

#9 Bakelite Bunny Rings

\$20.00
Paid

From: Estate sale
Bellingham, WA



Pair Bakelite Bunny Rabbit Napkin Rings-CUTE!

Description:

Vintage and darling bakelite bunny rabbit napkin rings are 2 1/8" tall and 1/2" thick. The ring hole is 1 3/8". They are in excellent condition and one is depression green and one is yellow.



**Winning
Bid:**

\$132.50

Ended: 10/1/00

History: 15 bids

Starting Bid: \$9.99, \$99 Reserve

Winner: Tacoma, WA

Viewed

000184 X

Bakelite Bunny Rings #9

The Story

I was sitting in my office at the back of the shop one day when I got a call from Eric, a producer at NBC's *Evening Magazine* in Seattle. He had heard of me and wanted to do a show about eBay. He wanted me to pitch him an idea for an attention-grabbing show. I suggested that he send a camera crew to Bellingham and they could follow me around going to garage sales. We could put our best items up for auction and see how they did. He liked the idea! Two days later, reporter Mimi Gan showed up at the shop on a Saturday morning.

My good friend Audrey Mortensen was a trooper and went with me. Audrey was my first employee and worked at the shop for over eight years. We found quite a few neat things that morning and it was fun being filmed. We went back to the shop and I did my research and listed three items: a Wales adding machine, a Sears starburst clock, and these Bakelite bunny napkin rings. I paid \$7 for the adding machine, \$4 for the clock and \$20 for the napkin rings.

Bakelite and Catalin are forms of phenol formaldehyde, a plastic, invented in 1908 by L.H. Baekland. There were two major types, cast and molded. Bakelite is molded, usually dark in color, and used for utilitarian pieces. Catalin is cast and used mostly for jewelry and novelties. Pieces in both types of plastic

were popular from 1930 to 1950. These bunny rings were probably Catalin, but "Bakelite" is a much more common term. A random check on eBay reveals 5477 items listed with "Bakelite" in the title and only 183 with "Catalin." Which term would you have used?

To find out if a piece is Bakelite or Catalin, try this easy test. Hold the edge of the piece under hot running tap water for up to 30 seconds and then smell it. If it's Bakelite or Catalin, it will give off a phenol, or fresh shellac, odor.

The Wales adding machine sold for \$50 to a man in England. The clock went for \$36 and the napkin rings for \$132.50 to Sherree in Tacoma, WA, of all places. When I emailed Sherree to ask if she had a photo I could use, she wanted to know why the napkin rings were one of my favorite items sold. I told her it was because they had been featured on *Evening Magazine*. She couldn't believe that she had missed seeing it. I told her I would make a copy of the show to send her. What a small world!

The show was a big hit and they aired my segment about eight times over two years. I became infamous in my little hometown.

