

The Wilensky Approach

How to grade a mineral

Minerals are works of art, each mineral is totally unique and can be judged by a multitude of criteria. Some criteria are subjective (in the eye of the beholder), while others can be quite concrete.

This grading system is a guide designed to help collectors assess how any given specimen ranks among its peers.

As a guide, it provides reference points while still leaving open the possibility that a specimen can be beautiful and treasured simply due to the fact that you enjoy its appearance or that it moves you. It is here that the worlds of art and nature meet.

How our grading system works

There are two sections to the guide: **Section A** with five criteria, and **Section B** with four criteria.

Each individual criteria is graded out of ten, ten being the best possible and most desirable score. Add up all nine criteria and then divide that sum by nine. This will give you an average score.

Of course there are some specimens where specific criteria are not applicable. In those cases, add up your individual criteria scores, then divide by the number of criteria used to get to your average score.

Average Scores

9-10 Exceptional quality

8-8.9 Very good quality

7-7.9 Good quality

6.9 > Not of collectible quality

Please note that this guide is to help collectors assess their collections. A high score does not necessarily denote a high monetary value.

Section A

Focuses on the quality of the crystal.

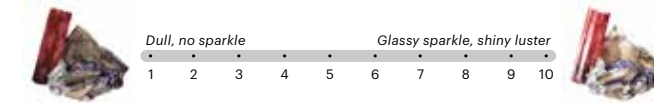
Color: Vivid color is the most desirable. Too light or too dark is not ideal.



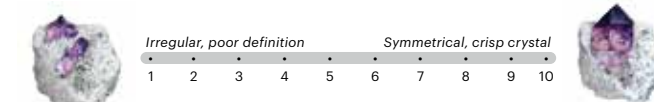
Transparency: Little to no impurities or inclusions make the crystal more desirable.



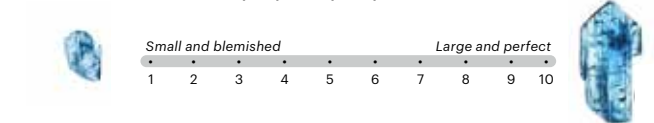
Luster: Does the crystal sparkle? A glassy, shiny look is ideal.



Form and Definition: Symmetry, well-defined terminations, and clean isolated crystals are prized.



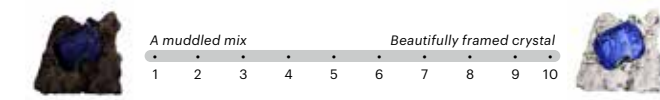
Crystal Size: Size alone is not the most desirable aspect. It must also be a top-quality crystal to be ideal.



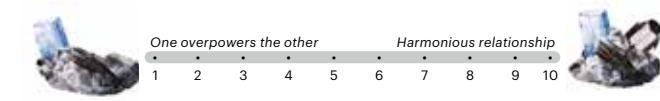
Section B

Focuses on the quality and relationship between both the crystal and the matrix.

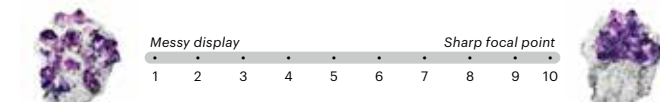
Contrast: A clear distinction between the crystal and the matrix is prized. A matrix that clearly frames the crystal is ideal.



Balance: Focuses on the overall harmony of the specimen. Do the crystals and the matrix complement each other?



Aesthetics: An arresting focal point is most desirable. Clean lines with a clear intelligible shape are prized.



Perfection: No visible damage to either the matrix or the crystal is ideal.

