

FAQs About The 14K Gold Jewelry on OldMaidCatLady.com



What does "14K" mean?

14k stands for 14-karat weight. Pure gold is 24-karat, but this is too soft for use in jewelry. Jewelry may be made in 18K, 14K or 10K gold. The 14K is more durable, and in these days of high costs for gold, more reasonably priced. 14K gold actually contains 58.3% gold (14 parts gold to 10 parts other metals); 18K is 75% gold, 12K is 50% gold, and 10K is only 41.7% gold. 10K gold is mostly used in lower quality jewelry. It is more durable, but can also take on a brassy look over time.

How can I tell what karat weight my gold is?

In America, gold jewelry is hallmarked with the karat weight. While any karat weight may be called "solid" gold, you should look for the numbers 18K, 14K, or 10K to tell you how much gold is actually in the piece. Those with an allergy to nickel should choose 18K or higher gold content.

What makes up the other 41.7% of the metal in 14K gold?

It could be silver, copper, nickel, or zinc.

What makes some gold appear different colors than yellow?

This is due to the type and amount of metal used in the alloy. Traditional yellow gold is typically gold mixed with copper and silver. White gold has gold mixed with metals that are naturally white, then plated with rhodium. Rose gold is gold alloyed with copper to give it a pinkish hue. Even a green color can be obtained by alloying the gold with silver.



What is "white gold"?

This is gold mixed with metals like palladium or nickel that are naturally white, then coated (plated) with rhodium. The rhodium plating may wear down over time and need to be replated by a jeweler to restore the natural whiteness of the piece.



What is "gold filled" jewelry?

Designated by the initials "G.F.", this is jewelry made from another metal topped with a layer of gold. The marking on the piece will tell you what percentage of the metal in it is gold, and what karat weight that is. For example, 1/20 14K G.F. means that at least 1/20th of the weight of that piece is 14K gold.



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How is that different from “gold plated” jewelry?

The layer of gold in plated jewelry is thinner than in filled. This plating will be less durable and may wear away rather quickly.



How should I care for my 14K gold jewelry?

Remove your gold jewelry before using any harsh chemicals or swimming. You can clean it with a solution of warm water and a detergent-free soap, brushing with a soft-bristled brush to remove any dirt embedded in the piece. To protect from scratches, always store your gold jewelry in a soft cloth jewelry bag so it doesn't get jostled against other items in your jewelry box or drawer.

Why is gold so much more expensive than silver?

This is partially due to simple supply and demand for each of the precious metals, which determines the market value for gold. Price of a piece of jewelry is also affected by the purity of the gold (karat weight), the maker's name (e.g., Tiffany or Fabergé) and the craftsmanship used in creating the piece.

What is the “lost wax” method of jewelry making?

This is a multi-step process where a wax mold of the piece is first created by the artist. A plaster mold for the piece is then poured over it. Once hardened, the mold is heated to remove the wax. Then molten gold is poured into the plaster mold. After cooling, the gold is removed from the mold, filed and polished to finish the piece. The lost wax method has been used by jewelry artisans worldwide since the time of Mesopotamia and the pre-Columbian civilizations in the western hemisphere.



Here are just a few of our fine 14K yellow and white gold cat jewelry items:



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