

Amethyst:- The birthstone for the month of February.

Throughout history, quartz has been the chameleon gemstone, imitating many expensive gemstones.

Quartz has been an important crystal in history primarily because it is extremely useful in industrial and commercial applications. It was the first crystal used in radio transmission and reception and was essential in the development of computers.



Mineral Special:	The mineral quartz (a crystalline silicon dioxide)
Crystal Structure:	Trigonal crystal system
Specific Gravity:	2.65
Hardness:	7
Refractive Index:	(DR)1.544 -1.552

Quartz variety: Amethyst (macrocrystalline)

The colour royal. A transparent purple quartz which is the most important quartz variety used in jewellery.

Amethyst is the birthstone for February and the anniversary gemstone for the 6th year of marriage. The name is derived from the Greek work *amethystos*, meaning 'not drunken' and was considered a strong antidote against drunkenness.

Amethyst ranges in colour from pale lilac to a deep purple. The deep colours are the most valuable.



History & Lore

Fine amethysts are found in the British Crown Jewels and were a favourite of Catherine the Great and Egyptian royalty. It was thought to encourage celibacy, consequently amethyst was frequently utilised in churches and it remains the gemstone worn by senior Christian clerics.



Durability

At 7 on Mohs' scale of hardness, amethyst is a very durable gemstone suitable for all types of jewellery. However, excessive exposure to sunlight may fade its colour.





Enhancements

Amethysts are frequently heated to enhance the colour or lighten it if too dark. The resulting colour is permanent.

Synthetics

Synthetic amethyst entered the gem market in 1970. Amethyst prices subsequently fell due to synthetic stones being offered at a lower price and buyer confidence plunged with synthetic amethyst being sold as natural. Advanced laboratory testing is necessary to identify the synthetic material.

