**Rock and Mineral Uses**

There is little we do that does not involve rocks and minerals and the metals we extract from them. Sadly, people seldom stop to think about them. There are thousands of known minerals. We thought you might be interested in learning how a few of them affect you every day.

When we can relate the things they are studying to how it affects them personally, they are a lot more likely to remember the message. That is what this information is all about.

What follows doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of the essential role that rocks and minerals play in our lives.

Based on current consumption, it is estimated that you - ***and every other person in the United States*** - will use more than ***a million pounds*** of rocks, minerals and metals during your lifetime including:

* **800 pounds of**[**lead**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/finder/H2.HTM#LEAD) - Primarily used in the construction of batteries. Also used as a radiation shielding during x-ray treatment by your doctor and dentist and as a protective shield on your TV screen to protect you from radiation from that source.
* **750 pounds of**[**zinc**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/uses.htm#Zinc) - primarily used as a rust inhibitor for steel in the construction of cars, buildings, bridges, ships and trains.
* **1,500 pounds of**[**copper**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/uses.htm#Copper) - Primarily used in the manufacture of copper wire to conduct electricity needed in your car, home, office, school, church, appliances.
* **3,600 pounds of**[**aluminum**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/uses.htm#Aluminum) - Cans, aircraft and automobile construction, sporting and electronic equipment, appliances.
* **32,000 pounds of**[**iron**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/finder/H2.HTM#IRON) - Used to make steel for cars, subways, ships, cans, building construction, heavy equipment, appliances, power transmission turbines and towers.
* **27,000 pounds of**[**clays**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/finder/H1.HTM#CLAY) - Used to coat the pages of newspapers magazines, stationery, brochures and boxes so that the ink used in printing on them will be bright and will not run. Also used as a brightener and abrasive in toothpaste and to provide a smooth coating for your stomach in medicines.
* **28,000 pounds of**[**salt**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/uses.htm#Halite) - Used in food preservation (almost all canned and frozen food contain salt), to enhance the taste of foods and to melt the ice on streets and highways during the winter. Also used in the manufacture of many chemicals, for water treatment, papermaking, soaps & detergents and in petroleum refining.
* **1,000,000 pounds of stone,**[**sand**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/finder/H3.HTM#SAND)**,**[**gravel**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/finder/H2.HTM#GRAVEL)**and**[**cement**](http://www.rocksandminerals.com/finder/A3.HTM#CEMENT) - Use in streets, highways and sidewalks; in the foundation for your house and school; as decorative materials for yards and gardens; in water purification plants to protect your health and in the construction of buildings from the most modest of homes to the world's tallest skyscrapers.