



## A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO HALLMARKS – ACTIVITY SHEET

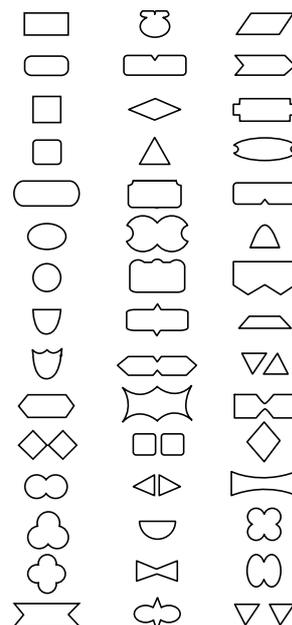
When you look at or touch a piece of silver or jewellery, it's impossible to tell exactly what it is made from. It may be silver or gold coloured, but not really made of silver or gold. To make sure that everyone tells the truth when selling anything made of a gold, silver, platinum or palladium, it has to be assayed (independently tested at an assay office). Once it has been assayed, it is given a special set of marks called a hallmark that tell you the result of the test and some other important information.



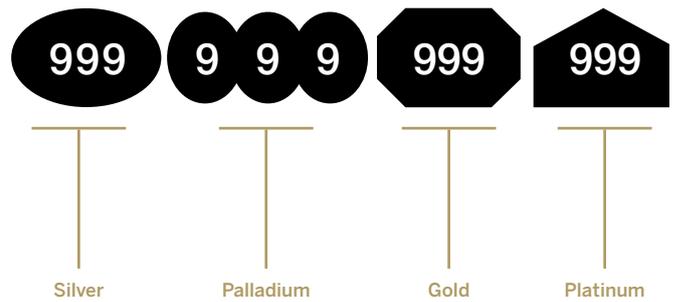
The three symbols you can see above are called compulsory marks. Together they make a hallmark. Anything made of gold, silver, platinum or palladium that is sold in the UK has to have a hallmark.

The first mark is the **Sponsor's** or **Maker's Mark**. It tells you who sent an item in to be assayed. Normally this is the person or company who made it, and the mark is their initials inside a shaped border. The Sponsor's Mark has to be a minimum of two letters and a maximum of five letters. Every one is unique, and to make sure that makers with the same initials don't get mixed up, two different fonts, and 45 different shaped borders are used.

You can see all of the shapes used for Sponsor's Marks on the right.



The second mark is the **Millesimal Fineness Mark**. It tells you which precious metal an item is made from and how pure it is on a rating from 0–1000. A 999 mark means that the precious metal is as pure as it can be. The purity mark for each precious metal has a different shaped border, making it easy to tell the difference between metals that share the same colour, like silver and platinum.



The third mark tells you which **Assay Office** tested and hallmarked an item. In the UK there are four Assay Offices, and each of them has a different mark. A leopard for the London Assay Office, an anchor for the Birmingham Assay Office, a rose for the Sheffield Assay Office, and a castle for the Edinburgh Assay Office.



Along with these three compulsory marks, the assay offices also apply voluntary marks that contain more information. This year the most exciting voluntary mark is the **Platinum Jubilee mark**. It celebrates Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 70 years of service. It is only available until the end of 2022.

**If you were a goldsmith,  
what would your Mark look like?**

# MAKE YOUR MARK

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On the page below are two special marks, the **London Assay Office Leopard**, and the **Platinum Jubilee mark**. But something important is missing – your **Sponsor Mark**.

Grab your pencils, or pens and get ready to make your mark. Start by drawing a border, it can be any shape you choose as long as it fits inside the dashed box. When you are happy with your border choose up to five letters to go inside it. These could be your initials, or if it is five letters or fewer, your entire first name. Draw them inside your border shape. Make sure they are really easy to read, so that everyone knows that this is your mark!



# ENTER THE LONDON ASSAY OFFICE MAKE YOUR MARK COMPETITION

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To celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, we're giving five young makers the chance to have their Sponsor's Mark, along with the London Assay Office Leopard Mark and the Platinum Jubilee Mark made into a customised rubber stamp.

To enter, take a photograph of your young maker's finished Sponsor's Mark, along with the LAO Leopard and the Platinum Jubilee Mark, and send it to: [competitions@thegoldsmiths.co.uk](mailto:competitions@thegoldsmiths.co.uk) using the subject line "LAO Make Your Mark Competition Entry".

**Please include:**

- The full name and contact telephone number of the person (parent/guardian) submitting the picture, so we can get in touch if your child is one of our five winners.
- The first name and age of your child, and the county or city that you live in.

The competition is open to makers aged 10 and under, who live in the United Kingdom.

We encourage makers of all ages to share their Sponsor's Mark with us on Instagram, make sure to tag *@thegoldsmithscompany* and *@theassayoffice* and use the hashtag *#LAOMakeYourMark* so that we see your wonderful creations!

The LAO Make Your Mark Competition is open to makers under the age of 10 who live in the United Kingdom. The competition runs from 1 June 2022 until 30 June 2022. Five winners will be selected by our panel of judges and notified by 17 July 2022. Winners will receive a custom made rubber stamp featuring their Sponsor's Mark, the LAO Leopard, and the Platinum Jubilee Mark. We aim to deliver prizes within 6 weeks of winners being notified. By entering the Competition, you grant permission for details including the first name, age, and country or city of the entrant to be used by the Goldsmiths' Company and London Assay Office to publicise the competition and its winners. To view the full terms and conditions visit our [website](#).