

# LUSTER TERMS AND DESCRIPTIONS

WORD	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
<b>DULL / EARTHY</b>	Very dull, mainly in minerals that are porous. Looks like a boring, old rock	Kaolinite, orthoclase
<b>WAXY</b>		Opal, chalcedony
<b>GREASY / OILY</b>		Nepheline
<b>PEARLY</b>	Like a pearl, play of colors, light colored	Talc, some micas
<b>SILKY</b>		Some varieties of gypsum, kernite, ulexite & in fibrous minerals
<b>GLASSY / VITREOUS</b>	Looks like glass	Quartz, many rock-forming minerals Obsidian- "nature's glass"
<b>RESINOUS</b>	describing yellow, dark orange, or brown minerals that are shiny like plastic -- honey like, but not necessarily the same color.	Sphalerite
<b>ADAMANTINE</b>	Transparent to translucent high luster like a diamond, almost brilliant	diamond
<b>SUBMETALLIC</b>	Somewhat of a metallic luster, but not as shiny	Hematite, magnetite
<b>METALLIC</b>	Shiny like a metal; highly reflective, opaque	Pyrite, gold, silver

## Mohs hardness scale

RATING	DESCRIPTION	MINERAL EXAMPLE
1 Soft	Easily crumbles. Can be scratched with fingernail	Talc
2	Can be scratched with fingernail (2.2)	Gypsum , soapstone (impure talc)
3	Can be scratched with copper penny (3.5)	Calcite
4	Can be scratched with a pocket knife (5.2) or common nail	Fluorite
5	Can be scratched with a pocket knife (5.2) or common nail. Can be scratched with a piece of glass (5.5)	Apatite
6	Mineral of hardness 6 or more will scratch glass	Feldspar- orthoclase
7	Can be scratched with a steel file (7.5) or a concrete nail	Quartz
8		Topaz
9		Corundum
10 Hard		Diamond

### Notes:

- Each mineral can scratch the minerals with lower hardness ratings
- Each mineral can scratch itself
- Weathered surfaces are softer
- Corners or edges of crystals are softer
- Small pieces seem softer than large pieces
- When you scratch, take a close look at the scratch line—which often looks white. Is it really a scratch or is it a powder line made from the tool you used because IT was softer than the item you were trying to scratch?