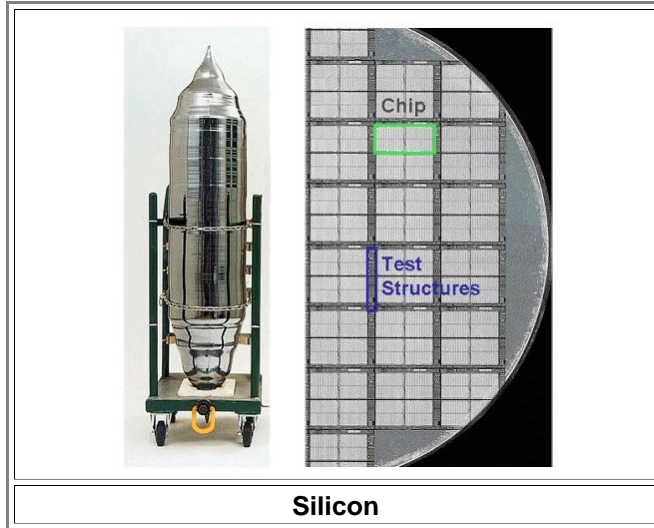


## Silicon vs. Silicone and Silica

So smelting and melting is about the same to you? Or silicon, silicone and silica? Then you probably belong to the exalted people with the true education; the kind of people who sneer at those poor sods who mix up romanic and romantic but usually do not have the faintest idea about how the universe or anything else outside of "humanities" really works.

Since you have read that far I will now help you with the silicon, silicone and silica bit. Here is silicon:



On the left you see a huge silicon crystal, on the right the processed surface of a silicon wafer. Silicon is an element and used not only for [microelectronics](#) but also for [solar cells](#) or micro-mechanical stuff.

Here are some well-know objects disporting **silicone**:



Silicon relates to silicone in exactly the same way carbon relates to polymers and proteins. "Silicones are polymers that include silicon together with carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and sometimes other elements. Some common forms include silicone oil, silicone grease, silicone rubber, silicone resin and silicone caulk" says Wikipedia.

No more need to be said

**Silica** is the word for silicon dioxide. In its crystalline form we call it rock crystal and collect it or make precious objects from it



● In its amorphous form it is indispensable for microelectronics and for making glass of all kinds.

▸ The (now defunct) space shuttle was covered with silica tiles for thermal insulation. The probability that this translated into the correct German "Quarz" (or at least Quartz") and not into "Silizium" or "Silikon" was about 33 %.