

If a piece does begin to tarnish, cleaning it right away will make it easier to restore the shine. Use a silver polishing cloth to remove oxidation from silver.

If the polishing cloth doesn't work, wash silver jewelry (without gemstones or pearls) in warm water containing a few drops of mild dishwashing liquid. Immerse the sterling silver in the water and gently hand wash. Use a cotton swab for tight corners. A soft baby toothbrush can be used for more abrasive cleaning when needed.

If the jewelry contains gemstones or pearls, do not submerge the entire piece into water. Instead, use a cotton swab with mild dishwashing liquid to wash only the silver. Thoroughly rinse and completely dry the sterling silver before storing. Moisture is one of the factors that contributes to tarnishing.

If this process has not removed the tarnish on the sterling silver it may require a visit to a professional jeweler who will either clean the sterling silver with an ultrasonic cleaner or buff it with stages of polishing medium. HMH does apply a protective coat of lacquer, which may hinder the cleaning process.

The most effective approach to managing tarnish is to properly store and clean sterling silver to prevent the tarnish before it takes effect.

HMH GUARANTEE

STERLING SILVER

Care &
Maintenance

G U I D E



Care & Maintenance

*HMH stands behind the quality of our products and guarantees the American craftsmanship built into every piece we manufacture. We replace or refinish all of our products that have any type of defect from the manufacturing process.

*All of the medals sold by HMH are made with refined solid sheets of unplated 925 sterling silver from the leading refinery in the United States. Some high polished crosses and rings do have genuine rhodium plating applied to them.

*While we cannot guarantee that our sterling silver pieces will not “tarnish”, we will refinish and replace any unused tarnished product for the store that originally purchased the item from us.

Tarnishing of sterling silver is a natural process that can never be stopped. It can only be slowed down by coating with a protective layer of lacquer (HMH “double” lacquers all of the medals).

Over time, any unplated sterling silver jewelry exposed to air will tarnish. Sterling silver is 92.5% silver and 7.5% other metals for hardening purposes. It is the other metals, primarily copper, that makes sterling silver tarnish. The copper reacts to moisture and sulfur in the air causing sterling silver to tarnish. Silver tarnishes faster in areas with high humidity and air pollution. Chemicals (hairspray, perfume, deodorant, body lotion, bleach, soaps, etc.) as well as consumption of acidic foods and body perspiration can speed up the tarnishing process.

Some people can wear sterling silver with no effect while others with a high acidic body chemistry can tarnish silver almost immediately. Statistics show 2 – 3% of people have skin chemistry that causes sterling silver alloys to turn skin green, black, or grey. The percentage of effected people is increasing due to increased percentages of chemicals in our environment and in the food we eat.