



Ask if it's hallmarked IT'S YOUR GUARANTEE

In the UK it is illegal to sell or describe any item as Gold, Silver, Platinum or Palladium unless it is hallmarked*

A hallmark applied by a UK Assay Office is not proof of origin or place of manufacture of an item.

The hallmark of a UK Assay Office (whether applied by a UK Assay Office in its approved locations in or outside the UK) is proof that an item (in all its parts) is of the standard of fineness indicated by the hallmark struck on that item.

Hallmarks applied by UK Assay Offices at their approved locations within the UK are clearly differentiated from those applied by UK Assay Offices in their approved locations outside of the UK (as detailed in the table below).

COMPULSORY MARKS		THE HALLMARK COMPRISES THREE COMPULSORY MARKS: A SPONSOR'S MARK, A FINENESS MARK AND AN ASSAY OFFICE MARK.								
Sponsor's Mark The registered mark of the article for hallmarking	Fineness Mark Tells you the precious metal content, expressed in parts per thousand				Assay Office Mark Tells you which Assay Office tested and hallmarked the article.					
	Silver	Palladium	Gold	Platinum	Marks applied in the UK	Marks applied outside of the UK				
	 Sterling Britannia 	2009 2010 	 9 carat 14 carat 18 carat 22 carat 	 	 London Birmingham Sheffield Edinburgh	 Birmingham				
Exemption Weights* Articles above these weights must be hallmarked	7.78 grams	1.0 gram	1.0 gram	0.5 gram						
OPTIONAL MARKS		YOU MAY ALSO SEE OPTIONAL MARKS SUCH AS THE TRADITIONAL FINENESS SYMBOL OR THE DATE LETTER FOR THE YEAR THE ITEM WAS HALLMARKED, OR A CONVENTION MARK.								
Traditional Fineness Symbols	 Sterling Silver	 Sterling Silver Scotland	 Britannia Silver	 Palladium	 Gold	 Platinum				
Date Letter	 2015	 2016	 2017	 2018	 2019	 2020	 2021	 2022	 2023	 2024
Common Control Marks (CCM) This mark is used and recognised by countries, including the UK, that are signatories to the International Convention on Hallmarking.	TYPE 1: CCM FINENESS MARKS								TYPE 2 CCM	
	 Silver	 Palladium	 Gold	 Platinum						

What should I do if my item is not hallmarked? If you have a concern regarding hallmarking contact your local Trading Standards Authority.
For more information visit www.gov.uk/government/organisations/british-hallmarking-council

Produced in Accordance with the Hallmarking Act 1973
Version 8/2019
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British
Hallmarking
Council

Consumer watch: *third of “gold” jewellery sold online could be fake*

It is illegal to sell anything in the UK made from a precious metal over a certain weight without a hallmark – a stamp of quality that protects the consumer by confirming that what they are buying is made from real precious metal. Our research suggests there could be around 150,000 items of fake “gold” jewellery being listed for sale in the UK each year, through online marketplaces such as eBay and Amazon.

The UK Hallmarking Act (1973) was put in place to protect consumers and retail jewellers from counterfeits, but the application of the legislation

to online trading activity remains untested. And we have seen little appetite from the internet giants to step up enforcement or adequately protect consumers.

We are asking the Government to work with Amazon and eBay to increase hallmarking information on precious metal jewellery listings, raising consumer and seller awareness about hallmarking and the law.

Noel Hunter

Chairman of the British Hallmarking Council



10 DAYS

Between 21 March and 1 April 2019 WRI Group, in partnership with INCOPRO, ran a 10-day internet sweep for listings of “gold” jewellery being sold through online marketplaces.



11,280 online listings selling gold jewellery included a reference to a hallmark.

36% OVER 10 DAYS

6,377 OF 17,657 ITEMS

OF “GOLD” JEWELLERY ITEMS LISTED FOR SALE ONLINE WERE NOT ADVERTISED AS HALLMARKED.

24%

of items listed for sale online as “gold” jewellery were suspected as fake.

56%

eBay sellers accounted for over half of all suspect items of “gold” jewellery sold online, where there was no mention of a hallmark.

£1.4M

The total value of the 6,377 items of suspected fake “gold” jewellery listed for sale in online marketplaces.

150,000

The average number of potentially suspicious listings selling “gold” jewellery online in the UK each year.



Get involved in the conversation today: <https://bit.ly/2LoyvhZ>



@AssayOffice



Sheffield Assay Office

HALLMARKING KEYS

Who submitted the article for hallmarking (Sponsor's mark)



What the article is made of (Metal Fineness marks)



Where the article was hallmarking (Assay Office town mark)



When the article was hallmarking (date letter)



Only jewellery carrying a legally recognised hallmark can be sold in the UK

HALLMARKING IS THE CONSUMERS' GUARANTEE

it's the only way to ensure the fineness of precious metal items

ASSAY OFFICE TOWN MARKS

There are four Assay Offices in the UK. They each have their own town mark.



Birmingham Edinburgh London Sheffield



British Hallmarking Council

The British Hallmarking Council (BHC) supervises the hallmarking activities of assay offices to ensure there is adequate provision of hallmarking in the UK.

ADVICE TO CONSUMERS



Consumers are advised to always check for a hallmark.

- *Always ask an online seller, before you buy, if an item has been hallmarked.*
- *If you believe you have been sold fake precious metal items speak to Citizens Advice, who can provide general information on hallmarking or give advice to help resolve a dispute.*

About the Research

The online insight report was conducted by WRi Group in partnership INCOPRO – both brand protection agencies – on behalf of the British Hallmarking Council and the Goldsmiths' Company Assay Office. Insights were drawn from online monitoring of UK marketplaces (Amazon, Depop, eBay, Freeads, Fruugo, Gumtree, PostAdsUK and Preloved) and social media (Facebook and Instagram) for 10 days from 21/03/2019 to 01/04/2019. The research ONLY looked at items sold as "gold". It did not include other precious metal items.

The research looked at:

- 1 How many items are sold as "gold" without a hallmark being referenced in the title or the text of a listing or post. This excluded gold –plated, rolled, golden, coated, bonded, vintage; items pre-1950. And focused on products; bracelet, chain, necklace, ring.
- 2 How many "gold" items are sold as bearing a UK hallmark, but where a price would indicate that this is too low.
- 3 How many items are sold as bearing a hallmark accepted in the UK.

The research found:

- 11,280 listings for products where a hallmark had been detected
- 6,377 listings for products where a hallmark had not been detected

- 135 listings for products being sold with a non-UK Hallmark detected
- 4,278 suspected infringing items for sale
- 2,893 suspected infringing listings on the top UK platforms for less than 50% RRP
- £1,143,383 potential infringer revenue from suspicious listings. This was calculated by applying the value of scrap gold to the 6,377 listings for products where a hallmark had not been detected and the 135 listings for products being sold with a non-UK Hallmark detected.
- And that sellers on eBay accounted for over half (56%) of all gold jewellery being sold, with no mention of a hallmark in the listing

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