

Can alcohol based (70%) sanitisers damage your gems and jewellery?

Words of caution and a suggestion- clean or have your jewellery cleaned more often.

Jewellery made from metals:

Alcohol-based sanitiser does not cause immediate damage, but the build-up of residue could cause metals to tarnish and wear over time.

Yellow gold:

The least susceptible to damage from hand sanitiser because there is no layer or film that can become tarnished or worn.

Platinum:

This metal is also very safe because it does not react with the chemicals in hand sanitiser. However, you still want to avoid it and ensure regularly cleaning to stop the shine of the metal from being dulled.

White gold:

This metal is likely to be damaged by sanitisers. The rhodium plating in white gold has the potential to wear off. White gold jewellery sometimes requires replating, but the use of hand sanitisers will speed up the process.

Rose gold:

This is another under threat because the chemicals may react with the copper elements that give rose gold that beautiful pink hue.

Sterling silver rings:

The **most caution** should be reserved for sterling silver rings. They are quite susceptible to tarnishing through chemical reactions from hand sanitisers.

Jewellery made from acrylic and plastic:

Contact with hand sanitiser containing 70% alcohol may cause the jewellery to discolour, crack, and develop small holes. This may be dangerous, as cracks and holes serve as bacterial breeding grounds.

Gemstones

With the exception of opals and pearls, the sanitiser will not damage them, but can leave a filmy residue on the stones over time, dulling the sparkle. But it is not permanent, and nothing a quick soak in your jewellers ultrasonic cannot fix or cleaning using a good quality jewellery cleaner.

Warning: When it comes to **opals and pearls**, extreme caution should be exercised Opals are porous and extremely sensitive to chemicals or acids of any description. Pearls also are sensitive to chemicals and acids are likely to change colour when they come into contact with alcohol-based sanitisers. If in doubt, talk to your local jeweller.

