

WHERE TO FIND ROCKS!

The great thing about rock collecting is that rocks can be found everywhere! Once you have learned a bit about the three types of rocks, the next step in collecting is to find specific rock types. As you saw in the section on what to collect, there are hundreds of different types of rocks which can be collected. As a guide to your rock collection, we have showcased 48 gemstone and mineral specimens. Now let's take a look at where to find some of them.

Quartz

Rock crystal quartz, the most common gem variety of quartz crystal, is, like all quartz, formed from the two most abundant elements in the earth's crust: silicon and oxygen. For centuries early civilizations believed that these pinhead size to nearly a meter in diameter rock crystals were permanently frozen ice. Quartz's high thermo-conductivity, which makes it feel cool to the touch, may have added to this belief. Regardless of what early people may have believed, historical records show the use of rock crystal for decoration and jewelry for at least 4,000 years. Tools and weapons were made from rock crystal long before it was used for decoration and jewelry. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey)

In the United States, you can find quartz in Arkansas, California, and New York.

Pyrite

At first glance you might just shout out, "GOLD!" The truth is this is not gold. Sometimes called "Fools Gold," because it has fooled many a miner looking to strike it rich. Pyrite is a highly sought after by rock collectors for its shiny golden crystal structures. Pyrite makes an impressive display piece and it is one of the more common minerals that can be found. You can find Pyrite throughout the United States including California, Colorado, North Carolina, and Washington.

Amethyst

Amethyst is a purple variety of quartz. It is known as the birthstone for February and is considered the most valuable form of quartz. Amethyst derives its name from the Greek word, "amethystos", which translates "not intoxicated." Amethyst was thought to ward off drunkenness. Amethyst colors range from light to dark purple. Amethyst can be found in Arizona, Texas, and Maine.