



Fork and Silver Guides and Templates

Use this guide to understand common terms.

This concise glossary covers essential silverware and jewelry-making vocabulary, from tools and techniques to materials, markings, and decorative styles. It's designed to support beginners as they learn, while remaining useful as a reference for more experienced makers.

Bead: Small object, often round, used in jewelry; made of glass, stone, or plastic.

Beading thread: Strong thread for stringing beads and beadwork.

Bezel: Metal band securing a gemstone.

Cabochon: Polished, domed stone set into jewelry.

Chain: Linked components forming flexible accessories.

Charms: Small pendants attached to jewelry pieces.

Clasp: Fastener for necklaces, bracelets, or anklets.

Crimp bead: Metal bead that secures wire or thread endings.

Crystals: Faceted glass stones for decoration.

Earring hook: Component connecting earrings to the earlobe.

Filigree: Ornamental metalwork with fine wires.

Gemstones: Cut and polished precious or semi-precious stones.

Headpin: Wire with a decorative end for hanging beads.

Jump ring: Metal ring joining jewelry parts.

Mandrel: Tapered tool shaping rings/bracelets.

Pliers: Tool for bending, cutting, and shaping materials.

Resin: Clear liquid for coating or embedding objects.

Rivets: Metal fasteners joining pieces together.

Seed bead: Tiny bead for detailed beadwork and embroidery.

Spacer bead: Bead separating others in designs.



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Soldering: Joining metals with heat and alloy.

Wire: Thin, flexible metal strand for components.

Sterling Silver: 92.5% pure silver, often marked "925" or Lion Passant.

Britannia Silver: 95.8% purity, marked with Britannia figure, used in Britain (1697–1720).

Coin Silver: Early American, ~90% purity, from melted coins.

EPNS: Electro-plated nickel silver; thin silver on a nickel-copper base.

Vermeil: Gold-plated sterling silver.

German/Nickel Silver: Copper, zinc, nickel alloys—contain no silver.

Maker's Mark: Silversmith's initials or symbol.

Assay Office Mark: Symbol showing the testing city (e.g., anchor for Birmingham).

Date Letter: Font-specific letter indicating assay year.

Duty Mark: Mark (often monarch's head) showing tax payment.

Duty Dodger: Piece with fake hallmarks to avoid taxes.

Flatware: Eating utensils; **Hollowware:** Vessels like teapots.

Patina: Surface aging valued by collectors.

Chasing: Design detailing from the front; **Repoussé:** Raised design from the back.

Bright-cut Engraving: Faceted cuts for shimmer.

Rat-tail: Decorative extension on spoon backs.

Terminal: End of handle, usually engraved.