

# Custom Jewelers: Everything You Need to Know

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Custom jewelers work with you to design, create, and perfect pieces that can be cherished for years - even decades to come. Not only is custom jewelry is outshining its mass-market counterpart, but the industry itself is experiencing rapid growth:

- In 2021, the US jewelry market is expected to reach [\\$57.96 billion](#) in revenue
- In 2018, the value of the diamond custom jewelry market alone was \$87 billion US dollars. It's expected to reach [\\$173 billion](#) by 2035.
- The global jewelry market is valued at [\\$348.5 billion](#) - which is roughly the GDP of South Africa, the 32nd largest economy in the world

Despite custom jewelers' growing popularity, some people are hesitant to work with them, fearing it'll be too expensive or that there's a chance they won't like the end product. In reality, many custom designs can be more affordable and of higher quality than a mass-market piece. Even if you don't know what you want, custom jewelers will help you find a way to personalize your piece with a one-of-a-kind design that shows a love one how much you care.

In this post, we will discuss:

- Why you should invest in customized jewelry
- Debunk common misconceptions surrounding custom jewelry and the jewelers who create it
- How custom jewelers turn dreams into luxurious, wearable pieces
- Give you a few jewelry fashion ideas to be inspired by

Let's get started...

## Why Invest in Customized Jewelry

While mass-market jewelry is chalked full of elegant pieces you can buy over-the-counter on the same day, it pales in comparison to custom jewelry. Here are a few reasons why:

### Custom Jewelry is Unique.

Custom jewelers emphasize the uniqueness of the item they're working with by tailoring the jewelry to meet your personal tastes. Personalizations can range from engraving a loved one's

name on a necklace to modifying a current piece in your collection to give it new meaning. You can even start from scratch with hand sketches, a wax molding, or a computer aided design (CAD). Whatever your need, custom jewelers can make your piece perfect for you or your loved one

### **Custom Jewelry is More Valuable.**

Custom jewelry creates and commemorates memories, so its value is defined by the quality of the piece itself, its uniqueness, and its sentimental nature. It can remind you of special occasions, like an engagement or a graduation, or signify to someone that you care by creating pieces with their birthstones or favorite gems. Customized jewelry can also celebrate a transition such as the start of a new chapter in your life.

Irrespective of reason or occasion, custom jewelers add value to the pieces they create that go beyond price tags.

### **Custom Jewelry is Timeless.**

The memories stored within the chains and stones can make custom jewelry timeless. Tailored jewelry can become a family heirloom, like a wedding ring passed down through generations or a locket containing pictures of your grandparents in their early years. They can be charm bracelets passed from mother to daughter for good luck, or gold chains passed from father to son. Whatever the occasion may be, custom jewelry can create a placeholder in time and serve as a reminder that someone cares about you.

### **Custom Jewelry is of Higher Quality.**

Since it's made by experienced professionals as opposed to being mass-produced by laborers on an assembly line, the end-product of your custom jewelry design will be of higher quality.

Custom jewelers usually use more pure noble metal for specialized pieces than what is used to make mass-produced jewelry. Creating or modifying a piece tailored to your needs gives custom jewelers and opportunity to show you their talents. Often, these jewelers are looking to build a relationship with you. That know that if you love their work, you'll likely become a repeat customer or even an ambassador for them. The same level of care doesn't go into mass-produced jewelry, which can be found in many different stores.

## **Misconceptions of Custom Jewelers and Their Jewelry**

There are plenty of misconceptions surrounding custom jewelry, so let's debunk a few of them:

### **Custom Jewelry is Expensive.**

Mass-produced jewelry is usually more affordable because the designs are completed and paid for one time, then mass-produced. In this sense, it takes much less time, thought, and effort.

However, custom jewelry usually isn't that much more expensive (if at all). With custom jewelry, you get to work with a designer, tell them your budget, and then discuss what cost-saving options may be available to you. Custom jewelry also tends to last longer, while mass-produced jewelry often requires more repairs or replacements, resulting in additional costs long term.

### **Custom Jewelry is Difficult to Create.**

Typically, the most difficult part of the process is figuring out what to create. Custom jewelers are masterful designers that can hand-sketch or create CAD designs of your vision, then turn these sketches into a physical product that is crafted and perfected to meet your needs. Once the concept, design, and materials are decided on, the rest is pretty easy.

### **Custom Jewelers Are Hard to Find.**

If you're reading this, you've already found us!

However, you should use caution when you're searching for a custom jeweler. There are cheats out there who sell fake or poor quality items to make some fast cash. Check a custom jeweler's credentials and ask to meet them either in person or via Zoom before making a commitment. Approach your custom jeweler search with the same level of scrutiny you'd take when looking for a new car, a new home, or even a new job.

### **Custom Jewelry is Time Consuming.**

The amount of time it takes to create customized jewelry depends on the work that needs to be done. Most custom jobs take around [four-to-six weeks](#), but new items can take as long as two months to create. Plan ahead if you have a special occasion coming up.

Luckily, most of the time consumption is on the designer's end, not yours. Once a design is decided upon, your hard work is done. All you have to do is approve of the end-product.

## **How Custom Jewelry is Made**

Making custom jewelry starts in the idea phase. If you have an idea of what you'd like already - that's great! If you don't, you can meet with a jeweler and a designer and brainstorm a few ideas or look at some of their available materials. While designers are more often the creative ones,

it's important to include the jeweler in this conversation. They can ensure that there won't be any structural issues in the design.

Make sure that you confirm pricing with the jeweler *before* your custom piece is designed. Reconfirm the pricing afterwards as well.

- Get an itemization of the price
- Confirm the expected time frame
- Ask if the jeweler will charge a design fee up front or wait until the piece is made
- Ask if there are additional fees for having multiple preliminary designs made

### **Wax Carving and CAD Designs**

Many custom jewelers approach the creation stage with two methods in mind: [wax carvings and CAD designs](#). Wax carvings are great for simpler designs or for pieces that require custom finish work to be done by hand. CAD designs work best for complex designs and those who want to view an “image” of the end-product before the wax carving stage begins.

### **Casting**

Next comes the casting phase, where a custom jeweler casts the piece in the metal of your choosing. It is then cleaned and polished into its final shape. After that, the gemstone(s) is set by hand and the metal work is completed.

### **Approval and Appraisal**

The process above is fine-tuned until it meets your final approval. Once it does, the piece is sent to an independent appraiser so that you can insure it, and then it's yours to enjoy!

## **Ideas to Get You Started**

Like clothing, jewelry fashion comes in trends - they just tend to grow slower and last longer.

### **2021 Jewelry Trends**

- [Earrings](#) - In the age of Zoom, earrings are perfect because they're easy to see, and they frame your face. Earrings of all kinds are in right now, include: hoops, pearl, and even the single earring.

- [Pendants](#) - Pendants demand attention and usually tell a story. If want your jewelry to make an extra statement or a conversation starter, these will make a great addition to your collection.
- [Pearls](#) - Pearls are very popular these days, whether they're large, small, on necklaces or bracelets, modern, unique, mismatched, etc. 2021 is the year of the pearl.
- [Chains](#) - Chains in all forms are also trending. Whether you're incorporating them in bracelets or long necklaces, they are wildly popular in 2021 - and the bigger, the better.

## Long-standing Trends

Jewelry - especially customized jewelry - can defy fads and even be considered timeless. Here are a few to consider:

- [Diamonds](#) - "Diamonds are forever," and they're also "a girl's best friend." Because of their value and versatility, diamonds also always trending in some form or another.
- [Tennis bracelets](#) - Tennis bracelets are a great example of how a simple design can be modified and updated to remain relevant in all eras.
- [Mixing Colors](#) - Mixing and matching stone colors in various pieces can bring new life and meaning to the piece itself. You can choose whatever color combinations best signify your mood or personality - or that of your loved ones
- [Personalized Jewelry](#) - Personalized jewelry adds depth, meaning, and memories to a piece. Nothing is more timeless than that.

## Occasions for Customized Jewelry

There's simply no shortage of occasions that warrant customized jewelry. Here are a few to consider:

- Wedding rings
- Wedding gifts
- Graduation gifts
- Birthdays
- Valentine's Day
- Anniversaries
- First day at a new job
- To say "I love you"
- Just because someone's special

At [Federal Way Custom Jewelers](#), we make all of our custom pieces in-house, where they're produced by one of our most trusted goldsmiths for the best in design and quality. Whether you need a semi-customized project or are starting from scratch, we can help you with all of your custom jeweler needs.

## FAQS

### **Q. What are some jewelry trends that are no longer relevant?**

A. As Hiedi Klum says, "In fashion, you are either in or you're out." If something is currently trending in the world of fashion trends, that also means that something isn't. Here are a few fads that have faded recently:

- Minimalism
- Small earrings, necklaces, or bracelets
- Singular color schemes
- Single-purpose jewelry
- Heavy cuffs
- Double-finger rings

### **Q. What is redesigned jewelry?**

A. Redesigned jewelry takes your existing gems or piece and incorporates it into a new design. You're not limited to the materials you have - you can use as few or as many as you'd like. You can also include new additions if they are relevant to the piece and its meaning.

For example, if you want to upgrade your wedding ring, you can take out the current stone or add more into a new piece. You could also include birthstones of your kids to signify your growth as a family. Conversely, you can also customize your wedding ring into a new piece of jewelry after a divorce.

When it comes to jewelry redesigns, you are only limited by your own imagination - and the capabilities of the jeweler and designer that you'll be working with.

### **Q. Why are wax models important?**

A. Jewelry is first designed in wax, then the wax is put into a mold of plaster. When the plaster mold is heated, the wax melts out of it and leaves room for the intended metal to be poured into the void. After that, the plaster is broken away and the piece is made.

### **Q. What are karats and why are they important?**

A. Karat is a unit used to measure the purity of gold. The purer the gold, the softer and more difficult it is to wear:

Karat (kt)	Gold Percentage
24 Karat	100% gold
18 Karat	75% gold
14 Karat	58.5% gold

The lower the karat, the more alloys are added to the gold to help strengthen it. Jewelers usually prefer to work with 14 kt or 18 kt gold because they are stronger than their 24 kt counterparts.

**Q. How much does customized jewelry cost?**

A. The answer largely depends on the product itself. The [Metalsmith Society](#) created an equation for their customizations:

- Materials + Labor (Hourly) + (10% to Cover Overheads) x 2 = Wholesale Price
- Wholesale price x 2-2.5 = Retail Price

However, every custom jeweler takes a different approach when it comes to pricing.

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**Meta:** Custom jewelers work with you to design, create, and perfect pieces that you can cherish for years or even decades. They outshine their mass-market counterparts