

Aura™ 22 #600-800

Instructions for Depletion Gilding

Depletion Gilding for Sterling Silver

⚠ Important: Aura™ 22 must be applied to fine silver surface. If you are working with sterling, you must first prepare it by depletion gilding (creating a surface layer of fine silver) onto which you can apply Aura 22.

What is depletion gilding?

Depletion gilding is a process of heating sterling silver sufficiently to oxidize the copper in the surface layer of the alloy and then removing that oxidized copper layer by soaking in a mild acid solution (the "depletion"). This process leaves a thin layer of fine silver on the surface of the metal (the "gilding"). If it is burnished with a soft brass brush, this layer will help inhibit tarnish. For best results, use only freshly mixed, hot pickle solution.

Tools Needed:

Torch	
Pickle pot	#501-012
Rio pickle	#501-023/3
Copper tongs	#501-017
Solderite™ pad, 12" x 12"	#502-052

Process:

1. Place the silver item near the center of the Solderite™ pad.
2. Using a neutral flame, heat silver until it oxidizes and turns a dark color.
3. Move the silver to a cool place on the pad and let stand for one minute.
4. Pick up the silver with copper tongs and quench it in hot pickle solution. **⚠ Caution:** The metal is still hot so do not let acid splash onto your clothing. Allow the piece to soak for 3–5 minutes or until all oxides are removed and the piece turns white.
5. Remove the piece from the pickle with copper tongs only.
6. Rinse in water and repeat Steps 2–5.



You will need to repeat this process 5 to 7 times. Each time you repeat the process, you will notice that heating produces less and less oxidation on the surface of the metal. By the seventh repetition, you will notice little or no oxidation and the metal surface will appear a frosty white. This is what you are looking for.

As each repetition of the heating process eats a little deeper into the surface of the metal, the surface becomes slightly porous. Now the surface is gilded with fine silver and is ready for the application of Aura 22. The slightly porous texture improves the bond with the Aura 22.

Burnish down the surface of the metal before mechanical polishing to prevent the polishing compounds from being embedded in the surface of the metal.



7500 Bluewater Road NW • Albuquerque, NM 87121-1962 USA
800.545.6566 • FAX: 800.965.2329 • www.riogrande.com
International: 505.839.3011 • International FAX: 505.839.3016