

Crafts Council  
Education  
Craft Careers

# How to become an Enameller



## What does an enameller do?

Enamelling is a colourful way to decorate objects. It involves the fusing of glass by heat onto a metal surface. Metals used for enamelling include gold, silver, copper, steel, cast iron and platinum.

Enamel is made from powdered glass, coloured by oxides. It is applied to the metal either wet or dry. The metal is then heated to about 850 degrees centigrade. Heating is usually in a kiln but can also be done with a handheld torch.

The heat causes the enamel to melt and fuse to the metal. The heating time is short, usually up to 10 minutes. More enamel, in different colours or textures can be added and the piece refired, sometimes up to 20 times.

Enamelling has been used for centuries. Pieces have been found from Roman, ancient Egyptian and Anglo-Saxon times.

Various techniques can be used to produce different finishes. Enamelling can be used on jewellery or other decorative items such as bowls, plates or vases.

Some enamellers have other craft skills, such as metalsmithing. They may make the pieces of jewellery which they then enamel. Some enamelling techniques involve engraving. Enamellers may do this themselves or employ an engraver.

Enamellers work in a studio and are often self-employed. This may be at home or elsewhere, and they may share the studio with other makers.

Enamellers may sell and promote their work through galleries, or via online shops and social media. They might also take commissions from customers.



Enamel Tree, Elaine Green

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## Key Skills.

- interested in working with metals
- someone with creative flair
- good attention to detail
- good at working with your hands
- able to work carefully and safely at very high temperatures

If you are dealing with the public, you also need to have customer service skills. If you are creating bespoke pieces, you need to be able to explain your creative ideas to customers.

If you're self-employed, you need business skills too, so you can market your goods and services, deal with finances and develop your business.



Enamel Leaves, Elaine Green

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## How do I become an enameller?

### Short Courses

Short courses in enamelling are available throughout the UK. Many are listed on the websites of:

[Guild of Enamellers](#)

[British Society of Enamellers](#)

Some courses are offered by colleges, while others take place in enamellers' own studios or workshops.

British Academy of Jewellery offers [diplomas in jewellery manufacture at Levels 2, 3 and 4](#). They also offer [apprenticeships in jewellery manufacture](#). Both include enamelling.

### Degree courses

If you want to study other jewellery skills to use along with your enamelling, you may want to take a course in jewellery design and or gold/silversmithing. There are numerous short courses in all aspects of jewellery making. Many of the college providing enamelling courses also run jewellery courses.

Degree courses in jewellery, gold/silversmithing and jewellery design are offered throughout the UK, including:

[School of Jewellery at Birmingham City University \(there is also an HND\)](#)

[Plymouth College of Art](#)

[Royal College of Art](#), London.

Some courses have entry requirements, such as two A levels (or equivalent) for degree courses. You will also need to show a portfolio of your work.

As well as English and maths, art and design or design and technology (resistant materials) are relevant subjects. Business studies or enterprise are useful if you want to run your own business.



Enamel flower, Elaine Green

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## Further Information.

Anyone interested in enamelling can join the [Guild of Enamellers](#) or the [British Society of Enamellers](#). They run events throughout the year so enamellers can meet and exchange ideas, exhibit their work, learn new techniques and buy and sell equipment and supplies.

Museums around the world have collections of contemporary and historic enamel work:

- [Victoria and Albert Museum](#), London
- [Black Country Museum](#), Dudley (West Midlands)
- [British Museum](#), London
- [Lady Lever Gallery](#), Wirral

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## Featured Maker.

Elaine Green is a designer and maker who makes sculptural pieces, often on a large scale, from metal. Discovering the art of enamelling transformed Elaine's metal working practice, adding vivid colourful details to her often pieces. Find out more [here](#) and follow Elaine on Instagram [here](#).



## Craft Careers

Craft generates £3.4 billion for the UK economy each year, with the contribution of the wider creative industries now growing at twice the rate of the UK economy. British craft has never been so sought-after and craft skills are revolutionising industries from aerospace to architecture.

To learn more about craft careers visit:  
[www.craftscouncil.org.uk/learning/craft-careers](http://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/learning/craft-careers)