

Important: you have 3 visual levels of the metal.

1st Crusty ball.

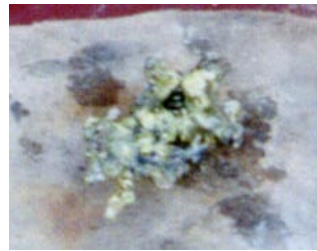
2nd Spinning, it is actually the copper & silver separating, **this is when you pour.**

3rd Boiling, TOO HOT, it jumps around and looks like tiny fireworks coming off the metal, the metal is actually vaporizing. If it get this hot you will have air bubbles in the silver that you won't see till you're done.

Note: I don't like to on direct casting, but stirring with a carbon rod will reduce air bubbles.



Getting Salt Off Silver & Pickle: While hot, pick the piece out of the salt with the tongs and drop into water. Then let the salt soak off or pull it out and scrape it off. Now it is multicolored with black spots on the black (I only seem to get it with the salt casting), the best way to remove that black spot is to put soldering flux on the whole piece. Then reheat the piece (the flux will boil - foam - turn to syrup - then the piece will turn white, remove torch NOW! Next thing that will happen is the silver will start melting, but I've never had one collapse yet). Throw your pieces in warm or cold pickle, let it soak any oxidation that is left (warm pickle works faster). The copper tongs are a MUST to add or remove pieces from the pickle!!! After removing, drop in a baking soda and water mixture then rinse.



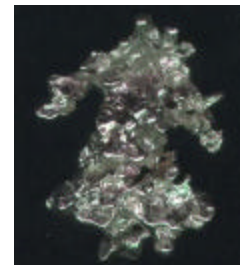
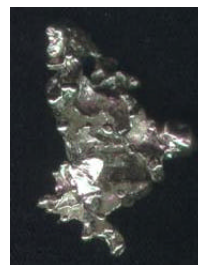
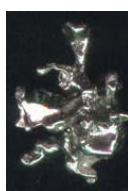
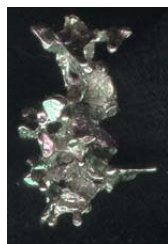
Bright Burnishing:

◆ **Steel Shot only:** Add ½ tsp. - 1 Tbsp. of or burnishing compound, your steel shot, and your pieces to the tumbling drum, add enough water to cover shot. Tumble for 16 hours or more.

◆ **Abrasive Pyramids & Steel Shot:** Mix it same as above (except use lapidary soap for the pyramids), but tumble for 1 hours with medium pyramids, 1 hours fine, 1-3 hours steel shot. For a smoother texture double time with pyramids, more texture use only steel shot.

◆ **Drying Steel Shot:** If you use plain steel, rinse and put on cookie sheet, pop into a 250 deg. oven until dry. It will rust if stored damp!!!

Note: Vibrating Tumblers are faster, but finding one that can handle the weight of the shot is harder to find.



Now Is The Time For Your Imagination: Look at your pieces, what do you want for the top, where and if a stone can be placed, where can I put a chain or hook it to something

1st Look for natural holes for a chain.

2nd Where can I drill a hole for a chain.

3rd Where can I solder a bail for the chain.

Solder or drill now, run it through the steel shot again for a couple of hours again. You can do this before bright burnishing, but sometimes it is easier to see what you want after a shine is put on.

Polishing: It is almost useless to polish with a buffer, so just wipe well with a polishing cloth.

Finishing: Set or glue in any stones, and wipe with polishing cloth again.



Go out and buy the ingredients for homemade Ice-cream, use up the extra salt. Invite some friends over, and enjoy the friendship & Ice-cream.

TIPS:

It is always best to learn from several people and do what works for you. Here is a couple of good spots.



Bean Casting:

<http://www.frii.com/~dnorris/beancasting.html>
My suggestion to add: Use the beans dry. After 2-3 cast, the beans start to swell, and the casts start looking great, after 10, the beans are too swollen, they should be allowed to dry. Take out only the big pieces, as you cast more the metal will fuse to the smaller pieces, giving a great effect, they may need just a spot of solder for the ones that don't fuse together. I prefer to bright burnish as described above.

Pine Needle Casting:

<http://pinneedlecasting.homestead.com/Main.html>
I prefer using soft, decorative, broom straw. It only has a few thick straws, and the softer one leaves a nice pattern. Remember to soak straw for about 20 min. before casting. To bright burnish, you can just use a steel or brass wheel for a hand held rotary power tool, and some white diamond prep polish.

References:

Don Norris at <http://www.frii.com/~dnorris>
And many other good people.