

Mineral Habits, Part 2

Habits are the distinctive form that mineral crystals may take in different geologic settings, for instance when growing in a free space or in a particular environment. Habit can be a strong clue to a mineral's identity. Here are another 9 of the 22 most common examples of some of the most useful mineral habits. Note that "habit" also has a meaning for rocks.



Granular Habit

If crystals are not well formed, what might otherwise be called an equant habit is instead called granular. These are [spessartine garnet](#) grains in sandy matrix.



Massive Habit

The quartz in this [gneiss](#) boulder has a massive habit, with no individual grains or crystals visible. Caution: rocks may also be described as having a massive habit, too. If you can, use a more appropriate term like equant, granular or blocky.



Lamellar Habit

Lamellae are leaves in scientific Latin, and a lamellar habit is one of thin layers. This [gypsum](#) chunk can readily be pried apart into crystal sheets.



Micaceous Habit

Minerals that split into extremely thin sheets have a micaceous habit. [Mica](#) is the prime example. This [chrysotile](#) specimen from an asbestos mine also has it.



Platy Habit

A platy habit might be better described as lamellar or tabular in some instances, but this thin sheet of gypsum can be called nothing else.



Prismatic Habit

Prism-shaped minerals are common in granites. [Tourmaline](#)'s nine-faced prisms are distinctive and diagnostic. Very long prisms are called acicular or fibrous.



Radiating Habit

This "[pyrite](#) dollar" grew from a central point, squeezed flat between shale layers. The radiating habit can have crystals of any form, from blocky to fibrous.



Rhombohedral Habit

Rhombohedrons are bent cubes in which no corner is straight; that is, each face of this [calcite](#) grain is a rhombus, and there are no right angles.



Rosette Habit

Rosettes are groups of tabular or bladed crystals arranged around a central point. These [barite](#) rosettes are composed of tabular crystals.

Source: <http://geology.about.com/od/minerals/ss/mineral-habits.htm#showall>



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