is smaller or equal to the diffraction-limited spot size, the notation "DL" appears next to the entry. The shorter focal length lenses produce smaller spot sizes because aberrations increase linearly as a lens is scaled up.

The effect on spot size caused by spherical aberration is strongly dependent on f-number. For a plano-convex singlet, spherical aberration is inversely dependent on the cube of the f-number. For doublets, this relationship can be even higher. On the other hand, the spot size caused by diffraction increases linearly with f-number. Thus, for some lens types, spot size at first decreases and then increases with f-number, meaning that there is some optimum performance point at which both aberrations and diffraction combine to form a minimum.

Unfortunately, these results cannot be generalized to situations in which the lenses are used off axis. This is particularly true of the achromat/aplanatic meniscus lens combinations because their performance degrades rapidly off axis.

Focal Length = 10 mm

	Spot Size (μm)*		
f/#	LDX-5.0-9.9-C	LPX-8.0-5.2-C	LAO-10.0-6.0
f/2	—	94	11
f/3	36	25	7
f/5	8	6.7 (DL)	6.7 (DL)
f/10	13.3 (DL)	13.3 (DL)	13.3 (DL)

**Diffraction-limited performance is indicated by DL.*

Focal Length = 30 mm

	Spot Size (μm)*		
f/#	LPX-18.5-15.6-C	LAO-30.0-12.5	LAO-50.0-18.0 & MENP-18.0-4.0-73.5-NSF8
f/2	295	—	3
f/3	79	7	4 (DL)
f/5	17	6.7 (DL)	6.9 (DL)
f/10	13.3 (DL)	13.3 (DL)	13.8 (DL)

**Diffraction-limited performance is indicated by DL.*

Focal Length = 60 mm

	Spot Size (μm)*			
f/#	LDX-50.0-60.0-C	LPX-30.0-31.1-C	LAO-60.0-30.0	LAO-100.0-31.5 & MENP-31.5-6.0-146.4-NSF8
f/2	816	600	—	—
f/3	217	160	34	4 (DL)
f/5	45	33	10	6.7 (DL)
f/10	13.3 (DL)	13.3 (DL)	13.3 (DL)	13.3 (DL)

**Diffraction-limited performance is indicated by DL.*