

Understanding & Communicating Jewelry Repairs

Common Stone Setting Styles: Flush and Channel Setting

The information in this section of *Counter Points* will help you evaluate the craftsmanship related to two popular stone setting styles: flush setting and channel setting. You'll also learn to recognize some of the common problems with these setting styles to determine if repair work needs to be done.

Take the time to become familiar with the information in this article and you'll be better prepared to identify needed stone setting repairs and have the knowledge and confidence to discuss repair options in a way that builds a customer's trust and loyalty. When delivering a piece of jewelry involving stone setting or setting repair, you'll be able to demonstrate and ensure that all expectations were met to the highest professional standards. The result? Greater levels of customer satisfaction and higher sales and profits for you and your store.

Flush Setting

What It Is: Flush setting (sometimes referred to as "burnish setting") is a relatively new style of stone setting, which has grown in popularity in the last few decades. Flush set stones are actually sunk into the mounting until they are level or flush with the surface. The technique of flush setting allows the jeweler to scatter gemstones across a piece of jewelry without the need for prongs, channels or groupings of stones to hold the gemstones securely in place. Jewelry with flush-set stones is often modern and stylish with a scattering of brilliance from randomly positioned gems.

At The Bench: Flush setting begins with the cutting of an opening or seat into metal. The seat must exactly match the diameter of the gemstone. A well-cut seat is so tightly cut to match the diameter of the gem that a brass pushing tool must be used to pop or push the stone into the seat. Because of the need for strong pressure to push the stone into place only very hard and durable gems like diamonds,

Part 4a:

This is the fourth in a series of *Counter Points* articles designed to help you, the professional sales associate, better communicate some of the most common jewelry repair processes and repair quality factors to your customers. According to recent research, a large percentage of customers actively seek out a new jewelry store because they are in need of a repair service. Because of this, it's critical that all professional sales associates be prepared to clearly communicate repair processes and repair quality factors in an easy-to-understand and comprehensive manner.

Divided into two parts, this issue of *Counter Points* discusses one of the more common bench procedures today: stone setting. In this first section, we review flush and channel settings.

In the next J Report, Part 4b will discuss Bright and Bead Settings and Pave settings.



The flush set gemstones in this matching band and cufflinks, by Etienne Perret, add a touch of random whimsy to the simple design.

Image: Professional Jeweler Magazine

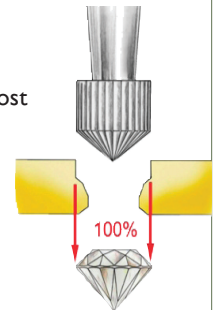
sapphires and rubies are used.

Once the gem is in place an appropriately sized burnisher is used to push metal from the edge of the seat down over the gemstone. Very little metal is actually pushed over onto the stone, so it is the tightness of the seat itself that helps hold the stone in place. Once a narrow bezel of metal has been created around the diameter of the stone, the burnisher is turned upright and run around the edge of the gem further pushing the metal onto the gemstone.

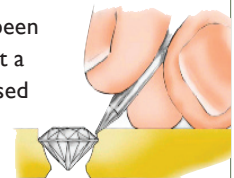
What To Look For: When inspecting a stone that has been flush set, it's important to note that the stone and seat match perfectly and that the small metal bezel, created by pushing the edge of the seat onto the gem, is consistent all around the stone's edge. The metal should not extend past the very tips of the gem's bezel facets.

Step By Step

Flush setting is the most exact type of setting work. Cutting a perfectly sized seat is the first step in the process.



After the gem has been pushed into the seat a burnishing tool is used to push the seat's edge down over the gemstone.



The metal edge should be uniform and only cover the very tips of the gem's bezel facets.

