A martensitic gear steel (18CrNiMo7-6) was annealed at 180 degrees C for 2h and at similar to 750 degrees C for 1h to design two different starting microstructures for shot peening. One maintains the original as-transformed martensite while the other contains irregular-shaped sorbite together with ferrite. These two materials were shot peened using two different peening conditions. The softer sorbite + ferrite microstructure was shot peened using 0.6 mm conditioned cut steel shots at an average speed of 25 m/s in a conventional shot peening machine, while the harder tempered martensite steel was shot peened using 1.5 mm steel shots at a speed of 50 m/s in an in-house developed shot peening machine. The shot speeds in the conventional shot peening machine were measured using an in-house lidar set-up. The microstructure of each sample was characterized by optical and scanning electron microscopy, and the mechanical properties examined by microhardness and tensile testing. The residual stresses were measured using an Xstress 3000 G2R diffractometer equipped with a Cr K alpha x-ray source. The correspondence between the residual stress profile and the gradient structure produced by shot peening, and the relationship between the microstructure and strength, are analyzed and discussed.

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