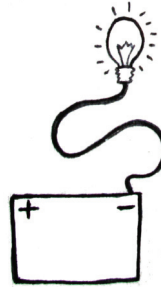


# Au

**Gold** is number 79 on the periodic table of elements and its symbol is Au. It is bright yellow and one of the rarest metals on Earth. It is most commonly used as money and jewelry. It is also a very malleable and conductive metal.



Gold is the most malleable metal on Earth. One ounce of gold can be hammered into a sheet that is 300 square feet. Gold leaf is often put onto other metals and materials and is much thinner than a sheet of paper.



Gold is very conductive and is sometimes used for wiring but not often because of its rarity and many other elements are better conductors.



Gold will hold its shape under most conditions but is very soft. You can dent a piece of gold with your fingernail. This is a good way to tell if it is pure gold.



Unlike most metals gold does not rust and does not react with water or air. Very thin sheets of it are sometimes used as a protective layer for other metals.

## Questions

1. What is a good way to tell if you have pure gold?
2. Why is gold not usually used for electrical wiring even though it is a good conductor?
3. Why are thin sheets of gold sometimes put over other metals?
4. What property of gold makes it easy to hammer into shapes?