

## Fast Facts

### Mineral

Corundum

### Color

Red

### Mohs Hardness

9

### Toughness

Excellent

### Major Sources

Afghanistan, Greenland, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam

### Birthstone

July

### Wedding Anniversary

15<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup>

### Care and Cleaning

Warm, soapy water is always safe. Ultrasonic and steam cleaners are usually safe for untreated, heat-treated, and lattice diffusion treated stones. Fracture-filled, cavity-filled or dyed material should only be cleaned with a damp cloth. Various chemicals, even mild substances like lemon juice, can cause change in some glass-filled rubies.



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# Ruby

A Symbol of Wealth  
and Nobility



# Ruby

Referred to as the king of precious stones, ruby is the red variety of the mineral corundum. The name comes from the Latin “ruber,” meaning red. Red is the color of our most intense emotions—love and anger, passion and fury. It’s associated with objects of power and desire—like fast cars and red roses.

Early cultures treasured rubies for their similarity to the redness of the blood that flowed through their veins, and believed that rubies held the power of life. Ruby retained its importance with the birth of the western world and became one of the most sought-after gems of European royalty and the upper classes.

Many medieval Europeans wore rubies to guarantee health, wealth, wisdom and success in love.

## Color

The color of ruby is caused by traces of chromium. Color is the most significant factor affecting a ruby’s color value. Rubies are available in hues ranging from orangy red to purplish red and in tones medium to dark. Fine quality rubies are pure, vibrant red to slightly purplish red but the most sought-after color by collectors worldwide is a deep red sometimes with a hint of purple, called “pigeon’s blood” in the trade.



*Color is the most significant factor affecting a ruby’s value. Fine gems are a pure, vibrant red to slightly purplish red.*

## Clarity

Inclusion-free rubies are practically nonexistent so the value varies with how visible the inclusions are. Inclusions can also impact a ruby’s durability, especially if there is a surface-reaching fracture. Typical clarity characteristics include thin mineral inclusions called needles. Rutile needles, or “silk,” can often contribute positively to a gem’s appearance.



*Corundum may show a phenomenon called asterism. This star effect usually appears as a six-ray star pattern across a cabochon-cut gem’s curved surface.*

## Sources

The most famous ruby mines are in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) but rubies can also be found in Vietnam, Mozambique, Madagascar, Kenya, Tajikistan, Thailand, Afghanistan and Pakistan.



## Treatments

Heat treatment is often used to improve the color or clarity of a ruby. Heat can also cause some fractures to “heal” in certain conditions. Lower quality material may have surface-reaching fractures filled with a glass to decrease their visibility and make the gem more transparent.

