

Copper Fast Facts

Copper is:

- An element with the chemical symbol Cu (from the Roman word Cuprum - their word for the island of Cyprus, famous for its copper mines).
- Deep pink-brown in colour and is the only metal other than gold, to have a distinctive colour.
- An excellent conductor of heat and electricity (second only to silver).
- Soft but tough.
- Malleable and ductile (can be beaten and drawn into a wire).
- Alloyed (mixed) with many other metals.
- Used in electric generators, household/car electrical wiring, wires in appliances, computers, lights, motors, telephone cables, radios and TV sets.
- Used in water pipes and hydraulic systems.
- Used to make 'silver' coins such as our 5, 10, 20 and 50 cent pieces. \$1 and \$2 coins are 92% copper, mixed with aluminium and nickel.
- Useful for car radiators, air conditioners, home heating systems, cooking pots and boilers to produce steam.
- Used as copper sulphate used to kill algal blooms in water reservoirs, protect timber, prevents plant roots from blocking rains and sewerage systems and controls insect infestations.

For more information on copper see [Geoscience Australia Mines Atlas](#).



Copper – Image courtesy of Xstrata
Copper

