What is chasing?

Goldsmithing Techniques · https://www.purejewels.com/faqs/goldsmithing-techniques/what-is-chasing/

Every fine jewellery piece tells a story, not only through its shape and stones, but through its **texture and detail**. One of the most intricate and expressive techniques used to bring metal to life is called **chasing**.

At **PureJewels**, where craftsmanship and cultural heritage converge, **chasing** is a technique that reflects our deep respect for hand-finished artistry.

Chasing Defined: Drawing with Tools, Not Ink

Chasing is a traditional metalworking technique used to **engrave, shape, or decorate the surface of metal**, using small chisels and hammers to create **low-relief designs, lines, textures, or patterns**.

Unlike engraving, which cuts into the metal and removes material, **chasing displaces the surface**, pushing and forming the metal from the front without removing volume. This creates beautifully **raised or indented details**, often by hand.

How is Chasing Done?

1. **Design Transfer**: The pattern or motif is sketched or marked on the surface of the gold or silver.
2. **Tool Selection**: Special chisels, called *chasers*, are used, each with different tips for lines, curves, or textures.
3. **Hammer Work**: The chisel is lightly tapped with a chasing hammer to impress the design into the metal.
4. **Polishing & Finishing**: Once the chasing is complete, the surface is polished — or left matte for contrast.

For added effect, chasing is often combined with **repoussé**, a technique where the metal is shaped from the reverse side to create depth from both directions.

Why is Chasing Important in Jewellery?

- **Artistic Detail**: Allows for fine patterns, floral motifs, scrollwork and textures, all without using gemstones.
- **No Metal Loss**: Since chasing doesn't cut into the metal, it preserves purity and weight.
- **One-of-a-Kind Craftsmanship**: Each chased piece is unique, shaped by hand and eye, not machines.
- **Cultural Heritage**: Chasing has been used for centuries in Indian, Middle Eastern, and European goldsmithing, especially in traditional bangles, pendants, and ceremonial jewellery.

Chasing at PureJewels

While many modern brands focus on casting and mass production, **PureJewels honours heritage techniques** like chasing — especially in bespoke 22ct gold pieces and hand-crafted bridal collections.

Our artisans use chasing to:

- Add **symbolic motifs** to bangles or pendants
- Highlight **script or monograms**
- Create **texture and contrast** in heirloom jewellery

This technique reflects our belief in jewellery as not just an ornament, but **artistry in gold**.

Chasing vs Engraving – What's the Difference?

Feature	Chasing	Engraving
Method	Pushes/displaces metal surface	Cuts and removes metal
Tool Used	Chisels & chasing hammer	Sharp engraving tools or machines
Purpose	Decorative detailing	Decoration or inscriptions
Depth	Typically shallow, surface-level	Can be deeper and more precise

Final Thoughts: A Quiet Craft of Enduring Beauty

Chasing is the whisper of the jeweller's hand, gentle, precise, and rich with intention. In a world where machines do more, chasing reminds us of the irreplaceable value of human craftsmanship.

At **PureJewels**, we embrace chasing as a way to preserve our goldsmithing legacy. It allows us to turn gold into canvas, and jewellery into storytelling.

FAQs

Q: Is chasing done by hand or machine?

Traditionally, chasing is done by hand using specialised tools. It can also be enhanced by modern techniques, but handcrafted chasing carries more artisanal value.

Q: Can chasing be done on all metals?

Yes — chasing can be performed on gold, silver, copper, and platinum. At PureJewels, we most often use it on 22ct and 18ct gold.

Q: Does chasing affect gold purity?

No. Chasing works with the surface of the metal and does not remove material, so the gold remains just as pure as it began.