

WORKING WITH GOLD FILLED: MISTAKES NOT TO MAKE

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How to make 14K gold filled jewelry?

Gold Filled is a very good alternative to solid gold and is becoming more and more popular in the creation of DIY costume jewelry. For those who are still wondering what Gold Filled is? As a reminder, it is this goldsmithing technique from the United States, which consists of mechanically applying a layer of 14 carat gold on a metal base, usually metal. The weight of the gold alloy corresponds to 1/20 of the total weight of the product, which is about 50 to 100 times more than in a gold-plated product. By extension, the technique gave its name to the material.

Durable and strong, gold filled is ideal for mounting jewelry. However, when making 14K gold-filled jewelry, it is difficult not to alter the gold layer that makes up the jewelry. Indeed, even if it is thicker than that of a gold-plated or 24K gold-plated jewel, it can easily be damaged if certain precautions are not taken.

Assembling jewelry

Assembling jewelry components and primers is the easiest way to create Gold Filled jewelry. Feel free to use our [gold filled jewelry tutorials](#) as inspiration for your DIY jewelry creations.

MISTAKES NOT TO MAKE

- The most common mistake is marking the metal. Be careful not to mark the metal with your mallet or pliers. For this, use a wooden [barrel mallet](#) and [nylons](#). Another tip for avoiding marks: cover the work surfaces with a clean flannel cloth. This way, the gold layer will be protected from the irregularities of your workbench.



Soldering Gold Filled

Soldering Gold Filled is a more complex technique to perform. It is a very delicate step in DIY jewelry making. To be successful, here are some rules to follow:

- Keep the number of soldering operations to a minimum. Ideally, try to make one or two soldering joints at most.
- Be quick with your soldering.
- Heat with a soft flame (also called a reducing flame), that is, a flame with little oxygen supply.
- Do not anneal your Gold Filled part.

Be aware that gold filled is soldered with 9K gold solder. It also works with 12K or 14K low gold solder. Choose yellow gold for gold-filled yellow gold or rose gold for gold-filled rose.

MISTAKES NOT TO MAKE

- Beware of excess solder when soldering. If you use too much brazing alloy, it will overflow and you will have to remove the excess by filing it off, which is not recommended with Gold Filled.
- Gold-filled is more sensitive to heating. The heat could cause it to distort or, worse, the different layers of metal that make it up could melt and mix.



Cutting gold filled with a wire

Gold filled plate is double coated, which means that the gold content is distributed on both sides of the sheet. Because the brass core is not visible, the double-coated plate prevents discoloration from oxidation or tarnishing. Cutting a plate will alter the gold layer. If the edges of the plate are left exposed, the core can change color to a brownish tint and tarnish the gold layer more quickly.

Plating can be an alternative to cover these edges.

Another possibility is to varnish the parts that are likely to tarnish. But this treatment has its limits because the varnish will soon come off because of rubbing on clothes and others, especially for rings and bracelets.

If you choose to varnish your pieces, it is preferable to inform your customers.

MISTAKES NOT TO MAKE

- If you are sawing, be sure to control your sawing so as not to scratch or damage the gold layer, especially on the corners and edges. If you are a beginner, practice beforehand by following our tips on how to saw with a bocil.
- Donot file or grind the gold layer. Any marks you make on the metal cannot be removed. However, GF will tolerate a light polishing and filing (to break an angle for example).

How does Gold Filled age?



Because of the gold alloy (12 or 14K) which contains a lot of copper, gold filled jewelry can oxidize if it is not stored properly. The layer of gold being thick, it is however possible to clean it. To do this, simply rub the piece with a cleaning wipe specially designed for jewelry.

MISTAKES NOT TO MAKE

- Be careful where you store your jewelry and your Gold Filled plates. Make sure it is dry, as moisture can cause the metal core to tarnish. Also remember to store each piece of plate separately, to protect them from scratches.

Thanks to our partner Caroline Rivière, author of the blog [Objectif bijoux](#) for her precious advice.

