

## **Sterling Silver Care & Cleaning Tips**

No matter what form it takes—fine jewelry, formal tableware, or an engraved gift item—pure sterling silver requires proper care and cleaning to maintain its initial luster and brilliance. Since it's much softer than many gemstones, silver requires special precautionary methods to prevent damage to its texture and composition. The good news? Caring for sterling silver doesn't have to be a laborious, time-consuming task. As long as you store it properly and keep up with regular periodic maintenance to prevent the dreaded tarnish, silver cleanings can be quick and easy.

### **Storing Sterling Silver**

Proper storage of sterling silver jewelry and gift items goes a long way toward preserving its shine and preventing the oxidation that can cause dullness and discoloration. Below, we've compiled some quick tips for proper storage of fine silver:

To prevent scratches, each piece should be stored individually in its own case, pouch, or compartment.

Be sure store sterling silver in a dry, cool place. In hot climates, it should be kept in an air-conditioned room.

Avoid keeping jewelry boxes in bathrooms, as the moist, warm air can compromise the brilliance of your sterling.

For best results, keep your sterling silver jewelry in a case lined with tarnish-resistant material.

If you're planning on storing a sterling silver piece for an extended period of time, try sealing it in an airtight bag (plastic works fine) to protect it from oxidation and humidity.

### **Cleaning Sterling Silver**

Over time, dirt, makeup residue, and skin oils can build up on the surface of your sterling silver jewelry and gifts, causing the metal to become dull and

cloudy. The best way to prevent this undesirable effect is to clean your pieces regularly.

As a general rule, the regular use of chemical liquid jewelry cleaners is discouraged, as they can result in the eventual discoloration of the metal. The safest and most effective way to polish sterling silver is to wipe it gently with a soft cloth. Most fine jewelry stores sell specially designed polishing cloths that are pre-treated with gentle chemicals to restore silver's natural brilliance, although most any soft cloth will do the trick. Avoid using coarse fibers or fabrics, such as paper or polyester, as these can result in scratching. Feel free to wipe down your stainless silver as often as you'd like to restore its shine and brilliance. It's also a good idea to perform a thorough cleaning before storing a silver piece for a long period of time.

For silver that has suffered from some degree of tarnishing, a deeper cleaning may be in order. To remove silver tarnish, you might want to try adding a small amount of mild detergent to the piece, and then use a damp cloth or fingers to rub it into the surface of the metal. To prevent potential scratching and dullness, it's a good idea to avoid scrubbing the silver with any type of brush.

Following these easy tips for storing and cleaning sterling silver can help to preserve the inherent beauty and shine of this precious metal, ensuring years of enjoyment of your investment.