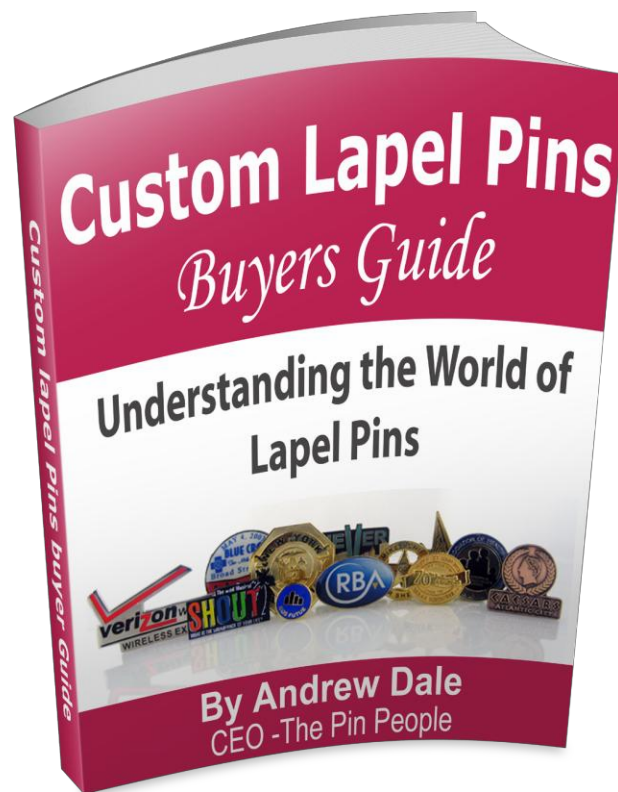


Custom Lapel Pins Buyers Guide

Understanding the World of Lapel Pins



By Andrew Dale

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Lapel Pins

Overview

Lapel pins are small pins that are usually worn on the lapel of a coat, jacket or a dress. It is like a piece of jewelry, but it is jewelry that can bring different messages. These beautiful creative lapel pins are worn by people with pride and others collect them. Lapel pins can be created with different designs. There are some that have the logo of a company or other lapel pins have the design of flags of different countries or just simply a message-slogan.



Uses for Lapel Pins

- **As an integral element of corporate identity**

Lapel pins look great on the coat of employees who are working with either a small firm or a big company. Normally, the designs of their lapel pins are the logos of their company or sometimes the name of the company.

- **Inform and provide recognition to others**

Wearing lapel pins can easily recognize the members of a certain company or organizations. These pins inform the public what type of work you do and the organization you belong with.

- **Recognize and reward achievement and success**

Some pins are made to be used as recognition awards for the achievements and success that a certain employee had done with their company or organization. It is also used as an award for an event or contest. Handing out lapel pins to participants especially to those who won can make the event more memorable.

- **Unique present or collectible**

These lapel pins can also be great gifts. It can be used as a token of appreciation to someone. While others, collect different types and designs of lapel pins. These people start collecting lapel pins as a hobby.

Choosing a Lapel Pin Company - (A Shameless Plug!)

There are a lot of different lapel pin companies. With just a simple search on any search engine, you will see the results for a lot of lapel pin companies. Even if there are a lot of lapel pin companies, you should choose the best lapel pin company for you. A lapel pin company that suits your needs. In choosing a lapel pin company, you need to consider the quality of their products. Know what materials they use to make lapel pins. You can also search for some reviews about the company to make sure they can give you the best and high-quality lapel pins you need. Also, be sure to check how long your order will take and what kind of shipping charges as well as many other add on fees and charges i.e. artwork, mold, die, setup etc. are involved which they may only reveal at the end. You also need to get a quote and make sure that the lapel pin company knows what your budget is. Great thing is that there are some companies that offer a free quote. There are some companies that offer a lot of different services, such as free artwork, free shipping and other incentives that may be included.

In full disclosure, I own ThePinPeople.com. We use this guide to assist our clients to make informed decisions when it comes to developing their own custom lapel pins and our price quote is simple straight forward with no gimmicks. The price we quote you per item includes everything even shipping.

The Pin People, was born in 2000, when the CEO, Andrew Dale, began to create custom lapel pins and citation bars to various law enforcement agencies across the United States. As a former Police Officer in New York, the business began to spread out to various federal and state agencies, until the point that costume departments, for various TV and movie studios began to contact The Pin People for props, as most of the police officers and detectives across the country were wearing our pins.

Now, **The Pin People** has become the Brand Name in the lapel pin industry, as they service many of the Fortune 500 companies, the largest non-profits, and thousands of other organizations and individuals every year.

We have a team of “Pin”gineers, that will work with you from start to finish ensuring that your pins turn out perfectly. We make ordering custom lapel pins, extremely easy. So if you do not wish to learn more, then you can just contact one of The Pin People’s “Pin”gineers, at info@thepinpeople.com, call us at (888)309-PINS, or visit the website at:

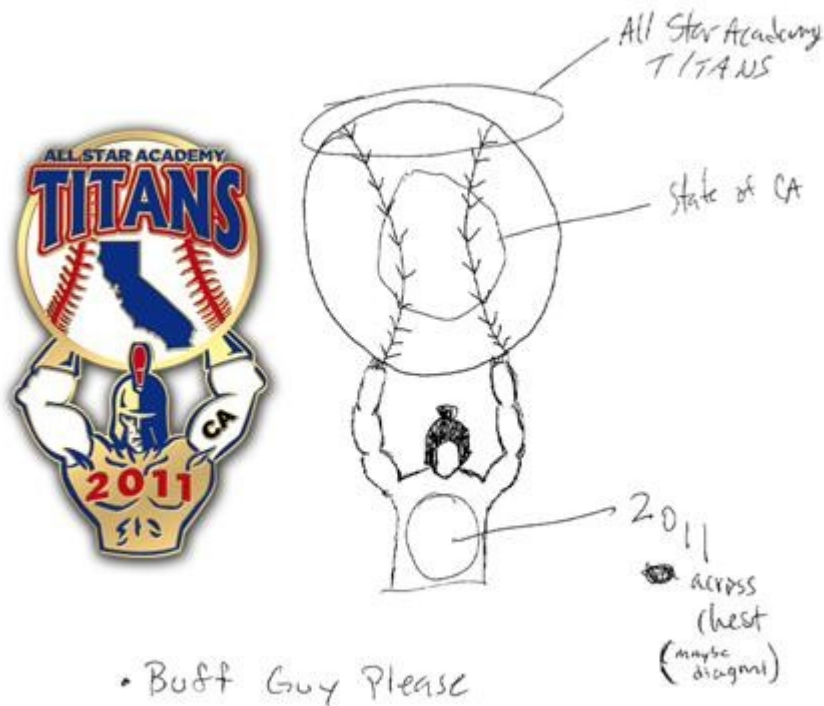
<http://www.thepinpeople.com> and we will be able to get your order going today!



For those that wish to learn more, continue reading, there is a lot more than just a plug for our company ☺

The Order Process

The order process begins when you contact your lapel pin company through phone, email or just filling out their quote form. Some companies offer a free quote. Include a picture of the artwork or a sketch of your design with details for your lapel pins, such as pin size, enamel color, lapel pin process, and materials, plating finish choice, epoxy dome, back of pin, quantity, attachments and delivery time. Once your information is received, they will begin working on your design. The process of creating your design normally takes from a few hours or up to one business day.



You can simply send anything that you have (like the image on the right), you will receive a digital sample, for your review and comments if any changes need to be made. Once the design of your lapel pins is ready, they will email it to you along with a request for billing and shipping information. After you received it, you may request any changes you would like to make to the design. The digital sample will have PMS colors detailed in a color key as these are the colors that would be used in production of your pin. Once you are satisfied with your

design, the company will then email you for a final order confirmation which contains all of the details of your order. You then confirm everything and finalize the order.

The production of your pin then commences. You can contact then the company for the status of your orders and just anticipate for the delivery of your lapel pins.

Creating Your Design – Tips to Ensure That Your Lapel Pins Will Be Perfect

Lapel pin companies have a variety of designs you can choose from. You can also create your own design for your lapel pins. There are other companies that can help you in creating your lapel pin designs. You need to choose or create a design that can be appealing to other people. Here is a [great video about how lapel pins are produced](#) and if you follow the tips below you will have a great understanding and appreciation for the world of lapel pins.



Use simple fonts for lettering, Arial, Times New Roman, etc. By using more complex fonts, sometimes, do not come out the way that you would desire, especially if the text is in metal. These types of fonts, if needed, should be done in a screen print to ensure that they are completely readable and legible.



Small details are usually done in metal plating color, depending on the style of pin that is chosen. We will touch on this in a different section of the guide.



Epola, Cloisonné, Soft Enamel, or Die Struck Pins will have metal lines separating the colors. Think about them as little walls, where the enamel (PMS) color is filled in. The example here is a soft enamel design.



If you prefer not to have thin metal lines separating the elements, you can opt for a Screen Printing Process. If you notice that there are no metal lines separating the Salem Animal Rescue League to the blue background.



This is an example of a die struck pin, or basically a soft enamel pin without any color. You can see that the raised and lower metal creates a beautiful effect for simple designs.



On a die struck lapel pin, often times, we will urge a customer to sandblast the background in order to make the raised metal stand out. Sandblasting give the lapel pins a great, highly polished look on the raised parts!

Choosing A Lapel Pin Base Metal Color

Yes, you have a choice! When designing your lapel pin, you can pick your metal plating color. There are some clients that also opt for a two-tone pin. Although the pricing increases quite a bit, it does create a great design.



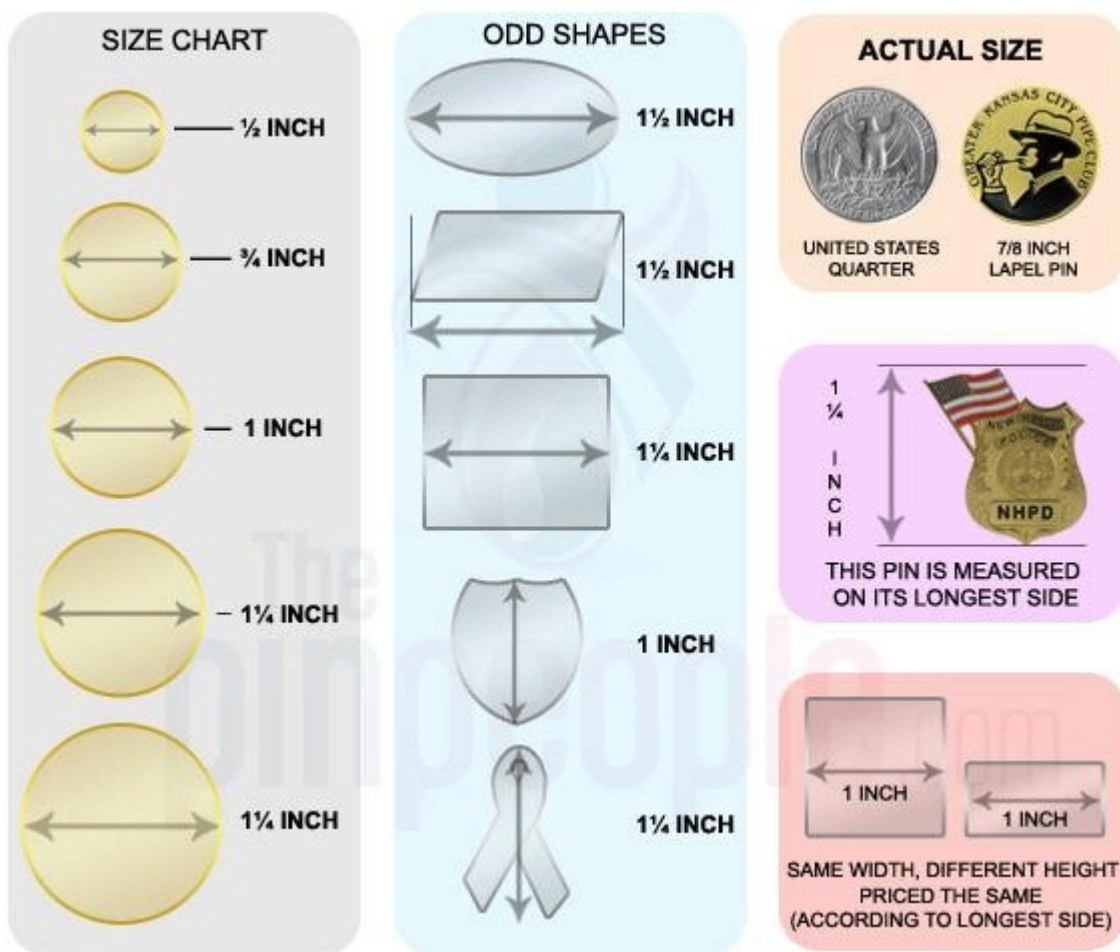
These are really great options when designing a die struck pin, a soft enamel pin with no color. The lower and raised metal tends to really..... by very distinctive when you opt for an antique metal color.

There are also options for a textured background, to give your lapel pin a great effect. This is used on Die Struck lapel pins, or soft enamel lapel pins with no color. These are background textures for the lowered metal that you can choose to make the raised polished metal really pop!



Choosing A Size – Because Size Does Matter!

In choosing a lapel pin, you need to consider the size of your lapel pin. The size of your lapel pin must be appropriate for your design and/or text. You do not need to have a big size of lapel pin just to show off. You need a lapel pin that is powerful. Sometimes it does not depend on the size, just by having a great design and a good quality lapel pin can attract people by itself.



Choosing a Lapel Pin Style

There are several lapel pin styles. But determining what style is best may be a tough task for you. Listed below are the styles of lapel pins and could help you in choosing your lapel pin style, a good lapel pin supplier would help you making this decision easy.

- **Cloisonné Lapel Pins**

Cloisonné is an ancient technique for decorating metalwork objects and now, lapel pins have this style too. Cloisonné pins have a royal history and a legacy. During the 13th century, the cloisonné process was first used in ancient China to create vases and other art for the Emperor.

Cloisonné lapel pins have a jewelry-like appearance. They are an excellent choice for any design that has separated colors. This type of lapel pin is an outstanding style that takes two bronze die-cut molds, one of the outline of your pin and a second of any cutouts.

The Cloisonné lapel pins are made out of powdered glass-like substance and fired at 1600 degrees Fahrenheit which helps the colors to hold fast and prevents the pin from smudging. They use a trimming tool to carefully cut out the outside shape of your lapel pin. When the pin has been cooled, they polished it to a smooth finish. Then your own choice of attachments will be added and will be packed as the last step in making cloisonné lapel pin. Also, cloisonné can be used to hard enamel lapel pins.



- **Hard Enamel (Epola) Lapel Pins**

If you are looking for a refined look of that has very thin separating metal lines then Hard Enamel also known as Epola pins are what you want. These pins have brilliant colored enamel areas that are flat and the metal areas are level with the paint.

Manufacturers refer to Epola as “Misty” Cloisonné, Resin Cloisonné, or Hard Enamel. Resin Epola is the highest quality pin. It has a resin-based color powder, heated at 800 to 900 degrees. Some Epola lapel pins are made from brass metal. Other Epola lapel pins are carved and engraved.



Hard Enamel lapel pins are made from pouring powdered glass into the recesses of a die stuck (stamped) brass base. The colors are matched using actual Pantone Matching Colors. After being baked at a very high temperature, the glass enamel is sanded and polished to flush out the metal lines that separate the colors. This gives the pins a smooth and lustrous quality.

- **Die Struck Lapel Pins**

If you are looking for a classic look of an all metal pin, Die Struck is the best for you. Without the use of color, metal on metal gives a traditional look whether your Die Struck pins are polished or antiqued. These pins are created from a die that is made from the design that you approve. Your die or mold is then struck from raw metal material. The stamping process creates recessed areas along the pins face. Once the die is created, they are hand polished one at a time and then plated with gold, silver, nickel, black nickel or several variations of antiquing.



Die Struck lapel pins are perfect for clear-cut designs with larger text. These pins are available with sandblasting in the recessed areas. This is the best way to give depth to your design and highlight fine details. Even if Die Struck lapel pins are simple, they are viewed with understated elegance.

Finally, Die Struck lapel pins can be created in a wide variety of shapes and sizes in order to present just the right image for your company.

- **Soft Enamel Lapel Pins**

Soft Enamel lapel pins have gained in popularity because of their great appearance and affordability. They have a high perceived value and the look of fine jewelry. Soft Enamel lapel pins are one of the most popular choices for custom lapel pins, it offers a great looking product for a price slightly less than the Cloisonné lapel pin process or imitation hard enamel lapel pins.



Metal materials that are used for Soft Enamel lapel pins are copper, brass, iron for die struck or stamped with soft enamel and zinc alloy for die cast Soft Enamel lapel pins. After being struck with the die, Soft Enamel lapel pins are filled with enamel paints. The pins are fired at low heat to seal the colors and provide a lustrous appearance and we end up with the true feel of raised and recessed metal.

- **Offset Printed Lapel Pins**

If you are in need of a lapel pin with a great amount of detail or wide range of colors, then Offset Printed lapel pins are great for you. These are the best solution for pins which need to incorporate gradients, shadows, fine lines and even photographs into their designs. These pins give you maximum flexibility without altering or distorting your design. Offset Printed lapel pins begin when the exact image of your design „camera ready” is transferred from a photographic negative onto the surface of the metal lapel pin. The Offset Printed style of pin is used in instances where a gradient of color shift is necessary.



For an exact replica of your logo or photograph, there is no better style of pin for you but the Offset Printed lapel pin. The process of offset printing enables the printing of designs with gradual colors that make it difficult for designs to be printed by other methods. Also, Offset Printed lapel pins are produced faster than any other type of custom shaped lapel pin and it comes with a protective epoxy coating on top.

- **3D Cast Lapel Pins**

3D Cast lapel pins are very easy to differentiate from 2D pins. 3D Cast lapel pins offer a level of detail and depth not attainable by a standard 2D Die Struck lapel pin. A 3D Cast lapel pin will have multiple surface levels at multiple angles to create a 3-dimensional look and feel. 3D Cast lapel pins can be made in just about any size and shape and are available in many different plating options or finishes.



The manufacturing of 3D Cast lapel pins differs in many ways from Die Struck lapel pins. The biggest difference is in the way the pin is formed. 3D Cast lapel pins use a rubber mold that accepts molten metal. The use of a rubber mold and molten metal allows for the 3D Cast lapel pin to have more dimension and details. The mold is spun at a high revolution rate as molten metal is added to a port on the mold. From here, each pin is polished to remove burs, spurs, or any surface defects. Your pin is then plated in your choice of metal finishes and the selected attachment is applied.

- **Photo Etched / Laser Screen Lapel Pins**

If you want a similar look to a Soft Enamel pins or Cloisonné pins, but with a more economical price, Photo Etched lapel pins are the best solution for you. These pins are made from a thinner metal plate that is suitable for etching. These pins also offer the advantages of color with the affordability many budgets require.

Lapel pins that are manufactured using the Photo Etched process are unique in the fact that the image on the lapel pin is taken directly from your „camera ready“ photo negative. Practically anything you take a picture of can be transformed into an attractive photo etched lapel pin.



The process of this style is amazing. First, the image of your design is transferred from your photographic negative onto the surface of the metal. To ensure the image lasts, your design is then etched into the brass lapel pin base using an acid-reaction process. This allows the design to “set” in the lapel pin and remain attractive for a long period of time.

Then, the indentions in your lapel pins are filled with the enamel colors. The sheet of metal is then fired at 450 degrees Fahrenheit for 12 to 15 minutes in order to “bake” the color onto your lapel pins.

Laser Screen or Silk Screen lapel pins are similar to Offset Printed lapel pins. Silk Screen lapel pins deliver a great deal of detail produced in full color. Using a screen made of finely woven, but porous fabric stretched over a wood or aluminum frame, areas of the screen are blocked off with a non-permeable material. Ink is then placed on top of the screen, and a squeegee is used to push the ink evenly into the screen openings and onto the ink. The ink is allowed to dry and then the process is repeated with another screen and different color. When all the colors have been applied, an epoxy coating seals the design and protects it from scratching and fading.

Understanding Cut Outs

A cut out can give a very unique look to a lapel pin. However, understanding cut outs, seems to be an issue, until you actually visualize examples. A cut out is any “piercing” through a design. So for instance, if you notice the ICE Badge example on the right, there are two cut outs, right below the wings of the eagle.



Now in this next example, you will notice that there are no piercings through the lapel pin design. The outside shape is cut to shape, but since there is no piercing through the metal, there is no cutout.



Okay, POP QUIZ!



Cut out



No Cut Out



Multiple Cut Outs



No Cut Out

Simple, right? Hopefully that clears up the issues of cut outs!

Additional Lapel Pin Options

Danglers

Danglers are small single attachments that connect to the larger pin with a hoop or anchor. Danglers are nice way of attaching additional information such as a slogan or motto to the larger pin.



Slider

A slider is similar to dangle and attaches to the main pin by cutting a line through and placing the attachment through which allows the attachment to move freely back and forth.



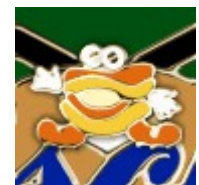
Bobble-Head

Like the slider, a bobble-head is a small pin attached to the larger pin to create movement. The bobble-head is a great concept for grabbing attention.



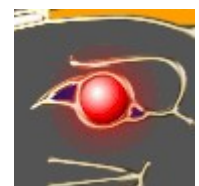
Spinner

Spinners are a separate pin just like the slider. It is simply a smaller pin that spins around creating a fun way to draw attention.



Blinkers

Blinkers are just small LED's that blink on and off. They are operated on watch batteries that last up to 150 hours continuously. A small button on the back of the pin controls the on/off switch.



Glitter

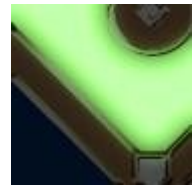
Glitter is a nice way of adding special colors to a design. Glitter is created by mixing enamel color with metal flakes. When captured by light, it produces a twinkle effect.

**Translucent Colors**

Translucent colors are enamel colors that are translucent allowing the polished metal under the enamel to show through.

**Glow-in-the-Dark-Colors**

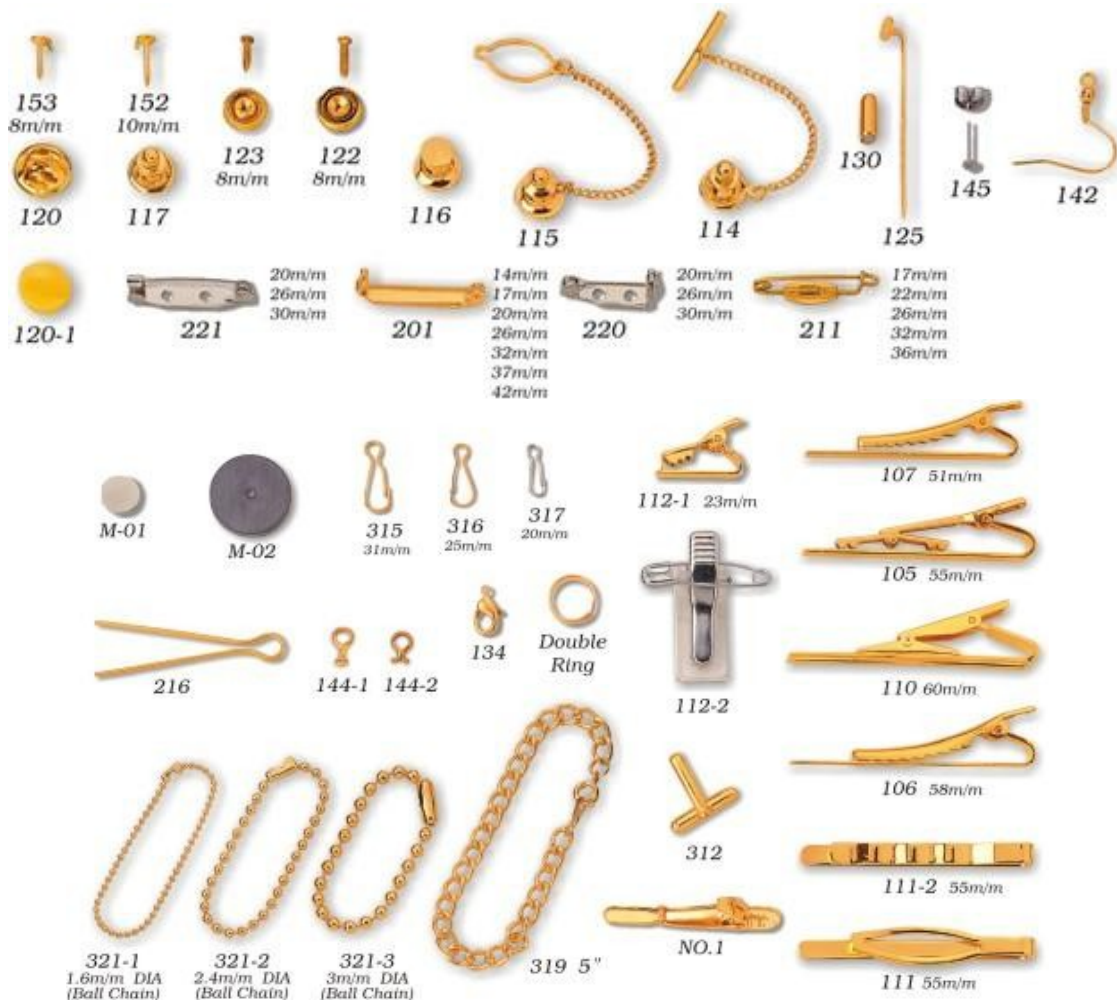
Glow-in-the-dark colors are made with special enamel that can capture daylight or any light which allows it to emit during the night or in the dark.



Lapel Pin Attachment Options

There are quite a few options when it comes to lapel pin attachments. Actually, this is where it is going to get interesting. Lapel pins are pretty neat in the fact that the face or adornment of the lapel pin can be attached to many different types of attachments, which actually create a whole new product. So basically, a money clips, tie tack, golf ball marker, are actually a lapel pin with a different attachment on the back. Let's explore this a little further.

These are the attachments for the lapel pins, earrings, tie tacks, tie bars, and cufflinks.



The cool part about understanding this is that you now understand that you can mix and match products. So, for instance, if you wanted to order lapel pins, money clips, and cufflinks, you can do that with the same mold and just change the back-end attachment.

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These are the money clip attachments. Once again, these are attachments that can be used with the same mold as the lapel pin.



These are the key chain attachments. Key chains, however, cannot use the same mold as a lapel pin. You will notice that key chain attachments have to attach to the adornment either through a loop or a cut out. Hence, the same mold for a lapel pin, money clip, cufflink, tie tack, tie bar, etc., cannot be used.



Lapel Pin Packing

There are many different options when it comes to packaging your lapel pins. Depending on what how you plan to distribute the pins, will depend on if you need further packaging options. Almost every lapel pin company offers the plastic zip bag, or otherwise known as poly bag at no cost. However, if you are using the pins for an event, or for a customer or an employee recognition piece, you may opt for a different type of packing.

The most common types of packaging is the poly bag, plastic (acrylic) case, velvet pouch (with or without imprinting), or the velvet case. You can see examples of all of these below.



Remember, when you opt for a plastic case or velvet box, it does take up more room when shipping the items.

There is also another very popular option. It is the card with the lapel pin attached to the card. You will notice in the example on the right, that you can design a card that carries your message as well as your lapel pin. Cards can vary in size at your discretion.

This is a very popular option as you can add a lot of information, contact information, a poem, or other inspirational message to accompany your lapel pin.



Now You Are An Expert

Armed with the information above you are now a lapel pin expert. You can make good informed decision about how you want your lapel pin to turn out. As I explained before, the world of lapel pins is pretty exciting, and I know that you will now start to take a second look at lapel pins worn by other people when you pass them on the street or see them in the office.

If you are inquiring about pricing in reference to the information that you recently learned you can always feel free to contact us at any time. Our “Pin”gineers are always there to assist you with any questions that you may have. Whether you are just curious or serious about creating your own lapel pin, The Pin People can guide you through the process.

Feel free to contact us anytime!



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