

GOLD & SILVER BUYING TIPS

Sample Standard Operating Procedures for Testing Gold at the Counter

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NOTE: *These tips are solely recommendations aimed at giving you a plan of action to build your own **Standard Operating Procedures** for your shop. You should base your plan on the tests you have available in your shop and are most comfortable with. Be sure to train your team and have a checklist for them to follow when testing.*

If you are unsure of results or believe your equipment may be malfunctioning, contact the manufacturer or the distributor you purchased it from for assistance. When it comes to electronic testers and/or XRF machines, proper care, maintenance, and calibration is required to ensure you are getting accurate results.

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For a more in depth look at how to test, purchase the book:
“Gold & Silver Buying Tips: Understanding and Mastering the Art of Precious Metal Buying”,
available exclusively on Amazon: <https://a.co/d/jdFWomE>

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For more information, visit www.goldandsilverbuyingtips.com.

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TEST 1: RARE EARTH MAGNET TEST

Did you feel any pull when you ran the magnet over the piece?

- ☐ **Yes** – Was it at the clasp only?
 - ☐ YES – *move on to the second test.*
 - ☐ NO – if the piece pulled throughout, *use your discretion to pass on the piece or move on to the next test.*
- ☐ **No** – *Move on to the second test to verify.*

TEST 2: ACID/STONE TEST

Step 1: Using a file, scratch/the piece you are going to test.

Step 2: Wipe the spot you scraped using a damp cloth to remove any particles from potential gold plating.

Step 3: Scrape the piece on the stone (if you scraped the piece, make sure you are scratching that spot on the stone).

Step 4: Using the appropriate acid for the karat of the piece you are testing, apply a droplet to the sample on the stone (be careful not to touch the tip of the dropper to the stone).

Did the sample fade or remain?

- ☐ Sample **Faded immediately** – Try a lower karat acid (*if you are using the 10K acid, use your discretion to **pass on the piece or move on to another test**.*
- ☐ Sample **Faded after a few seconds** – Try a lower karat acid (*if you are using the 10K acid, use your discretion to **pass on the piece or move on to another test**.*
- ☐ Sample **Remained** – Try a higher karat acid, if it fades with the higher karat acid, you can comfortably *offer a loan on the lower karat.*

Be sure to clean the stone after every use.

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TEST 3: ELECTRONIC GOLD TESTER

Step 1: Using a file, scratch/ the piece you are going to test.

Step 2: Wipe the spot you scraped using a damp cloth to remove any particles from potential gold plating.

Step 3: Use your electronic tester to test the piece. Be sure to follow the instructions for your specific device for proper and accurate results.

Was the result conclusive?

☐ **Yes –** **POSITIVE RESULT:** The electronic tester gave a positive reading or identified the piece as the expected karat. (Offer a loan or buyout for the piece at your discretion.)

NEGATIVE RESULT: The electronic failed to identify the piece as gold or marked it as no gold/gold filled. (Pass on the piece.)

☐ **No –** **The results were unclear.** This may be caused by testing different spots and getting mixed results. Be sure to test the spots where you scraped and cleaned the piece. (Use your discretion to pass on the piece or try another test.)

TEST 4: X-RAY FLUORESCENCE (XRF)

Step 1: Using a file, scratch/ the piece you are going to test.

Step 2: Wipe the spot you scraped using a damp cloth to remove any particles from potential gold plating.

Step 3: Align the spot you scraped with the beam you are going to be using to test the sample. Be sure you are testing a FLAT surface as best you can.

Did the XRF give a definitive reading?

☐ **Yes –** **POSITIVE RESULT:** The XRF identified the piece as the karat it was expected to be. (Offer a loan/buyout price for the piece.)

☐ **Yes –** **NEGATIVE RESULT:** The XRF gave a negative reading or identified the piece as “No Gold” or “Potential Plated Material” or showed a non-precious metal content. (Pass on the piece.)