

# Beginning Metalsmithing Tools List

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In general, I buy most of my tools and supplies from RioGrande. Otto Frei or Contenti are great alternatives as well. Links I provide are just an example of what I use but feel free to experiment.

## General Bench Tools:

- **Magnifying visor:** to work under magnification. Optivisor with a couple of lens options works great for most of my work. Beware: Amazon sells similar LOOKING visors but they're CRAP. Donegan is the original and their glass optics are great. Haven't tried their acrylic lens option but they're less expensive.
- **Pliers:** after using lots of kinds of pliers for metalsmithing, I find these to be my go-to's. I prefer parallel action to regular pliers when available because of less surface damage to pieces and they hold pieces securely in almost any situation.
  - ▶ Round Flat nose - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/flat-and-half-round-forming-pliers/111180>
  - ▶ Needle Chain nose - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/pliersswanstrom-needle-chain-noses230e/111303>
  - ▶ Parallel Chain nose - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/swanstrom-parallel-action-fine-flat-nose-pliers/111669>
  - ▶ Parallel Flat nose - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/swanstrom-parallel-action-flat-nose-pliers/111667>
  - ▶ Bail Making pliers - (replaces round nose pliers) <https://www.riogrande.com/product/bail-shaping-pliers/111957>
- **Ring clamp, parallel:** sooooo much better than a traditional ring clamp and very cheap. <https://www.riogrande.com/product/parallel-jaw-ring-clamp/113969>
- **Saw frame:** many choices here and this is one of those tools you just have to feel to know which one you like. I have tried a traditional, wholly adjustable frame style and don't like them much, others love them. I've never needed the adjustability. I like *Green Lion*: <https://www.greenlionstudios.com/jewelers-saw-frame>, or PotterUSA (almost always out of stock).
- **Saw blades:** get both 2/0 and 3/0 sizes to start. You will break many blades when you're learning so buy several dozen of each size. You can buy an assortment of sizes also, but buy extra 2/0 and 3/0. Don't buy the cheapest ones, buy Hercules or Rio's LaserGold, for example.

- **Hammers:** there are hammers for hitting other tools and hammers for hitting your precious metal work pieces, NOT to be confused!
  - ▶ Chasing hammer for hitting tools, flat face - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/fretz-revere-chasing-and-riveting-hammer-r-cr/112395>
  - ▶ Non-marring dead blow hammer - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/delrin-deadblow-hammer-cross-peen-and-flat/112472>
  - ▶ Goldsmith/Cross Peen hammer for general purpose work piece hitting - <https://www.riogrande.com/product/fretz-revere-goldsmith-and-cross-peen-hammer-r-gf/112396>
- **Bench block:** 4 x 4 inch is a good size to start. Get an old mouse pad to put under it to dampen the sound.
- **Bench pin:** type depends on your work area, might be a good idea to get a clamp on to start. <https://www.ottofrei.com/Combination-Bench-Pin-Anvil>. Ultimately, I recommend a GRS system.
- **Sand paper:** this stuff rocks! Can be used wet or dry and it lasts a long time, has more consistent grain size (better results). <https://www.riogrande.com/product/3m-imperial-micro-finishing-film-assortment/337310>
- **Scribe**
- **Dividers:** don't go cheap here. I recommend Starrett. <https://www.riogrande.com/product/starrett-deluxe-divider/116171>
- **Center punch:** <https://www.riogrande.com/product/center-punch/118116>
- **Caliper, digital preferred**
- **Metal ruler, metric**
- **Needle files:** don't go cheap on files. After expensive trial and error, I recommend two sets of these, one set in cut 2 (coarse) and one set in cut 4 (finer). <https://contenti.com/grobet-12-file-needle-file-sets>
- **Precision files:** again, don't go cheap. I'd recommend starting with the following shapes:
  - ▶ Barrett - 4" Cut 0, Cut 2, and Cut 4. <https://www.ottofrei.com/Grobet-Precision-Files-Barrette>
  - ▶ Crossing - 4" Cut 2 to start, <https://www.ottofrei.com/Glardon-Vallorbe-Crossing-Precision-Files-LP1960>
  - ▶ Half round - 4" Cut 2 to start, <https://www.ottofrei.com/Grobet-Half-Round-Precision-Files>

- **Bezel pusher:** <https://www.riogrande.com/product/steel-prong-and-bezel-pusher-square/113034>
- **Bezel roller:** <https://www.riogrande.com/product/brass-bezel-roller/113079>
- **Steel burnisher:** <https://www.riogrande.com/product/steel-burnisher-bent/113037>
- **Agate burnisher:** <https://www.riogrande.com/product/agate-burnisher-knife-style-tip/111362>
- **Shear:** Joyce Chen is by far the best for everyday, [https://smile.amazon.com/Joyce-Chen-51-0220-Unlimited-Scissor/dp/B0000CFLH7/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=joyce+chen&qid=1571705778&sr=8-1](https://smile.amazon.com/Joyce-Chen-51-0220-Unlimited-Scissor/dp/B0000CFLH7/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=joyce+chen&qid=1571705778&sr=8-1)