

JewelSmiths

Jewelry Cleaning Guide

Cleaning Tip 1.

Remove all jewelry before showering or cleaning. Soap can cause a film to form, making it appear dull and dingy. By preventing the formation of this film you immediately reduce the occasions of servicing.

Cleaning Tip 2.

To clean your jewelry at home, there are many available commercial cleaners that can be purchased at jewelry stores. If you would rather make and mix your own cleaner, drop us a email and we will give you instructions. The trick to solution cleaning is to soak the jewelry for as long as possible. This will loosen any built up material that is trapped in and around the piece. Always remember to read the instructions on the commercial cleaners before you attempt cleaning.

Cleaning Tip 3.

For certain jewelry, an ultrasonic vibrating cleaner may be appropriate, but always read the instructions first. Ultrasonic vibrating machines can loosen or damage precious gemstones while cleaning the jewelry, so be careful. If you have questions, please give us a call. Also never ultrasonic different metals at the same time, silver can tarnish gold if cleaned together.

Cleaning Tip 4.

Having a hard time removing grease, grime, paint or any other substance? Try using plain rubbing alcohol, soak then clean normally should do the trick.

Cleaning Tip 5.

Never, never, clean your jewelry in bleach!!! This solution will literally destroy your jewelry. Bleach will react to the metal, causing it to become very brittle. If you must emergency clean, use soap and water.

Cleaning Tip 6.

Polish silver or gold with a jewelry polishing cloth for best results. You can use a svelte or an old diaper, but the professional cloths are the best. Use of tissue or paper towels can cause scratches because of fibers in these products.

Cleaning Tip 7.

An old toothbrush is probably one of the oldest cleaning tricks in the book. Make sure that you use an old, soft bristle brush, because the hard bristle can loosen gemstones from their settings. Lightly brush at hard to reach areas with the brush while frequently applying cleaning solution. Never use the brush to remove caked on dirt or grime because sometimes the dirt is holding the gemstone into place, especially if the setting is worn or weak. Old toothbrushes are also great for cleaning watchbands, but remember to stay away from the watch case/movement, as it will develop rust - a killer of quartz or mechanical movements.

Cleaning Tip 8.

Be careful of cleaning or polishing hollow or tubular jewelry. Their thickness is very thin and unstable for polishing. Be very careful when rubbing cleaning or polishing solutions into them because the slightest pressure can dent or collapse the metal.

Cleaning Tip 9.

Many gemstones are enhanced with other substances and they have to be handled with care. It's best to read all cleaning solution labels before cleaning, also use care when directly cleaning gemstones. Cleaning solutions will lose power over time and must be repurchased. If unsure about witch solutions to use, contact us or your local jeweler and they will be able to walk you through it.

Cleaning Tip 10.

Be careful of cleaning costume, fake or vermeil, as it's very sensitive to any cleaning solutions. Costume or vermeil jewelry is a base metal (base or silver) with a gold layer over or absorbed into it. This layer is not made for abrasive cleaning or prolonged wear. These pieces are only for show or special occasions and should be slightly cleaned and carefully put away.



Cleaning Tip 11.

When self cleaning jewelry always use this handy visual checklist first: check to see if there are any loose or damaged gemstones; cracked or broken metal; bent or warped prongs/tips; discolored or pitting metal. Sounds like lots to go through but jewelers have the same mental checklist when cleaning and inspecting.

Cleaning Tip 12.

Always use warm not HOT water. Cleaning agents can be absorbed and react to very hot water causing a jewelry to discolor. Sterling silver is especially sensitive to hot water and can discolor in a heartbeat. Fires or smoke damage can cause jewelry to discolor. Many customers come into our centers, distraught over the discoloration of their jewelry. Not to worry though - a careful polishing (a buffing machine) or a special jewelry tarnish remover can zap it back to life. Call us or come in and we will help or direct you the best way possible.

**Cleaning Tip 13.**

Never clean any jewelry that is badly damaged, abrasive, cracked or broken. As with any other item broken or badly scratched items can exacerbate or worsen the problem. Also, if you see that your items are damaged while you are wearing them it only makes sense to remove and have them looked. You know the old saying, " an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Cleaning Tip 14.

Just like anything else, it is a very good idea to have all items for cleaning be checked and inspected for any possible problems or concerns. A jewelry inspection allows your jeweler an opportunity to professionally clean and inspect wear areas that can lead to breakage, abrasion or god forbid a lost gemstone! Treat your jewelry like your health and it will take care of you - emotionally and financially.

Cleaning Tip 15.

When using a polishing cloth try to stay away the gemstones unless they are the major colors of the flag - red (ruby) white (diamond) blue (sapphire). Some gemstones can have their facets/angles polished off or rubbed out by hard polishing. One good example is tanzanite, any polishing on the gemstone can rub out or dull its brilliance.