

Perfect Match

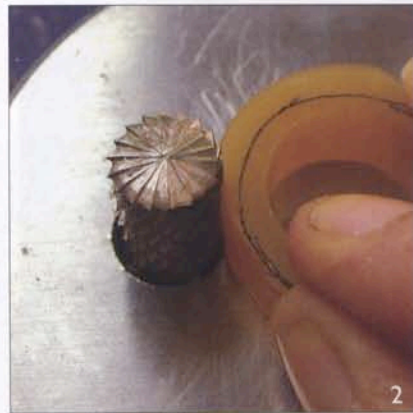
Creating a shadow band for an engagement ring

BY KATE WOLF *One of the most requested custom jobs is a wedding band that follows the contour of an existing engagement ring. Here is a technique that I've found helpful for making this task easy and accurate.*

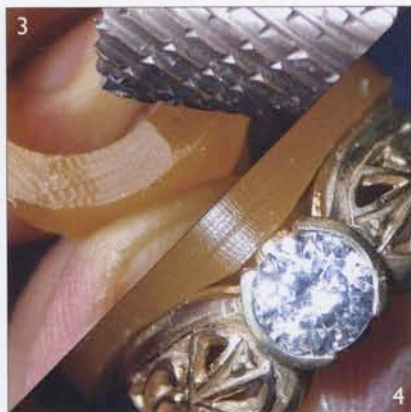
1 Slice off a section of wax ring tube that is wider than the desired wedding band. Open it up to the same size as the engagement ring. Put the wax and the engagement ring on a mandrel and trace around the ring.



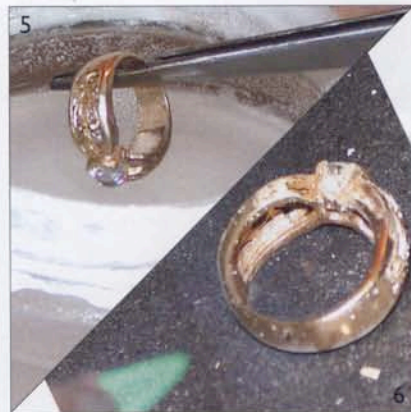
2 Trim outside of the traced line.



3 With burs or wax files, remove wax from the side of the ring blank until it roughly matches the contour of the engagement ring.



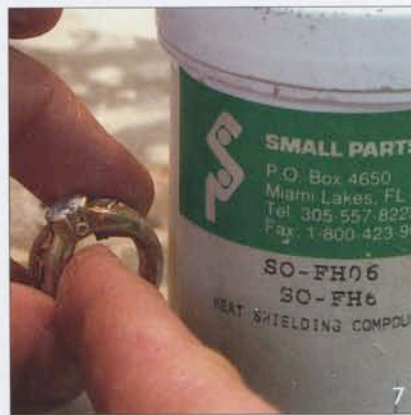
4 They should line up as shown here.



5 Clean the engagement ring in an ultrasonic, dry it, and then dip it in a solution of boric acid powder and denatured alcohol.

6 Burn off the alcohol.

7 Pack the inside of the ring with Heat Shielding Compound. Make sure you fill in the openings. (This will prevent the wax from flowing into the openings, which would make it difficult to separate the rings.) Put Heat Shielding Compound on top of the stone. (Use common sense when deciding which stones are appropriate for this technique.)



8 Wipe the side of the ring that will be against the wax with denatured alcohol.



AT THE BENCH

9 Remove excess Heat Shielding Compound.

10 Using a broom clamp mounted on the soldering area, hold a ring mandrel in position. Put the wax ring on the mandrel.

11 Heat—but don't overheat—the ring to melt it into the wax. (Remember, carving wax melts at 240°F/116°C).

12 Transfer the ring to the mandrel and quickly slide it down against the wax, taking care not to drip molten wax on your skin.

13 The wax is melted against the ring.

14 Remove the bulk of the material with files and burs.

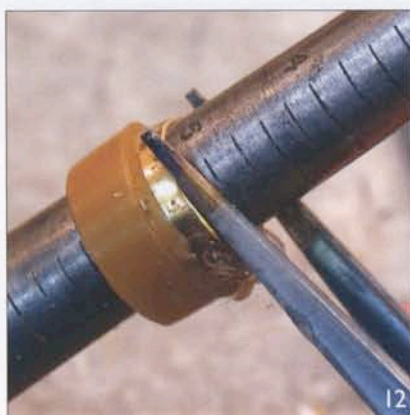
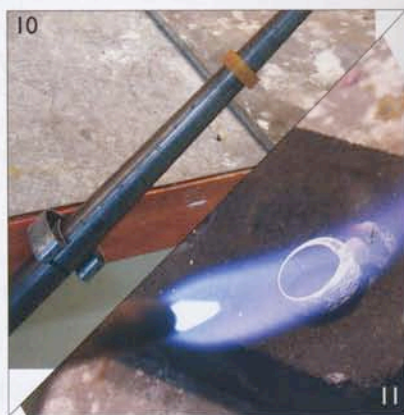
15 Scrape off the excess wax until you can see the edge of the engagement ring below, taking care not to scratch the ring.

16 Use an ongllette graver to cut through the wax *almost* to the ring.

17 Peel off the excess wax.

18 Shape the wax.

19 When the outside shape is done, pry the wax off the engagement ring. If necessary, put it in the refrigerator for a few minutes to help free the wax. (The Heat



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Shielding Compound will dissolve in water.) You have a perfect impression.

20 Blend in the side of the band, taking care to leave the center impression intact.

21 Do a final touch up and voilà! ♦

Kate Wolf is owner of Wolf Tools (wolftools.com) and hosts workshops at Wolf Designs (katewolfdesigns.com).

