

CLASSIFICATION OF SELECTED METAMORPHIC ROCKS

Does it have an obvious metamorphic foliation in the form of schistosity or gneissic layering?

Start Here

	Texture	Description	Name	Inferred Parent
<p>yes →</p> <p>Are most grains less than ~1 mm across?</p> <p>yes →</p>	Breaks into hard, flat, thin slabs due to slaty cleavage	Dull luster; microscopic mineral grains; colors are black, gray, green, or red	slate	mudstone or shale
	Non-planar foliation surfaces	Lustrous sheen caused by tiny graphite, chlorite, or mica grains along foliation	phyllite	mudstone, shale, or slate
<p>no</p> <p>Are most grains more than ~1 mm across?</p> <p>yes →</p>	Elongated or flat minerals along foliation surfaces	Has muscovite grains oriented parallel to foliation	muscovite schist	mudstone, shale, slate, phyllite
		Has biotite grains oriented parallel to foliation	biotite schist	
		Has blue lawsonite or blue amphibole (glaucofanite)	blueschist	mafic volcanics
		Has green minerals chlorite, actinolite, or epidote	greenschist	
	Compositional banding of light and dark minerals	Typically has quartz, feldspar, and mica minerals in widely spaced discontinuous layers	gneiss	many possible protoliths
<p>Are most grains less than ~1 mm across?</p> <p>yes →</p>	Microcrystalline texture	Usually a dull dark color; very hard	hornfels	many possible protoliths
	Microcrystalline texture; might have asbestos	Typically dull or glossy; green; commonly sheared	serpentinite	basalt, gabbro, or ultramafics
	Microcrystalline	Soft talc-rich rock; green, brown, gray, white	soapstone	basalt, gabbro, or ultramafics
<p>no</p> <p>Are most grains more than ~1 mm across?</p> <p>yes →</p>	Medium- to coarse-grained texture	Mostly shiny black amphibole (hornblende) crystals	amphibolite	basalt, gabbro, or ultramafics
	Crystalline texture	Green pyroxene and red garnet	eclogite	basalt, gabbro
	Varies from granular to crystalline	Quartz sand grains pressed together; very hard	quartzite	sandstone
	Fine (resembles a sugar cube) to coarse; often granofelsic	Recrystallized equal-sized grains of calcite or dolomite; fizzes in dilute HCl	marble	limestone
	Gravel sized rock fragments in finer matrix	Gravel-sized clasts might be distorted, and matrix might be foliated	metaconglomerate	conglomerate
	Angular gravel-sized clasts in matrix	A fault metabreccia cuts relict bedding in meta-sedimentary rock	metabreccia	sedimentary or fault breccia

*The name of a metamorphic rock can be modified by listing its most important minerals before the basic rock name, in order of increasing abundance. For example, if a schist has a few garnets but muscovite is more abundant, it would be a garnet muscovite schist.