



Minerals

Quartz (variety Flint)

SiO_2

Crystallography:

Hexagonal -R; 32 (low-quartz). Hexagonal; 622 (high quartz). cryptocrystalline; massive granular.

Physical Properties:

Cleavage: Generally none; occasional indistinct rhombohedral parting.

Fracture conchoidal; brittle.

Hardness: 7.0.

Specific Gravity: 2.6.

Luster: Subvitreous.

Color: Dull colors, usually gray or smoky brown, and brownish black. Also multi-colored with impurities. Subtranslucent to opaque.

Streak: White.

Composition/Features:

Most nearly a pure chemical compound of silicon and oxygen with constant physical properties. Characterized by its deep conchoidal fracture, hardness, and sharp cutting edge. Infusible. Insoluble except in hydrofluoric acid.

Occurrence/Use:

Flint is usually found in chalk deposits as dark siliceous nodules, while lighter-colored, bedded deposits are called chert. Wide occurrence, deep conchoidal fracture, hardness, and sharp cutting edge led to the widespread use of these varieties by primitive peoples for tools of all kinds.