

karats



IVORY

Traditionally Ivory is thought of as elephant tusk, although its source is much broader. Ivory can be found not only as the teeth and tusks of elephant but, from mammoth, mastodon, walrus, hippopotamus, sperm whale, narwhal, wart hog, boar and elk.

Strict laws have been implemented regarding the sale of Ivory. The protection of Endangered species such as the elephant which had been hunted for the sole purpose of selling Ivory have stalled the destruction of the elephant and diminished the amount of Ivory being sold. In fact it is now illegal to sell or buy most new Ivory.

As a result of this intervention many Ivory substitutes have been seen. These include, but are not limited to: bone, plastic and marble.

Old antique ivory is an exception, and can be found. Anyone purchasing old Ivory should know the source of it and know the dealer they are buying from. Ivory, which is actively and legally traded, is usually fossilized walrus, or ancient mammoth elephant Ivory. Much of this ancient mammoth is found embedded in ice or mud during spring run-off in tundra areas. Many mastodon tusks have been recovered in Alaska's pristine landscape.

Caring for Ivory here in Colorado or in any dry climate is important. Ivory must never be submerged in water. You should not wear your Ivory in the shower, or swimming. Ivory can be treated with some types of oil such as, mink, neetsfoot, or baby oil. Ivory can also be polished up very nicely by a knowledgeable jeweler. But, think twice before you have it done. That patina from years of handling and aging can only be duplicated by time.