

THE NOBEL PRIZE MEDALS

This year's Nobel Prizes will soon be awarded. Here we take a look at the composition of the medals awarded to the winners – as well as a fun bit of chemistry history involving the medals!

PRE-1980

Au APPROX. 96%

23 CARAT GOLD
SOLID GOLD - NO COATING
MASS: 200 GRAMS



POST-1980

Au APPROX. 75%

18 CARAT GOLD
24 CARAT GOLD COATING
MASS: 175 GRAMS

NOBEL PRIZES & AQUA REGIA

During the Second World War, when Germany invaded Denmark, the Nobel Prizes of physicists Max von Laue and James Franck were dissolved in aqua regia (a mix of nitric acid and hydrochloric acid) by the Hungarian chemist George de Hevesy. This prevented them being discovered, and the gold was later recovered from the solution and the medals recast.

DISSOLVING GOLD IN AQUA REGIA



AQUA REGIA

CHLOROAUIC ACID

RECOVERING GOLD FROM AQUA REGIA



SODIUM BISULFITE

ELEMENTAL GOLD



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