

Basic Detail Report



Armband Currency (Mwali)

Date
late 20th Century

Primary Maker
Massim

Medium
Shell, beads and string

Description
Mwali armbands are made of shell, beads, and string. They usually travel as a paired item. They aren't normally worn, but instead are hung from rope and either exchanged as part of the Massim's region's Kula trade, used as bride price, or admired as wealth. The Kula trade was an exchange of gifts spanning thousands of miles in a route through the islands of New Guinea. In the kul aring mwali were traded in a counterclockwise direction and red shell discs were traded in the clockwise direction.

Dimensions
Each: 7 1/8 × 4 × 1 5/8 in. (18.1 × 10.2 × 4.1 cm)