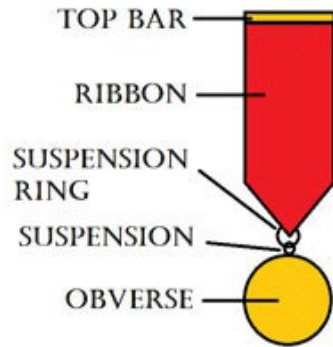


A Refresher on Medal Terminology

MEDAL TAXONOMY



NOT SHOWN: BROOCH, REVERSE FACE

The common parts of a medal are:

1. Top Bar – Not always present, but when it's there the function is to secure the ribbon to the brooch. If present, it may be inscribed with names or places.
2. Ribbon – the part of the medal that connects the medal proper to the brooch. Originally silk, these are now usually made of synthetic materials, commonly grosgrain or satin.
3. The medal itself has two sides or faces:
 1. The obverse face is the side which a casual observer can see when the medal is being worn.
 2. The reverse face is that side worn closest to the wearer's chest.
4. The brooch is the pin used to attach the medal to the uniform.
5. The suspension ring is the contact point between the medal and the ribbon. On some medals, the ribbon is folded through the suspension ring during mounting, while others use a bottom bar (see *top bar* above).
6. The suspension is a loop or attachment point affixed to the top of the medal, where it connects to the suspension ring.

Considering Medals

Effectively, a medal is normally comprised of two main components, the ribbon and the disk, which are usually made up of different materials and which can react differently under the same conditions. For example, under mildly humid conditions any silver or copper fittings of a medal will quickly tarnish if not protected, while the cloth ribbon of the same medal may suffer no lasting effects (or may develop mold or mildew). Under strong light conditions (such as in direct sunlight) the metal fittings of the same medal will not be affected, but the cloth ribbon will quickly fade. As such, any strategy for cleaning, storing, and/or displaying medals must consider all materials used in the construction of the award. Unfortunately, because of the wide variety of materials that could be used in the construction of awards and honours, we can only offer general guidelines in this publication.

Storage

The best place to store an award is usually in the box it came in - assuming it came with one. Second-best for storage is a padded envelope of the sort commonly used to send small objects in the mail - you want to ensure that the decoration is protected from knocking against any hard surfaces which could dent the medal, and that the components of the decoration are securely held together so they can't get separated.

Finally, if possible, always wear soft cotton gloves when handling your decorations to prevent the transfer of oils, etc. from your skin.

Labelling

You should always label the awards in your collection, with information such as:

- Proper name of the award

- Who it was presented by
- Who presented to (if not yourself)
- Date presented
- Any other relevant details such as where or why presented (i.e. if it was presented "at MicroCon 2022 in Las Vegas")

Displaying Your Medals?

You may want to display your medals for all to see, even when you're not wearing them. While this an entirely understandable impulse, recall the earlier comments about how environmental conditions such as sunlight or humidity may impact on components of the decoration. Every effort must be made to ensure that your awards are stored in a temperature- and humidity-controlled environment, away from direct sunlight. Care should also be taken to limit the decorations' exposure to airborne contaminants such as cigarette smoke or chemical fumes which could cause the materials to discolor or break down over time. Finally, displaying medals for an extended time in a vertically suspended state could put undue strain on the suspension ring. Therefore, if you must display your medals for an extended period, we would recommend putting them in a shadow box or other glass-top case (locked or secured so as to protect the medals - from curious fingers as well as dust), laying flat on a table or shelf (away from the edge so it can't be knocked off accidentally), and out of direct sunlight.

Repairing Medals

Despite our best efforts, sometimes our awards will get damaged - particularly when we are wearing them, and they can get snagged on something. A couple of the most common scenarios are outlined below, along with guidance on how to recover.

Broken Suspension Ring

Recall that the suspension ring is the piece that connects the medal proper to the ribbon. Unfortunately, when wearing your decorations, it's all too easy for something to get snagged, bending or breaking the suspension ring. As long as it's just the suspension ring that's been bent or broken, it's easy to replace it with a "jump ring" from a craft or hobby store. If the suspension (attachment point) of the medal itself has been damaged, you may need to contact a jeweler to see if they can repair it with solder.

Missing or Detached Brooch

The brooch being the part of the decoration that affixes it to the recipient's clothing, it is typically at the back of the award and thus out of sight. As such, it can normally simply be reattached with a strong adhesive such as E6000, or a replacement (readily available at most craft and hobby stores) can be used. Ensure that you remove as much of the old adhesive as possible before performing the repair. If possible, test the adhesive with the materials used for your decoration first - having your medal melt because you chose a glue that was incompatible with the material of the ribbon would be a disaster!

Cleaning Medals

As noted previously, a decoration should be thought of as two distinct parts - the ribbon and the medal proper. Each of these will obviously require different cleaning techniques. The medal can normally be wiped with a soft cloth (damp if necessary), while the ribbon will need to be spot-cleaned of stains using a product that will not mar, damage, or fade the ribbon material. Try a small amount of soapy water. As always, spot-check your cleaner in an inobtrusive place first to make sure it won't damage the award.

About MEDALS

The Microphaleristic Educational Archive and Library of Slabovia (MEDALS) was founded in 2018 by HRM King George 2.0 of Slabovia.

The archive and library exist to document for future generations the diversity and splendour of medals, orders, and other decorations issued by various micronations. The documented collection can be found online at <http://www.microphalerist.com>, or the Board of Directors may be contacted by e-mail at medals@slabovia.com

Contributions

MEDALS welcomes contributions of phaleristic specimens from all micronations!

Physical specimens should be carefully wrapped and shipped with appropriate documentation (see below) to:

George Bragg
PO Box 99900 KA 614 655
RPO Parkwoods Plaza
Don Mills Ontario Canada M3A 0A3

Virtual specimens (i.e. photos) can be sent via e-mail to medals@slabovia.com with the following information:

- The name of your micronation and a link to its official website if any
- Pictures of the front and back of the award (taken with a white background)
- The name of the award
- A short paragraph outlining the awarding criteria and any other special features of the award

(If sending via e-mail, please only document one decoration per e-mail.)

Please note that the archive only documents awards presented in the physical world.

Storing and Caring For Your Medals & Honours



An educational pamphlet from the Microphaleristic Educational Archive and Library of Slabovia (MEDALS)

