

Look for quality construction. When buying a piece of gold jewelry, be sure to inspect it carefully. Pay special attention to fasteners or clasps, making sure catches work easily but are secure. Likewise, the backs of pins and earring posts should be strong and firmly attached to the piece, with no soldering marks visible. With gold chain, lay it flat and make sure the links don't kink or bend.

### *Your Gold Jewelry Wardrobe*

Build a gold jewelry wardrobe in the same way you build a clothing wardrobe. Always begin with the best-quality basics you can afford and add pieces. Your basics are a gold chain, necklace, classic hoop or button earrings, and a link bracelet. Additions can include a slide-on pendant, a pair of drop earrings where the bottoms can be detached (thus creating two different looks), followed by a gold ring or a pin. Begin with pieces that have classic shapes and look appropriate with a variety of different outfits, then add pieces that offer versatility or those with a fashion touch, such as matte and polished surface treatments or two or three tones of gold.

### *Caring for Your Gold Jewelry*

Gold is lasting and durable, but it can get scratched or dented if treated roughly.

Gold's worst enemy is chlorine. Repeated exposure can weaken

gold's structure, eventually leading to breakage. Keep your jewelry away from chlorinated cleaning products and out of swimming pools and jacuzzis.

Protect your gold jewelry by storing it safely or keeping it wrapped in a soft cloth when not being worn.

Clean your gold jewelry with a cleaning solution of sudsy lukewarm water, or bring it to your local jeweler and have it steam-cleaned.

Dry and polish jewelry with a chamois or soft cloth after cleaning and rinsing.

Keep gold jewelry free from dust, moisture, perspiration and makeup.

Always inspect your gold jewelry for weakness or damage and bring it to a professional jeweler for immediate repair. Your jeweler will be able to restore it for you.

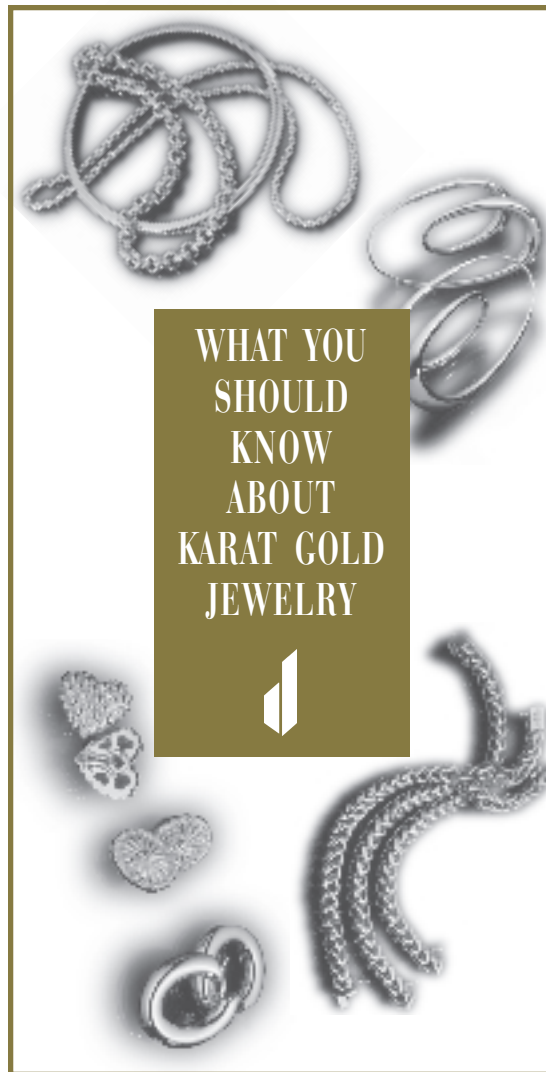
### *Where to Buy Karat Gold Jewelry*

You can buy gold jewelry in many types of stores, and "incredible discounts" are not hard to find. But to make sure you get jewelry that you will be happy with now and for years to come, follow a simple rule: buy from a professional, someone you can trust. Choose a retailer who has been serving the community for a number of years and has an established reputation.

Ask if the jeweler is a member of Jewelers of America, the national association for retail jewelers. Or look for the "J" mark on the door. JA jewelers are knowledgeable, and they have a wide selection of fine jewelry that will make putting your gold jewelry wardrobe together easy and fun. They will not only help you with this purchase, but they will be there in the future to answer all your questions and help you with your purchases, repairs, and custom design. JA members have signed and abide by a Code of Ethics, so you can buy with confidence from your JA member jeweler.



Jewelers of America, Inc.  
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel: 646-658-0246 • 800-223-0673  
Fax: 646-658-0256  
[www.jewelers.org](http://www.jewelers.org)



WHAT YOU  
SHOULD  
KNOW  
ABOUT  
KARAT GOLD  
JEWELRY





Gold, one of the world’s most precious metals, dates back to the dawn of mankind. All great civilizations built up treasuries of the lustrous metal, reserving golden objects for their most important rituals.

The most alluring use of the sun-colored metal has always been in jewelry. The Egyptians, largest producers of gold in the ancient world, equated gold with the sun, the giver of life, and reserved its use for pharaohs only. The ancient Etruscans created meticulously hand-wrought objects using fine granules and threads of gold, a technique still practiced today. To this day, Chinese and Indian brides wear jewelry of 24-karat gold on their wedding day to ensure a lifetime of good luck and happiness. A gift of gold jewelry says love and permanence as eloquently today as in all the ages past.

### The Characteristics of Gold

Gold combines four basic characteristics that make it a universally treasured possession:

**Beauty** — Gold’s natural color can be further enhanced by alloying it with small amounts of other metals, yielding a spectrum

of exquisite, subtle shades. Metalsmiths are able to create yellow, rose, green and white golds by adjusting the alloys.

**Purity** — It is estimated that only slightly more than 100,000 tons of gold have been taken from the earth during all of recorded history. And although gold can be found in rivers, seas and land in many parts of the earth, it is not easily extracted. Opening a mine is a time-consuming and costly operation, and several tons of ore are required in order to produce just one ounce of the precious metal.

**Durability** — Look no further than the nearest museum, where gold jewelry, coins and artifacts from ancient civilizations attest to the metal’s enduring beauty and permanence.

**Workability** — Jewelers throughout the ages have preferred gold to all other metals for its beauty and ease of workmanship. Gold can be melted, or shaped, to create any design. It can be alloyed with a number of other metals to increase its strength and produce a variety of colors and can be re-melted and used again to create new designs.

### How to Buy Karat Gold Jewelry

Look for the quality mark. Pure gold, or 24-karat, is generally considered too soft for use in jewelry, so gold is alloyed with other metals to increase its strength.

Eighteen-karat gold is 18/24ths, or three-quarters, pure gold. Jewelry of this fineness is marked “18k” or “750,” the European designation meaning 75 percent gold.

In the United States, 14-karat gold is used most commonly for jewelry. Fourteen-karat gold is 14/24ths, or slightly more than one-half, pure gold. Jewelry of this fineness is marked “14k” or “585,” the European designation meaning 58.5 percent gold.

Nothing less than 10-karat gold can be legally marked or sold as gold jewelry in the United States. These pieces are marked “10k” or “417,” the European designation meaning 41.7 percent gold.

Look for trademarks accompanying the quality mark. When a piece of jewelry is stamped with a quality mark, law requires that it be

| Quality Marks on Karat Gold Jewelry |            |                  |                   |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Karatage                            | Karat mark | European marking | Percent pure gold |
| Ten-karat                           | 10K        | 417              | 41.7%             |
| Fourteen-karat                      | 14K        | 585              | 58.5%             |
| Eighteen-karat                      | 18K        | 750              | 75.0%             |
| Twenty-four karat                   | 24K        | 999              | 99.9%             |

stamped with a hallmark or trademark as well. Sometimes the jewelry is also marked with its country of origin. These designations are designed to assure you that you are buying genuine gold jewelry of the karatage marked.

Because gold is alloyed with other metals to increase its strength, it can also be made in a variety of colors. For example, yellow gold is created by alloying the metal with copper and silver; using copper only creates pink gold; white gold contains nickel, zinc and copper; green gold contains silver, copper and zinc.

| Alloys Used in Karat Gold |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Color                     | Contains These Metals      |
| Yellow gold               | gold, copper, silver       |
| White gold                | gold, nickel, zinc, copper |
| Green gold                | gold, silver, copper, zinc |
| Rose gold                 | gold, copper, silver       |
| Pink gold                 | gold, copper               |

Pricing is based on four factors: karatage, weight, design and craftsmanship. The karatage and weight tell you how much gold is in a piece, but other crucial factors determining price are the piece’s construction and design. A price based solely on weight does not reflect the work that has gone into the piece. It’s important to remember that each piece of gold jewelry is unique and, if cared for properly, can last a lifetime.