

# Kryptonite

**Kryptonite** is a fictional substance and the most well-known weakness of DC Comics' superhero Superman. Kryptonite is the ore form of a radioactive element (prior to *Crisis on Infinite Earths*)<sup>[1]</sup> or compound (post-*Crisis on Infinite Earths*)<sup>[2]</sup> from Superman's home planet of Krypton. The popularity of Superman and his vulnerability to kryptonite has led to the generic usage of the term in popular culture as a reference to an individual's weakness, similar to "Achilles' heel"— which originates from Greek mythology.<sup>[3]</sup>

First mentioned in *The Adventures of Superman* radio show in June 1943, kryptonite has been featured in a variety of forms and colors (each with its own effect) in DC Comics publications and other media, including feature films, television series, and novelty items such as toys, trading card sets, and games.

Superman and all other Kryptonian characters are susceptible to kryptonite radiation. In the Modern Age of Comic Books, it is established that kryptonite can also affect non-Kryptonians though at a much slower rate, causing humans to develop acute radiation syndrome or superhuman abilities.<sup>[4]</sup>

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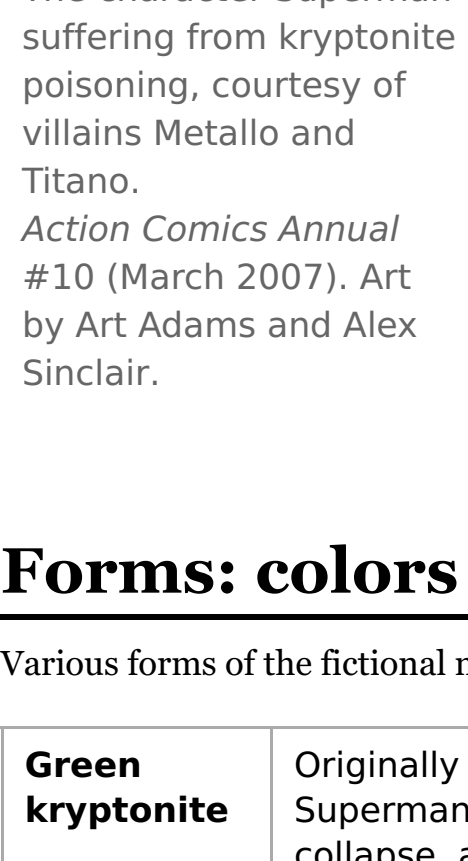
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## Origin



An unpublished 1940 story titled "The K-Metal from Krypton", written by Superman creator Jerry Siegel, featured a prototype of kryptonite. It was a mineral from the planet Krypton that drained Superman of his strength while giving superhuman powers to mortals. This story was rejected because in it Superman reveals his identity to Lois.<sup>[5]</sup>

The mineral known as kryptonite was introduced in the story arc "The Meteor from Krypton" in June 1943 on *The Adventures of Superman* radio series.<sup>[6]</sup>

Kryptonite was incorporated into the comic mythsos with *Superman* #61 (November 1949).<sup>[7]</sup> Editor Dorothy Woolfolk stated in an interview with *Florida Today* in August 1993, that she "felt Superman's invulnerability was boring."<sup>[8]</sup>

Kryptonite gradually began appearing more frequently, causing science fiction writer Larry Niven to theorize in tongue-in-cheek fashion that Krypton was in fact a Dyson sphere or a cold neutron star, and that this was the underlying reason for so much of the mineral finding its way to Earth courtesy of meteor showers.<sup>[9]</sup> Originally Kryptonite was described as a mineral element occurring naturally on Krypton, but Silver Age continuity instead posited that the entire physical mass of the planet had been transformed into Kryptonite by an intensive burst of nuclear radiation resulting from the planet's explosion, thus massively increasing the amount of Kryptonite in the universe. In an effort to reduce the use of kryptonite in storylines, all known forms on Earth were transmuted into "K-iron" in a 1971 story arc titled "The Sandman Saga".<sup>[10]</sup>

## Forms: colors and effects

Various forms of the fictional material have been created over the years in *Superman* publications.

<b>Green kryptonite</b>	Originally red in color, the material debuted in <i>Superman</i> #61 (Nov. 1949) and did not adopt its characteristic green hue until <i>Action Comics</i> #161 (Aug. 1951). Green kryptonite weakens Superman and other Kryptonians. It can and will kill them with long-term exposure. Kryptonians under Kryptonite exposure experience severe muscular weakness, usually to the point of collapse, and excruciating pain, with both conditions progressively intensifying. Kryptonians under Kryptonite exposure usually develop a fever and eventually will lose consciousness before death. Under Kryptonite exposure, the blood of Kryptonians begins turning green, and their skin gradually assumes a green color. <p>Although canonical depictions vary widely, the majority of accounts maintain that although Kryptonite exposure victims experience severe weakness and pain, exposure in itself does not eradicate the victim's super-powers, except those related to physical strength. Therefore victims retain most of their visual and sensory powers, although Kryptonite itself appears impervious to damage by heat vision. Kryptonite exposure does not compromise the subject's invulnerability to other forms of injury; therefore it is not a practical strategy for a villain to first expose the victim to Kryptonite, then kill them with a gun or other conventional weapon. Some accounts maintain paralysis is an effect of Kryptonite exposure, although most depictions show victims still capable of limited movement. Kryptonian characters have been shown to become immune to the effects of green kryptonite due to either long-term absorption of sunlight<sup>[11]</sup> or extremely high short-term exposure to the sun.<sup>[12]</sup> Post-Crisis sources establish that green kryptonite is also harmful to humans; with sufficient long-term exposure, it can result in cancer, as Lex Luthor discovered from a ring with a Kryptonite jewel he wore to ward off Superman's presence.<sup>[13]</sup></p>
<b>Red kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Adventure Comics</i> #252 (Sept. 1958). Originally red kryptonite simply weakened Superman, but to a greater degree than green kryptonite. Red kryptonite was later described as causing odd behavior or bizarre transformations, albeit temporary and non-fatal. The effects of red kryptonite are sometimes described as lasting exactly 24 hours, but in other accounts the effects may persist up to three days.
<b>Anti-kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Action Comics</i> #252 (May 1959). Harmless to Kryptonians, but has the same effect as the green variety on normal humans. Anti-kryptonite is also the power source for one version of the character Ultraman, Superman's evil counterpart from an antimatter universe. <sup>[14]</sup>
<b>X-kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Action Comics</i> #261 (Jan. 1960). Created by Supergirl (Kara Zor-El) in an unsuccessful attempt to find an antidote to green kryptonite. Harmless to Kryptonians, the mineral gives normal life-forms superhuman abilities, as in the case of Supergirl's pet cat Streaky. Revised in <i>Superman Family</i> #203 (Oct. 1980) to have the same effect as the green variety on Kryptonians.
<b>Blue kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman</i> #140 (Oct. 1960). An imperfect form of kryptonite which affects the imperfect character Bizarro and members of the Bizarro League in the same way green kryptonite affects Superman. Blue kryptonite is the antidote to the random and bizarre effects of red kryptonite.
<b>White kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Adventure Comics</i> #279 (Dec. 1960). Kills all plant life from any world.
<b>Red-Green kryptonite, first variety</b>	Debuted in <i>Action Comics</i> #275 (April 1961). An alloy created by the villainous character <i>Brainiac</i> , the red-green kryptonite caused Superman to mutate, temporarily growing a third eye in the back of his head.
<b>Gold kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Adventure Comics</i> #299 (Aug. 1962). Kryptonite affected by atomic radiation, capable of permanently removing a Kryptonian's ability to process yellow sunlight, which nullifies all superhuman abilities. In Post-Crisis this kryptonite only removes a Kryptonian's powers temporarily. (In <i>Superman II</i> , the crystal chamber from Superman's Fortress of Solitude exhibited the same effect although this process was reversed via Jor-El's green crystal.) <sup>[15]</sup>
<b>Red-Green-Blue-Gold kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman</i> #162 (July 1963). An imaginary story in which Superman combines the minerals to power an intelligence-expanding device. An explosion occurs and the hero is split into two separate beings ("Superman-Blue" and "Superman-Red") both of whom possess enhanced intelligence.
<b>Silver kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen</i> #70 (July 1963). Revealed by Jimmy Olsen to be a hoax. In Post-Crisis, Silver kryptonite first appeared in <i>Superman/Batman</i> #46 (April 2008), modeled after the version that appeared in the <i>Smallville</i> TV series. Silver kryptonite causes Kryptonians to suffer from altered perceptions, loss of inhibitions, and extreme hunger cravings. On the <i>Supergirl</i> TV series, this kryptonite causes Superman to hallucinate his "greatest fear" of an attacking General Zod during the final episode of season 2 <i>Nevertheless, She Persisted</i> .
<b>Jewel kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Action Comics</i> #310 (March 1964). Fragments of Krypton's Jewel Mountains. Amplifies the <i>psychic</i> powers of the criminals imprisoned in the <i>Phantom Zone</i> , allowing them to project illusions or perform mind control.
<b>Bizarro-red kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen</i> #80 (Oct. 1964). Affects humans in the same manner that red kryptonite affects Kryptonians.
<b>Red-Green kryptonite, second variety</b>	Debuted in <i>Superboy Comics</i> #121 (June 1965). This caused Superboy to lose his powers permanently, but Phantom Zone criminal Vakox unwillingly cured him, restoring his powers.
<b>Red-Gold kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman</i> #178 (July 1965). Temporarily deprives Kryptonians of their memories.
<b>Magno-kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen</i> #92 (April 1966). Created by the villain Mr. Nero, this variety is magnetically attracted to all substances originally from Krypton.
<b>Red-Green-Gold kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman</i> #192 (Jan. 1967). An imaginary story in which the alloy permanently removes Superman's powers and memories of himself as Superman.
<b>Slow kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>The Brave and the Bold</i> #175 (June 1981). A modified variety of green kryptonite produced by supervillan <i>Metallo</i> that affects humans in a manner similar to the green mineral.
<b>Kryptonite-X</b>	Debuted in <i>The Adventures of Superman</i> #511 (April 1994). A one-time fluke. Kryptonite-X was created when the Eradicator filtered a harmful barrage of kryptonite discharged by the villain Cyborg Superman at Superman. The result was beneficial for Superman, supercharging and restoring his ability to process solar radiation.
<b>Pink kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Supergirl</i> vol. 4 #79 (April 2003), pink kryptonite seemingly turns Kryptonians gay. This type of kryptonite was mentioned in a single panel in a story that was a satire of the plots of many Silver Age comic stories (such as those listed above) which featured some strange new variety of kryptonite. In the Justice League Action short "True Colours" it switches a Kryptonian's gender.
<b>Black kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Supergirl</i> #2 (vol. 5, Oct. 2005). In pre-Flashpoint continuity, it could split a Kryptonian into two separate entities: one good and the other evil. (The kryptonite manufactured by the villains of <i>Superman III</i> had just such an effect on the Man of Steel.) <p>In Dark Nights: The Batman Who Laughs #1, set on Dark Multiverse Earth -22, a Batman corrupted by the Joker, creates a modified strand of black kryptonite. He tests this first on Supergirl, causing her to murder her family before dying. He then uses it again on Superman and Superboy who literally tear apart Lois Lane before also dying themselves.</p>
<b>Orange kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Krypto the Superdog</i> #4 (Feb. 2007). Provides super abilities for 24 hours to any animal that comes into contact with it.
<b>Periwinkle kryptonite</b>	Debuted in <i>Superman Family Adventures</i> #9 (March 2013). A non-canon story. Exposure to periwinkle kryptonite causes Kryptonians to lose all inhibitions.

Other varieties of the material have appeared but have been revealed to be hoaxes, such as "Yellow" (*Action Comics* #277, June 1961), "Kryptonite Plus" (*Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen* #126 Jan. 1970) and "Blood" (52 #13, Aug. 2006).

## In other media

### Television

**Live-action**

- The Adventures of Superman* (1952-1958) featured kryptonite in the episodes "Panic in the Sky", "The Defeat of Superman", "Superman Week", "The Deadly Rock", "The Magic Secret", "The Gentle Monster" and "Ali That Glitters".
- Superboy* (1988-1992) featured green kryptonite the episodes: "Kryptonite Kills" and "Metallo". "Bride of Bizarro", "Kryptonite Kid", and "Obituary for a Super-Hero". The red variety was featured in the episode "Super Menace". A Bizarro White variant was featured in the episode "The Battle With Bizarro", which heals the title character.
- Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* (1993-1997) featured green kryptonite in the episodes "The Green, Green Glow of Home", "Barbarians at the Planet", "The House of Luthor", "Metallo", "Top Copy" and "Battleground Earth". The red variety was featured in the episodes "Individual Responsibility", "Ultrawoman" and "Lethal Weapon".
- Smallville* (2001-2011) featured kryptonite on a regular basis. A large quantity of the green variety descends to Earth in a meteor shower, arriving in the town of Smallville, Kansas with the spaceship containing the infant Kal-El. The material is colloquially referred to by Smallville residents as "meteor rock", but is eventually called "Kryptonite" by Clark Kent once he discovers his origins in season two episode "Rosetta" (In real life, the area near Benham, Kansas is known as the site of a major meteorite strike between 10,000 and 20,000 years ago.<sup>[16]</sup>) Aside from being harmful to Clark Kent, the mineral produces bizarre changes in flora and fauna. It also occasionally bestows metahuman abilities on humans depending on the circumstances of their exposure to it, such as a girl treated for a rare bone disease acquiring shapeshifting powers. These people are commonly known by the inhabitants of Smallville as "Meteor Freaks". The green variety of the mineral appears in several episodes every season, although other varieties appear, including: red in "Red" (2002), "Exodus", "Exile", "Phoenix" (2003), "Unsafe" (2005), "Crimson" (2007) and "Upgrade" (2010); black, formed when superheating green kryptonite in "Crusade" (2004) and "Doomsday" (2009); silver in "Splinter" (2005); blue in "Blue" (2007), "Persona" (2008), "Kandor" (2009), "Salvation" (2010) and "Harvest" (2011); as a gem in "Persuasion" (2010) and gold in "Prophecy" and "Finale" (2011). *Smallville* was the first appearance of a black kryptonite that would split a person into their good and evil halves, before later being brought into the comic canon in *Supergirl* #2 (vol. 5, Oct. 2005).
- Supergirl* (2015–present) featured green kryptonite in episodes: "Pilot", "Stronger Together", "Hostile Takeover", "For the Girl Who Has Everything", and "Distant Sun". In the second part of Arrowverse's 2017 crossover "Crisis on Earth-X," reveals that Green Arrow of Earth-1 somehow obtains samples of green kryptonite, and uses them to construct kryptonite arrows as deterrents against rogue Kryptonians such as Overgirl (Supergirl's parallel universe counterpart from Krypton-X). DEO manages to synthesize and create blue kryptonite which is featured in the episode "Bizarro". The red kryptonite is featured in the episode "Falling" as a failed attempt to recreate green kryptonite by Maxwell Lord. Silver kryptonite is featured in the episode "Nevertheless, She Persisted". In season 3, the black kryptonite is pivotal to its arc, first appeared in the episode "The Fanatical", which is being referred as Harun-El by Kryptonians. The Worldkiller Coven from Krypton, headed by dark priestess Selena, schemes to use the Harun-El to terraform Earth into a Krypton-like planet for Kryptonians to inhabit. The protagonists uses the Harun-El to split the Worldkiller Coven's servant, Reign, from her human alter-ego Samantha Arias. By the end of the season finale, it is implied that Supergirl's being is also divided after her exposure to it during her final battle with Reign.

### Animation

- The Brady Kids* (1972-1973) featured green kryptonite in the episode "Cindy's Super Friend" which shows Clark Kent attempting to become Superman in the Kids' clubhouse, only to be incapacitated by a piece of green kryptonite as part of a rock collection.

- Super Friends* (1973-1986) features kryptonite in the episodes "Superfriends: Rest in Peace" ("Krypton Steel"); "Darkseid's Golden Trap" (Gold); "Terror From the Phantom Zone" (Blue, Green, and Red); "Return of the Phantoms" (Green); "Rokan: Enemy from Space" (Green); "Bazarowurld" (red and Blue); "Revenge of Bizarro" (red and Blue); Will the World Collide?" (Green); "Uncle Mxyzptlk" (Red); "The Death of Superman" (Green); "Batman: Dead or Alive" (Green).

- Superman* (1988) features a kryptonite ring worn by Lex Luthor.

- Superman: The Animated Series* (1996-2000) offers an explanation of the effect of the material on Superman. This series and *The New Batman Adventures* (1997-1999) showcase a three-part crossover story arc called *World's Finest* that demonstrates the effect of kryptonite poisoning on humans.

- Justice League* (2001-2004) explores the same theme.

- In *Batman Beyond* (1999-2001) the two-part episode "The Call" reveals kryptonite has been kept safe in the distant future as a deterrent against Superman due to the hero's past as a rogue agent under Darkseid's mind manipulation.

- Krypto the Superdog* (2005-2006) features Green, red and a purple-spotted variation.

- Legion of Super Heroes* (2006-2008) features Green.

- Young Justice* (2010-2013, 2018) featured green kryptonite in the episode "Auld Acquaintance".

- In *Batman: The Brave and the Bold* episode "Battle of the Superheroes!", Superman is infected with a kryptonite necklace secretly given to Lois Lane by Lex Luthor which causes Superman to become evil. Now Batman must work with Krypto the Superdog to hold off Superman until the effects of the red kryptonite wear off.

### Films

- In *Superman* (1978) Lex Luthor (Gene Hackman) deduces that a meteorite found in Addis Ababa is actually a radioactive piece of the exploded planet Krypton. Luthor uses the mineral to weaken Superman (Christopher Reeve), who is saved by Luthor's lover Eve Teschmacher (Valerie Perrine).

- In *Superman III* (1983) the millionaire Ross Webster (Robert Vaughn) orders the creation of synthetic kryptonite. Computer programmer Gus Gorman (Richard Pryor) uses tar to compensate for an unknown component of Kryptonite, causing the newly created mineral to eventually turn Superman evil and split the hero into two beings. Gorman's "supercomputer" later fights Superman and uses a kryptonite ray.

- In *Superman Returns* (2006) Lex Luthor (Kevin Spacey) steals the Addis Ababa L9 Pallasite Meteorite and uses kryptonite to create a new Kryptonian landmass and a dagger for use against Superman. The film describes kryptonite's formula as "sodium lithium boron silicate hydroxide with fluorine". A year after the film was released, a substance with a similar formula was discovered, jadearite, a coincidence which led to media attention<sup>[17][18][19][20]</sup>. The new mineral, unlike the fictional material in the movie, does not contain fluorine, does not glow green.<sup>[17]</sup>

- In *Justice League: Crisis on Two Earths* (2010) an alternate universe version of Lex Luthor uses blue kryptonite against the villain Ultraman.

- In *Justice League: Doom* (2012), the villain Metallo wounds Superman with a kryptonite bullet, but he is saved by the JLA.

- In *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016) kryptonite is discovered by men working for Lex Luthor (Jesse Eisenberg) at the bottom of the Indian Ocean and experimented with by Luthor, who learns of its harmful effect on Kryptonians when the corpse of General Zod is exposed to it. Kryptonite is stolen from Luthor by Batman (Ben Affleck), who uses the kryptonite to create kryptonite gas pellets and a Kryptonite-tipped spear, both of which he later uses in battle with Superman (Henry Cavill). *Doomsday* is also shown to be weakened by Kryptonite, allowing Superman to use the spear to kill him in the film's climax.<sup>[21]</sup>

### Video games

- In *Superman: Atari 2600* (1978) Luthor has created kryptonite satellites and scattered them around Metropolis that take away Superman's ability to fly when touched. Superman must then walk around Metropolis until he finds and meets Lois Lane, to regain his powers.

- Superman 64* (1999) it appears as kryptonite fog, coined as an excuse for the game's poor draw distance.

- In the crossover fighting game *Mortal Kombat vs DC Universe* (2008) kryptonite weakens Superman when exposed while it makes his Mortal Kombat universe counterpart, the thunder god Raiden, stronger.

- In *Lego Batman 2: DC Super Heroes* (2012) kryptonite is used to power Lex Luthor's weapon the "Deconstructor".

- Scribblenauts Unmasked: A DC Comics Adventure* (2013) showcases the material in different forms.

- Kryptonite is one of the foundation elements in *Lego Dimensions*.

- Injustice: Gods Among Us* (2013) features a kryptonite laser designed as a fail-safe against Superman should he turn against humanity.

- Gold and green kryptonite appear in the story mode of *Injustice 2*.

### Serials

Columbia Pictures produced two 15-part motion picture serials that used kryptonite as a plot device: *Superman* (1948) and *Atom Man vs. Superman* (1950).

### Music

Songs:

- "Kryptonite" by 3 Doors Down (2000).<sup>[22]</sup>

- "Kryptonite (I'm on It)" by rap group Purple Ribbon All-Stars (2006).<sup>[23]</sup>

- "Fashion Is My Kryptonite" by Bella Thorne and Zendaya (2012).

- "Ready or Not" by Bridgit Mendler (2012).

- "Shut Up and Dance" by Walk the Moon (2014).

- "Get Your Cape On" by Jordyn Kane (2015).

- "Kryptonite" by Cimorelli (2017).

- Pocket Full of Kryptonite*, a 1991 album by Spin Doctors.<sup>[24]</sup> The album's title is drawn from a line in the song "Jimmy Olsen's Blues", which is featured on the album.

- In the title track for his album Ten Feet Tall and Bulletproof, Travis Tritt sings about picking a fight when he feels like Superman "only to find my opponent is holding Kryptonite".

- The Genesis song The Carpet Crawlers mentions Kryptonite: "Mild-mannered Supermen are held in Kryptonite...".

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## External links

- The *Superman* Homepage's section on kryptonite (http://www.supermanhomepage.com/comics/comics.php?topic=comics-racfaq#Kryptonite)

- Howstuffworks.com: "How Kryptonite Works" (http://www.howstuffworks.com/kryptonite.htm)

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Kryptonite	
<span></span> <div>Green Kryptonite: art by Gary Frank.</div>	
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In story information	
<b>Type</b>	Element
<b>Element of stories featuring</b>	Superman <p>Superboy</p>