

Why Your \$10,000 in Jewelry Might Be Insured for \$1,500

The hidden dollar caps in every homeowner policy — and the five-minute check that finds them.

The Second Loss

The burglary was bad enough. When Maria got home and found the bedroom ransacked, the first loss was obvious: her grandmother's ring, her wedding set, the anniversary watch — roughly \$10,000 in jewelry, gone. The second loss came three weeks later, in an envelope from her insurance company. The check was for \$1,500.

Not because the adjuster doubted her claim, and not because she lacked coverage — her policy showed \$150,000 in personal property protection. The reason sat two lines deep in a section most homeowners have never read: **Special Limits of Liability**. Her policy, like most, capped jewelry theft at \$1,500 — total, no matter what the jewelry was worth.

What Sublimits Are

Your personal property coverage sounds like one big bucket. It isn't. Inside it, standard policies place much smaller caps on specific categories — especially for theft — because small, valuable, portable items are exactly what burglars target. Typical caps in a standard policy commonly land near these ranges (yours may differ — that's the point of checking):

- **Cash, coins, gift cards** — often around \$200
- **Jewelry, watches, furs (theft)** — commonly around \$1,500 *total*
- **Firearms (theft)** — commonly around \$2,500
- **Silverware (theft)** — commonly around \$2,500
- **Watercraft and trailers** — commonly around \$1,500
- **Business property at home** — commonly around \$2,500

The jewelry cap is the trap that catches the most families: it is usually total, not per item. Three rings and a watch worth \$12,000 together share one \$1,500 pool.

Policy Fighter Insight™

The personal property number on your declarations page is a ceiling for your belongings as a whole — not a promise about any particular item. For your most valuable possessions, the real coverage is set by sublimits deeper in the policy, often a tiny fraction of what those items are worth.

Why This Is Personal

When founder Tom Birney's own home burned the day before Thanksgiving, working through the personal property claim meant confronting exactly how policies treat individual belongings — and how much depends on details most homeowners never see until the worst day. Policy Fighter exists so you can see those details today, on a calm day, instead.

The Five-Minute Sublimit Check

- **Step 1 — Find the section.** In the full policy document, locate “Special Limits of Liability” within the personal property coverage.
- **Step 2 — Walk your home against the list.** Jewelry box, gun safe, coin collection, camera gear, cash envelope: is what you own worth more than its cap?
- **Step 3 — Note theft-only vs. all perils.** Many policies cap jewelry only for theft but pay in full for fire. The section says which — and it changes everything.
- **Step 4 — Ask about scheduling anything over a cap.** A scheduled personal property endorsement (personal articles floater) insures specific items at agreed value — often with no deductible and coverage for simple loss. Usually a modest annual cost; jewelry typically needs a recent appraisal.
- **Step 5 — Photograph everything valuable today.** Proof of ownership is half of every claim, and it's the half you can win in advance for free.

Four Questions for Your Next Renewal

1. “What are my special limits for jewelry, firearms, silverware, cash, and electronics?”
2. “Do those limits apply to theft only, or to all losses?”
3. “What would it cost to schedule my ring / watch / collection at appraised value?”
4. “Is there a blanket jewelry endorsement if I have several smaller pieces?”

Download the FREE Guide

“8 Questions That Reveal If You're Actually Protected”

PolicyFighter.com/guide

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— The Policy Fighter Team

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