

# Nippon Precision Jewel Industry Co., Ltd.

Hyogo Only One Company (selected in FY 2020)

## [Company Profile]

Address	100 Ashiya, Shinonsen Town, Mikata District, Hyogo 669-6701
TEL	0796-82-3171 (main line)
FAX	0796-82-4110
URL	<a href="http://www.jico.co.jp">http://www.jico.co.jp</a> (In Japanese)
No. of employees	54 (as of April 2021)
Capital	20 million yen
Founding	October 1959
Representative	Kazushi Nakagawa

## [Business Overview]

Manufactures and sells record needles, contact gauge, dressers, lens cleaners, and diamond bars.

## [Technology]

The development of phonograph stylus—the technology underlying all businesses conducted at Nippon Precision Jewel Industry (JICO)



There is not much demand for record needles. Therefore JICO had considered withdrawing from the needle industry. However, thanks to the recent analog trend and need to stay home

due to the novel coronavirus, there is an increasing demand for records in not only Japan but also Western countries. However, due to the nature of the product, record needles cannot be mass produced. They need to be handmade one by one with a microscope and tweezers. Therefore, JICO is currently doing its best to meet customers' expectations.

## **[History of Development]**

JICO was founded as a sewing needle manufacturer. However, after sewing needles came to be primarily mass produced in factories, companies that were in Hyogo's sewing needle industry began to shrink. JICO also had no choice but to withdraw from the sewing needle industry. However, JICO wanted to use their technology they developed through manufacturing sewing needles. Therefore, JICO decided to produce phonograph stylus, which led to today's comprehensive production of stereo phonograph stylus.

## **[Originality]**

Manufacturing different kinds of phonograph stylus requires using different kinds of jigs and tools. JICO themselves designs and manufactures the jigs and tools that they need. The jigs and tools tailor-made for manufacturing record needles reflect the hard work by their makers to make them easier to use, and JICO continues to put effort into improving their jigs and tools as well.

The jigs and tools are designed in ways that will guarantee the quality of the phonograph stylus manufactured with them regardless of who uses them, which JICO considers as being one of their strengths. Therefore, the Company's jigs and tools are highly confidential.

## **[Future Development]**

JICO has two plans for the future development of their phonograph stylus business. The first plan is to improve their current status from being a third-party phonograph stylus manufacturer. Shure, a major audio equipment manufacturer, announced that they have discontinued their production of phonograph stylus and magnetic cartridges. Therefore, JICO has decided to begin manufacturing cartridges in addition to phonograph stylus.

The second plan is to change the material the Company currently uses for its phonograph stylus cantilevers. JICO primarily uses aluminum now. However, it believes changing the material should completely change the sound as well. The Company's plan is to provide customers with a number of materials they can choose from depending on the record and/or

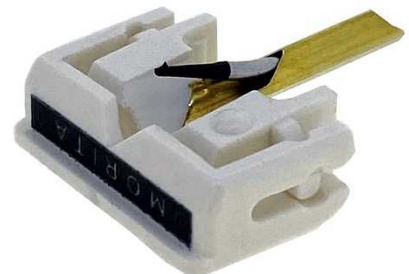
song they intend to enjoy.

## [Topics]

JICO offers a completely different sound with a MORITA cantilever.

JICO offers the industry's first wooden cantilever under the brand name "MORITA." The first wooden cantilever it offered was made of *Kurogaki* (*lit.* black persimmon), and in 2020, the Company released its second wooden cantilever made of *photinia villosa* (also known as *Ushikoroshi*).

JICO looks forward to seeing changing phonograph stylus according to taste become common sense.



## [Corporate History]

1873—Founded Nakagawa Needle Factory as a sewing needle manufacturer.

1949—Began manufacturing and selling phonograph steel needles.

1959—Converted to a corporate organization due to business expansion under the name  
Nippon Precision Jewel Industry Co., Ltd.

1966—Began comprehensive production of jewel record needles.

1973—Began designing and manufacturing gauge contacts (measurers).

1978—Developed medical equipment and dental diamond bars.

1981—Received approval from the Ministry of Health and Welfare (now Ministry of Health,  
Labour and Welfare) to build and operate factories for manufacturing medical  
equipment.

1990—Developed CD pickup lens cleaners.

1993—Began designing and manufacturing diamond dressers.

2005—Received certification from SME Support Net Hyogo as a Hyogo Prefecture Active  
Company.

2010—Developed, manufactured, and sold drive freshers.

2011—Was selected as one of Kansai region's 100 Active Manufacturers in 2011 (basic  
technology division).

2017—Was selected as a Regional Future Leader by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and

Industry.

2020—Was selected as a Hyogo Only One Company.