

SKILLS

- fabrication
- soldering
- stone setting

Citrine and Sterling Pendant

A sunny, sweeping design

BY TERRI HAAG, WITH HUGO RODRIGUEZ

I documented how Scottsdale jewelry designer Hugo Rodriguez, owner of Platella Silver, shows how to make a simple but stunning citrine and satin-finished sterling silver pendant in just a few hours. He first designed the piece on paper, and using a plastic template of standard shapes, he created a sweeping, elongated free-form, pointed tear-drop, adding a long “tail” which will form the bail. Then he fabricated the piece with a brushed texture and highly polished back.

MATERIALS

Pear-shaped, 12mm x 14mm x 6mm stone
 13 gauge round silver wire
 Silver rolled sheet, 5½" x 1⅛"
 Red Rouge Zam green buffing compounds
 40-60 grit industrial wet-dry paper

TOOLS

HAND TOOLS: drills, metal shears, jewelers saw and blades, mallet, dapping punch, pliers

OTHER TOOLS: Flex shaft, ⅛" High Perform Wheel ⅛" (medium), Mini brush/soft ¾"

SOURCES

Most of the tools and materials for this project will be available from well stocked jewelry supply vendors, many of whom can be found in our Advertiser's Index, page 71.

TIME IT TOOK

4-6 Hours

Photo 1 Create a drawing of the finished design. Cut out the finished drawing and use white glue to stick it to the rolled silver sheet. This step makes transfer of the design to the rolled silver base easy.

Photo 2 Use a fine saw blade and hand-saw to cut out the design.

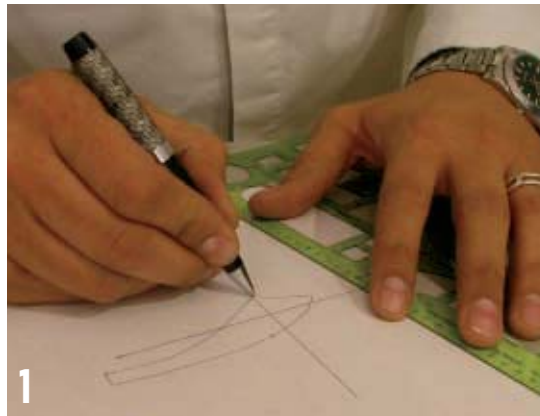
Photo 3 Using a dapping tool, form and mallet, give the silver blank a concave front, leaving the long "tail" flat.

Photo 4 Using round-tipped bail pliers, carefully bend back the long end to form the bail. Soldering the loop closed is optional.

Photo 5 Mark the position of the stone and the placement of the prongs on the front of the piece.

Photo 6 Drill three holes to accommodate the appropriate gauge wire for prongs plus a center hole for cutting out the back.

Photo 7 Thread a saw blade through the center hole and carefully cut out the space drawn for the stone. The hole should be approximately 75% - 80% of the size of the stone itself. In this case, the hole was approximately 10 mm x 12 mm.





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Photo 8 Push the prong wires through the blank from the back and solder into place, front and back.

Photo 9 Saw off the backs of the prongs and file any remaining bumps flat.

Photo 10 Polish the back with a polishing wheel to remove file marks, then buff out to a high shine and clean with an ultrasonic bath or with soap and water and a soft cloth to remove powder and grease.

Photo 11 Mark the placement of notches on each prong and then etch the notches with the small grinding tool.

Photo 12 Pad the back of the piece so as not to mar the polished finish. Using industrial grade sandpaper, rub the front surface to create the desired degree of satin finish. The back may be left smooth or finished with sandpaper to match the front.

Photo 13 Carefully bend out one of the three prongs and place the stone into the notches. Bend the prongs inward until the stone is properly and securely seated.

Photo 14 Cut off excess prong material and smooth with files and sanding sticks.

Photo 15 Use sonic cleaner again to remove grease and buffing compound.

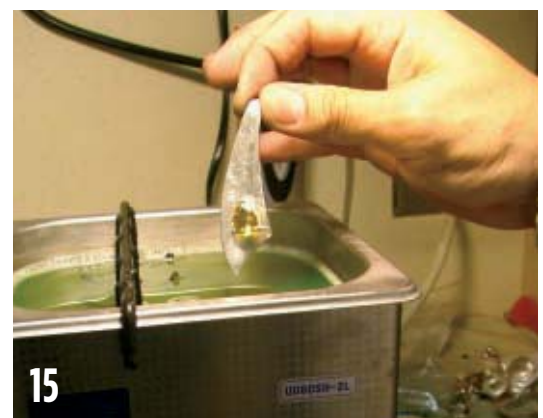


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TERRI HAAG is a freelance writer based in Tucson, Arizona. She has been a frequent contributor to this magazine for more than a decade.



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