

5 Ways To Clean Your Jewelry at Home

1. Wear It!

The best way to polish your jewelry that I've found especially with Silver is to wear it! However, it is a good idea to take it off for bed, and before showering, washing, moisturizing and putting on makeup. Some jewelry has a finish or clear coat to preserve the finish, so it's not just the tarnish of silver sulfate that can darken your jewelry. The oils and chemicals in cosmetics can affect the finish, or break down the clear coat.

So wear your jewelry during the day and often! But take it off or wait to put it on, before you practice your self care cleansing ritual.

I have observed this often through my own experimenting. I find that most jewelry can handle some of this wear and tear, but to keep it fresh a ceramic dish or clean spot in your medicine cabinet to place those earrings can be helpful. Otherwise you can also decide to accept the well worn & loved look too as another option!



2. Try Baking Soda in Aluminum For Silver.

You can also sometimes polish it by buffing with a soft cloth.

If you have really tarnished silver jewelry, try this: ALUMINUM PAN or FOIL in a pan with 2 TABLESPOONS BAKING SODA and a kettle of BOILING WATER (1L) Stir around for a while with a wood spoon or chopsticks. It really does work to bring back that nice bright white silver. The aluminum is important because it creates a reaction that pulls the silver tarnish off the surface.

3. When Metal Bothers The Ears.

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE

Clean the part that goes through the ear with hydrogen peroxide once in a while. Just dip the hook or post into a cap of peroxide and let it sit for a minute and it can make a big difference if you feel sensitive to certain metals. Stainless steel and sterling silver are hypoallergenic, so if they are bothering you, I have found even just a swab with the peroxide can help!

4.Cleaning Non Precious Metal Jewelry-

I make earrings etc from copper and brass using various patina processes to bring out different colors on the surface of the metal. I always make sure they have sterling silver or gold filled hooks so they remain hypoallergenic. I love how I can work with these metals and make my work more accessible to everyone who may be interested.

I always finish the surface with some kind of a clear coat varnish finish. This could be usually either a cold wax like a car wax or a clear spray enamel. Over time it is natural for this finish to wear away, but from my experience I have worn earrings I've made for over 10 years and found they remained more or less the same because of the preserving clear coats. As long as I took them off before bathing the finish did not actually wear off!

The best way to take care of these types of earrings is to not wear them to bathe, and to take them off at night and the same as above - take it off or wait to put it on, before you apply cosmetics or moisturizers.

If you would like to clean your earrings you do risk washing and wearing away the clear coat.

IMPORTANT NOTE * How earrings with metal patinas age can be is part of their appeal too.

5.A Few More Possibilities

To shine jewelry up when necessary, here are a few more things you can do.

1. SOFT CLOTH- Buff them with a soft cloth and clean the ear hooks with peroxide.
2. DISH SOAP - Damp cloth, or Scrub gently with lukewarm water and dish soap solution and a soft toothbrush
3. SALT & VINEGAR PASTE- If the clear enamel finish has worn off, or is wearing off or the metal is showing stains or dullness, mix a paste of approximately 1 Tablespoon of flour, 1 Tablespoon of white vinegar and a pinch of salt, spread on the surface and let sit for around 20 minutes. Rinse off and pat dry with a soft cloth.
4. CAR WAX- If the wax finish is wearing off you can also take some car wax. (You can tell by looking if it's a waxy matte finish) and rub on 2 or three coats allowing to dry and rebuffering between coats.
5. CLEAR NAIL ENAMEL- If the shiny enamel coating gets a scratch or starts to wear away in places you can clean it by the above suggestions and when dry give it a coating of clear nail polish to keep it looking good. (This can also help when people are sensitive to certain metals. My understanding is Jewellers brass does not contain nickel which people seem to be more allergic too in general)

Ultimately you could take it to a jeweler is also something to consider. Apart from completely refinishing them, using solvents, steel wool etc., I hope the above suggestions help and you find some good ideas to try to help your jewelry enjoy a long life of wearability! Do you have ideas I haven't covered? I would love to hear about them!