

Spinel [MgAl₂O₄]

Spinel is unique because it is both a specific mineral name and the name of a group of minerals, all of which are metal oxides and have the same crystal structure. The spinel group—consisting of minerals such as franklinite, chromite, and the mineral spinel—often forms glassy, lustrous octahedrons. Although found in many colors, the red variety is called “ruby spinel”, due to its blood-red coloration. Due to the similarity in color, hardness, and transparency to ruby (corundum), many historically significant “ruby” specimens have been discovered to be a red spinel. For example, the famous ruby found as the frontal stone in the Crown of State of the Queen of England—called the Black Prince’s ruby—is actually a spinel, and while just as beautiful, it is worth significantly less. ^{G6}



Spinel ^{G6}