

# Cross Wear Care Guide



## How to Extend the Life of Your Gemstone Rings

Shoes wear with use. Tires wear with increased mileage, and yet people often seem surprised that jewelry worn 24 hours a day can show significant signs of wear within a few years.

Whenever a ring or piece of fine jewelry is worn, wear will occur. The more frequently it is worn, the more quickly it will wear. Periodic maintenance is required on all jewelry to restore and rebuild worn and damaged parts.

Following is a list of common causes of wear and damage to jewelry and specific recommendations on things you can do to extend the life of your settings and protect your gems.

## Rings Should Be Removed During the Following Activities

**Gardening...** Gold has a hardness of 2 1/2, slightly harder than a fingernail. Soil is composed of particles which have a hardness of 7 and harder, which will wear away molecules of gold rapidly. Gloves don't protect against this type of wear. In fact, small particles of dirt inside of the glove will wear prongs and ring shanks even more quickly.

**General Yardwork...** Even though you wear gloves, it doesn't protect a ring from bumping against a stone wall and bending a prong. An accident that might occur in a split second could bend or break a prong, causing the loss of a gem worth hundreds or thousands of dollars.

**Housework...** Cleaning out the attic or garage, even making beds can cause damage. Wearing gem set jewelry while doing housework should be avoided.

**Working in the Kitchen...** A kitchen can seem an innocent place to wear a ring, but it is one of the situations where hands are the most active. One bump against a metal grate in a stove or hit on the edge of a frying pan, can cause a prong to be bent or broken, or a diamond to be chipped, or a colored gem to be scratched. Ask for a free Cross Kitchen Ring Hook, a safe place for your ring while working in the kitchen.

**Beach...** The beach is one of the most common places for jewelry to become lost or damaged. Hands become cold in our icy Atlantic waters, fingers shrink and rings easily slip off. Necklaces, earrings and bracelets are easily lost in the sand. The greatest risk to gem set jewelry is abrasion from the sand. Typical beach sand in the northeastern United States has a hardness of 7-8, and can act like sandpaper on gold and colored gems. Building one large sand castle can put more wear on a ring than a year of normal use.

**Work...** Any job involving machinery or moving hard solid objects, gem-set jewelry should be removed. Any occupation in which a gem or mounting might come in contact with hard objects presents a possible risk.

**Sleep...** Certainly it would seem that wearing rings and jewelry to bed would be safe, and yet prongs on rings can wear out in half the time if worn at night. How? Gold against fabric. Time lapse photography shows that most people move hundreds of times during the night while they sleep. A few molecules of gold here, a few molecules of gold there, multiplied times hundreds of nights over the years, represent a considerable acceleration of wear on your fine jewelry.



## Other Considerations Regarding Rings



**Applause...** To the owner of fine jewelry, one of the most baffling types of damage to rings can occur while attending a large concert or symphony production. In the midst of deafening applause, which often follows a great performance, rings worn on opposite hands can literally be pummeled with hundred of little flattened spots. Prongs can be flattened and bent, gems can be chipped and destroyed. In the darkened performance hall with deafening applause, you can neither see nor hear what is happening to your rings. The solution: When wearing rings on opposite hands, applaud with the fingers of the right hand striking the palm of the left hand.

**Loose Fitting Rings...** No finger has one perfect size for fitting rings. Time of day, temperature, humidity, physical activity, weight gain or loss, all contribute to as much as a size or two difference in some people. This, in combination with enlarged knuckles, can cause rings to fit loosely. Rings should be made as small as possible to provide a snug fit. If enlarged knuckles prevent snug fitting, adjustable shanks or special fitting devices should be considered to reduce turning. When two rings are worn on the same hand together, wear will occur as the rings rub against one another. If the rings fit loosely, the wear will be accelerated.

## The Gold & Chlorine Dilemma

Chlorine, a chemical found in some household cleaning agents and found as an additive in swimming pools, can attack the alloys mixed with karat gold. Prolonged contact with chlorine may cause pitting and discoloration and ultimately a weakening of the gold in the affected jewelry. Remove your fine jewelry before swimming in a pool or using chlorinated cleaning products.



## Enjoy and Wear Your Rings

As a balance to all of our cautions, you need to weigh your desire to wear your ring. If a solitaire mounting costs \$1,000 and you wear it out in fifteen years, it has cost less than \$70.00 per year. If you have your ring cleaned and checked periodically you can manage the wear appropriately and know when to make the decision to replace the mounting. Understanding how you are wearing your ring and what the consequences of that wear are are the keys to your success. We want you to wear your jewelry and enjoy it. We hope this information helps you enjoy your fine jewelry for a lifetime.



## I Want to Wear My Ring All the Time!

Women told us what they wanted: a diamond ring which could be worn all the time and yet was both feminine and beautiful. We listened and created an entire collection of contemporary designs which are low profile, durable, and comfortable.

These exclusive designs were created to be worn 24 hours a day\*, 365 days a year, during the widest range of activities. Ideal for today's active lifestyles. Each ring in this lifestyle collection features a full platinum rim to protect the entire outer perimeter of your diamond. See these rings in our Active Lifestyle Collection.

(\*in almost all situations)

# Jewelry Care Guide for Necklaces, Bracelets, Pins & Earrings



## Bracelets & Necklaces

When a bracelet or necklace wears out, why does it wear? Where does the gold go, and are there ways to reduce the rate of wear? Following is an examination of several causes of accelerated wear in bracelets and necklaces and the best ways to reduce or prevent wear.

### Why Cleaning Bracelets is so Important

It is obvious when a film accumulates on the backside of a gem. Its brilliance is dulled. To restore the sparkle the solution is obvious, simple cleaning restores its full brilliance and beauty. What is not as obvious is that this same film seen on the back of gems accumulates on the hidden surfaces between links of bracelets and necklaces. And while this film has only a limited effect on beauty, it has a significant effect on the long term wear, safety and durability of the bracelet or necklace. What is actually occurring in these hidden spaces between links is a build-up of a thin film of hair spray, soaps, makeup, perfume, hand cream and or natural body oils. This thin film becomes the base into which fine particles of ordinary atmospheric and household dust become embedded. With normal use the links of the bracelet or necklace flex and move while the embedded microscopic dust acts like a fine emery paper wearing away hundreds, even thousands, of molecules of gold every week. The result, slowly, imperceptibly, over time,

significant quantities of gold are worn away.

A thorough cleaning of gold bracelets and necklaces should be done daily or at the very least weekly. The best way to clean gold is with a professional, non-abrasive, jewelry cleaner. To clean gold bracelets and necklaces, simply dip a child's soft bristle toothbrush into the liquid cleaner, scrub the hidden spaces between the links, then rinse off in warm water and dry with a towel. A properly cleaned link bracelet will typically last two to three times longer.

While ordinary invisible atmospheric dust will accelerate wear, visibly dusty environments like barns and construction sites will greatly accelerate wear. Jewelry should not be worn in these situations.

### Proper Bracelet Fitting

Link bracelets which are too large around the wrist wear out more quickly than properly fitted bracelets. If a bracelet is too loose it is best to have it shortened, Making a bracelet the proper length can potentially double the life of the bracelet.

### Maintenance of Clasps

No clasp is infallible. Almost all clasps require periodic adjustments to maintain proper functioning. At any indication of diminished performance or evidence of failure of a clasp to hold, remove the piece of jewelry and take it to a jeweler to adjust the clasp or to replace a malfunctioning clasp.

Safer clasp designs usually take longer to attach and detach. Simple, quick clasps are generally not as secure as more complex clasps.

It is especially important to test the clasp each time any bracelet or necklace is attached to be certain it is functioning properly. If a bracelet or necklace is pulled or stressed, a clasp can malfunction. It is best to avoid wearing a necklace to bed to reduce the chances of inadvertent stress on the chain or its clasp. Also, spring rings and lobster claw clasps have a tiny steel spring which controls the closure. It is best not to shower while wearing any spring action clasp, as rust, over time, can cause a reduction or loss of springing action.

Safety chains and safety devices are a nice added assurance but if at any time, the main clasp fails, remove the bracelet or necklace. Do not rely on the safety. Most losses of bracelets and necklaces occur after one or several warning signs. Do not wear a bracelet or necklace on which the clasp failed to perform until the clasp's performance has been checked by a professional.





## Hollow Link Designs

Hollow construction in gold bracelets and necklaces give the appearance of size and mass, yet are often very delicate. Extra special care must be given to hollow and semi-solid designs as more rapid wear will occur.

## Use Care When Attaching Pins

Of all the categories of jewelry, pins generally survive the passage of time best. Some of the finest existing examples of Victorian, Edwardian, Art Nouveau and Art Deco jewelry styles are pins. In general, pins incur very little wear over many years of use, and yet like other forms of jewelry, they are subject to a variety of risks.

The joint, pin and catch (the device that holds and/or locks the pin in place) are the most critical parts of a pin's long-term safety. The greatest risks to pins is loss while wearing. This can occur as a result of several factors:

- improperly clasped clasp
- catching a pin with a shoulder bag or coat, causing it to unclasp.
- a clasp out of adjustment

Contemporary pins have safety catches which have a little device that locks in place, helping to prevent the pin from coming unclashed.

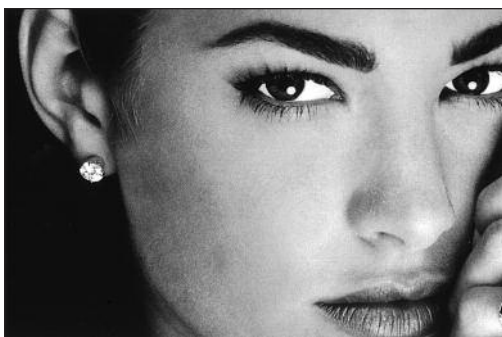
Before attaching a pin, close and unclose the clasp to be certain it is functioning properly. A properly functioning clasp should have enough friction to offer a perceptible resistance. Another way to assure a pin is properly secured is to attach the pin to your dress lapel before you put the dress on. If this is a new pin, practice with the closure several times until you know "its feel"...because when you attach it to your lapel it is generally too close to see and you must rely on "the feel" for certainty. If at any time, the catch doesn't feel safe don't wear the pin until you have had a professional check and adjust the tightness.

Antique pins, made prior to the invention of the safety catch, should have an upward spring in the pin stem sufficient to provide a positive closure. Antique pins require frequent adjustment to maintain proper tension. Many antique pins were fitted with an additional safety feature in the form of a little locking device which slides over the end of the pin stem, providing an additional degree of assurance from loss.

The security of a pin should be tested after you put on or remove an overcoat, to be certain that the safety device is still in a fully locked position. Seatbelts can damage pins and cause clasps to open. If you are to be the driver or passenger determine the angle of the shoulder strap. Always attach your pin to the lapel not covered by the shoulder strap to avoid risk of damage. It is also important to avoid carrying a purse with a shoulder strap on the same side as the pin. Caution should be used while wearing pins when caring for young children. The curiosity of a young child can result in them pricking themselves on the hidden pin stem, hurting themselves on the outer edge of the design, or pulling or bending the design of the pin.

**Some thoughts on the clothing to which you will be attaching your pins:** The weight of the clothing must be sufficiently heavy to support the weight of the pin. Very sheer, loose fitting blouses, fabrics such as crepe, sheer silks, rayons, and light polyester lack the body to support most pins. It is also a good idea to test the pin stem on the hem of any fabric, to see if it leaves a visible hole or mark which remains when the pin is removed. Satin, silk, taffeta, pima cotton and linens are often unforgiving of pins. Always test first. And finally, prior to inserting a pin stem into any clothing, be certain that the pin is spotlessly clean. Tarnish on silver or the oxidation on antique pins can leave a permanent discoloration on lighter fabrics.

All gemstone-set jewelry and jewelry with functioning parts should be reviewed by a professional at least once a year for safety and security, this is a service we are pleased to provide free of charge.



## Earrings - How to Prevent Loss

Like pins, earrings receive very little direct wear, and yet are still subject to a variety of perils. Because of their small size, one of the greatest risks to earrings is loss.

Pierced earrings have a post (the part which goes through the ear) and a nut (which holds the post secure on the ear). It is of critical importance that the post and nut are properly sized and fitted to each other. Because earrings are made with different diameter posts, one set of earring nuts will not necessarily hold another earring securely. Interchanging earring nuts places earrings at a high risk of being lost.

Many women will have a favorite pair of earrings, and desire to wear them nearly all the time. Activities which result in the bending of posts or loosening of earring nuts and the earrings are: sleeping with earrings on; towel-drying hair after showering or swimming, putting on or removing a pull-over sweater or heavy winter cloth-

ing. Earnuts should be checked for proper tension prior to putting them on. Proper tension on an earnut should require at least mild effort to slide on and off.

Earnuts are made from different gauges of tempered gold. We make an earnut which is more than three-times the weight and strength of the average earnut; and while they are not infallible, they are one of the most secure earnuts available. These heavy gauge, tight fitting earnuts come with all of our Cross earrings, and should not be used with other earring you may own. (Heavy weight earnuts may be purchased for your other earrings, but must be properly fitted and adjusted to assure proper tension on the earring post.)

**Clip-back earrings** and pierced-clip earrings should be adjusted for tightness, so that they do not pinch the ears, while still providing enough tension to hold the earrings securely in place. Pierced-clip designs are often for larger earring styles and provide good stability. These larger designs rarely work well converted to pierced backs only.

**Storing your earrings:** Gem-set earrings left loose in a jewelry box or in a purse can move around and scratch one another. A simple and safe way to store your earrings is to slide the post of one earring through an in-place earnut on the other earring, locking it in place with its own earnut. Then slip the pair into a small transparent zip lock plastic jewelry pouches.

## Extra Special Care for Pearls

Pearls require special care. A cultured pearls outer surface is made of layers of nacre which gives a pearl its beautiful luster. Even on the finest quality, in a 6.5mm size, the thickness of these lustrous layers are less than 3/10mm thick, about the thickness of four sheets of typing paper. Because the hardness of a pearl is only 2 1/2 - 4 1/2 (a little harder than a fingernail), they must be protected from scratching or abrasion, which will dull and wear the surface. Perhaps the greatest risk to long term beauty in a strand of fine cultured pearls is wear which can occur from minute traces of make-up. Many make-ups contain microscopic particles which can slowly abrade the surface of the pearl.

Pearls should be the last piece you put on and the first to take off at the end of a day. Hairspray and perfumes should be applied before adorning your pearls and make-up should be avoided around the area the pearls come in contact with the skin.

When you undress, your pearl jewelry should be the first thing you remove, to prevent any possible contamination from make-up. Pearls and fine jewelry should be stored separately from where you apply your make-up. Following removal, always wipe pearls with a soft, damp (not wet), clean cloth or tissue free of lanolin, to remove traces of perspiration or any oils from the skin. A buildup of oils in the porous surface of a pearl, over time, can contribute to a discoloration of the pearl. Keep your pearls separate from diamonds and other hard gems in your jewelry box, to avoid scratching them.

Another risk is hair spray, perfume and hand lotion, any of which coming in contact with pearls can cause discoloration. Like in the preceding example, perfume and hair spray should be applied before adorning jewelry. We have often noticed discoloration in pearl bracelets when perfume is regularly applied to the wrist. Hand lotion should simply be avoided when wearing pearls. Not only can hand lotion cause discoloration in a pearl, its sticky residue can attract dust which can cause wear on the pearls, as well as wearing the silk cord on which it is strung.

Our cultured pearl necklaces are strung with a high quality silk thread for both strength and beauty. The silk thread is finely knotted between the pearls to protect them from rubbing against one another and also to keep the pearls from scattering should the string break. Constant wear can weaken the necklace string. Pearl manufacturers recommend pearls be restrung once a year if you wear your pearls regularly.

## Pearl Summary

Treat your cultured pearls as precious jewels.

Store your pearls in a chamois bag or wrap in tissue. This will prevent scratching and fading.

Put pearls on after applying hair spray or perfume To maintain the luster of your cultured pearls, wipe with mild soap and water or clean in Cross pearl cleaner and they lay them flat to dry. Do not soak & do not hang.

Have your cultured pearls restrung periodically. This prevents the silk from stretching or getting worn out. Always ask to have your pearls restrung on silk. Nylon has a tendency to abrade the drill holes.

Always remove pearl rings before bathing or doing dishes.

**DO NOT** clean with chemicals while wearing pearls.

**DO NOT** store cultured pearls in a plastic bag.

Always wipe your cultured pearls with a soft tissue before and after wearing.

# Timeless But Not Indestructible

## Dispelling the Myth That Jewelry Does Not Wear Out

In 1780 the Conquistadors smashed one priceless Colombia emerald after another, believing that true emeralds should withstand any blow. In 1960, during one of their infamous fights, Elizabeth Taylor pitched the flawless Taylor-Burton Diamond at Richard Burton. The impact of landing on a marble floor cracked the diamond's edge and thereby dropped its clarity grade and value. In the spring of 1994, a client of mine was horrified to realize that in her attempt to keep her pearls from being stolen, she had ruined them by hiding them in her freezer.

Ignorance of the proper care for jewelry and gemstones was the cause of these and many other smaller disasters. Of the many erroneous beliefs that surround jewelry and gemstones, one of the most dangerous and pervasive is the misconception that jewelry does not wear out. The danger of this misconception is twofold. First, without being aware of the special care gemstones and jewelry require, most people may not store or clean their jewelry properly, running the risk of destroying their cherished heirlooms, like my client did with her pearls. The second danger is, while harboring the idea that jewelry does not wear out, a person may wear their jewelry during inappropriate activities or in damaging ways.

For example, it may be fashionable to place a delicate gold bracelet on the same wrist as a stainless steel Rolex. Yet after wearing them together twenty-four hours a day for six months, the constant abrasion between the two may cause the bracelet to break. A gentleman may purchase a fragile opal ring and proceed to wear it to work on a construction site. In my fifteen years experience as a goldsmith and jewelry designer, I have heard customers comment, "I wasn't doing anything and the stone just fell out!" Upon examination, the piece shows signs of prolonged wear, such as missing prongs, bent bands, dents and gouges in the metal.

If one is unaware of the special care certain jewelry may require, it is tempting to jump to the conclusion that, should a piece become damaged or show signs of wear, it must be an inferior product. What many people don't realize is that every time we grasp a handle, turn a knob or wash our hands, we leave minute traces of gold from our jewelry behind. The skin on the palms of our hands is being totally replaced every seven days due to wear, yet we do not notice its loss because it is on the molecular level. While our skin replaces itself, our rings, watches and bracelets do not fare as well, and with time, the damage can add up.

This misconception that jewelry shouldn't wear out seems to be particularly difficult to dispel. Perhaps some people have subconsciously translated the wonderfully romantic DeBeers slogan "A diamond is forever," to mean literally "a diamond cannot be broken" or "diamond jewelry will last forever." Ron Dean of the Diamond Information Center in the Pacific Northwest clarifies the DeBeers slogan by pointing out that "the youngest diamond in your jeweler's display case was formed approximately 97 million years ago - which is pretty close to forever." Margaret McCann, of the Diamond Information Center's New York office, offers these thoughts: "Since the diamond is the hardest known substance on earth, it has come to represent the lasting commitment and unbreakable bond of love between a man and a woman. "However, Ms. McCann goes on to add, "Even though a diamond is durable, it can be chipped by a hard blow."

The second factor compounding this misconception is the abundance of "estate" jewelry, which is often mistaken for "antique" jewelry, thereby giving the erroneous impression that jewelry should last several hundred years. What is the difference between antique and estate jewelry? Federal law requires a piece of jewelry to be at least one hundred years old to be classified as antique, whereas estate jewelry is simply jewelry that has been previously owned and may be no more than a few years old.

The truth about most surviving antique jewelry is that it was not worn on a daily basis. Antique jewelry and pieces from the 1920 and 1930 that we see today have endured because they were kept in a safe deposit box for most of their existence. In fact, the reason you are able to wear grandmother's ring is because grandmother (or great-grandmother) kept it in her jewel box and probably wore it only on special occasions. Like her best china, grandmother kept her best jewelry and heirloom pieces safe from the damage that daily use would cause.

Current marketing surveys show that up to 80 percent of jewelry sold is to women who purchase it for themselves. And often women will wear their jewelry when gardening, going to the beach or playing tennis. While grandmother would not have dreamed of wearing her fine jewelry during household chores or yard work, today's busy woman does not think of removing her jewelry during such activities.

To help you get more years of enjoyment from your jewelry, it is important to learn the proper care considerations for your fine pieces. First, it is best to remove jewelry before engaging in sports, household chores or yard work, and at bedtime. It is obviously dangerous to wear neck chains, bracelets and rings while participating in sports such as basketball, but tennis and racquetball can be equally damaging to jewelry. Even the seemingly harmless sport of swimming can have disastrous effects on jewelry. Chlorinated water in pools and hot tubs attacks gold alloys, causing them to become brittle and break. In cleaning house or gardening, you may come into contact with many abrasive surfaces, compounds and chemicals that can scratch and discolor gold, platinum and gemstones. It may be true that "diamonds are a girl's best friend," but a porcelain kitchen sink is a diamond's worst enemy and can chip its facets. I also discourage my friends and customers from wearing their jewelry to bed. Not only does this increase wear and tear on the jewelry from getting caught and snagged on bed linens or sleepwear, but it might also cause the wearer injury.

Cleaning gold and silver jewelry is very easy to do and, when done properly and regularly, can keep your jewelry sparkling. Finally, rinse the jewelry in clear water and blot it dry on a soft hand towel. Any discoloration or dirt that this process cannot remove should be brought to the attention of your personal jeweler.

Don't hesitate to ask your jeweler any question you might have about caring for your jewelry. The more you know about your jewels and how to care for them, the greater - and longer-lasting - your enjoyment of them will be.

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## *Mindful Jewelry Protection*

You can program your subconscious mind to take extra special care of your gem set rings and other fine jewelry. By a simple act of willing, asking your subconscious to look out for situations in which your jewelry might be at risk.

A good example of this in the short term is how aware you are after you have just done your nails. If your nails take thirty minutes to dry, you hold your hands differently during this time. You select your activities carefully. If you have long hair you may not even answer the phone. While the polish is drying you are not apt to be thinking every moment, "My nails are still drying...my nails are still drying." And yet, the mind is on automatic pilot. You're protected.

The same is true of wearing gem stone set rings. If you make your intent to protect your gems specific and clear, "The gem will come in contact with nothing," you intuitively move through time and space with much greater care, knowing how to hold your hands and when it is appropriate to remove your rings.

We hope this information in our Wear Care Guide is helpful. If you have any questions regarding fine gems or jewelry, please stop in or give us a call.