



# Smithsonian Associates

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## DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR JEWELRY MAKERS

with Mia Vollkommer

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Hello! I'm looking forward to meeting you in the Design Principles for Jewelry Makers class. Here is a list of items to have on hand.

### Week 1

- Color wheel (optional but useful)
- Pencil/eraser
- Fine tip sharpie marker
- Colored pencils, pens, watercolors, or digital paintbox – whatever you enjoy using to “think on paper”.
- Whatever paper is appropriate for your chosen medium – sketchbook, mixed media paper, watercolor paper, etc. (or no paper at all if working digitally)
- A small collection of small items from around your house. The items should be big enough to hold, but small enough so that several can be traced onto an 8.5x11 piece of paper. For example:
  - Things from the kitchen: bottle caps, wine corks, shapes cut from cereal shipping box cardboard.
  - Things from outside: acorns, black walnut halves, leaves, stones, sticks.
  - Things from your jewelry making stash: round beads, interestingly shaped pendants, metal scraps.

### Between Week 1 and Week 2

At the end of our first class, I will be issuing a jewelry design challenge to be completed for our second meeting\*\*. This design will be self-directed, and you can make it from whatever items you have, or from items specifically purchased for the challenge.

I will be offering “mystery packs” on my website comprised of items (beads and findings) from my own stash which can be purchased and incorporated into your design - sometimes surprise elements can spark design ideas that you may not have arrived at otherwise! Kits will range in price from \$25-\$45 plus shipping and will be available at [www.shop2dots.com](http://www.shop2dots.com) 3 weeks prior to the first-class meeting.

Purchasing a kit is *totally* optional!

## Week 2

- Same items as week one
- Your completed design challenge piece.
- If you have any items in your stash that you haven't been able to incorporate into a successful design (yet!) you can have those on hand for discussion as well.

Please let me know via email (noted above) if you have any questions about anything on this list, and again I'll look forward to seeing you in class!

\*\* I do not normally assign "mandatory" homework for my classes, but I'm trying it out this time, and we'll see how it goes! 😊

The goal of the design challenge is to have you apply some of the principles learned in Week 1 to making an actual piece(s) of jewelry. There will also be a few parameters, intended to get you thinking along potentially new lines, which can have a lasting impact on your jewelry making going forward. With the Thanksgiving break, we'll have two weeks between class one and two, which (fingers crossed) gives you a bit of extra time to work on the challenge. I have no expectations for your creation/s – it could be a single earring, or a full set including earrings, necklace, and a bracelet. Both types of submission are valid and "correct". I'll expect that you'll send me an image of your work to show in the Week 2 class.

Often when it comes to sharing work, students fear being "wrong", think that their work is "not good enough" to share, or are hesitant about possibly receiving negative feedback.

Please know that with me:

- you are never wrong, but rather, always learning.
- any attempt at making something is more than good enough.
- I do not support negative comments as a healthy way to help artists grow within their medium.

I also cannot stress enough how beneficial it is for all students to see the work that is being done by their classmates. This in truth is one of the major downsides of working on Zoom: being unable to see and support the work that is being done around us.

I hope this note will reassure you and give you both the spark and the confidence to participate in the design challenge (*and* share your creation/s with me and the class.)

Mia 😊