

# How To Hallmark Your Jewellery

Any piece of precious metal jewellery that qualifies needs to be hallmarked in the UK. Here's how to get started with hallmarking.

## What To Hallmark?



### YES

- ✓ Any precious metal jewellery (gold, silver, platinum or palladium) above the minimum weight threshold
- ✓ Silver with a fineness level of 92.5% or above
- ✓ Gold which is 20 parts pure out of 24 (i.e. 83% or above)



### NO

- ✗ Gold items that weigh less than 1 gram
- ✗ Silver items that weigh less than 7.78 grams
- ✗ Platinum items that weigh less than 0.5 grams
- ✗ Palladium items that weigh less than 1 gram

Hallmarking of palladium was introduced in the UK in 2009 and became compulsory in January 2010.

## How To Hallmark

1

### Send your piece

to one of the four approved Assay Offices in the UK

Birmingham • Edinburgh • London • Sheffield



BIRMINGHAM



EDINBURGH



LONDON



SHEFFIELD

Hallmarking cannot be undertaken by a manufacturer, jeweller or importer and must only be done on site at one of the four registered UK Assay Offices.

2

### The Assay Office will test the piece

for quality and fineness. There are two steps in this process:

#### Sampling:

Used to make sure that all items sent to the Assay Office in a single packet are the same

**Touch tests** – a cutting or scraping of the metal is taken  
**X-Ray Fluorescence Spectrometer (XRF)** – the item is X-rayed

X-Ray Fluorescence is often preferred for testing finished items as the piece doesn't need to be scraped or cut.

#### Assaying:

Used to determine the precious metal content. Depending on the metal to be tested, there are three tests:

**Gold** – Cupellation  
**Silver** – Titration  
**Platinum and Palladium** – Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometry (ICP OES)

3

### Fail?

- If an item fails the fineness test it can often be hallmarked at a lower standard
- If the Assay Office has concerns they will contact you directly

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### Pass

- The item will be hallmarked via hand marking or laser marking
- The correct hallmark will be applied, containing three compulsory marks and one optional mark:

| Mark                           | Example                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Sponsor's Mark                 | Maker's Mark              |
| Standard of Fineness           | Silver                    |
| Assay Office                   | Birmingham                |
| Year of Hallmarking (Optional) | Year hallmark was applied |

- Your newly hallmarked item is returned to you for sale

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#### Resources:

- <http://www.cooksongold.com/blog/cooksongold/a-brief-history-of-hallmarking>
- <https://theassayoffice.co.uk/help-with-hallmarks/anatomy-of-a-hallmark>
- <https://theassayoffice.co.uk/send-us-your-hallmarking/credit-application>
- <http://news.thediamondstore.co.uk/hallmarking-jewellery/>
- <http://www.assayoffice.co.uk/our-services/uk-hallmarks>
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1973/43/contents>