

TOP TEN

Jewellery Soldering Tips For Beginners

Ready to get to grips with silver soldering?
Use these top tips to help you get started – and get better results.

1 Invest in a soldering starter kit:

- Soldering torch
- Soldering sheet (easy, medium, hard)
- Pickling solution
- Soldering block
- Liquid flux
- Flux brush
- Fine point tweezers
- Plastic tweezers

2 Choose the right solder

Solder comes in three different types:
HARD MEDIUM EASY

Solder comes in three different types: hard, medium and easy. These different types of solder each have a different melting point, helping you to solder multiple joints on one piece of jewellery. The type of solder you start with will depend on the piece you're working on.

3 Keep it clean:

Any dirt or grease on your metal can stop the solder from flowing. Try not to handle the metal too much and use a pickle solution to remove any oil or dirt before soldering.

4 Pick your pickling tools:

All pickling solutions work best when warm, but ensure the solution is not boiled.

NOTE:

Don't use steel tools with pickle, as it will copper flash your work.

TOP TIP

Not ready to invest in a pickling tank yet? Many jewellers like to use an old slow cooker on a low temperature.

5

Find the right temperature:

Flux can be used as an indicator of temperature when soldering. As the solder reaches the right temperature to flow through the seam, flux becomes translucent.

DID YOU KNOW?

The small pieces you cut from your solder sheet are referred to as pallions, taken from the French word 'Papillon'. This means 'butterfly' and refers to the way that the tiny pieces of solder flutter about when you cut them.

6

Soldering a ring together?

Place the pallions across the seam in a similar way to stitches to make for a clean join. Once solder flows, heat the opposite side to pull the solder through the whole seam. Make sure there are no gaps between the flush. The purpose of soldering is to join the metals, not to fill in the gap!

7

Use solder paste for small findings:

Solder paste makes soldering small findings, such as chain ends or earring posts, much easier as it helps the components stick together during soldering.

TIP: If your paste dries out, add a bit of auflux to rehydrate.

8

Choose the right flame:

Adjust the size of the torch flame according to the job you're doing.

9

Be careful not to overheat the metal:

Once it has turned a bright red, you should remove the heat. If it starts to glow white, your metal has reached the temperature at which it could melt!

10

File away firescale:

You may notice a purple blemish has appeared on the surface of your ring after heating. This is known as fire stain or firescale and is caused by overheating your piece. If you've followed the tips above, this shouldn't happen – but if it does, small blemishes can be removed by sanding or filing the metal.

READY TO START YOUR SOLDERING PROJECT?

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