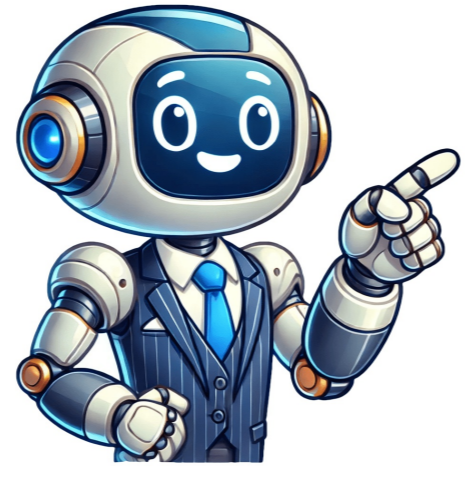


I'm not a bot



and look for a signature or mark. Some brands are worth WAY more than others, so this step is crucial!Signatures: Most pieces just have the company name stamped on them. You'll spot marks like "TRIFARI," "CORO," or "HASKELL" right on the piece.Initials/Monograms: Some designers kept it simple with just their initials. If you see "MB," that's Marcel Boucher's work. "HC" means you've got a Hattie Carnegie piece in your hands.Pat. Pending/Patent Numbers: Found "Pat. Pend." on your jewelry? That means they applied for a patent but hadn't gotten it yet. Actual patent numbers are even better - you can look them up to nail down exactly when a design was registered.Copyright Symbol (©): This little mark is a dead giveaway for newer pieces. They didn't start using © on jewelry until 1955, so anything with this symbol was made after that.Design/Inventory Numbers: The fancy designers like Boucher and Schreiner often added style or inventory numbers to their pieces. If you're lucky, you can match these numbers to old catalogs and figure out exactly what collection your piece came from.To make identification easier, here's a quick breakdown of some notable costume jewelry brands and their notable signs, marks, and more!Source: eBay - xyla_vintageMarks: Early pieces show "KTF" (1920s-30s). Then they switched to "Trifari" with a crown over the "T" (1930s-50s). After 1955, you'll see "Trifari ©". Some have "Trifari" in flowing script.What to look for: Their rhodium plating was top-notch, and they often used custom-cut rhinestones. The best pieces come from the "Crown Trifari" years when Alfred Philippe (who'd worked at Cartier!) was designing. Hunt for pieces with "invisible settings" - they're worth more.Marks: The earliest pieces aren't signed at all. Later, you'll find "MIRIAM HASKELL" on an oval plaque, or sometimes block letters on a cartouche or horseshoe shape. Some early pieces just have an "H" on the clasp.What to look for: The craftsmanship is incredible - intricate wiring (usually gold-tone), hand-set stones, and lots of baroque pearls and filigree. Haskell pieces feel substantial in your hand. Even the unsigned early pieces fetch good money if you can spot her construction style.Source: eBay - TIKIAGOGO'S RETRO RAG SHOPMarks: They made tons of different lines. Look for "CORO" in various fonts, "Coro Craft" (their higher-end stuff), "Coro Duette" (clever brooches that split into dress clips), or "Vendome" (their luxury line after the 1940s).What to look for: They made everything from cheap to high-end. Their convertible pieces are clever, and they did beautiful work with colorful rhinestones and enamel.Marks: "SCHREINER," "SCHREINER NEW YORK." Weirdly, many of their best pieces aren't marked at all or just had a paper tag (now long gone).What to look for: They did quirky things like setting rhinestones upside-down so the pointy part faces up (creates amazing sparkle), making big domed designs, and using "dog-tooth" prongs. You often have to identify them by their construction rather than marks.Marks: "Eisenberg Original" (earliest and most valuable). "Eisenberg Ice" (after 1940s). "Eisenberg ©."What to look for: They started as a clothing company and made jewelry to dress up their outfits. Their rhinestones are exceptional - often unfilled and set in sterling silver or rhodium-plated metal. The pieces are heavy and could pass for real diamond jewelry.Marks: "MB" in a cartouche, "Marboux" (early pieces), "Boucher" (later work), "Boucher ©." Often includes a design number.What to look for: His pieces are like sculptures - very three-dimensional with incredible detail. He did amazing animal designs and used high-quality plating. His work feels like fine jewelry.The way a jewelry piece was made can tell you a lot about its age and value. Here are some construction clues to look for:C.Clasps: Simple hooks without the safety catch on brooches - late 1800s to early 1900s.Trombone Clasps: Tube with sliding pin, mostly European - 1920s-40s.Roll-Over Safety Clasps: Pin tucks under rotating hood - standard for brooches from the 1930s on.Barrel Clasps: Screw-together halves on beaded pieces - pre-1970s.Fishhook Clasps: Basic hook-and-eye mechanism - older necklaces.Fold-Over Clasps: Hinged flap that snaps shut - vintage link bracelets.Spring Ring Clasps: Small circle with spring-loaded opening - mid-century onwards.Lobster Claw Clasps: Secure pinchy clasp - 1970s to present (not truly antique).Screw-backs were common from the 1920s to 50sClip-backs became popular in the 1930sClip-backs with comfort pads showed up in the 1940sPost earrings for pierced ears gained popularity from the 1960s onwardProng Settings: Little metal "claws" grip the stones. Look for chunkier, heavier prongs on the older stuff.Pave Settings: Tiny stones set right next to each other to create a solid surface of sparkle.Bezel Settings: A metal rim wraps around the stone to hold it in place.Channel Settings: Stones sit snugly in a metal channel without any prongs showing.Gluing vs. Setting: Good vintage costume jewelry rarely has glued-in stones. If you spot glue (especially in older pieces), you're probably looking at the cheaper stuff. Quality pieces have stones mechanically secured with prongs, bezels, or metal work. Now for the fun part - figuring out if that flea market find is worth \$5 or \$500! Here's what drives value in vintage costume jewelry.Condition: condition makes or breaks value. A mint condition piece can be worth ten times more than the same piece with damage. Things you must always check: Are all stones present and secure? Is the finish intact (no worn plating)? Do clasps and mechanisms work properly? Is there any verdigris? Any chips, cracks, or repairs?Completeness: Complete sets are worth more, too - finding a matching necklace, bracelet, and earrings together (called a "parure") is always more valuable than single pieces.Rarity and History: Just like any collectible, rarity drives the value of vintage costume jewelry, too. Limited production runs, experimental pieces, a designer's prototype or sample, worn by a celebrity or featured in a film, and discontinued lines typically command higher prices.Brand Power: Let's be real - brand names matter a ton in costume jewelry. The most valuable pieces come from renowned designers and quality manufacturers, such as Chanel, Schiaparelli, Miriam Haskell, Eisenberg, Trifari (especially Alfred Philippe designs), Marcel Boucher, and Joseff of Hollywood.Special Features: Certain decorative elements can make a piece extra desirable. Look for: Jelly Belly designs, Aurora Borealis finishes (rainbow iridescent coating), Art glass elements, three-dimensional designs, figurals (animals, people, or objects), and hand-painted enamel.