

## Wikipedia Writing Assignment



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This is a series of writing assignments I provided to my students enrolled in an Earth Materials course taught in the Dept. of Geological Sciences at UT Austin. Students complete a Wikipedia entry regarding a mineral that is currently missing from the on-line dictionary. The entry is developed throughout the semester as different topics regarding mineral properties are discussed in lecture. Overall, the course is geared towards introducing students to minerals, mineral study techniques, igneous and metamorphic rocks, ore deposits, and ore formation processes. Students take the class after passing introductory geology and basic chemistry. I decided to try the Wikipedia assignment after frustrations with an end-of-semester term paper, which I suspect most students started the night before it was due. My preferred assignment for Mineralogy courses I taught previously was to make a poster about an unusual mineral. Unfortunately this was not possible due to the large class size (>80 students). The assignment was 10% of their total grade (two in-class lecture exams =30%, lecture final=20%, lab exercises =10%; two lab exams= 30%).

**The first assignment:** Students create an entry indicating a mineral's chemical formula and origin of its name. They become familiar with Wikipedia and library resources available in Geology.

**The second assignment:** Students create a table in Wikipedia preferred format for mineral entries that lists important characteristics.

**The third assignment:** Students describe their mineral's crystal class. They describe the meaning of the crystal class in their own words. I have found, however, that this can clutter the entry a bit. They must cite their sources in the format of American Mineralogist. I have not yet had a student who, on the first try, properly references their work in this prescribed format.

**The fourth assignment:** They describe the optical class of their mineral. They are learning about optical mineralogy during this portion of the course.

**The fifth assignment:** They find out why their mineral is important. Some of these minerals are important medically, economically, or for collectors. Others are not important at all. They must make an effort to determine the mineral's importance.

**Rubric:** Points are given for correct mineral formula, origin of the name, with some effort made to discover why it was chosen, entries in the table, references in correct format, which crystal and optical classes their mineral belongs to and what this means, where the mineral is found, and overall clarity, spelling, and organization.

**Benefits:** Students felt like they were contributing to Wikipedia and their writing had a purpose and impact beyond the classroom. Wikipedia has active users who may assist with the entry, and comment if they feel what is written is improperly cited or poorly written. One student had their entry deleted because of these reasons. These Wikipedia users help us as instructors convey the importance of correct spelling and grammar, and citing accurate information. Wikipedia has on-line volunteers who will help.

**Drawbacks:** Learning Wikipedia is time consuming. Each assignment requires a worked example. Trolls can damage the entries. Those who assist students can be frustrated by poor entries, and feel burdened. I did not experience other issues, like plagiarism or students revealing personal information, but these issues may arise.

**Useful References (Besides the ones listed in the assignments):**

**Wikipedia Education Program** ("Professors around the world assign their students to contribute to Wikipedia for class assignments"): [http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia\\_Education\\_Program](http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia_Education_Program)

**Assignments for Students Editors** (For students who edit Wikipedia. I did not do this, but it may be useful for peer review): [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Assignments\\_for\\_student\\_editors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Assignments_for_student_editors)

## GEO416K. WIKIPEDIA MINERALOGY PROJECT #1



This first homework will be part of a series of exercises with the purpose of getting you to explore resources available for Mineralogy. The inspiration for the project comes from my exasperation with the repeated questions: “Why do we need to know so many minerals?” and “What about these minerals do we need to know?” Rather than saying “Everything is important,” I hope to show you that what you need to know depends on what geologic questions you hope to answer and that mineralogy developed in a historical context, parallel with other sciences.

This is the first part a series of assignments that will help you put together an entry in the on-line encyclopedia site due at the end of the semester about an unusual mineral.

**What is Wikipedia?** (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About>) It is a multilingual, web-based, free-content encyclopedia project based on an openly-editable model. Wikipedia is written collaboratively by largely anonymous Internet volunteers who write without pay. Anyone with Internet access can write and make changes to Wikipedia articles (except in certain cases where editing is restricted to prevent disruption and/or vandalism). Users can contribute anonymously, under a pseudonym, or with their real identity, if they choose. The Wikipedia community has developed many policies and guidelines to improve the encyclopedia; however, it is not a formal requirement to be familiar with them before contributing.

Your goal is to write a short paragraph summarizing the origin and meaning of the mineral name you chose from Wikipedia’s list of minerals **for which there is no entry**. Include the chemical formula of your mineral in your paragraph. Print out your work, and turn it in on **SEPTEMBER 17** at the beginning of lecture.

### Step 1. Create a Wikipedia account.

1. Go to <http://en.wikipedia.org>
2. Click the "Sign in/create account" link in the upper right corner on the Wikipedia website.
3. Click the link "Create One" above the boxes. This will take you to the account creation page (also: <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:UserLogin&type=signup>).
4. Prove You’re Human. Wikipedia presents some characters to type in a box.
5. Enter your desired user name in the "Username:" box. This will be the name of your account.
6. Enter a password in the "Password:" box. Make sure that you can remember your password, but that it would be hard for anyone else to guess.
7. Enter the same password as above in the "Retype password:" box.
8. Enter your e-mail address in the "E-mail" box if you want to. For more information about this, see below in the "Tips" section.
9. Click the "Create account" button.

### Step 2. Read these articles about the website:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Welcoming\\_committee/Welcome\\_to\\_Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Welcoming_committee/Welcome_to_Wikipedia)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Policies\\_and\\_guidelines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Policies_and_guidelines)

Complete the Wikipedia Tutorial: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Tutorial>

### Step 3. Create an entry for a mineral for which there is none.

1. Go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_minerals\\_\(complete\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_minerals_(complete)).
2. Choose a mineral that has a name in red. Choose any mineral you like, as long as it has NO entry.
3. Figure out the mineral’s chemical formula and origin of its mineral name using library resources.
4. Add the Wikipedia entry indicating the mineral’s chemical formula and origin of its mineral name, including references. An example is included.

### Step 4. What to turn in.

1. A print-out of the page that shows that there was no original entry for this mineral. This looks like the first page of the example.
2. A print-out of your addition to Wikipedia indicating the mineral’s chemical formula and origin of its name. This looks like the last page of the example.

# Editing Nabalamprophyllite

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

- *Before creating an article, please read Wikipedia:Your first article.*
- You can also search for an existing article to which you can redirect this title.
- To experiment, please use the sandbox. To use a wizard to create an article, see the Article wizard.
- When creating an article, **provide references** to reliable published sources. An article without references, especially a biography of a living person, may be deleted.
- You can also start your new article at Special:MyPage/Nabalamprophyllite (<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:MyPage/Nabalamprophyllite&action=edit>) . There, you can develop the article with less risk of deletion; ask other editors to help work on it; and move it into "article space" when it is ready.
- If you wish to ask an informational question, please visit one of our reference desks.

AdvancedSpecial charactersHelp

Content that violates any copyrights will be deleted. Encyclopedic content must be **verifiable**. You irrevocably agree to release your contributions under the CC-BY-SA 3.0 License and the GFDL. You agree



# Nabalamprophyllite

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Nabalamprophyllite** has a general formula of  $\text{Ba}(\text{Na},\text{Ba})\{\text{Na}_3\text{Ti}[\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_2\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{14}](\text{OH},\text{F})_2\}^{[1]}$  The name is given for its composition (Naba, meaning sodium, Na and barium, Ba) and relation to other lamprophyllite-group minerals. Lamprophyllite is a rare Ti-bearing silicate mineral usually found in intrusive igneous rocks<sup>[2]</sup>.

- <sup>^</sup> Philonen, P.C., Grew, E.S., Ercit, T.S., Roberts, A.C., Jambor, J.L. (2005) New mineral names. *American Mineralogist*, 90, 1227-1233.
- <sup>^</sup> Klein, C., Dutrow, B. (2007) The 23rd edition of the *Manual of Mineral Science*. John Wiley Publishers, p.497.

- N.V. Chukanov, M.M. Moiseev, I.V. Pekov, K.A. Lazebnik, R.K. Rastsvetaeva, N.V. Zayakina, G. Ferraris, G. Ivaldi (2004) Nabalamprophyllite  $\text{Ba}(\text{Na},\text{Ba})\{\text{Na}_3\text{Ti}[\text{Ti}_2\text{O}_2\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{14}](\text{OH},\text{F})_2\}$ , a new layer titanosilicate of the lamprophyllite group from the Inagli and Kovdor alkaline-ultrabasic massifs, Russia. *Zapiski Vseross. Mineral. Obshch.*, 133(1), 59–72 (in Russian, English abstract).

Retrieved from "<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nabalamprophyllite>"

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## **Resources for online mineral information searching**

Note – What constitutes a trusted source? For a useful discussion of this issue, See:  
<http://usefulchem.blogspot.com/2010/01/dangerous-data-lessons-from-my-cheminfo.html>

Common errors include: transcription, rounding, estimating, conversion, translation, repetition, spell check, inattention, etc.

Wikipedia requires that an encyclopedic entry be verifiable. You will not be replicating the lab work, so the best you can do is to find the literature trail that leads to the primary investigators – the first people to publish the taxonomy of your mineral. In producing your entry, verify in at least three sources the paper trail AND the accuracy and/or consistency of your values. Reference your sources accurately and completely. A fact cannot be copyrighted, but textual presentation and formatting CAN be copyrighted.

### **Databases:**

<http://www.mindat.org/>

[mindat.org](http://www.mindat.org/) is a huge resource for mineral data online – note especially the outbound linking from each entry.

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/indexes/titles.php?let=G>

Here you can search

Glossary of Geology – an online dictionary with brief definitions  
and

GeoScience World - the primary database for citations to geology literature, with a package of more than 30 full text journals attached – a great way to locate primary source literature. [also Instructions for Authors, on citing in American Mineralogist style]

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

This is the Library home page – use it to see if we have full text online for your journal references, or to locate the paper items. From this page: <http://catalog.lib.utexas.edu/> click COURSE RESERVES to see your printed resource options.

<http://rruff.geo.arizona.edu/AMS/amcsd.php>

American Mineralogist Crystal Structure Database

<http://www.mineralogicalassociation.ca/index.php?p=34>

Contributions to Canadian Mineralogy (also a great source to untangle abbreviations of journal titles)

<http://galleries.com/> - or better –

<http://galleries.com/minerals/byname.htm>

Amethyst Galleries' Mineral Gallery site. Confusing layout, but a number of ways to organizer your search.

### **Images:**

<http://fasttex.diaa.utexas.edu/vargas/>

Jackson School/ Vargas mineral collection

<http://www.geolab.unc.edu/Petunia/IgMetAtlas/mainmenu.html>

Atlas of Igneous Rocks, Minerals, and textures (U.N.C.)

[http://smithsonianimages.si.edu/siphoto/siphoto.portal?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=home](http://smithsonianimages.si.edu/siphoto/siphoto.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=home)

Smithsonian Images (click gems and minerals)

Note: Where possible, link to an online image, rather than paste it in. Scanning and uploading a printed image may violate copyright!

## GEO416K. WIKIPEDIA MINERALOGY PROJECT #2



The next step in the project is to add a table to your Wikipedia entry that lists your mineral's properties. Wikipedia prefers to have a table that can be added to by other readers. You may not be able to find all of the properties listed below, but try, and as the semester goes on, you can add more information. **What to turn in:** A copy of your Wikipedia page with the table included. You can cut and paste this table into the beginning of your entry with the information. I suggest you write the information here first, and then paste it into the beginning of your article.

**DUE: OCTOBER 1** at the beginning of lecture

```
{{FixBunching|beg}}
{{Infobox mineral
| name      =
| category  =
| boxwidth  =
| boxbgcolor =
| image     =
| imagesize =
| caption   =
| formula   =
| symmetry  =
| unit cell =
| molweight =
| color     =
| habit     =
| system    =
| twinning  =
| cleavage  =
| fracture  =
| tenacity  =
| mohs      =
| luster    =
| refractive =
| opticalprop =
| birefringence =
| pleochroism =
| streak    =
| gravity   =
| density   =
| melt      =
| fusibility =
| diagnostic =
| solubility =
| diaphaneity =
| other     =
| references = <ref> add reference here </ref>
}}
{{FixBunching|mid}}
{{FixBunching|end}}
```

### GEO416K. WIKIPEDIA MINERALOGY PROJECT #3



The next step in the project is to be sure your Wikipedia entry contains information about the crystal class your mineral belongs to. The source of your information **MUST** be a journal article or book you have found in the library (as opposed to an internet resource). You **MUST** cite the article or book in the format of *American Mineralogist* and you must write a few sentences describing what the symmetry of your mineral means.

**American Mineralogist Style.** All authors in the references must be listed as last name, comma, initials. For successive references with identical authors, the author list is replaced by a dash. The first author's first name may be spelled out if there is a chance of confusion. Journal names must be spelled out in full. No parts of the reference are italicized, boldface, or underlined. Examples of the common types of references are listed.

#### REFERENCES CITED

- Bailey, S.W. (1982) Nomenclature for regular interstratifications. *American Mineralogist*, 67, 394-398.
- Commission on New Minerals and Mineral Names of the International Mineralogical Association. (1982) Suggested outline for new mineral descriptions. *American Mineralogist*, 67, 190-191.
- Dunn, P.J. (1977) From unknown to known: The characterization of new mineral species. *Mineralogical Record*, 8, 341-349.
- Fleischer, M. (1970) Procedure of the International Mineralogical Association Commission on New Minerals and Mineral Names. *American Mineralogist*, 55, 1016-1017.
- Fleischer, M., and Mandarino, J.A. (1995) Glossary of mineral species (Seventh edition). 280 p. *Mineralogical Record*, Tucson, Arizona.
- Graham, A.L., Bevan, A.W.R., and Hutchison, R. (1985) Catalogue of meteorites (4th edition). British Museum (Natural History), 460 p. London, U.K., and University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A.
- Hansen, Wallace R., Ed. (1991) Suggestions to Authors of the Reports of the United States Geological Survey. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.
- Kennard, O., Speakman, J.C., and Donnay, J.D.H. (1967) Primary crystallographic data. *Acta Crystallographica*, 22, 445-449.

**DUE: OCTOBER 29** at the beginning of lecture

**What to Turn in:** A copy of your Wikipedia article with a few sentences written about the symmetry of your mineral. The source must be referenced in *American Mineralogist* style.



## Nabalamprophyllite

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Nabalamprophyllite** has a general formula of 




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[3] The name is given for its composition (Naba, meaning sodium, Na and barium, Ba) and relation to other lamprophyllite-group minerals. Lamprophyllite is a rare Ti-bearing silicate mineral usually found in intrusive igneous rocks<sup>[4]</sup>. Nabalamprophyllite is monoclinic, which means crystallographically, it contains three axes of unequal length and the angles between two of the axes are 90°, and one is less than 90°. It belongs to the space group P2/m<sup>[5]</sup>. The mineral also has a orthorhombic polytype (nabalamprophyllite-2O)<sup>[6]</sup> This mineral belongs to the space group Pnmm.

### References

- ↑ http://webmineral.com/data/Nabalamprophyllite.shtml
  - ↑ Philonen, P.C., Grew, E.S., Ercit, T.S., Roberts, A.C., Jambor, J.L. (2005) New mineral names. American Mineralogist, 90, 1227-1233
  - ↑ Philonen, P.C., Grew, E.S., Ercit, T.S., Roberts, A.C., Jambor, J.L. (2005) New mineral names. American Mineralogist, 90, 1227-1233.
  - ↑ Klein, C., Dutrow, B. (2007) The 23rd edition of the Manual of Mineral Science. John Wiley Publishers, p.497.
  - ↑ Philonen, P.C., Grew, E.S., Ercit, T.S., Roberts, A.C., Jambor, J.L. (2005) New mineral names. American Mineralogist, 90, 1227-1233
  - ↑ Sokolova, E., Hawthorne, F.C. (2008) From Structure Topology to Chemical Composition. IV. Titanium Silicates: The Orthorhombic Polytype of Nabalamprophyllite from the Lovozero Massif, Kola Peninsula, Russia. The Canadian Mineralogist, 46, 1323-1331.
- ↑ N.V. Chukanov, M.M. Moiseev, I.V. Pekov, K.A. Lazebnik, R.K. Rastsvetaeva, N.V. Zayakina, G. Ferraris, G. Ivaldi (2004) Nabalamprophyllite Ba(Na,Ba){Na<sub>3</sub>Ti[Ti<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>Si<sub>4</sub>O<sub>14</sub>](OH,F)<sub>2</sub>}, a new layer titanosilicate of the lamprophyllite group from the Inagli and Kovdor alkaline-ultrabasic massifs, Russia. Zapiski Vseross. Mineral. Obshch., 133(1), 59–72 (in Russian, English abstract).

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Categories: Sorosilicates | Barium minerals | Sodium minerals | Titanium minerals | Hydroxide minerals | Halide minerals | Silicate mineral stubs

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	<b>Nabalamprophyllite</b>
	<b>General</b>
<b>Category</b>	Titanium silicate, heterophyllosilicate, sorosilicate
<b>Chemical formula</b>	Ba(Na,Ba){Na <sub>3</sub> Ti[Ti <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub> Si <sub>4</sub> O <sub>14</sub> ](OH,F) <sub>2</sub> }
<b>Crystal symmetry</b>	monoclinic, P2/m
<b>Unit cell</b>	a=19.805, b=7.123, c=5.426Å, β=96.45, V=753.4Å <sup>3</sup>
	<b>Identification</b>
<b>Color</b>	brown to bright yellow crystals
<b>Crystal habit</b>	prismatic, sheaf-like, random aggregates
<b>Cleavage</b>	perfect (001) cleavage
<b>Mohs scale hardness</b>	3
<b>Luster</b>	glassy, transparent to translucent
<b>Streak</b>	white
<b>Optical properties</b>	biaxial positive, α=1.750, γ=1.799, 2V=40.5°
<b>Pleochroism</b>	weak, green-brown
<b>References</b>	[1], [2]

#### GEO416K. WIKIPEDIA MINERALOGY PROJECT #4



The next step in the Wikipedia project is to provide information about the optical properties of your mineral. Some questions to guide your entry:

1. Is your mineral isotropic or anisotropic? Define these terms in your entry.
2. What is its relief? Define mineral relief in your entry.
3. How many indices of refraction does it have? Write the numerical values and define indices of refraction in your answer.
4. What is its color in plane polarized light? If you can't find this information, take a guess based on its chemical formula. Do you think the mineral would be pleochroic? Why or why not? Define pleochroism in your answer.
5. Is your mineral birefringent? Define birefringence in your answer.
6. Be sure to fill in the mineral's optical properties in your table.

**What to turn in: A copy of your entry with at least 3 of the above tasks completed.**

**DUE MONDAY NOVEMBER 8 at the BEGINNING OF LECTURE**

## **GEO416K. WIKIPEDIA MINERALOGY PROJECT #5**



The next step in the Wikipedia project is to provide information why your mineral is important. How could your mineral be important?

Minerals are used in a variety of fields, including medicine, materials science, construction and building materials, use in equipment and manufacturing. Sometimes they indicate important elements are present in metamorphic or igneous rocks. Sometimes they are useful only for collectors of rare minerals. Sometimes they are just not important at all, and they just exist. If this is true for your mineral, you better be able to prove it, because I will look it up. Mineral importance is in the eye of the mineral holder... so do the best you can. To get you started, see who has studied your mineral and why.

**What to turn in: A copy of your entry with at least 50 words written about the importance of your mineral.**

**DUE WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 24 at the BEGINNING OF LECTURE**

**+if you don't come to class on Wednesday (day before Thanksgiving), be sure to turn it in Monday.+**

## GEO416K. FINAL WIKIPEDIA MINERALOGY PROJECT



FINAL WIKIPEDIA PROJECT DUE December 3 at the beginning of lecture. What is left of your Wikipedia project is to “clean up” your entry. The goal is to edit your entry so that it is useful for someone who would need to know about your mineral.

### Grading Rubric

#### Gain points:

- (5 points) Correct mineral chemical formula and written with subscripts when appropriate. Check both the table and the body of your entry.
  - Example:  $\text{CaCO}_3$
  - Not CaCO3
- (5 points) Origin of its name with some effort to discover why that was the chosen
  - Example: Allanite was discovered in 1810 and named for the Scottish mineralogist, Thomas Allan (1777-1833). Or Chesterite is named after Chester, Virginia, where it was first discovered.
  - Not
  - Allanite is named after mineralogist Thomas Allan. Or Chesterite is named for someplace in Virginia.
- (10 points) Table should have at least 10 entries.
  - Example: Mohs scale hardness 5
  - Not
  - Mohs scale hardness bright yellow
- (5 points) References in correct American Mineralogist style.
  - Example: Strunz, H. (1955) Hagendorfite. *American Mineralogist*, 40, 553.
  - Not Herbert Stunz, 1955., “Hagendorfite”; *American Min.*, 40..
  - Example for our textbook: Klein, C., and Dutrow, B. (2007) The 23<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the *Manual of Mineral Science*, 675 p. John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Hoboken, New Jersey, U.S.A.
  - To reference a website if you know who wrote it and when it was posted: Bodine, Alicia, 3 March 2007, “Sameplite Mineral Data.” [www.webmineral.com/data/Sampleite.shtml](http://www.webmineral.com/data/Sampleite.shtml). Accessed 23 November 2010. If not, fill in what you can. Should include when it was accessed for credit.
- (5 points) At least 1 reference obtained from a journal or book (not internet resource).
- (20 points) Which crystal class your mineral belongs to, and what this means in your own words. If anything is written that is confusing or not in your own words, I will take points off. Place any numerical information you found about its space groups, symmetry operations, etc. in the table. You can delete your definitions to clean up the article.
- (20 points) Which optical class your mineral belongs to, and what this means in your own words. If anything is written that is confusing or not in your own words, I will take points off. Place any numerical information you found about its indices of refraction, pleochroism, etc. in the table. You can delete your definitions to clean up the article.
- (10 points) Where is your mineral found? What type of geological setting is this?
- (20 points) Clarity and organization. The article should be clearly written, in your own words, and useful for someone finding information about your mineral.

#### Lose points:

- Spelling and punctuation: -5 points for every spelling mistake and punctuation error.
- References that do not exist (-5 points for each entry). I will be looking them up and clicking on links.

**Some items that may help in polishing your article:**

- If you have problems with your references read:  
[http://www.minsocam.org/msa/ammin/All\\_About\\_References.html](http://www.minsocam.org/msa/ammin/All_About_References.html)  
[http://www.minsocam.org/msa/ammin/REFS\\_updates.html](http://www.minsocam.org/msa/ammin/REFS_updates.html)
- To be sure that your article will not lose points for clarity and organization, read:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual\\_of\\_Style](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style)