

Jeweler

Tiny work with gold, stones and fire. Nearly everything you make is for the biggest day of somebody's life.

TYPICAL PAY

\$52,540

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$36k to \$88k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Repair benches, retail stores,
custom studios, manufacturing sh...**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Art, metal shop, chemistry. Start making things now, in any material, and keep photographs of all of it.
- 2 Trade program or apprenticeship** 1 to 2 years
A one or two year bench program, or a paid apprenticeship in a working shop if you can find one.
- 3 Learn stone setting** 2 to 5 years of practice
The skill that separates a repair technician from a jeweler. It is taught, but mostly it is thousands of hours of practice.
- 4 Gemology, if you want it** 6 to 12 months
The Graduate Gemologist credential from the GIA (Gemological Institute of America) lets you identify and grade stones and take appraisal work.
- 5 Your own bench or shop** After 5 or more years
Custom commissions, a studio, or a repair trade shop serving other stores.

Pros and cons

- + Short, cheap training for a real craft
- + You finish something physical and permanent every single day
- + Skilled bench jewelers are genuinely scarce, so good ones stay employed
- The occupation is shrinking as manufacturing moves overseas
- Detailed close work is hard on eyes, neck and hands over decades
- Starting pay is low while your hands are slow

Optional boosts

Stone setting. Graduate Gemologist. CAD (computer-aided design) and 3D printing. Laser welding and engraving.

Good to know

Pure gold is too soft to wear

Gold at 24 karat bends under a fingernail, so jewelry is alloyed with other metals. A 14 karat ring is a little over 58% gold, and a 18 karat one is 75%. That mix is why different gold jewelry feels and wears so diffe...

One nonprofit invented how diamonds are described

The Gemological Institute of America created the system of describing a diamond by cut, color, clarity and carat weight. It is now used in shops and laboratories worldwide, and it came from an educ...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Jewelers and Precious Stone and Metal Workers (51-9071.00)
Gemological Institute of America
North Bennet Street School, full-time programs
Apprenticeship.gov: what a Registered Apprenticeship is

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/jeweler>



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