



JEWELRY DESIGNER

JOB DESCRIPTION

A jewelry designer needs a strong eye for detail, a flair for fashion, and a love of creating intricate objects to succeed in their profession. They design jewelry and accessories, and make the items in their workshop using materials, such as gold, silver, precious stones, and wood.

Designers without access to a workshop use the services of specialized companies to manufacture their designs.



SALARY

Newly qualified designer ★★☆☆☆

Jewelry technician ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Competitive industry • Most jewelry manufacturers concentrated in “jewelry district” of large cities • Traditional jewelry stores have declined in numbers

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Craft design and technology • Art • Computer-aided Design (CAD) • Science • English • Mathematics



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS A degree is an advantage, but many designers are self-taught, take vocational courses, or begin work as an apprentice.



LIFESTYLE Jewelry designers generally work regular hours, but they may travel to meet suppliers, retailers, clients, and manufacturers, and to attend trade fairs.



LOCATION Jewelry designers usually work in a studio or workshop. They may also work at a manufacturer’s office, sharing a space with other designers.



THE REALITIES Building a reputation is vital for success, so jewelry designers need to work hard to promote their work in galleries, in stores, and online.

CAREER PATHS

Aspiring jewelry designers do not require formal qualifications—skills and experience are much more important. However, a relevant degree will increase your chances of finding a job with a large jewelry company, or give you the confidence to start your own design business, selling your work online or through galleries and stores.

TRAINEE You can start an apprenticeship with a designer, or an internship with a large jewelry company, learning practical skills on the job.



GRADUATE Employers will value certain college courses, such as jewelry design, gemology (the science of natural and artificial gems), art and design, 3-D design, fashion and textile design, and trend forecasting.



▼ RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **PRODUCT DESIGNER** *see pp. 18–19*
- ▶ **FASHION DESIGNER** *see pp. 30–31*
- ▶ **CERAMICS DESIGNER** Shapes and fires clay to produce objects, such as kitchenware, tableware, and tiles. Some ceramic designers work with manufacturers, while others design and make one-off items.
- ▶ **WATCHMAKER** Makes and repairs watches and other timepieces. Many watchmakers are self-employed, while others work in jewelry shops and department stores. The traditional skills of the watchmaker are in renewed demand because of a upsurge of interest in classic and antique timepieces.

SKILLS GUIDE



A high level of creativity and innovation to prepare designs to commissioned briefs.



Good communication skills for interacting with designers, manufacturers, and clients.



Proficient computer skills, such as the ability to operate Computer-aided Design (CAD) software.



An ability to use fine tools to create and repair intricate pieces of jewelry.



Commercial awareness for marketing designs and products to clients and manufacturers.



Good attention to detail for carrying out complex design work accurately.

JEWELRY TECHNICIAN Uses specialized equipment in order to make jewelry. A technician will usually make jewelry in a factory or large workshop.



SILVERSMITH Specializes in, and principally works with, silver to make jewelry, silverware, vases, and other artistic items. They may use other metals, such as gold, copper, steel, and brass.



JEWELRY DESIGNER
You may specialize in a specific type of work, such as bracelets or wedding rings. Once established, you may move into manufacturing, or run your own business.



GEMOLOGIST Gives valuations of precious jewelry for insurance purposes. This role requires formal training in the identification, grading, and pricing of gems.



Demand for gems and jewelry goes up in good times, and down when an economy is flat, so a designer's income can fluctuate.