

About Birthstone Systems and Colors

Birthstone Colors Vary in Accordance with Differing Birth Systems

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“A Mother’s Ring! Is this for me?” Blush. Blush. Grin. Grin. “It’s so beautiful. I would never have guessed you guys would’ve thought to get one for me!”

Around my finger went the shiny gold band. More blushing and grinning went my color and expression. My erect fingers spread in a horizontal fashion. My eyes scrutinized the five stones – each representative of one of my children’s birthday.

“This one looks pinkish!” I extrapolated in the midst of verbalizing which stone represented which month. “Rubies are supposed to be red... not pink or maroon looking. They’re supposed to be like ruby red lipstick!”

Oh well. What can I say? There I was being “Miss Picky” – ruining the family’s surprise – not to mention their shopping for the perfect band and design and stone shape and reasonable price – yada-yada-yada... But what was I supposed to do? The jeweler, at least in my mind, had inserted the wrong stone to represent my daughter’s July birth month.

Birthstones, also known as natal stones, are precious or semiprecious gems that symbolize the date of a person’s birth. The tricky thing is that birth periods associated with the gems could revolve around differing systems. The differing systems include the *calendrical months of the year*, the *ruling planets*, and the *astrological signs of the Zodiac*. What this means is that the color of a birthstone in connection with a

person's birth depends on which system is being utilized to determine the color. This means that a person choosing a birthstone because he or she was born in July would have a different stone associated with her birthdate depending on whether she chose to use the planetary, the calendrical or the astrological signs birth system.

Another factor involving birthstone coloring entails genuine versus synthetic gemstones. Whereas synthesized stones can be almost as beautiful as real stones and they're cost efficient, the colors they produce may not be as dark or as light as their genuine sisters' coloring. With that said, gem coloring is not exactly the same for all like stones even if the gems are genuine.

Calendrical Month Birthstones

Wearing a particular month's birthstone is not something that is "set in stone". In fact, birthstone wearers often favor a different month's stone over their own. The same is true for birthstone colors. If a stone color doesn't jive with a particular individual, he or she often chooses a substitute. For instance Topaz or its mimic Citrine considered to be golden in color are often substituted for blue Topaz which is actually a colorless or golden treated crystal.

Those born in the month of September have all rainbow colors, except certain hues of red, to choose from when seeking their Sapphire birthstones. Accordingly, despite the fact that some shades of red are set aside for Rubies, and Sapphire are generally blue, they can be found in various colors. For that matter, Tourmalines and Diamonds can also be found in a variety of colors. Furthermore, garnets, although usually red, are found in colors such as green, orange, and purple.

In addition to stone quality and color, another aspect to birthstone importance is the character those born under the stones are said to possess. The Jewelry Industry Council

located in New York City specifies quality and symbolization of various birthstones. Below is a list designating which gems are assigned to which month and the gems' symbols.

January- Garnet
Symbol- Constancy

February- Amethyst
Symbol- Sincerity

March- Aquamarine, Bloodstone
Symbol- Courage

April- Diamond
Symbol- Innocence

May- Emerald
Symbol- Love and success

June- Pearl, Moonstone, Alexandrite,
Symbol- Health and longevity

July- Ruby
Symbol- Contentment

August- Peridot, Sardonyx
Symbol- Married happiness

September- Sapphire
Symbol- Clear thinking

October- Tourmaline
Symbol- Hope

November- Topaz
Symbol- Fidelity

December- Turquoise, Zircon
Symbol- Prosperity

During the time of the exodus, today's calendar month system

had yet to arrive. For this reason, birthstones of that period were set in accordance with the *signs of the zodiac* which brings us to *Planetary Birthstones*.

In ancient times gemstone wearers believed that wearing birthstones corresponding with the planets that ruled during their time of birth would instill good karma in their lives. Planetary birthstones involve a time-frame associated with two months as opposed to one month as follows:

Planet in Rule – Corresponding Zodiac – Dates of Rule – Designated Birthstone

Mars- Aries- Mar 21 to Apr 20- Jasper
Venus- Taurus- Apr 21 to May 21- Aventurine or Emerald
Mercury- Gemini- May 22 to Jun 21- Tiger Eye
Moon- Cancer- Jun 22 to Jul 22- Moonstone
Sun- Leo- Jul 23 to Aug 21- Rock Crystal
Mercury- Virgo- Aug 22 to Sep 23- Citrine
Venus- Libra- Sep 24 to Oct 22- Sapphire
Pluto- Scorpio- Oct 23 to Nov 22- Garnet or Ruby
Jupiter- Sagittarius- Nov 23 to Dec 22- Topaz
Saturn- Capricorn- Dec 23 to Jan 20- Lapis Lazuli
Uranus- Aquarius- Jan 21 to Feb 19- Turquoise
Neptune- Pisces- Feb 20 to Mar 20- Aquamarine

Talismanic Birthstones

Believed to possess magical planetary powers that warded against evil, aided healing, and saw into the future, talismanic birthstones became popular among religious practitioners. Talismanic birthstones are available in two forms. One form involves cutting or engraving symbolic amulets. The other type involves engraving talismanic symbols into gems corresponding to zodiac signs as follows:

Capricorn- Onyx
Aquarius- Jasper
Pisces- Ruby

Aries- Topaz
Taurus- Garnet
Gemini- Emerald
Cancer- Sapphire
Leo- Diamond
Virgo- Zircon
Libra- Agate
Scorpio- Amethyst
Sagittarius- Beryl

Pictures of Talismanic Birthstone Symbols can be viewed at Bernardine.com.

Other types of birthstones include Tibetan "Mystical" stones that are more than one thousand years old, and Ayurvedic birthstones involving first century Indian medicine practices using herbs, rubbing oils, purgatives, and so on to treat diseases.