

HOW TO; - CREATE A COLLECTION

A collection is basically a group of jewellery pieces or designs - connected by a theme, or using similar elements in different ways.

Collections are useful when producing jewellery for sale, to create pieces in themed groups in this way, and launch the collection together.



It can also be fun / useful to think in collections, even if you are just making for yourself - to work on a theme, or to create a selection of pieces that are related will help you to focus and practice your skills.

Launching a collection, rather than creating individual pieces one by one makes marketing and selling the jewellery easier in some ways, as it can give you a whole series of photos to rotate through for promotions and marketing, as well as giving the specific launch event to focus your marketing posts and mailings around.

A collection can be any mix of quantity of pieces that seems appropriate to you, your time, or your theme - it can be a small collection of just 3 items, or more likely, between 5-10 designs - all closely linked together on a theme. These could be one off pieces, or pieces that can be replicated in limited or production quantities. The type and quantity of pieces you choose to include in your collection can be guided by the particular theme / brief for the collection, as well as by the time and materials you have available, and if you have been selling jewellery for a while, the type of customer you have, and the types of pieces you know sell well to them.

A collection is typically created around one or more statement pieces - the statement piece is usually a necklace that is extravagant and would stand out across a room, or in a display at a fair, shop, or gallery. This is often a more expensive and more complex piece, not necessarily super commercial (depending on your client base) but it is saleable if the right customer comes along, and is key to drawing in customers to look at the rest of your pieces, that may be on the same theme, but possibly more commercial in price band and wear-ability.

"Don't design for everyone. It's impossible. All you end up doing is designing something that makes everyone unhappy." - Leisa Reichelt

A COLLECTION MIGHT CONSIST OF; -

- Statement piece
- One or more, larger earring designs
- Larger pendant
- Bracelet/S
- Stud/simple earrings
- Simpler necklace
- Simpler pendant
- Ring/s

"Every great design begins with an even better story." Lorinda Mamo, Designer

The elements in your collection all relate to each other - the different pieces might each re-use a single element from the statement piece, or use a feature design in different scales and variations...

Depending on your customer base, it might also include other items - maybe specific mens jewellery pieces such as cufflinks, tie pins, or if you work towards wedding jewellery, maybe hair decorations / combs / pins, or items such as wrist, body or belly chains. If relevant to you - you can choose to make the collection available in a small range of colour ways - with test pieces in each of your colour options to show to customers. This could mean having a small range of different gemstones available, coloured enamel or beads, offering pieces in a choice of finish - shiny, matte, patinated, or in different metals or platings.

THEMES / CONNECTING A COLLECTION

A collection can be linked purely by the initial brief / concept and be pieces made / designed on a general theme, or may be more closely by using the same repeated elements throughout each of the designs - for example, for a production collection, you might choose to cast a single flower, and use this in different multiples, joined or linked in different ways to build each of the different jewellery items in the collection. It might be soldered onto a ring shank, or bangle, units might be soldered together to build larger features for a statement necklace or pendant, jump rings may be soldered on in different positions to enable linking the flower up into a chain necklace or bracelet, for example.

SELLING IN COLLECTIONS

Once your collection is launched - particularly if the pieces are limited edition or production pieces that you are repeating, it is really useful to keep monitoring which items from the collection are getting the most interest and the most sales - this can help advise future new collections, or extensions to the same collection.

You can choose to retire items that aren't selling so well, and move the best seller/s into your permanent collection. You can use the feedback from each collection to continuously refine the type, colour or styles of items in future collections.

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."
Maya Angelou, Author

Cassandra has always taken great inspiration from gardens and this was no different in Morocco. She created her Mashrabiya Trellis design after being inspired by the mashrabiya trellises carved in wood and found around windows and gardens all around Morocco.
"The Islamic love of geometry is echoed in the mashrabiya screens they created wherever they went on their travels. Geometry builds on simple shapes of circles, squares and rectangles, turning them into puzzling patterns. And through the spaces in between, it is possible to create endlessly varying vistas to fascinate the eye. I filled pages in my sketchbook with my interpretations of this geometry, bringing it all together as The Mashrabiya Trellis Collection of designs."
Cassandra Goad. Jeweller