

# Cut It Out!

**A** sawframe and blades can strike fear in the heart of a beginning metalsmith. I'll never forget the groans and curses of frustration or the sound of breaking blades during my first sawing class. The instructor had made it look so effortless and easy, but for some, proper sawing skills took all semester to master. Even experienced jewelers sometimes have a problem getting into a zenlike state for sawing, so I checked in with two of my expert advisors for their tips and tricks for getting the most out of one's sawing technique.

Here's what I found out.

## Christine Dhein

Often sawblades slip out of position on the first stroke, which can damage your piece. To ensure your first pass with the blade cuts the metal in the correct spot, saw into the wood of your bench pin with one or two strokes to stabilize the blade.

Position your piece on the bench pin so that it meets the blade at the beginning of the line to be cut. While the wood holds the blade in position, saw into the metal with several strokes.

Remove the blade from the wood and place the notch you cut between the "V" in the bench pin to saw the rest of the line. With this "bite" in the metal, your sawblade will naturally cut where you intended.



Christine Dhein is an award-winning jewelry designer who works primarily with precious metals, diamonds, and recycled rubber. Her innovative designs have been displayed nationally and internationally. She is the Assistant Director of the Revere Academy where she also teaches Keum-boo and Fabrication. Christine will be releasing an instructional video entitled *Keum-boo: The Art of Attaching Gold to Silver* in August 2006. For more information, visit [www.sexymetal.com](http://www.sexymetal.com).



## Mike Martin

Mike is a loyal reader who sent me a coin cutting vise of his own design, along with a diagram and blueprints for making one after seeing "How to Saw-Pierce for Dramatic Effect" in the