



Jewelry
Making
DAILY

PRESENTS

Free Jewelry Dictionary: Crack the Code on Jewelry Terms



Free Jewelry Dictionary: Crack the Code on Jewelry Terms

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SAGENITE? PILLIONS? GANGUE? Have you ever come across these and other jewelry-making terms — with absolutely no idea what they mean? Well, we’ve made it easy for you! This dictionary of common (and not-so-common) terms for jewelry artists will help you find your way through the mysterious world of jewelry making. You’ll never have to wonder what in the world “adularescence” means again.

Karla Rosenbusch
Managing Editor
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist



*Azurite Malachite
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ALL PHOTOS: JIM LAWSON

A

Abrasives

The grits, usually silicon carbide or diamond, used to shape gemstones.

Acetylene Torch

Portable silversmithing torch which burns acetylene and air.

Adamantine

The diamond-like luster of certain gems.

Adularescence

A milky reflection of light on a gem such as the blue or silvery appearance of moonstone.

Airbrasive Unit

A small-scale sandblaster used with a variety of powdered abrasives for the delicate cleaning of fossils.

Alcohol Lamp

A small lamp often used for dopping cabochons or faceted stones.

Alloy

Two or more metals in combination. (For example, sterling is silver plus copper.)

Almag

An oil often used as a coolant for slab or trim saws.

Alumina

Highly refined aluminum oxide used as a polishing agent.

Aluminum Pencil

This pencil leaves guidelines on stones which will not wash off.

Amber

Fossilized tree sap, occasionally containing preserved insects as inclusions.

Ammonite

A group of mollusks (molluscs) extinct since the Cretaceous Period whose modern relatives include the chambered nautilus, squid, and octopus.

Amorphous

Meaning formless; describes gem materials without orderly atomic structure.

Angle Pointer

Points to the desired angle on a faceting head.

Angle Quadrant

Shows the degrees from 0 to 90 for faceting angles.

Angle Stop

Prevents accidentally overcutting the desired angle on a faceting machine.



Leather as a Jeweler's Tool
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, April 2014

Annealing

The process of heating metal to keep it workable.

Anode

The positive terminal of an electrolytic cell used with a plating solution.

Anti-oxidant

Liquid applied to places solder should not flow.

Antiquing

Applying a finish to jewelry to make it look old. For example, using liver-of-sulfur to blacken silver.

Anvil

Metal stake used for forming or raising metal.

Apex

The bottom point of a faceted stone.

Appliqué

Laying one layer of metal upon another to produce dimension and design.

Arbor

A rod, bar, or shaft which holds the wheels for cutting, grinding, sanding, and polishing.

Art Deco

Jewelry of the early 20th century featuring abstract and geometric lines.

Art Nouveau

Jewelry of the turn of the 20th century with flowing lines and realistic motifs.

Assembled Carving

A carving made of several parts, often of different materials and colors assembled into one unit.

B

Asterism
A quality present in some gem materials which makes it possible to cut "star" cabochons. Inclusions make the stars possible.

B

Baculite

A common uncoiled ammonite of the late Crustaceous Period.

Baguette

A facet cut for small gems, step cut, and rectangular.

Bail

Holder for the top of a pendant.

Bangle

A rigid, entirely round, loose-fitting bracelet.

Bar Pin

Narrow decorative pins of a more or less rectangular shape.

Barion

A mixed facet cut combining emerald cut crowns with brilliant cut bases.

Baroque Pearl

A pearl of irregular shape.

Bas Relief

A low relief carving — raised slightly above the background material.

Basse Taille

A transparent enamel technique with repoussé.

Bead Board

A wood or plastic grooved board for arranging bead necklaces before stringing.

Bead Mill

A machine to finish spherical beads.

Bead Thread

Silk or nylon thread of various sizes for beading.

Bead Wire

Fine nylon-coated wire for beads.

Bearings

Supports for rotary shafts of revolving lapidary machines.

Beeswax

Used for cementing and dopping.

Belcher Mounting

Pronged modification of the gypsy mounting for rings.

Bell Cap

A metal bell-shaped cap with loop top for attaching stones.

Bench Pin

A notched hardwood pin to be attached to the workbench to hold jewelry during specific stages.

Bench Vise

A small vise with can attach the pin or various other tools to the workbench.

Bevel

A small rim around the bottom edge of a cabochon with an angle of about 45 degrees.

Bezel

A shape made of flat wire to hold the stone in place in a piece of jewelry.

Bezel Pusher

A tool to flatten and smooth the edge of the bezel firmly around the stone.

Bezel Wire

A metal wire with a collar and sometimes fancy designs for making bezels.

Biaxial

Stones with two optic axes and directions.

Binding Wire

A soft iron wire for holding together parts to be soldered.

Birefringence

Doubly refractive materials.



Fiesta Bonefish
Step by Step Wire Jewelry, August/September 2014

Blank

A piece of gem material which was been sawed and ground to the approximate size and outline of the planned cabochon.

Blazer Blades

Modern long-lasting diamond saw blades.

Bobbing Compound

A fine abrasive which leaves metal scratch-free with a dull finish.

Bola Slide

The slide which moves up a bola tie cord.

Bola Tie

A neckpiece consisting of a length of cord with tips and held together by a movable slide of metal and often set with a stone.

Borax

Mineral powder used as a flux to control oxidation during melting of metal. Also, when combined with boric acid, used for flux during soldering.

Bort

Industrial diamond for lapidary purposes.

Botryoidal

A smoothly curved group of rounded mounds on some gem rough which resembles a pile of marbles or grapes.

Boule

The pear-shaped gem material resulting from early synthetic production.

Box Clasp

A standard box-shaped jewelry clasp with a tongue which slides into the end opening.

Brass

A copper-zinc alloy used for jewelry and decorative objects.

Breccia

Cutting material made of angular bits which have been naturally cemented together by some mineral, often chalcedony.

Brick

A brick is often used for initial cuts and for deglazing diamond saw blades.

Brilliancy

The total light reflection of a gemstone.

Brilliant

A basic facet cut of 58 facets, primarily for round stones.

Briolette

A drop-shaped facet cut with the crown similar to the rose cut.

Britannia Metal

Modern pewter alloy of tin, antimony, and copper.



Twin Twirls
Step by Step Wire Jewelry, June/July 2014

Bronze

An alloy of copper and tin.

Bruce Bar

A patented polish compound in stick form.

Buff

The wheels or pads used for polishing gem materials. Usually leather, felt, muslin, Pellon, etc.

Bur

Carbon steel tool which can be one of 30 or more shapes to be used in a flexible shaft tool.

Burnisher

Oval-shaped blade tapering to a fine point for setting stones and smoothing metal.

Bushing

A replaceable lining for a bearing or the removable cylindrical lining of the grinding wheel holes.

C

Cab Mate

Complete cabochon machine with light.

Cable Chain

Simple chain with interlocking identical links in a pattern of vertical links connected by horizontal links.

Cabochon

A polished gemstone with a flat bottom and domed top, usually oval or round (not faceted). However, cabochons may also be shapes such as hearts, crosses, freeform, and other shapes.

Cabochon Unit

A combination machine used for making cabochons from the sawing through polishing stages.

Cameo

An engraved cabochon, usually cut from a color-layered material.

Carat

A unit of weight for gemstones. There are 5 carats to a gram.

Carborundum

Silicon carbide. Synthetic hard material used for grinding wheels, cutting and sanding grits, and lapidary tools.

Carriage

That part of the saw which feeds the material into the blade.

Casting Flask

Steel flask to hold the investment for casting.

Casting Machine

Any of several kinds of machines made for casting metal.

Cat's-Eye

The phenomenal property of some gems with fiber or tube inclusions to produce luminous "eyes" if properly oriented.

Caulking Compound

Used as a grout for some mosaics.

Centrifugal Caster

A casting machine with a heavy spring which swings the arm to force the molten metal into the flask.

Ceramic Soldering Block

A lightweight, fire-proof, smooth block for soldering.

Chamois Buff

A wheel buff or hand buff with chamois surface for polishing jewelry.



Jelly Fish
Step by Step Wire Jewelry, August/September 2014

Champlevé

An enamel technique in which depressed areas in the metal are filled with enamel.

Channel

Stone inlay in a metal framework of flat wire cells.

Charge

Impregnating a grinding or polishing wheel or disc with the desired compound.

Chasing

Texturizing metal with chisel-like tools.

Chasing Hammer

A hammer with a large flat head used for striking the chasing tool.

Chatelaine

A metal pin with swivel chains for hanging objects such as a watch, keys, scissors, etc.

Chatoyance

The phenomenal quality of some gems to reflect movable light bands.

Cheater

A faceting machine device for moving a mounted gemstone sideways.

Chinese White

A white substance which is brushed on metal so a pattern or design can be drawn on it.

Chrome Oxide

A dark green polish powder often used for jade.

Chuck

An attachment for holding the mounted preform or other piece of work. A clamp for holding the dop stick for a faceting handpiece.

Clamps

Usually refers to C-clamps, which have a C shape and a threaded bolt which can be tightened to hold two parts together.

Cleavage

The property of a crystalline material to break in a specific way, leaving a somewhat smooth break.

Cleavage Angle

The angle created between cleavage faces when a mineral is split.

Clipped Solder

Metal solder which can be purchased ready for use in bottles of 1mm squares.

Cloisonné

Cells of rectangular wire are placed in a pattern on a metal surface, filled with enamel, and fired.

Cluster Ring

A ring made to set a group of small stones.

Coin Jewelry

Coins mounted to wear as jewelry.

Cold Dop

A method of dopping sensitive stones with cold cement.

Collet Hammer

Hammer with a double head, one part domed, the other a modified shape.

Collet Setting

Setting with the stone in a metal collar.

Conchoidal

A shell-like fracture of concentric smooth curves found in some minerals such as obsidian.

Concretion

A concentration of sediments harder than surrounding rock and usually formed around a nucleus.

Conglomerate

A cutting material in which rounded grains and pebbles are naturally cemented together by chalcedony or another agent.

Contaminant

Harder or larger particles on laps or buffs which cause scratches on stones.

Copper Tongs

Used for removing metal from pickle.

Core Drill

A tube drill which cuts cylinders of stone.

Cork Lap

A lap used for cabochons and small flats.

Costume Jewelry

Fashion jewelry. Jewelry which keeps pace with current styles and fads.

Crown

That part of a faceted stone which is about the girdle.

Crucibles

Containers for melting metals.

Cryptocrystalline

Materials with microscopic crystalline structure.

Crystal

A solid with regular atomic internal arrangement bound by definitely patterned external planes.

Crystalite Discs

Fast cutting diamond discs.

Crystalline

Materials with precise atomic internal structure but without the external shapes composed of definite planes.

Cuff Bracelet

Wide rigid bracelet with narrow opening.

Culet

The bottom facet on the pavilion of a brilliant cut stone.

Cultured Pearls

Induced pearls of various shapes and colors grown in pearl farms or fisheries and widely used for jewelry.

Curb Chain

A chain with flattened links each fastened to the next in the same manner.

Cushion

A facet cut shaped like a square with rounded corners.

Cutter

A lapidary.

Cuttlebone Casting

Carving patterns in cuttlebone for direct casting.

Cylinder

Cylinder-shaped cut stones, often with engraved designs.

D

Dapping Block

Blocks with dies and punches to fit, for shaping metal.

Dapping Punch

When tapped with a hammer in the die, forms half a dome.

Dendritic

Moss- and branch-like shapes and markings; developed during crystallization of ore and manganese compounds, often caused by manganese or iron minerals.

Dental Tools

These small, well-made tools are used by carvers.

Diamond Cut

Brilliant engraving cuts on metal for greater luster.

Diamond Drill

A gem drill using diamond points.

Diamond Dust

Also called diamond powder or diamond grits, used in cutting and polishing gemstones.



Cool Tools & Hip Tips
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, April 2014

Diamond Paste

Diamond particles in a paste compound.

Diamond Saw

A gem-cutting saw with the blade edges with diamonds.

Diamond Wheel

Grinding wheel with diamond-impregnated surface.

Diamond Wheel Dresser

Tool used to true the silicon carbide grinding wheels.

Dichroism

Literally two colors. A gemstone with this property shows two colors when viewed from different directions.

Dispersion

The separation of white light into the colors of the spectrum.

Dop

Also dop stick. A rod of metal or wood to hold the gemstone during the required stages for finishing it.

Dopping Block

A faceting machine device for correctly aligning two dop sticks for the transfer process.

Dopping Wax

Any of several kinds of wax used to attach stones to a dop stick.

Double Cabochon

A cabochon which is rounded or domed on the bottom as well as the top. Two-sided cabochon.

Doublet

A gemstone made of two layers of material.

Dowel

Round wood rods used for dop sticks.

Draw Plates

Strong metal plates with many holes for changing wire's size or shape.

Drawing

Wire can be reduced in size or changed in shape by pulling through the draw plate.

Dremel Tool

Motorized variable speed handpiece for working on stone.

Drill Bits

The points used in a machine for drilling which do the actual cutting.

Drill Press

A machine which holds the drill and the work to be drilled.

Drop Casting

Dropping molten metal into ice water for freeform shapes.

Drum Sander

A sanding wheel for abrasive belts, either strip or endless. Some drum sanders are expandable.

Drusy Cavities

Hollow spaces within a rock, such as volcanics, that are filled with a collection of secondary minerals.

Dust Collector

A system of filtering dust from the air of a lapidary shop. Combinations of blowers, filters, and suction.

Dwt

Abbreviation for the troy weight unit "penny-weight."

E

Earring Jacket

A thin stone or metal pattern drilled for an earring stud.

Easy-Flow Solder

Coiled wire soft solder with a low melting point.

Electro-Etching

A method of etching metal surfaces with electroplating equipment.

Electroforming

Building up metal on a disposable form using electroplating equipment.

Electroplating

Depositing a coat of metal over another metal by electrolysis.

Emerald Cut

Same as step cut. A basic facet design, usually rectangular or square, with rows of parallel facets.

Emery

A mixture of finely granulated corundum, magnetite, hematite, ilmenite, and quartz.

Emery Cones

Used on tapered spindles to sand the inside of rings.

Enamel

Glass frit which is applied to metal and fired to color the metal and produce a design.

Engraving

Incising designs in metal or stone with sharpened steel gravers.

Enhancer

Pendant with clamp which will fit over pearls or beads.

Enhydro

A stone containing a section which is partially filled with water.



Saddle Mount for Hanging Earrings
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, April 2014



Galaxy Gem
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist,
May/June 2014

Etching

A process of producing a design upon stone or metal using corrosive acid.

Extender

A fluid used to dilute and spread diamond paste or powder.

F

Fabulustre

A stick type of polish compound.

Facet

A flat polished surface on a gemstone, usually a transparent stone, and usually in combination with other flat planes in a specific design. Also a small surface displayed by a crystal that is naturally occurring from growth, as in crystal faces.

Faceting Head

That part of a faceting machine which is moved up and down on a rod and can be adjusted to the proper angle to cut the facet.

Faceting Saw

A small thin diamond saw for preliminary cuts of facet rough.

Fantasy Cuts

Novel new combination cuts which have concave "facets" and elements of cabochons, flat facets, and carving.

Feathering Disc Adhesive

Cement for bonding abrasive discs to pads.

Feldspar

A group of rock-forming silicate minerals with the subgroups orthoclase and plagioclase.

File-a-Wax

Wax to be shaped by files for lost wax models.

Files

Principal jewelry files are flat, mill, half-round, and round.

Filigree

Spiral wire units forming lacy designs in flat metal framework.

FinaLap

A metallized resin lap for faceting.

Findings

Parts for making jewelry complete, such as pin backs, bola tips, bell caps, bails, jump rings, etc.

Fine Grind

The last grinding process before sanding.

Fine Silver

Pure silver, not alloyed.

Fire

The flashes of different colors in gems resulting from the breakup of white light.

Fire Scale

A deposit of dark cupric oxide on the surface of alloyed metals such as sterling because of overheating or not enough flux.

Fishhook Clasp

Hook shape which fits in decorative metal oval.

Flanges

Discs to hold lapidary wheels and saws in place.

Flannel Buff

Cotton buffing wheel used with rouge.

Flask

Stainless steel cylinder with matching sprue base for casting.

Flask Tongs

Long-handled tongs for handling hot flasks.

Flats

Either slabs or flat areas on stones which should be curved.

Flaws

Fractures or inclusions which mar the stones and should be avoided in the cutting process.

Flexible Shaft Handpiece

A motorized hand-held piece of lapidary equipment with variable speed, which can hold a variety of cutting, grinding, and polishing tools, especially for carving.

Foredom

A popular brand of flexible shaft handpiece and tools.

Forging

Forming metal by raising it with a hammer over a stake.

Foxtail

Fine nickel chain for heavy beads.

Freeform

A stone which is not cut in a regular or standard geometric shape.

Fused Metals

Fusing scrap metal onto a preformed metal back.

G

Gangue

The relatively worthless rock or vein material in which valuable metals or minerals occur.

Gauge

A device for measuring the exact dimensions of a gemstone.

Gear Trigger

The trigger which holds the notched gear at the top of a faceting head.

Gear Wheel

A 60 notch wheel used for many kinds of facet cuts.

Gem

A cut and faceted stone, often for jewelry use.

Gem Maker

Complete combination unit.

Gem Master

Facet machine with electronic micro-stop.



Green Waves
Step by Step Wire Jewelry, June/July 2014

Gem Material

Rough mineral or rock which can be cut into gemstones.

Gemstone

A mineral, synthetic, or organic stony material which has sufficient beauty and hardness (or toughness) to be used for decorations or adornment.

German Silver

An alloy of nickel, copper, and zinc.

Gilding

Covering a metal surface with "gild," a mixture of gold and mercury. Also covering with gold leaf.

Girdle

The outer edge of a faceted stone or the dividing line between the crown and pavilion.

Goggles

Safety goggles should be worn for such steps as melting metal, centrifugal casting, etc.

Gold Filled

A core metal such as nickel laminated between gold sheets. Must be stamped, for example 1/20 G.F. or 1/20 10K G.F.

Gold Plated

A thin (usually) gold covering on jewelry or other objects deposited by electroplating.

Gold Solder

For soldering gold jewelry — available in low karat up to 18K, in clipped, strip, and wire form in yellow or white.

Gold Test Kit

Acid bottles with test needles and touchstone for determining karat content.

Grain

A tiny crystalline particle or a unit of weight which is one quarter of a metric carat.

Gram

A metric weight — 28.34 grams to an avoirdupois ounce.

Gram Weight Set

A set of metal weights from 500 milligrams to 100 grams, for weighing jewelry metals.

Granulation

Decorative and texturing metal process of solderless bonding of tiny beads of gold to the surface by heating.

Gravers

Steel tools for engraving designs or letters, available with ends of many shapes such as chisel, bevel, flat, lozenge, round, and square.

Green Wax

A standard dop wax for cabochons.

Grinding Wheel

Silicon carbide or diamond wheels to grind gemstones into desired shapes.

Grit

Loose grits, or grits in binders, are abrasives of various sizes, usually silicon carbide or diamond, used for lapidary work.

GROUT

A cement which is used to fill spaces between stones of mosaics.

Gum Tragacanth

Used as an adhesive in the enameling process.

Gypsy Setting

A wide-domed ring with a flush set stone which continues the curve of the dome.

Gyro Rock Cabber

A machine with six cab heads designed to make perfect cabochons consistently.

H

Half Dome

Formed by dapping a circle of metal into a die block.

Hallmarks

Registered craftsman's marks stamped on jewelry items.

Hard Solder

Gold or silver solder with a melting point of 1365°F and a flow temperature of 1450°F.

Hard Stone

Hard stones for jewelry are those 5-10 on the Mohs scale.

Hardness

How hard one stone is in comparison to others is measured by lapidaries chiefly with the Mohs scale, which rates talc as 1 and diamond as 10.

Hastings Triplet

A three-part 10X magnifying loupe for viewing stones.

Healed Fracture

A previously fractured piece of gem material naturally filled in by chalcedony or another mineral.

Heat Color

The various colors of yellows and reds which indicate the temperature of a molten metal.

Heat Sensitivity

The characteristic of some gem materials to chip or break easily when exposed to heat.

Heat-Treated

Subjected to a process of heating (especially precious stones) to change the color.

Hemostat

A versatile locking pliers which can be used while soldering.

High Dome Cabochon

A cabochon with an unusually steep curved top, very often a star stone.

Highland Park Tumbler

Steel barreled tumbler with nylon bearings and plastic-covered roller shafts.



Falling Leaves Earrings
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, August 2014

Holiday Combination Units

Various sawing/grinding/polishing units of cast aluminum with silicon carbide or diamond wheels and accessories.

Hopper

Same as barrel for tumbler, but often used for vibrating tumbler nomenclature.

Hot Dop

An electric unit for heating dop wax and the stone to be dopped.

Inclusions

Irregularities, usually of foreign material, enclosed within gem materials, such as liquid- or gas-filled tubes, feathers, flakes, needles, crystals, etc.

Index Wheel

Disc which regulates the stone setting on a facet head.

Inlay

Positioning a gem material pattern in recessed soft material such as slate. Also inserting a stone design in metal.

Intaglio

A gem engraving similar to a cameo but concave instead of convex.

Intarsia

A gemstone picture made up of many precisely shaped pieces of material fitted together on a base of stone or wood. Also Florentine mosaic or pietra dura.

Investment

A plaster-like material which is mixed with water and poured around the model to be cast in the casting flask. Also called cristobalite.

Iridescence

A changeable multi-colored effect in gem materials such as spectrolite, caused by light interference.

J

Jacobs Chuck

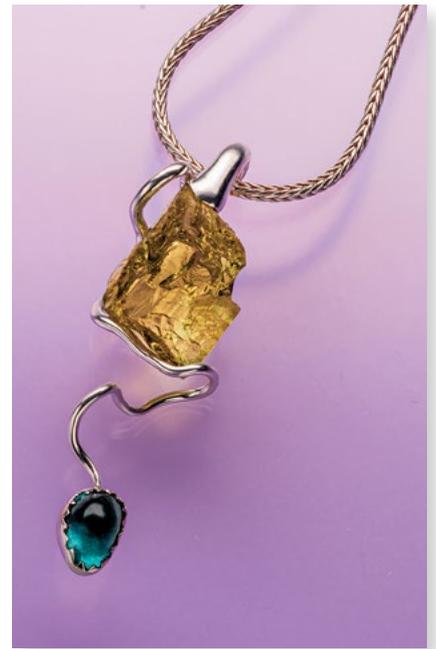
Fits on a threaded shaft and holds a variety of tools for carving.

Jamb Peg

An early faceting device with holes to support dop sticks at the proper angles.

Jewel

An ornament, usually of precious metal, set with a cut and polished gem or pearl. Also a cut and polished gem.



Silver and Apatite Pendant
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, November 2013

Jeweler's Eye

A portable device to aid in identification of gemstones.

Jeweler's Saw

A rigid, metal, adjustable frame with wooden handle and straight replaceable steel blades of various sizes.

Jewelry Cleaner

A liquid cleaner for jewelry for use with or without an ultrasonic machine, a steam cleaner, or a jet cleaner.

Jewelry Pins

Gold- or silver-colored "u" shaped pins ending with an upright curve.

Jobber

A wholesaler who distributes imported or American-produced materials and supplies to retailers.

Jump Rings

Round or oval metal rings which are used to link two parts together. Made with a slit opening which is usually soldered shut after being put to its intended use.

K

Karat

A measure of the purity of gold. 24K is pure, 12K is half gold, and less than 10K is usually not stamped as gold.

Karat Stamp

Metal stamp for incising metal content.

Kerf

The width of the cut made by the saw blade.

Keyhole Router

A diamond tool designed to remove material for the inlay process. Also used as a drill.

Kiln

Burnout oven for casting or enameling.

Kimberlite Pipe

Volcanic, pipe-shaped structure filled with kimberlite rock that might contain diamonds.

Kool Jool

A preparation for coating jewelry parts which must be kept cool during soldering.

L

Labradorescence

A phenomenon caused by the lamellar structure of some gem materials producing bright reflected flashes similar to iridescence, but not multi-colored.

Lap

A horizontal revolving disc for grinding and polishing gems.

Lap Stik

A two-sided sticky tape to hold slabs to laps.

Lapidary

A person who works with stone, primarily gemstones. Also used as an adjective to describe the shop, the kind of material, and the equipment used in cutting stones.

Lathe

Rotating machine which can be used to make vases, bowls, etc

Lavalier

Small jeweled pendant, often with fine chains.

Leather Buff

A popular surface for polishing gems.

Lemon Peel

Also called orange peel. The appearance of materials pitted by undercutting, due to irregular grain structure.

Limoges

An enamel style similar to a painting in appearance.

Linde A

An excellent aluminum oxide polish for many materials.

Little Torch

A miniature oxygen and gas torch which welds, brazes, or solders areas hard to reach with conventional torches.

Liver-of-Sulfur

Potassium sulphide, often used to antique metals.

Lobster Claw

A safe jewelry clasp.

Locket

A hinged pendant, often round or heart-shaped.

Locking Tweezer

Used to get a firm grip on small objects.

Lost Wax

A casting process where the burnout melts the wax model and molten metal is forced into the mold.

Loupe

A magnifying device for inspecting gemstones.

Low Dome Cabochon

A cabochon with a very slightly curved top.

Lubricant

Also coolant. A liquid for keeping the machinery and/or gem material cool.

Lucite Lap

A plastic lap for faceting.

Luster

The optical effect resulting from light reflected from the surface of gem material. Examples: silky, pearly, vitreous.



Twisted Sterling Cuff
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, November 2013

M

Main

A principal facet.

Malleable

The property of metals to be formed without breaking.

Mandrel

A tapered spindle for sizing and shaping items such as rings.

Marquise

A double pointed cut for a faceted stone.

Married Metals

The Mexican term for lamination of several metals in one piece of work.

Massive

Material not occurring in external crystal form.

Matrix

The rock in which the gemstone occurs, often polished with it such as matrix opal or emerald-matrix.

Matrix Mount

Preparing a fossil for display, usually without removing it from the original matrix in which it was found.

Matte Finish

A velvety, non-shiny finish.

Media

Abrasives embedded in plastic used in vibratory tumblers.

Mesh Size

A measurement of particle size in grinding or polishing powders.

Metric Weights

A system of weights used particularly for facet material.

Mirror Finish

A bright, glass-like finish.

Mizzy Wheel

Small heatless grinding wheels for use in flexible shaft tools for carving.

Mohs Scale

A commonly used scale of relative hardness of minerals. 1. Talc. 2. Gypsum. 3. Calcite. 4. Fluorite. 5. Apatite. 6. Feldspar. 7. Quartz. 8. Topaz. 9. Corundum. 10. Diamond.

Mokumé

A Japanese method of texturing metal to resemble wood grain.

Monel Metal

A nickel copper alloy.

Mordant

Etching solution of acids and water.

Mosaic

Pebbles or pieces of cut stone cemented to a base to form a pattern or picture.

Motif

The theme of a design.

Mount

To rebuild a fossil skeleton for display.

Mourning Jewelry

Victorian fad often done in black or featuring portraits.

Mud

A mixture of water and grit used as an abrasive for sawing.

Mud Saw

A revolving steel wheel which cuts with silicon carbide abrasives mixed with water.

Muriatic Acid

A dilute acid which is sometimes added to a polish slurry (only a few drops) for such soft cutting materials as calcite.

Muslin Buff

Multiple circles of unbleached muslin are sewn together for a high speed polishing buff.

MX Wheel

Cut-off wheel of aluminum oxide-impregnated muslin for cutting metal.

N

Nacreous

Having the luster of mother-of-pearl.

Navaratna

Traditional nine-gem jewels of India.

Needles

Elongated crystals, such as rutile, often found as inclusions in gem material.

Netsuke

Small carved toggle used to attach a small container to a kimono sash.

NGraveR

Electric engraving machine.

Nibbling

Preliminary step in shaping a cabochon preform by breaking off small bits with nippers or pliers.

Nickel

Hard white metal used for plating or alloying.

Nickel Silver

An alloy of copper, nickel, and zinc.

Niello

Blackened silver alloyed with sulfur and copper and fired onto the workpiece.

Nodule

Rounded or almond-shaped lump of mineral or aggregate, typically in siliceous volcanic rocks.

Notch Rim Blade

A diamond saw blade made of steel with notches on the edge holding the diamond charges.



Silver Dimensional Pendant
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, November 2013

Novaculite

A uniform, fine-grained material from Arkansas used as a sharpening stone for tools.

Nugget

A small, natural, irregular lump of material, such as turquoise nugget.

O

Ochre

Yellow-to-brown-colored mixture of different iron compounds such as hematite and limonite.

Old Mine

A facet cut which is the predecessor of today's brilliant cut.

Oolite

Sedimentary rock made up of very small spheroidal granules often of calcium carbonate cemented together.

Opalescence

A phenomenal quality in some gems which milky or pearly.

Opaque

Gem material which does not transmit light, such as jasper.

Optic Axis

A direction in a doubly refractive crystal which appears singly refractive.

Opticon

An epoxy-like product used as a fracture filler.

Optivisors

Plastic magnifying lenses attached to a headband.

Organic Gem Materials

Gem materials which are partly or wholly comprised of animal or vegetable matter. Examples include pearl, amber, and coral.

Orientation

Finding the best way of cutting a gemstone to maximize its best optical qualities, such as chatoyancy, luster, or inclusions.

Ornamental Stone

Decorative materials which are usually softer, more opaque, more massive, more common, or less durable than hard translucent or transparent gem materials, but are used for vases, bowls, carvings, bookends, clock faces, etc.

Oxalic Acid

A few crystals can be added to the polish slurry of hard-to-polish gems.

Oxidation

In jewelry, the chemical union of oxygen and metal which causes darkness or tarnish.

Oxidizing Flame

A torch flame which used too much oxygen and causes oxide films on metal.

Oxy-acetylene Torch

A torch which burns acetylene gas and oxygen.

P

Palladium

A silvery white metal used in alloys and electroplating.

Pallions

Small squares of solder.

Parting Plane

The separating plane of a twinned crystal.

Patina

Surface appearance of naturally or artificially aged metal, especially copper, brass, or silver.

Pavé

A method of setting multiple stones in jewelry so little or no metal shows around the stones.

Pavilion

The portion of a faceted stone below the girdle.

Pear Cut

A gem cut with a rounded top and narrowing down to a point.

Pearl Cement

A durable cement used for pegging pearls.

Pebble Mosaic

A picture or pattern composed of small rounded stones which are cemented onto a base and then grouted.

Pegmatite

Magmatites with large, individual crystals; a source of many gem minerals.

Pellon

A plasticized cloth used for the surfaces of polishing laps.

Pennyweight

Precious metals such as gold wire are sold by the pennyweight, 24 grains troy.

Pewter

An alloy composed of tin, antimony, and copper.



Cool Tools & Hip Tips
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, August 2014

Phenolic Lap

A resin polishing lap used especially for hard stones.

Phenomenal Stones

Gem materials which have an unusual optical quality such as chatoyance, labradorescence, asterism, etc.

Pickle

An acid bath for metal to dissolve surface oxidation and flux residue. Works more rapidly when heated in the pickle pot.

Piercing

Making a design by cutting through the metal.

Piezoelectric

Characteristic of some crystals that become electrically charged when mechanically altered.

Pitch

A black semi-hard substance, which softens when heated, used in bowls to hold metal in place while it is being worked in such process as chasing or engraving.

Pitch Lap

A scored lap made of opticians pitch, used for polishing large surfaces.

Planishing

Hammering metal on a metal stake with a special hammer to remove irregularities.

Plastic Pellets

Used as a filler and carrier in tumblers.

Plating Solutions

Sulfate- or chloride-based solutions used for electroplating.

Platinum

Hard, white, long-wearing precious metal.

Play of Color

The spectral colors which are seen in an opal as it is moved in changing light.

Pleochroism

The quality of a gem to exhibit different colors when viewed from several directions.

Pliers

Pliers necessary for silversmiths are round nose, needle nose, flat nose, and cutting nose.

Plique-à-jour

Enamel work on lacy metal frame such as filigree, which has no backing in part and this is transparent or translucent.

Pneumatic Scribe

A small, air-driven, reciprocating impact tool used in the preparation of fossils.

Polish

The smooth, glassy reflecting surface of a finished stone.

Polishing Agents

The finely ground powders mixed with water for a polish slurry. (Sometimes formed as bars.) Examples include tin oxide, cerium oxide, and chrome oxide.

Preform

A stone which is shaped to the approximate size and form desired but has not been fully ground and has not been sanded or polished.

Prepolish

A satiny appearance which begins when the fine sanding is satisfactory.

Prestolite Torch

A portable acetylene torch for jewelry work.

Prong

Metal projection for holding stones in settings.

Prong Pusher

A tool with a blunt end for pushing prongs over stones.

Propane Torch

Portable pinpoint torch which burns propane.

Pro-Slicer Blades

Very thin blades for cutting high-quality gem material.

Pulley

A grooved wheel attached to a motor shaft and machine shaft which transfers power from motor to machine by means of rubber belts.

Pumice

A fine powder for polishing or cleaning.

Punches

Used with dapping blocks to shape metals.

Pyroelectric

A characteristic of some minerals that become electrically charged when heated or cooled.

Pyrometer

Device for measuring temperature in burn-out ovens.

R

Rabbit Ear Bails

Split top bails for pendants.

Raising

Shaping metal with a hammer and a base.

Rapid Polish 61

A polish compound used for jade and hard-to-polish stones.

Rathburn Saw

Small jeweler's saw with no V joint, used for sawing tubing.

Rawhide Mallet

Leather mallet embedded with shellac for delicate metal work.

Raybrite

A series of uniform micron-sized alumina polishes for stones of various hardnesses.

Recirculating Pump

Small pump to bring water to a grinding wheel.

Reducing Flame

A properly adjusted flame for soldering has a blue tip and yellowish or greenish interior cone.

Reflection

Light which reaches the eye when the beam strikes the surface of a gem. (Total reflection includes light from within.)

Refraction

The bending of light rays that enter transparent material.

Refractive Index

A measure of the angle at which a light ray is deflected in a specific gem species.

Relief Carving

Carving attached to and raised from the background.

Replica Casting

Instead of a lost wax model, a natural object such as a flower is burned out for the casting mold.

Repoussé

A process of giving a sculptured effect to jewelry by hammering embossing tools onto the metal placed in a pitch bowl.

Reticulation

Texturing metal into a deeply ridged surface by the use of a torch.

Rheostat Control

Speed control device for flexible shaft machines.

Rhodium Plate

This metal, which is resistant to oxidation and acid, is often used to plate silver.

Ring Gauge

Used to find the size or half-size for a ring.

Ring Mandrel

Round, tapered steel stick for forming rings.



Unity
Step by Step Wire Jewelry, June/July 2014

Ring Stick

A tapered stick for measuring the size of a finished ring.

Ring Stretcher

A tool which stretches the metal of a ring by thinning or rolling the metal.

Rivets

So-called "cold connectors" for some jewelry items are rods slid through holes and flattened over the ends to hold parts together.

Rolling Mill

A mill with steel rollers to alter the gauge of flat metal or wire, such as reducing thickness of metal or flattening wire.

Rondelle

A polished metal disc used between beads in necklaces.

Rose Cut

An early facet style with a flat bottom and round, domed faceted top made up of triangle cuts coming to a point on top.

Rotary Tumbler

A machine which finishes gem materials when charged with appropriate grits and rolled over and over by an electric motor.

Rotary Wheel Dresser

A rod tipped with carbon steel wheels for smoothing grinding wheels which are not true.

Rouge

Various iron oxide powders used for polishes.

Rough

Minerals or mineral aggregates which occur without a regular crystal surface, or gem material that has not been worked on.

Rough Grind

The first grinding of the preform.

Rubber Mold

A mold made of a special rubber which is used to make multiple identical castings.

Rutile

Elongated needles of this mineral are common inclusions in many gems and are often responsible for sagenite and asterism.

S

Sagenite

Needle-like crystals penetrating gem materials.

Sand Blaster

A machine which forcefully blows out streams of grits of various hardnesses to abrade, texturize, etch, or carve gem materials.

Sand Casting

An old method of casting with wet casting sand being pressed firmly around the model making a mold for filling with molten metal.

Sander

A disc or belted charged with abrasives which smooth the surfaces of stones, preparing them for polishing.

Sanding Cloth

The cloth belt or disc which is charged with abrasives for the sanding processes between the grinding and polishing steps.

Satin Finish

A smooth but not brilliant metal polish.

Saw Speed

The revolutions per minute and the surface feet per minute of a revolving saw blade.

Scale

Oxidation of a metal surface caused by heat.

Scarab

A cabochon engraved with a variation of the ancient Egyptian sacred beetle design.

Schiller

A metallic-appearing shimmer or sheen seen in some gem materials.

Scoring

Cutting radial lines in soft metal faceting laps to prepare the lap for polishing large facets.

Scotch Stones

Slatelike stones used with water for removing blemishes on a metal surface.

Screw Feed

A threaded metal bolt which feeds the material by turning to push the carriage of the slab saw forward.

Scribers

Sharp tools used to draw or trace designs on metal.

Scroll Work

Jewelry made with soldered scrolls of wire.

Sculpt-Wire

Clay-like substance which air-hardens to a metallic mass similar to "liquid steel."

Selvyt Cloth

A flannel jewelry polishing cloth, half charged with rouge.

Serpentine Chain

Identical flattened "s" shaped links.

Sgraffito

An enamel technique with a design scribed through to expose previously fired layers.

Shaft

The steel rod upon which the revolving parts are mounted.

Shellac

Used to dop sensitive stones or to make abrasive tools.

Shepherd Hooks

Hook-shaped earwires.

Silicon Carbide

Carborundum. A hard synthetic for grinding and sanding.

Sinking

Forming metal by pounding and stretching it into a hemispherical die.

Sinter

Mineral deposit in springs.

Sintered Rim Blade

A saw blade with diamond powder mixed with metal powder and made into a thin circle, which is then heat treated and soldered to the edge of a circular saw.

Slab

A flat section or slice of rock.

Slab Saw

A saw which is designed to cut slabs or slices of rough material with a circular diamond saw blade.

Slabsorbe

A liquid for removing oil from slabs.



Blue Apatite
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist,
November 2013

Slurry

The mixture of polishing powder and water used on a polishing buff.

Snap-In Mounts

Quick, easy-set, commercial mountings.

Soft Stone

A stone less than 5 in hardness on the Mohs scale.

Solder

A variety of alloys, mostly gold or silver, which when heated to the flowing point will permanently unite the chosen pieces of metal.

Soldering Blocks

Soldering is done on a fire-proof block such as charcoal, fire brick, or ceramic.

Sparlike

Aggregates having characteristically smooth, often shiny, cleavage faces.

Specific Gravity

The density of a mineral in comparison to that of water.

Sphere Machine

A machine used to shape and polish spheres by the use of revolving cutters and various grits.

Spindle

A tapered, threaded tool to hold buffs.

Spinning

Forming metal by stretching it over a chuck using a lathe.

Splash Hood

The cover for a slab saw which prevents coolant mist from spraying into the room.

Splash Pan

A metal pan beneath the grinders and sanders to catch water.

Splash Shield

The metal hood above the grinding and sanding wheels designed to keep water from splashing into the room or onto the lapidary.

Spool Sander

A grooved, curved wooden machine for sanding cabochons.

Spring Ring

A ring-shaped jewelry clasp with a spring in the tube.

Sprue

That part of the wax model which reaches to the edge of the flask so that when it melts there will be a canal for the molten metal.

Sprue Base

Base for attaching the sprue to the model.

Sprue Wax

Wax rod for making sprues which will burn out cleanly and quickly.

Stakes

Smooth steel forms for use in forming, raising, and planishing metals with hammers.

Stamps

Steel tools for stamping impressions into metal surfaces.

Standard Brilliant

Round 58 facet gem.

Star Facets

Triangular facets next to the table.

Steam Casting

An inexpensive method of casting using steam pressure.

Step Cut

Emerald cut. A basic facet design, usually rectangular or square, with rows of parallel facets.

Sterling

A standard of metal purity for silver with 75/1000 parts of copper to 925/1000 parts of fine silver.

Stone Holder

A movable pronged holder for inspecting faceted stones.

Stripping

Removing scale, old plating, or dull surface of metal by electrolysis.

Swage Block

A block with various sizes of indentations to hold tubing for sawing and filing.

Swedish Files

Small needle files.

T

Table

The flat facet on the top of a faceted gem.

Tang

The end of a graver or file which fits into the handle.

Tank

Reservoir. The pan for holding the coolant/lubricant of a slab saw.

Taps

Metal taps with matching dies are used for threading items such as ear screws.

Template

Sheets of plastic or metal with cutouts of various sizes and shapes of cabochons for outlining on stone.

Tensile Strength

The property of a metal to be stretched without tearing apart.

Third Hand

A stand for holding items to be soldered.

Thrumming

Buffing inaccessible areas with a string or cord.

Tiffany Mount

A prong setting for a faceted stone mounted on top of the ring shank, allowing more light.

Tiger Tail

Nylon-coated bead wire.

Tin Lap

A soft metal lap used for faceting.

Tin Oxide

A popular polishing powder.

Titanium

Lightweight refractory metal used for contemporary jewelry.

Torpedo Clasp

Also barrel clasp. Metal parts screw together for a lock.

Toughness

The property of structural particles of a gem material to cling together to avoid breakage.

Transfer Block

Also transfer jig. The block which makes it possible to align dopsticks for transferring a gem being faceted.

Translucent

Gem material which transmits light but is not clear enough to see through.

Transparent

Gem material in which the interior can easily be seen and which one can see through when it is held to the light.

Tri-Color Gold

Jewelry made with three colors of gold — yellow gold, rose gold, and green gold (usually).

Tri-Cord Knotter

A device for making quick, uniform knots in necklaces of pearls or other beads.

Trilliant

A modern, curved triangular brilliant cut, originally 44 facets.

Trim Saw

An electric saw for rough shaping of cabochon blanks from slabs of gem material.



Domed Fluted Bangle
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist, May/June 2014

Tripoli

Silicon dioxide polishing powder.

Trivet

A metal stand used to hold work during the process of fusing (such as enamel) to metal.

Troy Weight

System of weight for precious metals. One troy ounce equals 1.10 avoirdupois ounces.

Tubing

Formed by pulling a metal strip through a drawplate and used for hinges, clasps, and links.

Tufa

Porous rock formed as a deposit from springs or streams.

Tumbler

A rotary or vibratory machine which will produce finished stones from tumbling rough.

Tumbler Charges

Measured grits, powders, and sometimes additives used in the tumbling process.

U

Ultralap

A plastic lap embedded with abrasive or polishing agents.

Ultrasonic Cleaners

Machines filled with cleaning solution which vibrate at high frequencies.

Ultrasonic Drill

A high-tech, fast-vibrating drill with electronically supplied abrasives.

Undercut

The property of some fibrous or granular gems to develop small pits during sanding and/or polishing.

Uniaxial

Stones with one optic axis.

V

Vacuum Casting

A system of casting with a machine which pulls air and gases from the mold so that molten metal will flow quickly.

V-Dop

A dop stick with a "V" notch for elongated stones.

Vermeil

Gold-plated sterling silver.

Vernier

An auxiliary gauge for a millimeter slide gauge for determining gem depth; a secondary gauge to subdivide small units on the primary gauge.

Vibralap

Automatic flat lap for processing flats by vibrating.

Vibratory Tumbler

Rapidly vibrating tumbler with unusually upright hoppers, many of which are open.

Vibro-Graver

A vibrating electric engraving machine with adjustable stroke.

Vise

The part of the saw that holds the rock between cut. It often has hardwood jaws.

W

Water-Soluble Wax

Wax used as a foundation for building a wax model for a piece of jewelry which will appear heavy or bulky but will actually be quite thin. The foundation wax is dissolved before the casting.

Wax Lap

A lap coated with wax for polishing soft materials.

Wax Pen

An electric pen for making wax models that keeps the wax melted, to be released through a trigger tip.

Wax Pot

Electric pot for keeping wax at the proper temperature for making models for casting.



Azurite Malachite
Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist,
August 2014

Wax Wire

Round wax wires of different gauges, which can be twisted and bent into designs for wax jewelry models.

Wet Belt Sander

Complete, ready-to-use sander for cabs and flats.

Wet-or-Dry Belts

Silicon carbide sanding belts.

Wheel Cement

A bonding agent for abrasive discs or polishing pads.

White Diamond

A fine tripoli polish.

White Oil

A preferred cutting oil for slab saws.

Winding Jig

Metal or hardwood jig with wire protrusions for winding filigree wire into intricate designs, which are then removed from the jig by a lifting plate.

Wire Saw

An iron, diamond-charged saw blade, straight rather than circular.

Work Hardened

Metal which has been worked gets increasingly harder, so that it must be annealed to maintain its workability.

Y

Yellow Ochre

A solution that is painted on jewelry parts that need to be kept cool during soldering.

Z

Zam

A buffing compound similar to rouge.

Zinc Lap

A faceting lap for corundum.

Zirconium Oxide

A polishing agent similar to cerium oxide.



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