WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A testing apparatus comprising:

a support unit that supports a lower surface side of a test piece;

a pressing unit having an indenter that presses the test piece supported by the support unit;

a drive mechanism that raises and lowers the pressing unit;

a load measurement instrument that measures a load generated when the indenter presses the test piece supported by the support unit; and

a controller that controls raising and lowering of the pressing unit,

wherein the controller is configured to

be capable of stopping movement of the indenter when a measurement value of the load measurement instrument has turned from a rise to a fall after the indenter has started pressing of the test piece;

obtain a predetermined distance (H3) by subtracting a chip thickness (d) of the test piece and a margin distance (H2) from a distance (H1) from an origin position (H0) of the indenter to upper ends of support parts of the support unit;

and

lower the pressing unit such that the indenter is lowered at a first speed until reaching the predetermined distance (H3) and thereafter at a second speed to bring the indenter into contact with the test piece, wherein the first speed is higher than the second speed.

2. The testing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein

the controller stores a program that executes, based on selection by an operator, either one of

first control to stop the movement of the indenter when the measurement value of the load measurement instrument has turned from a rise to a fall after the indenter has started the pressing of the test piece, and

second control to stop the movement of the indenter when the measurement value of the load measurement instrument has become zero after the indenter has started the pressing of the test piece.

3. A testing method comprising:

a support step of supporting a lower surface side of a test piece by a support unit;

a pressing step of pressing the test piece

supported by the support unit with an indenter;

a measurement step of measuring a load of pressing by the indenter with a load measurement instrument in conjunction with start of the pressing step; and

a first stop step of stopping movement of the indenter when a measurement value of the load measurement instrument has turned from a rise to a fall in the measurement step,

wherein, in the pressing step,

a predetermined distance (H3) is obtained by subtracting a chip thickness (d) of the test piece and a margin distance (H2) from a distance (H1) from an origin position (H0) of the indenter to upper ends of support parts of the support unit; and the pressing unit is lowered such that the indenter is lowered at a first speed until reaching the predetermined distance (H3) and thereafter at a second speed to bring the indenter into contact with the test piece, wherein the first speed is higher than the second speed.

4. The testing method according to claim 3, wherein

the testing method includes, instead of the first stop step, a second stop step of stopping the movement of the indenter when the measurement value of the load

measurement instrument has become zero through continuing the movement of the indenter also after the measurement value of the load measurement instrument has turned from a rise to a fall in the measurement step.