

DOT THE JEWELLERS

COMMISSIONING

REMOTE COMMISSIONS

How do we handle the commission if you can't make it to the shop?

With an international client base, one of the main challenges is how to arrange the commissioning process so that the customer doesn't have to get to the shop to see new designs and to make decisions. We've taken advantage of the new technologies available to allow us help you to develop an individual piece of jewellery without having to worry about whether or not you can get to Saltaire, or to Yorkshire – or even to the UK. As long as you have a postal address and an internet connection, you can order from Dot the Jewellers.

The initial step is the same – we establish your design preferences by using previously commissioned design work as a starting point. By asking you a series of simple questions – what colour metal did you have in mind? diamonds or coloured stones? do you want to incorporate stones or metal you already own into a piece? – we find out what elements are important to you. We then email you a series of images from our extensive archive of previous work to help you refine your ideas about what type of style you might be interested in.

Based on your reactions to these images, we start to put together a series of design options. Consultations can be carried out by phone, email, Facetime or Skype, as you prefer. When we've come up with three designs which we think will suit, we create renders of each option; these are clearly lettered, for ease of identification and discussion. You can select a design you like from this series or, by marking up a print-off of the relevant design, identify areas where you would like to see changes. This can then be posted back to us as hard-copy, or scanned / photographed and emailed back as a picture file or PDF.

A major concern when we design a ring for someone we haven't actually seen is how to ensure that the proportions of the piece will look good on the person who's going to wear it – after all, hands come in all shapes and sizes, and not every ring will suit every finger. To resolve this, we've developed a 'scale ring' made from silver. For no additional charge, we make this up to the correct finger size, and send it to the client. This accomplishes two things – first, it allows us to confirm that we have your size right; if the scale ring doesn't fit, neither will the commission! Second, it gives the client something tangible to compare with a proposed design, since a selection of the design renders sent to you will contain a to-scale image of this ring. Upon completion of the piece to your satisfaction and receipt of final payment, it will be securely posted to you by Royal Mail or by international courier. All items are appropriately insured in transit.

You keep the scale ring as a souvenir of the commission process, or for use in your next commission from Dot the Jewellers.

COMMISSION CARDS

How to make sure they'll like the ring (Or pendant. Or earrings...)

Do you want to commission a piece of jewellery as a surprise for someone? Does the idea make you nervous because you're worried they might not like it? We have a solution - Dot the Jewellers offer a Commission Card service, which lets you give a gift of bespoke jewellery while allowing the recipient to contribute to the design of the piece. This is suitable for any special occasion, from birthdays, to anniversaries, to holiday gifts – it can even be a good way of proposing!

Just make an appointment to come in and have a chat. We'll give you an overview of our prices, and guide you through a number of images to allow you to choose one that you think may appeal to the person you want to surprise (this won't define the end result – it just gives us something to put on the card, and provides a taster of the style and quality of the intended gift). Once you've chosen a sample design, we'll ask you for any photos or message you'd like to appear on the card.

The message can be reproduced in your handwriting, at no extra charge. We'll also ask you for a £300 retainer, to serve as a placeholder for the commission. We'll then design the card, and send it to you. You present it when and how you like. The person receiving it can contact us to start the design and commission process at any time convenient to them, and we will arrange to bill you – in confidence - for the deposit and balance at the appropriate stages.

PRICING

Dot the Jewellers respect our clients' intelligence, and don't regard them as gullible. For this reason, we don't do sales or discount promotions. Rather than buying jewellery components in bulk to produce mass-market jewellery, we make bespoke single items, so have no economies of scale to pass on. Neither will we inflate the price first so that we can pretend to give you an item at a 'bargain' price. With Dot, you can be sure that you are buying unique jewellery, made by a qualified artisan from quality materials, at a price which accurately reflects the value of each piece. We would regard any other relationship with our customers as dishonest.

Dot the Jewellers will arrange every aspect of the manufacture, including the sourcing of gemstones. However we encourage people to select their own gems, and will usually arrange for the client to view and select from a range of suitable stones. We like to do this for two reasons. First, we've found that getting people involved in this stage makes them feel more connected with the design work. Second, by choosing your own stones, you can be sure that you have something that you are happy with and that you can afford.

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COMMISSIONING

It can be difficult at the very beginning of a commission to give an estimate of the likely cost of the finished piece of jewellery. At this stage, there are so many variables – what metal? what stones? what size? how complicated? – that any attempt to estimate would give an unhelpfully large range of prices. For this reason, we always start by having a good chat with a prospective client. This free face-to-face discussion usually follows an exchange of information by email, and serves to give us an idea of what you may be after and what your budget is.

The price charged by Dot for a piece of jewellery takes into account design time, manufacture time and materials used. As a general rule, our prices start at £950; this is determined by the minimum amount of time it takes to develop designs. When you engage us to produce designs for you, we'll ask for a £300 upfront payment. This is a retainer, and is non-refundable. (Please note that particularly complex designs or designs involving the reuse of customers' stones may attract a larger retainer, in order to cover necessary costs). Once we have received this payment, we will produce a minimum of three designs for each piece of jewellery commissioned. This will be done within 21 days of the date of the retainer, unless otherwise agreed.

When the final design and materials have been agreed, we'll provide you with an accurate quotation for the piece, and will ask you for a deposit of 40%, less the retainer already received. (Please note, due to fluctuations in the metal and gem markets, this quotation is valid for no more than 14 days from the date of issue and may need to be recalculated if the deposit is not paid within this period). Finally, we'll ask you for payment in full when you're happy with the completed work and would like to arrange to collect the finished item.

With most other jewellers, their service would end there. However, with Dot the Jewellers our service to you doesn't stop after you've paid. Our free aftercare package means we will clean and polish the item upon request, no matter how long ago we made it for you. We also ensure that you can continue to wear your jewellery, no matter what – Dot the Jewellers offer free re-sizing of most rings made by us, as many times as necessary for as long as you own the ring (unfortunately we will need to make a charge for resizing full eternity rings, since this constitutes remaking).