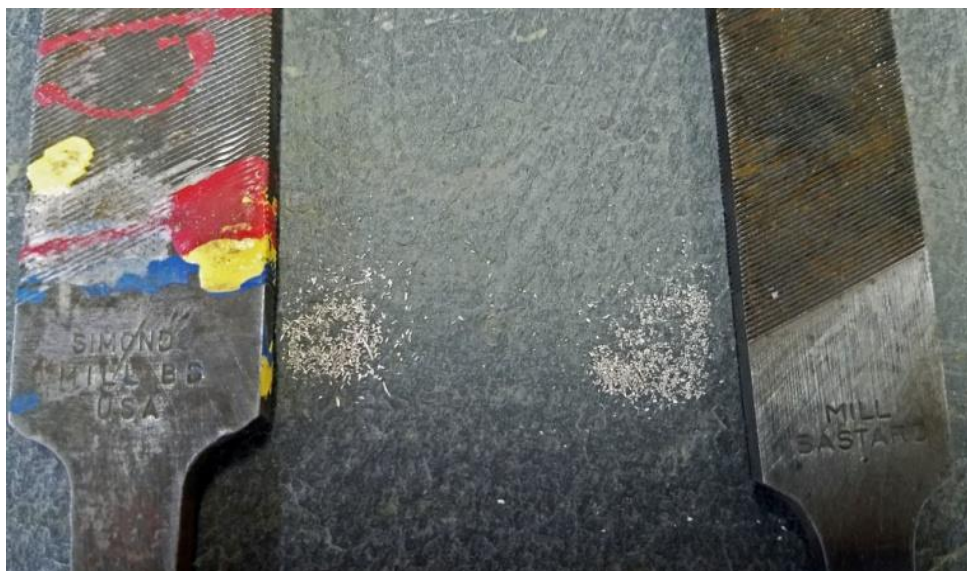


## Silver and Gold Dust... a word about files

by April Bower

About FILES: There are lots of methods to make dust for fusing texture. Sawing, filing and burrs. Find one you feel comfortable with. Filing is low tech and easy. We are not making a lot of dust and we want coarse grains or shreds. The 18k and Silver are both soft metals and a cheap hardware store file will work fine, or maybe search your garage for something you already have. \*  
note. Good files are NOT inexpensive. For your jewelry work I do not recommend a cheap file. Only for this "dust" job do I suggest a cheap file.



here are the dust shreds from the same cut

(Bastard cut) in different size files.

left is an 8" and right is 6" file

info about files:

- American Pattern files are graded with terms like Bastard, second cut and smooth cut ..no I'm not swearing...lol. These are different cuts. and a bastard cut on a 8" file will be correspondingly coarser than the same cut on a 6" file. So bigger file; bigger cut, not just more cutting surface.
- Swiss pattern cuts are more often used by Machinists or Jewelers for the finer cuts and more varied shapes with #00 being coarsest and #0- #4 finer and finer.
  - **For our DUST use, look for**
- a big file. 8" best, 6" next best. The measurement is from the cutting part to tip.

- a wide flat file. a flat side of a big file that has a rounded side is ok. Narrow or square = not so good.
- a coarse file. read the cut on most files, stamped just above or on the tang. Swiss pattern: #00 is best.(coarsest) #0 next . on American Pattern, Bastard is best
- a handle. Wood or plastic handles are cheap and add several inches of cutting stroke to your file, but more importantly, it is safer and more comfortable for your hand. So if your file doesn't have a handle buy one and jam it on.
- Files cut on the forward stroke. Use a bit of downward pressure with the push, with no pressure on the drag back.

I tried a coarse "Checkering" file. It works but was slower to make dust and made finer dust.

Here are some links to some very inexpensive possibilities. some are made for wood or plastic, but will work for this goal

\*[https://www.harborfreight.com/8-inch-flat-file-96626.html?fbclid=IwAR3obs0\\_onUkYpckaVGrrZkzCwozQcfk4A46kj4e3L9CE-N7AcsEv6DD7l8](https://www.harborfreight.com/8-inch-flat-file-96626.html?fbclid=IwAR3obs0_onUkYpckaVGrrZkzCwozQcfk4A46kj4e3L9CE-N7AcsEv6DD7l8) single flat file less than \$4

\*<https://www.harborfreight.com/12-piece-file-and-rasp-set-97070.html> good cheap file set for dust and wax and wood forms The half round /flat file make a nice coarse dust and quickly, but may be more of a "Shred".

\*<https://www.harborfreight.com/5-inch-curved-jaw-locking-pliers-39666.html> these locking pliers are comfortable to hold, work well and are \$3! Will come in handy in other applications too. These are only available in stores, not online , sorry. You could get the next size larger.....

Below is a photograph of what I describe as "Dust" on left and "Shreds" on right. I have found a combo of both best as the dust helps fuse the shreds down. Shreds on their own stack up like haystacks and have few contact points with the silver, so don't fuse as well. The fact that they are larger, makes them show more, but not if they fall off!

