

Rocks and Minerals (Speedy Study Guide)

By Speedy Publishing LLC

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Speedy Study Guides

ROCKS AND MINERALS

Minerals

- Minerals are naturally occurring substances formed by geological processes. They are usually solid and feature a crystal structure as well as specific physical properties and chemical composition.
- Physical properties of minerals include crystal structure, hardness (Mohs scale), luster (how it reflects light) and color, as well as more complicated properties such as streak, fracture, cleavage and density.
- Mohs scale of hardness measures the ability of minerals to scratch each other. Talc is very soft and is listed as 1, diamond is very hard and is measured as 10.
- A mineral is sometimes made up of just one chemical element but more often it is a compound (mixture) of two or more. For example, diamond is made up of just carbon, while fluorite is made up of a compound of calcium and fluorine.
- There are over 4000 different types of minerals.
- Only around 30 of these are commonly found in the Earth's crust.
- Examples of minerals include calcite, gypsum, feldspar, pyrite, gold, quartz and diamond.
- The precious gems ruby and sapphire are varieties of the mineral corundum.

Rocks

- Rocks and stones are naturally occurring solids made up of minerals.
- The Earth's crust is made up of rock.
- Rocks have been used by humans for millions of years, from early tools and weapons through to various construction materials.
- There are three different types of rocks based on the way they form, igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic.
- When magma cools and solidifies it forms igneous rock.
- Examples of igneous rocks include granite, basalt, gabbro, obsidian and pumice. More igneous rock facts.
- Sediment deposited over time, often in layers at the bottom of lakes and oceans, forms sedimentary rocks.
- Examples of sedimentary rocks include sandstone, mudstone, flint, greywacke and chalk. More sedimentary rock facts.
- Extreme pressure and heat over time forms metamorphic rocks.
- Examples of metamorphic rocks include marble, quartzite, schist, granite and slate. More metamorphic rock facts.
- The metamorphic rock marble is formed from the sedimentary rock limestone.
- The metamorphic rock granite is formed from the igneous rock basalt.

EXAMPLE OF MINERALS

The Silicates

 <p>Amazonite</p> <p>is a beautiful green variety of microcline feldspar. Its chemical formula is $KAlSi_3O_8$, potassium aluminum silicate.</p>	 <p>Tanzanite</p> <p>is a variety of Zoisite. It is valued as a gem stone and has the chemical formula $Ca_2Al_2Si_2O_{11}(OH)$.</p>	 <p>The Mica Group</p> <p>is the name given to a group of silicate minerals that have silicon and oxygen as their two major components.</p>	 <p>Muscovite</p> <p>is a member of the mica mineral group. It is more important as a rock-forming mineral than as a collectible specimen.</p>
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