

*** Name Origin:**

Latin argentum (silver). Silver from old english seolfor for silver.

*** Sources:**

Found in ores called argentite (Ag_2S), light ruby silver (Ag_3AsS_2), dark ruby silver (Ag_2SbS_2) and brittle silver.

*** Uses:**

Used in alloys for jewelry, in many compounds, photographic film and paper electronics, mirrors and batteries.

*** Additional Notes:**

Silver has been known since ancient times. It is mentioned in Genesis. Slag dumps in Asia Minor and on islands in the Aegean Sea indicate that man learned to separate silver from lead as early as 3000 B.C. Silver occurs native and in ores such as argentite (Ag_2S) and horn silver (AgCl); lead, lead-zinc, copper, gold, and copper-nickel ores are principal sources. Mexico, Canada, Peru, and the U.S. are the principal silver producers in the western hemisphere. Silver is also recovered during electrolytic refining of copper. Commercial fine silver contains at least 99.9% silver. Purities of 99.999+% are available commercially. Pure silver has a brilliant white metallic luster. It is a little harder than gold and is very ductile and malleable, being exceeded only by gold and perhaps palladium. Pure silver has the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of all metals, and possesses the lowest contact resistance. It is stable in pure air and water, but tarnishes when exposed to ozone, hydrogen sulfide, or air containing sulfur. The alloys of silver are important. Sterling silver is used for jewelry, silverware, etc. where appearance is paramount. This alloy contains 92.5% silver, the remainder being copper or some other metal. Silver is of utmost importance in photography, about 30% of the U.S. industrial consumption going into this application. It is used for dental alloys. Silver is used in making solder and brazing alloys, electrical contacts, and high capacity silver-zinc and silver-cadmium batteries. Silver paints are used for making printed circuits. It is used in mirror production and may be deposited on glass or metals by chemical deposition, electrodeposition, or by evaporation. When freshly deposited, it is the best reflector of visible light known, but is rapidly tarnishes and loses much of its reflectance. It is a poor reflector of ultraviolet. Silver fulminate ($\text{Ag}_2\text{C}_2\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$), a powerful explosive, is sometimes formed during the silvering process. Silver iodide is used in seeding clouds to produce rain. Silver chloride has interesting optical properties as it can be made transparent; it also is a cement for glass. Silver nitrate, or lunar caustic, the most important silver compound, is used extensively in photography. While silver itself is not considered to be toxic, most of its salts are poisonous. Natural silver contains two stable isotopes. Forty nine other radioactive isotopes and isomers are known. Silver compounds can be absorbed in the circulatory system and reduced silver deposited in the various tissues of the body. A condition, known as argyria, results, with a greyish pigmentation of the skin and mucous membranes. Silver has germicidal effects and kills many lower organisms effectively without harm to higher animals. Silver for centuries has been used traditionally for coinage by many countries of the world. In recent times, however, consumption of silver has at times greatly exceeded the output.

