



Changing Your Body Jewelry

First off, you should only change body jewelry if your piercing is pretty well healed. The new body jewelry should be the same gauge as the original jewelry unless you are stretching your piercing (for more information, see our [Stretching Guide](#)). If the new jewelry is of a thinner gauge than the piercing will shrink and the piercing will have to be stretched back up to wear your original body jewelry. With some piercings the body jewelry must be of a certain design to be comfortable.

You will have an easier time inserting your new body jewelry if you lubricate the piercing and the new piece of jewelry using a water-based lubricant or anti-microbial soap (we recommend [Satin Soap](#)). Place a small amount of lubricant onto the existing body jewelry and rotate the jewelry to lubricate the piercing. Captive rings should be opened before lubricating the jewelry.

Externally threaded body jewelry should be heavily lubricated to reduce the risk of damaging the piercing during insertion. The threads can get caught on the interior of the piercing, making insertion difficult and painful. Threaded body jewelry is most securely tightened using rubber gloves, a tissue, or gauze to grip the balls. Never use pliers to tighten balls. In the case of internally threaded jewelry, using pliers can strip the threads from the ball.

Jewelry designed for ear piercings is not appropriate for wear in body piercings. Ear jewelry is designed to fit the thickness of the average earlobe; most body piercings are wider than the thickness of the earlobe. Ear jewelry is too thin to be safely worn in body piercings. Rings and hoops designed for ear piercings often have hinges, hooked ends or overlapping hollow tubes with rough edges which easily irritate the piercing. Ear piercing studs are difficult to clean. The butterfly clip backing can become clogged with discharge, dirt, and bacteria. Ear jewelry is usually made of silver or of a lesser grade of steel or is plated, all unsuitable materials for wear in body piercings.

Sewing needles and safety pins are made of a lesser grade of steel and are usually nickel-plated. Wearing sewing needles and safety pins can cause a severe allergic reaction and lifelong sensitivity to nickel.

SIZING INFORMATIONS

Which Body Jewelry Gauge and Size is Right for You Length Chart

If all this fractions of an inch, millimeter and gauge sh*t has you confused, have no fear and read on ... Basically, all you need to remember is that gauge refers to the thickness of the body jewelry and length refers to the internal diameter (for rings) or length (for barbells). Other important tips include knowing that:

- 1) Diameters listed are internal diameters meaning they are measured on the inside of the ring or from the inside of each ball on a barbell,
- 2) the lower the gauge number, the thicker the body jewelry (i.e. 6ga is thicker than 8ga, and 0 gauge is thicker than 2 gauge) and,
- 3) if you convert the denominator (the bottom number) to 16 in all fractions of an inch, the numerator (the top number) will help you order all the sizes (or just use the chart below).

And for those who don't give a f*ck about math, we've created an easy-to-use chart to figure out which size and gauge is best for you (see below).

Due to variations in screen resolution and monitor size, sizes on this page are not guaranteed to be true to life. Always use an accurate tool to measure sizes before ordering body jewelry.

A dime, life-size.

Dime

17mm or 11/16" Across A penny, life-size.

Penny

19mm or 3/4" Across A nickel, life-size.

Nickel

21mm or 7/8" Across A quarter, life-size.

Quarter

24mm or 15/16" Across

Due to the fact that different monitors are set with different resolutions, we offer our sizing chart in a downloadable format.

Download and print our new Adobe Acrobat PDF sizing chart [here](#).

See our [Gauge/Length Inch to Millimeter Conversion Chart](#) [here](#).

Common Sizing Information

For those with a more common introductory level piercing, we've compiled this list to help you get more familiar with the world of body jewelry. >

Ear: If you got your ear(s) pierced by a gun (which we HIGHLY oppose-see Piercing Myths for details) and you've never stretched your hole(s), your jewelry gauge is 20 or 18. With a little antibacterial soap and water, massaging 16 gauge body jewelry into the hole shouldn't be a problem. DO NOT attempt to go any thicker than 16 gauge if you currently have a 20 or 18 post! If you were pierced with a needle the gauges most commonly range from 18-10, most likely being 16 and 14. Intricate piercings like the tragus and rook typically hold jewelry 5/16", 3/8", or 7/16" in size. However, jewelry for the lobes can be just about any size from huggies to pirate rings. For information on stretching your lobes, see our [Stretching Guide](#). Also check out our [Stretching Kits](#). (see some lobe body jewelry)

Eyebrow: The most common gauges for an eyebrow piercing are either 18ga or 16ga, with 16ga being the most common. Typical ring diameters and curved barbell lengths are 5/16", 3/8", 7/16". (see some eyebrow body jewelry)

Labret: The most common gauges for a labret piercing are 14ga and 12ga. Depending on the thickness of your lip, the most common flat back post lengths are 5/16", 3/8", or 7/16" with 3/8" being the most common. Remember, you are pierced with a longer post to allow for swelling. To avoid damaging teeth and gums, you must switch to shorter length piece when the swelling goes down. (see some labret body jewelry)

Lip: Like the Labret, typical lip jewelry is either 14ga or 12ga gauge. Again, the size of the jewelry depends on the thickness of your lips, most frequently 5/16", 3/8", and 7/16". (check out our steel and titanium seamless rings)

Navel: The standard navel jewelry is 14 gauge. Very few piercers will pierce a navel with a 12 gauge needle unless requested. The most frequent size jewelry for a healed navel is 3/8" or 7/16". The next size up is 1/2" if you prefer something larger, and 5/16" is shorter. (see some navel body jewelry)

Tongue: The two most common gauges for a tongue piecing are 14ga and 12ga (most are 14ga). Regardless, the tongue is usually well-behaved enough to interchange either gauge jewelry. The most common size for tongue barbells is 5/8". If for any reason you feel your tongue jewelry creates too much friction with your gums or teeth, IMMEDIATELY replace your jewelry with something shorter. Remember, you are pierced with a longer post to allow for swelling. To avoid damaging teeth and gums, you must switch to shorter length barbell when the swelling goes down. The price you pay for smaller jewelry will be a lot less than new teeth! (see some tongue body jewelry)

Nipple: Nipples are most frequently pierced at 14ga or 12ga. For females, common replacement sizes include 9/16" and 5/8" for barbells or 5/8" and 3/4" for rings. For males, common replacement sizes include 7/16", 1/2", and 5/8" for both barbells and rings. (see some nipple body jewelry)

Nostril: If you got your nostril pierced with a gun (first of all, shame on you-go directly to the Piercing Myths) your hole is 20ga. Otherwise, it is probably 18ga or 16ga. Typical sizes for this jewelry include 5/16", 3/8", 7/16", and 1/2" (with 3/8" being most common). Pre-bent nostril screws fit nearly everyone, but an unbent nostril screw is best for the pickier piercee (no pun intended). A quick stop to the jeweler to bend your post is probably your best bet with a precious stone and metal screw. (see some nostril body jewelry)

Septum: If you can't remember your body jewelry stats because you were too busy listening to the bells ringing in your ears, your jewelry is probably 14 gauge. Common lengths for the septum include 3/8", 7/16", 1/2", and 5/8" (AKA "The Bullring"). (see some septum body jewelry)

Genitals: If you went ahead and got your genitals pierced, we hope that you are familiar with the gauge and size of the jewelry. Some unique body jewelry for male genital piercings include Frenum Loops and Prince's Wands.

Body Jewelry Gauge/Length Conversion Charts:

| Gauge | Inches | Millimeters | Inches | Decimal inches | Millimeters |
|-------|--------|-------------|--------|----------------|-------------|
| 0000 | .460 | 11.684 | 1/8 | .125 | 3.2 |
| 000 | .410 | 10.404 | 3/16 | .1875 | 4.8 |
| 00 | .365 | 9.266 | 1/4 | .250 | 6.4 |
| 0 | .325 | 8.26 | 5/16 | .3125 | 7.94 |
| 2 | .257 | 6.54 | 3/8 | .375 | 9.5 |
| 4 | .204 | 5.19 | 7/16 | .4375 | 11.11 |
| 6 | .162 | 4.12 | 1/2 | .500 | 12.7 |
| 8 | .128 | 3.26 | 9/16 | .5625 | 14.29 |
| 10 | .102 | 2.59 | 5/8 | .625 | 15.9 |
| 12 | .081 | 2.05 | 11/16 | .6875 | 17.46 |
| 14 | .064 | 1.63 | 3/4 | .750 | 19.0 |
| 16 | .051 | 1.29 | 13/16 | .8125 | 20.64 |
| 18 | .040 | 1.02 | 7/8 | .875 | 22.2 |
| 20 | .032 | .812 | 15/16 | .9375 | 23.81 |
| | | | 1 | 1.000 | 25.4 |

Body Piercing Aftercare & Healing Guidelines

Body piercing Aftercare and healing suggestions can vary slightly from piercer to piercer. Each piercer has their own experiences with certain healing techniques; however, when deciding how to provide you, the piercee, with the highest quality aftercare, healing, and infection information available, Tribalectic decided to use the most medically sound and supported information. Therefore, our suggested aftercare & healing guidelines have been compiled by performing extensive research on the following:

- Standard healing and aftercare medical information
- Suggestions and tips from highly reputable body piercing friendly medics
- Suggestions and tips from top professional piercers
- Piercee healing successes
- Current popular industry suggestions
- Personal experience as a professional piercer
- Observations of infected body piercings and their recovery

After compiling our first edition of Tribalectic's suggested aftercare & healing guidelines, we submitted the information for medical review by piercing-friendly physician Dr. Janet L. H. Keating with Duke University's Student Health Service in Durham, North Carolina. In addition, constant consultation with John Lopez—senior piercer at Gotham (formerly the Master Piercers of Gauntlet, the most renowned gurus in the game who founded the first body piercing establishment in the US)—also helped fine-tune our suggestions.

Since the world of medicine (both holistic and traditional western) is continually evolving, Tribalectic will be updating our suggested aftercare & healing guidelines in order to provide you with the highest quality information available. We look forward to receiving comments and suggestions from more piercing-friendly medics, professional piercers, and piercees as well as successful and unsuccessful infection treatments.

To get specific information for aftercare & healing, we encourage you to post messages in Tribalectic's Body Piercing Forum. We also encourage you to check out our Body Piercing FAQ, our Body Piercing Myths, and, for those who need additional tips, please read Dr. Janet Keating's article "Caring for Infections".

Tribalectic is a free information society and believes that the following information should be accessible to people pierced and interested in getting pierced. We humbly thank all our contributors for supporting the flow of essential information. Tribalectic does not claim to own or copyright the following suggestions. All healing and aftercare techniques are universal methods of treatment that can be used by everyone. In other words, our suggestions are common knowledge to be shared by all.

And remember, this information is meant to help you heal and care for your healthy and infected piercing(s), however, it is not magic. Each human body is unique and may react differently to specific treatments. Neither Tribalectic nor any of the contributors to the suggested aftercare & healing guidelines are responsible for the healing of your piercing(s) or infections, or the application of this information. Many uncontrollable factors may inhibit the proper healing of your body piercing(s). Consequently, if you feel as though these suggestions are not benefiting the progress of your healing, or you feel that your body piercing(s) are getting infected, please consult your personal doctor.