

BASICS; - DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

To design jewellery - it is really helpful to first think about a few different aspects and think about your priorities for each of these...

Start collecting ideas and images - from jewellery, from art, from magazines, from the shops, and try and identify what it is about each idea or image that most appeals to you.

TIP - Go with what you like most, what is meaningful to you, or what you would like to own or wear. As a designer you need to find your own unique identity and this is where that can start.

COLOUR

What colours appeal to you most? What colours do you wear a lot? Do you want to follow the fashion trends with new colour options with each new collection or season? Do you want the colours in your work to just be beautiful, or to send a message - for example red can be angry, or passionate, or suggest love, blue can be calming; colours are also associated with sports teams, charities and causes. Have a look at the separate colour information. How would you like to add colour to your designs?



MATERIALS

Jewellery can be, and of course, often is made of precious metals (silver, gold, platinum, palladium) and gemstones, or beads, but it doesn't have to be.

Jewellery could be wooden or ceramic, made of textiles / fabric, it could be glass, or plastic - made of acrylic or resin, it could be other 'base' metals such as copper, pewter, bronze or brass, or it could be a mixture of all different types of materials, or re-purposing 'found' materials.

What is the jewellery you most like to wear made from?

What materials do you know how to, or enjoy working most with?

Different materials give different design opportunities, and have very different properties such as colours or textures to add to your jewellery, so have a real look around and see what appeals to you.

SCALE

Do you prefer small and dainty jewels, or big and bold statement pieces?

Larger pieces in metal or gemstones can get heavy, so if you're going big - think about the weight - adding in some other materials and hollow, or empty spaces can add bulk without adding weight.

If you like dainty, small designs - think about how they can still have the durability to last without getting broken, damaged or distorted and stay small...





SHAPES / MOTIFS

Will your work be figurative - depicting recognisable shapes - flowers, animals, people or places?

Do you prefer shapes that are more abstract?

Do you prefer simplified forms or fine intricate detail?

Do you love intricate filigree designs, or designs encrusted with tiny gems, or do you like large colourful gems in big bold shapes?

Do you like to layer up lots of beads or jewellery together, to add texture or do you like things simple and uncluttered?

Do you like sharp angles or soft curves? Geometric, or natural organic forms?

QUANTITY

Whether you want to be able to repeat your design or not may alter how you choose to design an item, as different techniques can be used to make producing multiple editions much easier. Of course also for multiples - the amount of materials needed is key - for example, if you have x number of really great but discontinued beads, for example, how can you use them best and still have enough to make x number of necklaces. If you have a design for a gold ring - making it slightly chunkier can make a big price difference to the materials, especially when you plan to make multiples - you need to balance the design with practical needs.

TECHNIQUE

If you are just learning to make jewellery, it is often best to focus on using and making the most of your new skills - practicing them will help you improve.

Do you want to expand your skills or learn new techniques, or stick with variations on what you can already do?

Do you want to challenge yourself to push your skills by designing more complex pieces, or do you prefer more simple pieces that you can make more quickly? You can choose to design things that you don't yet have all the skills necessary to make them, and use this as a way to learn or try new things, or to work out what skills you would next like to learn.

TIP - Of course what you like can change - identifying your current preferences will not commit you to forever only ever making dainty geometric jewellery for example - this is something that you can constantly adapt or re-evaluate and can change from year to year, or from one design to the next. No-one is ever just one thing!