

## Glossary of terms to describe properties of Materials (7-12 years)

Blue shading indicates the properties you would normally expect children aged 7 and over to have already encountered

Property	Definition	Example
Absorbent	Materials that can soak up liquids	Paper, cotton, wool, toweling
Brittle	Materials which will break rather than change shape when a force is applied	Glass, ceramics
Dull	Materials that do not reflect light well	Wood, rubber, cardboard
Durable	Materials that are hard wearing and withstand damage	Brick, slate, stainless steel
Elastic	Materials that are springy. They can change their shape by being stretched or compressed when a force is applied and will return to their original shape after the force is removed.	Rubber, a pair of tights
Electrical conductor	Materials that allow electricity to flow through them.	Metals, graphite
Electrical insulator	Materials that do not allow electricity to flow through them.	Plastic, glass
Flexible	Materials that can be bent, folded or rolled.	Leaves, paper, fabric, rubber
Fragile	Materials that are delicate and become damaged easily.	Glass, tissue paper, polystyrene
Hard	Materials that cannot be easily scratched, dented or forced into a different shape	Diamond, metal
Impermeable	Materials that do not allow water or liquids to pass through them	Concrete, granite, plastics, rubber
Magnetic	Materials that are attracted to a magnet.	Steel, iron, nickel
Opaque	Materials that block light and do not let it pass through them.	Metal, wood, rock
Permeable	Materials that allow water and liquids to pass through them	Paper, fabric, sand
Reflective	Materials that send the light back	Glass, some plastic, metals
Rigid	Materials that are stiff and do not bend	Glass, steel, some types of wood & plastic
Rough	Materials with an uneven surface	Brick, sand, tree bark

Shiny	Materials that reflect light well	Metals, cut diamonds and other precious stones
Smooth	Materials with an even, continuous flat surface	Glass, marble, glazed ceramics, some plastics
Soft	Materials that can be easily scratched, dented or forced into a different shape.	Playdough, fabric, chalk
Strong	Materials that won't crack or break easily when forces push or pull them	Metal, rock, some types of wood
Thermal conductor	Materials that allow heat to flow through them.	Metals, graphite
Thermal insulator	Materials that do not allow heat to flow through them.	Wood, plastic, fabric
Tough	Materials which change shape rather than break when a force is applied to them	Steel, aluminium
Translucent	Materials that allow <b>some</b> light to pass through them but block some of the light.	Tissue paper, thin fabrics
Transparent	Materials that allow light to pass through them and also allow us to see through them	Glass, water, some plastic
Waterproof	Materials that do not let water soak into or pass through them	Plastic, wax, rubber
Weak	Materials that crack or break easily when a force is applied to them	Paper, tissue Polystyrene, cork