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SCRAP BUYERS BEWARE GUIDE Fabricated Fakes Made To Deceive You!



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Weight: 20 grams

Description:

Knuckle ring was stamped with what looked like a LAO hallmark and the letters JJ and 375. The 'marks' appear to be cast rather than stamped and failed an acid test. Beware, this base metal ring would have been very easy to mistake as 9ct.



Weight: 18 grams

Description:

Similar to the above ring but this ring was stamped '18K' and '750' on the inside although it was in fact heavy gold plated



Weight: 12 grams

Description:

We have seen lots of these wedding bands over the years. Again, similar to the above rings, it is stamped '18K' and '750' but when tested with acid or an X-ray fluorescence machine/gun, it will show up as base metal.



Weight: Various

Description:

Brass rings with fake hallmarks. Beware: these are very common! Rings are normally stamped with a 375, 585 or 750 mark and a 9K, 14K or 18K mark but the colour should give it away and on acid testing, will fizz up green and unlike real gold it will not leave a stain.





Weight: 1-2 gram/s a pair

Description:

Beware for studded earrings that are used for piercing ears, as the majority of them are gold plated base metal.



Weight: Various weights

Description:

Beware when purchasing these very popular crystal earrings, as there is only a very thin layer of gold on them. Some of them could be plated, so make sure you check them with acid / magnet before purchasing.



Weight: 3-4 grams

Description:

Again, a very popular style of earring where the majority are real gold, but we have found some to be gold plated base metal.

If you run a magnet over the plated ones, they most certainly will stick to it. If in doubt, always check with acid.



BANGLES & BRACELETS



Weight: 80 grams

Description:

Only one link of this 'gold bracelet' was 14ct white gold and stamped with a 14ct UK hallmark. The rest of the bracelet was all stainless steel. We are highly doubtful that this is a one off piece.



Weight: 100 grams

Description:

Steel rope chains with real gold triggers and 18ct gold hallmarked ends. This is the latest in a long line of gold plated steel chains with/without real 18ct gold ends. Steel can react in the same way as gold when using some acid testing, so beware. Unlike gold, steel is very hard to file.



Weight: 25 grams

Description:

The bangle appeared to be rolled gold but the marking has been soldered over and replaced with a 585 (14ct) stamp mark. The bangle will fail an acid test as long as its filed.



Weight: 30 grams

Description:

The heavy panther heads are base metal with a heavy gold plated coating. The rest of the bangle was in fact 18ct yellow gold and stamped, but not hallmarked. Beware of buying weighty non precious metal components.



...BANGLES & BRACELETS



Weight: 120 grams

Description:

Heavy 'gold' link bracelet.

All of the links were hollow except for two, which felt a lot heavier and when cut open, they were filled with copper. It would be hard to identify by a visual inspection because there wasn't a seam on any of the links.



Weight: 8 grams

Description:

Exterior is 9ct yellow gold and stamped 375, but there is a steel core/wire running through the middle.

The steel core is commonly used to strengthen the bangle, but ensure you take it out before purchasing this extra non precious weight.

Weight: 30 grams (approx)

Description:

Bangle appeared to be 9ct yellow gold with a Birmingham Assay office hallmark, but it was in fact all solid brass and the hallmark was also fake.



Weight: 11 grams (approx)

Description:

9ct watch bracelet with steel springs in each of the links. Before purchasing, either pull out the springs or make an allowance on the weight.







Weight: 55 grams (approx)

Description:

Stainless Steel necklace and pendant which was stamped as 18ct gold (750).

This piece is made from a non magnetic alloy of stainless steel. Beware, this can give a 'false positive' on an acid test, which makes these fakes harder to spot.

If in doubt, run a file across the metal as stainless steel is very tough and 18ct gold is relatively soft.



Weight: 32.6 grams

Description:

Both ends of this Figaro chain were actually 9ct yellow gold and one end was UK hallmarked (375) but the rest of the chain, weighing 25.6grams, was heavy gold plated copper. Remember to always check different parts of any chain and don't solely rely on the hallmarks.



Weight: 55 grams

Description:

This 9ct white 'gold' chain was stamped 375 but was in fact silver with gold end links. The chain had then been rhodium plated and barrelled to give the appearance of age.





Weight: 15 grams (approx)

Description:

Steel rope chains.

We have just started to see these steel rope chains come through; some may have real gold catches but the chains are steel.

Beware when using acid to test these chains, as steel will give the same reaction as gold.



Weight: 7 grams (approx)

Description:

We received this 9ct yellow gold chain and initial pendant which was hallmarked at the clasp.

When checking both the chain and pendant with acid, we found the chain to be real and the pendant was in fact plated base metal.



Weight: Various

Description:

Beware of these fake hollow white gold necklaces and bracelets!

They are being made using the same components but in many different styles.

They are stamped '750' and rhodium plated.

Picture of necklace shows the style of links being used.



SIMPLE WAYS TO SPOT FAKE GOLD COINS



Size and Weight

As gold is an extraordinarily dense metal, most fakes that weigh correctly will be too large in diameter and/or too thick. If they are the correct diameter and thickness, then they will be underweight. Always check the diameter, thickness and weight of the coin or bar.

Sound or "Ping" Testing

Real gold and silver coins make a chiming sound when struck.

Base metal coins have a dull sound and their ring will be shorter.

Gold Magnet Test

As gold is not magnetic, place a strong magnet on a coin and it sticks, then it most certainly is base metal.

Gold Acid Test

File the surface of the coin, then drop a small amount of acid on top and wait for a chemical reaction.

Fake gold will immediately turn green where the acid is. If nothing happens then its real gold. Acids should be handled carefully as your items can be permanently discoloured.





SPOTTING FAKE BARS

Fake gold bars are often filled with a tungsten core and then covered with a layer of pure gold.

Although the bar weight would be right, it would have a 'dead ring' when knocked. The bar would test as gold with acid or an x-ray fluorescence scan.

Beware, the bar has been specifically designed and made to pass the weight, acid and x-ray test.

The best way to test if it is real is to drill right through the bar.







1 Ounce 'gold' bar

This fake bar was packaged and sealed in a Perth Mint blister pack and sold to an unsuspecting consumer, who then sold it to a jewellery company for scrap.

When purchasing sealed bars, they should be removed from the packaging and drilled through.



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