

Minimalism and Jewelry Design

Minimalism in jewelry design is trending – simple, elegant, and chic. There's a bit more to this style, though, than simply hanging a charm or pendant on a chain – it takes some thought and planning to create and wear minimalistic jewelry.



A good place to start is with the roots of minimalism – in Zen Buddhism. One of



the important principles of this religion is mindfulness and focus – concentrating on the essentials, of what is truly important. In jewelry design, this means picking each element with care and considering how it fits in with the overall design.

Japanese flower arranging, or Ikebana, based on Zen philosophy, uses subtle, pared-down elements to create breathtakingly elegant designs. Designers study each component, its lines, form, and shape, and “discover” the design as it evolves. The form takes the shape of a scalene triangle, with unequal sides and is comprised of short, medium, and tall stems.

In applying these principles into jewelry design, we can start with a single component and carefully study it – form, texture, color. Consider what additional elements can be brought into the design and what relationship they have with the original component. Consider how to arrange the components to maintain balance. The scalene triangle is a good “benchmark” to use in designing. If you enjoy jewelry design as relaxation, this is for you - this process can be completely absorbing, almost meditative.



Jewelry design is most certainly an art, but as wearable art also has an “engineering” component – how it going to stay around one’s neck or wrist, how will it drape, and how will it hold up with prolonged wear. Since each element in a minimalist piece is essential to the design itself, we need to select findings with an eye as to how they complement that design.

Consider these examples:

1. For the Turtle Voice necklace, we selected a Kazuri pat bead as our starting point. It is a squared round, and the shape seems to complement the geometric pattern on it. This becomes our short line. The colors are predominately green and brown. A simple complement would be a smaller bead in a coordinating color. When placed on the brown leather, this can be our medium” line. This is balanced with three carefully placed knots on the other side of the leather for our longest line. The pat bead is attached to the leather with another piece of leather which forms a loop around the necklace; the ends are trimmed unequally and can be seen as an extension of the longest line. The necklace is finished with a simple slide knot so as to avoid introducing any unnecessary components.



2. For the Dharma Earrings, we carefully arranged the three components (2 beads and a charm) so the points on the bottom of each form a triangle.



3. It may be that a grouping of pieces is the best way to achieve a good design. We can use a trio of necklaces, each with carefully-chosen components, to complement each other and form a “whole.



Minimalist jewelry does not necessarily have to be small or delicate. A statement piece can also be considered minimalist as long as its components are carefully considered and unnecessary “clutter” avoided.



How to Wear Minimalist Jewelry: Layering is a great way to combine simpler pieces for a variety of styles, from simple to bold. You can apply the same principles used for creating minimalist jewelry. of lengths. Start with a single piece and add others with different but complementary textures and shapes. Be sure to incorporate a variety of lengths.



Outside Resources:

<http://www.minimalstudent.com/zen-and-the-art-of-minimalism-part-1-zen-philosophy/>

<http://www.minimalstudent.com/zen-and-the-art-of-minimalism-part-2-mastering-the-art/>

<http://www.presentationzen.com/presentationzen/2009/09/0-design-lessons-from-ikebana.html>

<http://www.wafu-ikebana.org/faq.php>

<http://stylecaster.com/minimalist-jewelry-trend/>