



Amateur Gemstone Faceting Volume 1: The Essentials

By Tom Herbst

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Note: This is Volume 1 of Amateur Gemstone Faceting, containing Chapters 1 to 9. To track down Volume 2, search for "Amateur Gemstone Faceting Volume 2: Expanding Your Horizons."

Have you ever gazed in wonder at a faceted gemstone, at the ever-changing interplay of light, colour, and sparkle, and asked yourself how such a thing could come into being? Gemstones have been a source of fascination, mystery, and power for millennia, yet it is only in the last few decades that the tools and knowledge for creating these tiny miracles have been available to the average person.

In this book, amateur faceter Tom Herbst lays out the steps necessary to transform a shapeless lump of rock into a glittering jewel that is unique and valuable. Along the way, he explains not only the "how" but also the "why," and provides helpful tips in dealing with many of the pitfalls that confront the beginning gem cutter.

At a bare minimum, this book should help you appreciate the craftsmanship that gives life to the jewelry you love. Hopefully, however, you will be inspired to attempt your own first gemstone, the initial step in what may be a lifelong involvement in the captivating hobby of amateur gemstone faceting.

Happy cutting, and may you make all your meets.

Amateur Gemstone Faceting Volume 1: The Essentials - Chapter Summaries

Foreword

A welcome to the wonderful world of amateur gemstone faceting.

Chapter 1 - Gems and Faceting

Explains the nature and types of gemstones and introduces the hobby of faceting.

Chapter 2 - Faceting Machines

Provides an overview of the mechanics of faceting machines, including a section on evaluating and paying the right price for your dream machine or even building your own. Includes a snapshot of the current faceting machine market.

Chapter 3 - Laps

Explains cutting and polishing laps and the relative advantages and disadvantages of each type. An overview of commercial offerings and typical starting lap sets should help you make the best choice.

Chapter 4 - Additional Equipment

Discusses the additional equipment you will need or want, ranging from dop sticks to polishing compounds to lighting.

Chapter 5 - GeM101: Your First Gemstone

A detailed illustrated tutorial to guide you through cutting and polishing your first gem, from selecting the rough stone to showing off your handiwork.

Chapter 6 - Gem Rough

Provides advice on finding gem rough, selecting the right piece, and paying the right price for it. The chapter also discusses synthetic and simulant gemstones and orienting your gem rough for maximum visual impact and yield.

Chapter 7 - Dopping

Explains traditional dopping practice and introduces a hybrid method which simplifies the process substantially. Includes a thorough discussion of dop transfer technique to ensure proper alignment of the pavilion and crown.

Chapter 8 - Cutting and Polishing

Explains the techniques of cutting and polishing, including sections on pre-forming, lap and facet sequencing, meet point faceting, polishing theory, and charging laps with compound. Extensive troubleshooting discussions should help you avoid, or at least correct, common cutting and polishing problems.

Chapter 9 - Further Reading

An expanded reading list on multiple faceting-related topics.

Glossary of Faceting Terms

A reasonably complete explanation of faceting terms, including direct pointers to the chapter and page where you can learn more.

Index

The two volumes of Amateur Gemstone Faceting comprise 20 chapters and almost 900 pages. The merged index helps you quickly find what you need.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Tom Herbst is an amateur faceter and all-round rock enthusiast. Born in eastern Ontario, Canada, he received his formal education in Montreal, Quebec, Waterloo, Ontario, and Ithaca, New York. A research astrophysicist in his "day" job, Tom specializes in the design, construction, and scientific exploitation of novel astronomical instrumentation. Although he began collecting pretty rocks as a kid, it was not until his mid-thirties that Tom realized that creating gemstones is within everyone's grasp. A few faceting lessons and a homebuilt machine later, he was deep into the hobby and has never looked back. Tom currently lives in Germany, along with his wife and their two teenage sons.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carrie Grogan:

The book Amateur Gemstone Faceting Volume 1: The Essentials has a lot of information on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was published by the very famous author. Tom makes some research prior to write this book. That book very easy to read you may get the point easily after reading this book.

Sophia Hartman:

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