VISUAL™ Quick Tips

Beading

by Chris Franchetti Michaels

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

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Chris Franchetti Michaels is a writer and jewelry artisan specializing in beaded designs, wirework, and metal fabrication. She has written extensively about jewelry and jewelry making on the Internet since 2003, and she is the author of *Teach Yourself Visually: Jewelry Making & Beading* and *Wire Jewelry Visual Quick Tips.* Chris has also appeared on several episodes of the DIY Network television show *Jewelry Making,* and her designs have been featured in popular jewelry project books. Visit her website BeadJewelry.net for more help and inspiration.

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chapter 1

Beads and Beading Supplies

Beads are the key components of any beaded design, and they are available in a wide array of materials, colors, shapes, and sizes. This chapter provides a review of bead types and characteristics, as well as the essential tools, equipment, and supplies you'll need to perform common beading tasks and to complete your designs.

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Beads, Pendants, and Charms

You can purchase beads, pendants, and charms at craft stores, bead shops, travelling beads shows, and on the Internet. They are usually categorized by material, size, and shape.

GLASS BEADS

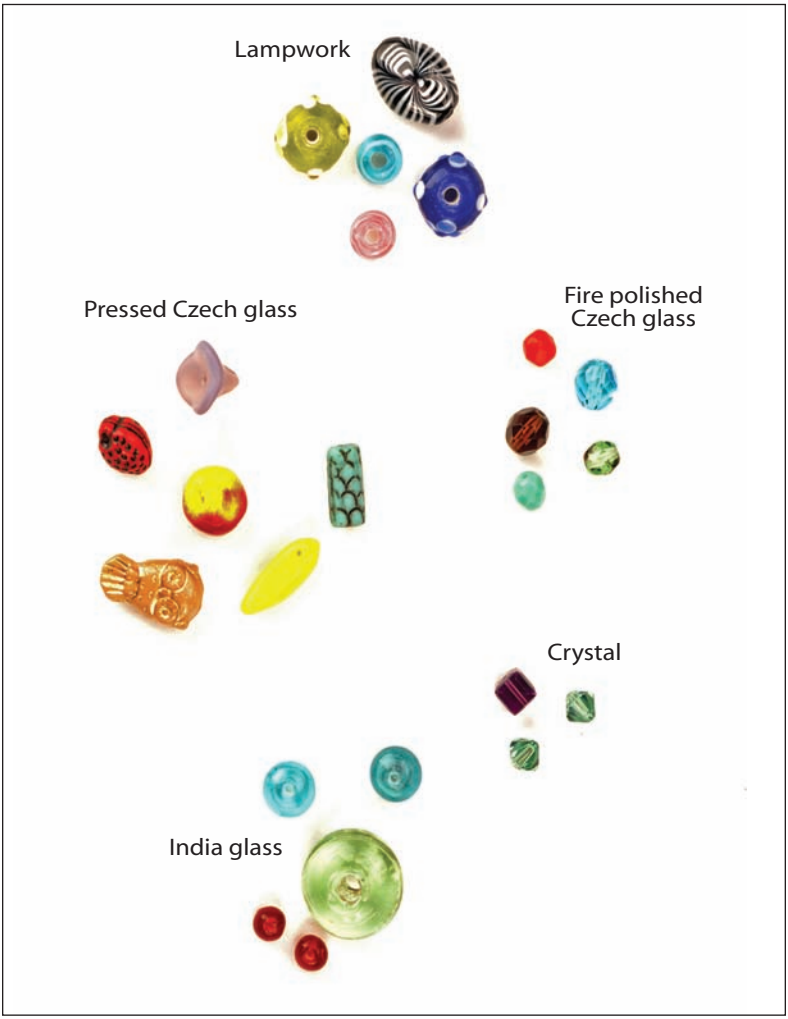
Glass beads are available in just about any color and style you can imagine. Their quality is often linked to where and how they are made. For example, many glass beads currently made in China and India are less consistent in size and color than glass beads from Europe.

Some of the most popular European glass beads are made in the Czech Republic and are commonly referred to as *Czech glass beads.* Some Czech glass beads are *pressed,* or manufactured in molds. You can find them in a lot of fun shapes like flowers, animals, and even fruit. Other Czech glass beads are *fire polished.* Fire polishing is a special process that gives glass extra shine and sparkle. But fire-polished glass beads are not quite as eye-catching as *crystal beads.* Crystal is glass that contains a small amount of lead. The highest-quality crystal beads are made in Austria and the Czech Republic, but less expensive variations are also manufactured in China.

Seed beads and *cylinder beads* are tiny glass beads commonly used to create woven beaded fabric. You can also use them to make thin, beaded strands. The highest-quality seed and cylinder beads are manufactured in Japan and the Czech Republic.

Although most glass beads are made by machine, some are individually handmade. *Lampwork beads* are an especially popular style of handmade glass beads. They are crafted by manually applying molten glass to metal rods.

Other beads are created by a combination of mechanical and handmade methods. For example, some manufactured glass beads are *hand faceted,* or cut to have multiple flat surfaces, to mimic the look of gemstone beads.



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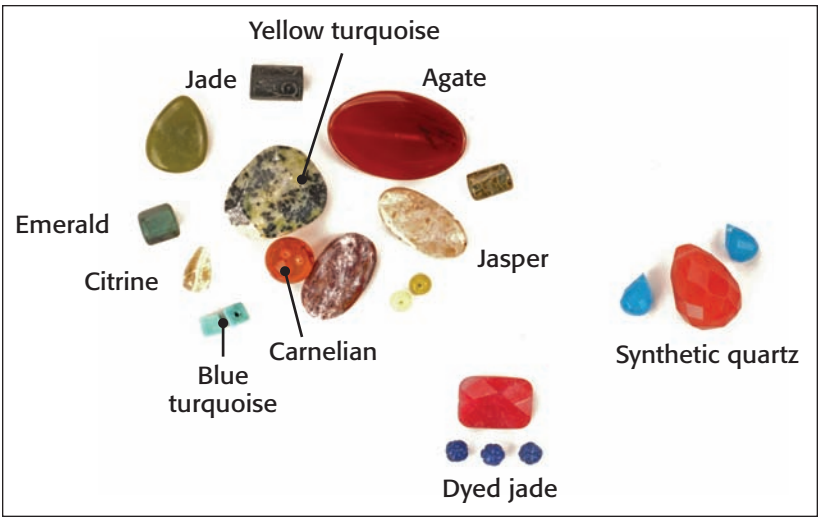
GEMSTONE BEADS

Most gemstone beads are made from *semiprecious* natural stone. Semiprecious stone is more abundant, and less costly, than the *precious* gemstones used in fine jewelry settings. Agate, jade, quartz, jasper, and turquoise are examples of common semiprecious stones. You can also find semiprecious varieties of more expensive stones like ruby, amethyst, emerald, and citrine.

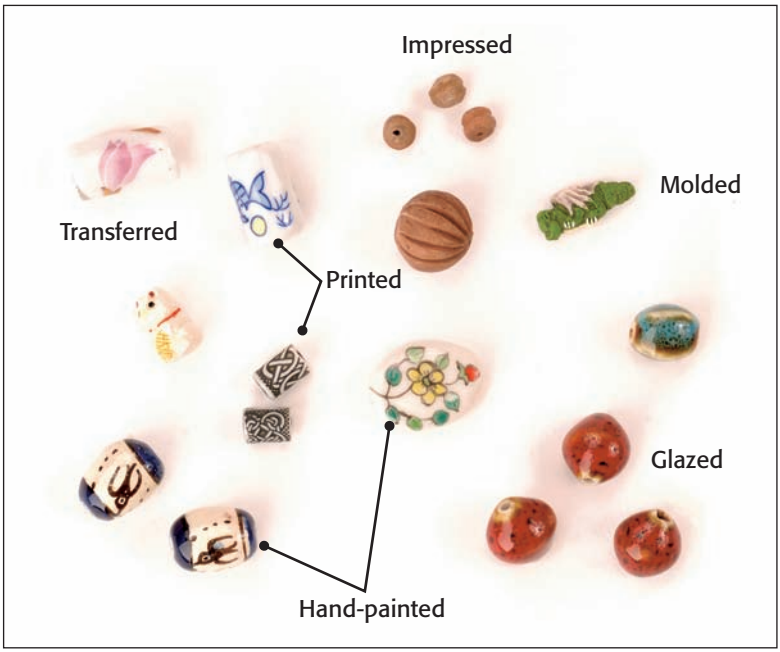
Gemstone beads are usually shaped by hand. Like glass beads, their quality and cost often depend on where they were made. Some of the most affordable gemstone beads are made in India. They are colorful and beautiful, but their shapes and sizes are less consistent than more expensive gemstone beads from China.

Many gemstone beads are *treated*, which means that they may be dyed, oiled, heated, irradiated, or injected with waxes. Treatments improve the look of lower-quality stones, but treated stones remain less valuable than higher-quality, untreated stones. Treated gemstone is not the same as *synthetic* gemstone. Synthetic gemstone beads are not really made from stone; they are another material made to look like stone. Many synthetic stones—especially synthetic quartzes—are made from glass. They can be very beautiful, but they are considered inferior to natural stone.



CERAMIC BEADS

Ceramic beads are made from earthen clay. They can have a simple, natural look or be highly decorative. Colorful ceramic beads are usually painted, printed, or glazed. With *painted* ceramic beads, the paint is brushed on or the beads are dipped into paint. A coat of lacquer may be applied to seal the paint in place. *Printed* ceramic beads are either stamped with paint or have designs *transferred* onto them from other surfaces. Transferred designs are usually applied using heat, but otherwise they are similar to stamps. Printed and transferred designs are less time-consuming to create, and more regular in appearance, than hand-painted designs. *Glazed* ceramic beads are coated with colored or clear glass.



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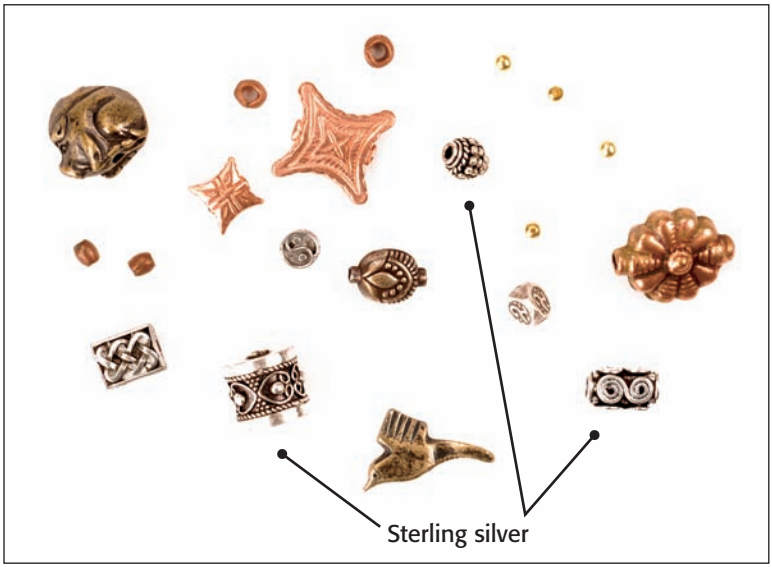
METAL BEADS

Metal beads can be made of *precious* metal or *base* metal. The most common precious metals used in handmade jewelry are sterling silver and gold. Base metals include more common, less expensive metals like copper, brass, nickel, tin, or aluminum. *Alloys* are mixtures of two or more types of metal.

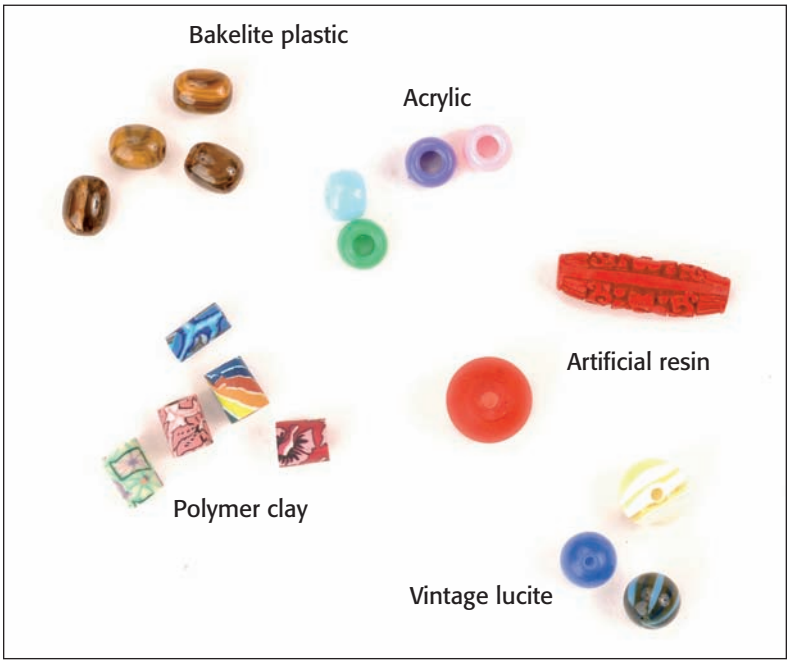
Surface finishing is a technique used to change the color of a metal's surface. Dark metal finishes are often referred to as *oxidized* or *antiqued*. *Plated* metal is coated with a very thin layer of another metal.

Most solid metal beads are *cast,* or molded. Hollow metal beads are often made of two stamped sheets of metal joined together at the seam.



PLASTIC BEADS

While some plastic beads are inexpensive and of low quality, others are pricey and highly collectible. Beads made from hard vintage plastics like *Bakelite* and *celluloid* are especially sought after. *Artificial resin* is a soft plastic used to make bright, colorful beads, or to replicate natural materials like amber and cinnabar. (In fact, modern beads called "cinnabar" are usually made from red or black resin, because natural cinnabar is highly toxic.) Some basic plastic, or *acrylic,* beads are coated to look like metal beads. Others look like carved bone, tortoise shell, or pearls. *Polymer clay beads* are also made of plastic.



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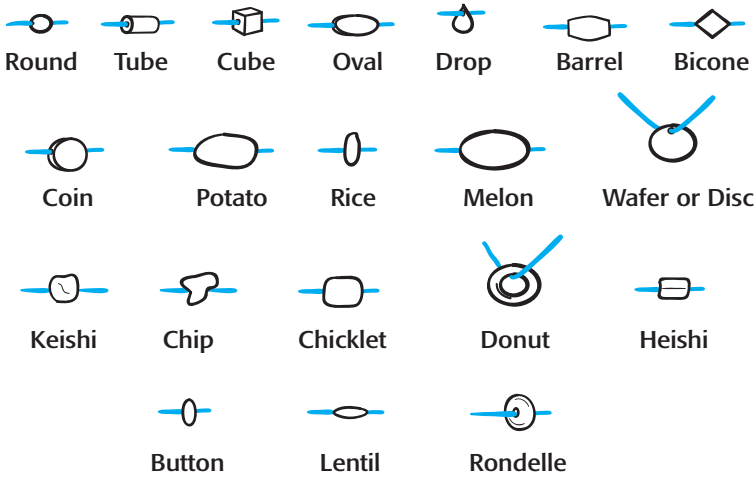
ORGANIC BEADS

Organic beads are made of materials that come from living things. *Pearl*, which is formed by water creatures called *mollusks,* is an all-time favorite organic bead material. Other organic bead materials include wood, seeds, shell, amber, bone, and horn. *Amber* is a very lightweight material made from the natural resin of ancient trees. *Bone* and *horn* beads typically derive from the byproducts of large livestock like cows and sheep. Beads made from these materials are usually handcrafted, and many are hand carved.

BEAD SHAPES

Beads are available in many shapes. Here are the most common shapes you will encounter when bead shopping.



STANDARD BEAD SIZES

With the exception of tiny seed beads, bead sizes are typically described in millimeters. The size of a round bead is its *diameter,* which is the same measurement as either its *length* (the distance between the two openings of the drill hole) or its *width* (the distance between the other two sides of the bead). The sizes of other shapes of beads are often described by both their length and width. Typically, length is the first measurement given, but sometimes width is provided first. (For this reason, it's important to examine the bead in question to understand its width versus length.)

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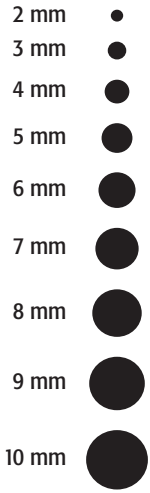
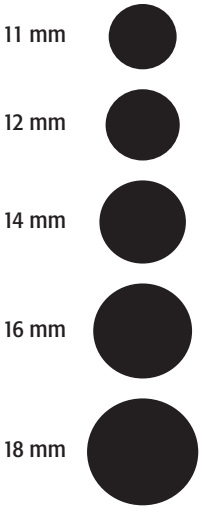
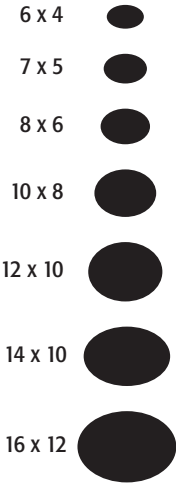
Beads, Pendants, and Charms *(continued)*







SEED AND CYLINDER BEAD SIZES

The sizes of seed beads and cylinder beads are denoted by numbers called aught sizes, which are often written to look like fractions.

The most versatile size for seed beads is 11/0, pronounced "eleven aught" or simply "number eleven." Other seed-bead sizes range between about 6/0 (larger, also called *pony beads*) and 15/0 (very small). For simplicity, just keep in mind that the larger the number, the smaller the bead.

Cylinder beads are available in a much more limited range of sizes than seed beads. The most common cylinder-bead size is 11/0, but you can also find them in size 8/0.

PENDANTS AND CHARMS

Pendants and charms are sold by most bead suppliers. Although most are made of metal, they can also be made of glass, gemstone, ceramic, plastic, or organic material.

Pendants are usually larger than charms and serve as focal pieces for necklaces. The little devices that hold pendants onto necklaces are called *bails.* Most metal pendants are sold with bails attached, but with others (especially those made from gemstone or organics) you need to add a bail.

Charms are typically used as accent pieces rather than focal points. You can use a single charm in a design, or a collection of many. Charms usually attach to jewelry with split rings or jump rings (see p. 30).

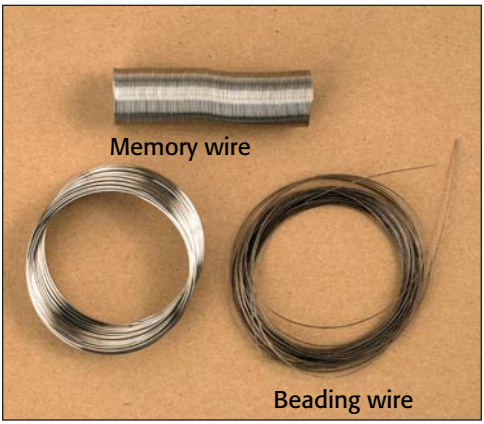
Stringing Materials

You can string beads on many different materials. Here's a brief look at the most common stringing materials used for beading.

BEADING WIRE AND MEMORY WIRE

Unlike regular metal wire, *beading wire* (also called *bead stringing wire*) is soft and flexible. It's made up of many tiny metal strands woven or wound together. Most beading wire is covered with a thin layer of nylon plastic. To learn more about the sizes of beading wire, see "Grades of Beading Wire" in Chapter 2.

Memory wire is hard, single-strand steel wire designed to hold a circular shape. You can use it to make beaded coil bracelets, necklaces, and rings that don't require clasps.

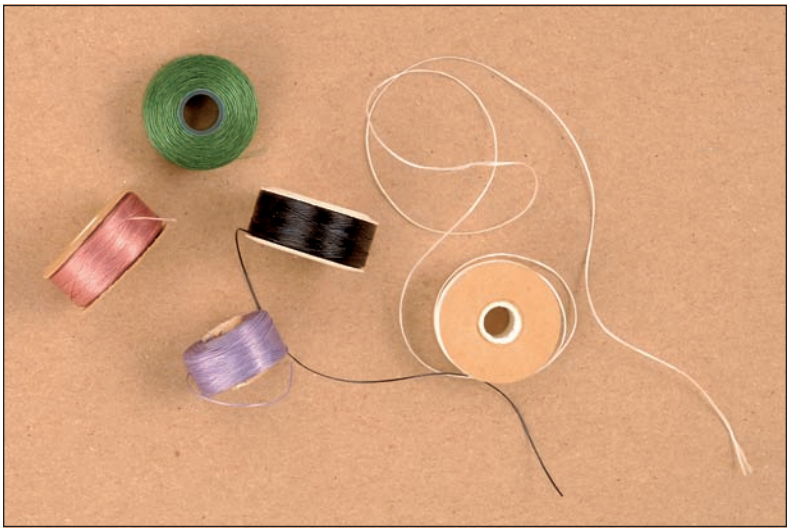


CORD AND RIBBON

Cord is non-metal material that often consists of smaller strands woven together. Silk, linen, nylon, cotton, and satin are popular types of multiple-strand cord. Leather, suede, and rubber are typical single-strand cords. *Stretch cord* can have single or multiple strands. Most cord is sized in millimeters or inches according to its diameter, but some manufacturers use their own sizing system using numbers or letters. *Ribbon* for beading is usually made of soft fabric, like organza or satin.

BEADING THREAD

Beading thread is a special synthetic thread designed for beading. It has a very small diameter and can fit through tiny bead holes. Like cord, it is often composed of multiple strands. Beading thread is usually stronger and smoother than thread used for sewing. For help selecting the proper thread size, see p. 202 in the Appendix.



Tools and Supplies

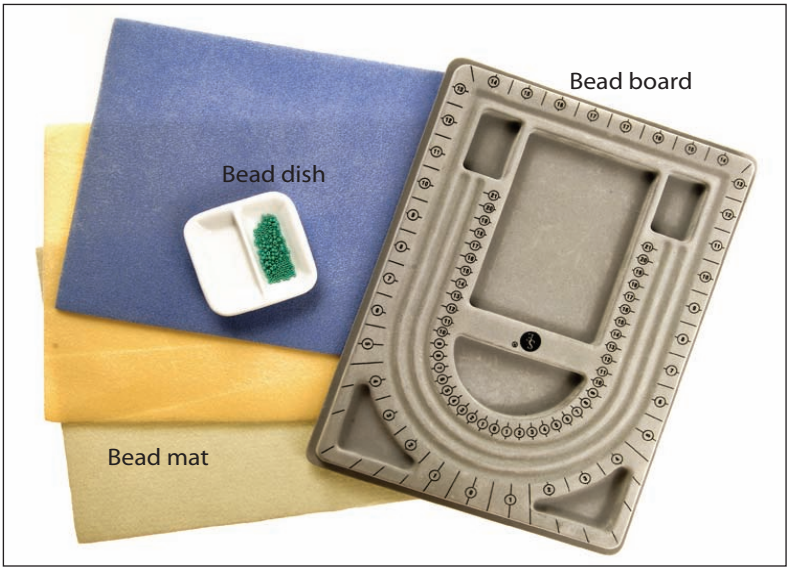
Although beads and stringing material are the basic necessities of any beading project, there are other tools and supplies that can make your beadwork easier and help you create more complicated designs. Here's a look at some items that you may find useful.

BEADING MATS, BEADING DISHES, AND BEAD BOARDS

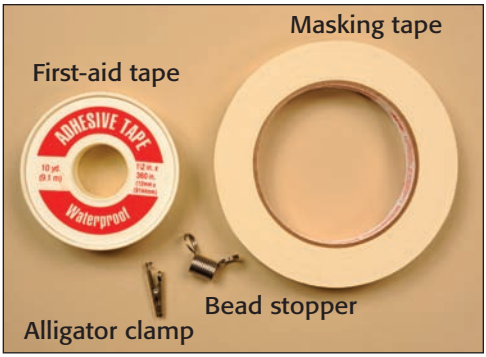
Because many beads are round, they can easily roll away from your work area. You can keep better track of your beads by working on a *beading mat.* A beading mat can be any flat surface that is textured to keep beads from rolling. It can be as simple as a terry cloth hand towel or as fancy as a specially engineered, rubberized mat from a bead shop. Textured foam drawer-liner material also makes a nice bead mat, and you can find it at most home improvement stores.

When you work with tiny seed beads, you may find it more helpful to keep them on a ceramic dish or in a shallow, smooth bowl. This makes it easier to pick up the beads using a beading needle.

A *bead board* is a tray with long grooves for holding and arranging beads. Most bead boards are made of plastic with a velvety coating that helps beads stay in place. Bead boards are available in a variety of shapes and sizes, and they usually have measurement marks to help you gauge the lengths of your designs.



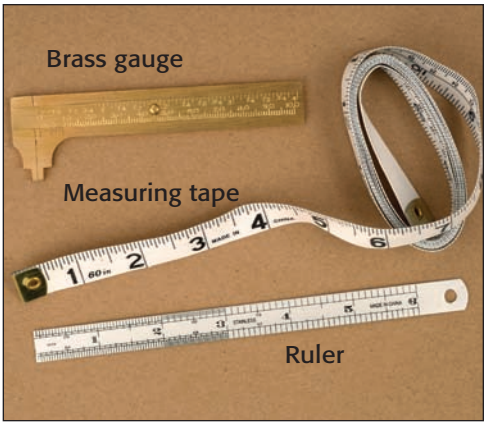
TAPE, CLAMPS, AND BEAD STOPPERS



You can use masking tape, alligator clamps, or Bead Stoppers to keep beads from falling off the string while you work. *Masking tape* can be folded over a strand. It is also used to secure macramé cords for knotting. *Alligator clamps*, which are small metal clamps traditionally used for electrical work, are useful for clamping cord. *Bead Stoppers* are clamps made specifically for beading, and are found at some bead shops and jewelry supply stores.

You can also use *first-aid tape* made of fabric to provide a base for gluing an end piece onto a band of flat peyote stitch made from seed beads (see Chapter 4.)

MEASURING TOOLS



It's a good idea to have a ruler and a measuring tape on hand for measuring the lengths of beaded strands, sizing beads and other components, and helping with jewelry sizing. You can also use a sliding *brass measuring gauge* to determine the dimensions of beads and components. Brass measuring gauges have marks that line up to show you the sizes of items in millimeters and inches. They are relatively inexpensive and provide very accurate measurements.

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SHARP SCISSORS OR NIPPERS

A good pair of small, sharp scissors can help you cleanly cut and trim soft stringing materials like cord, ribbon, and thread, and smaller sizes of beading wire. For larger beading wire, or to cut soft materials more quickly, you can use a pair of short-bladed cutters called *nippers*. Try to avoid using your beading scissors or nippers on anything other than bead-stringing material; hard or rough materials can damage or dull them.

TIP

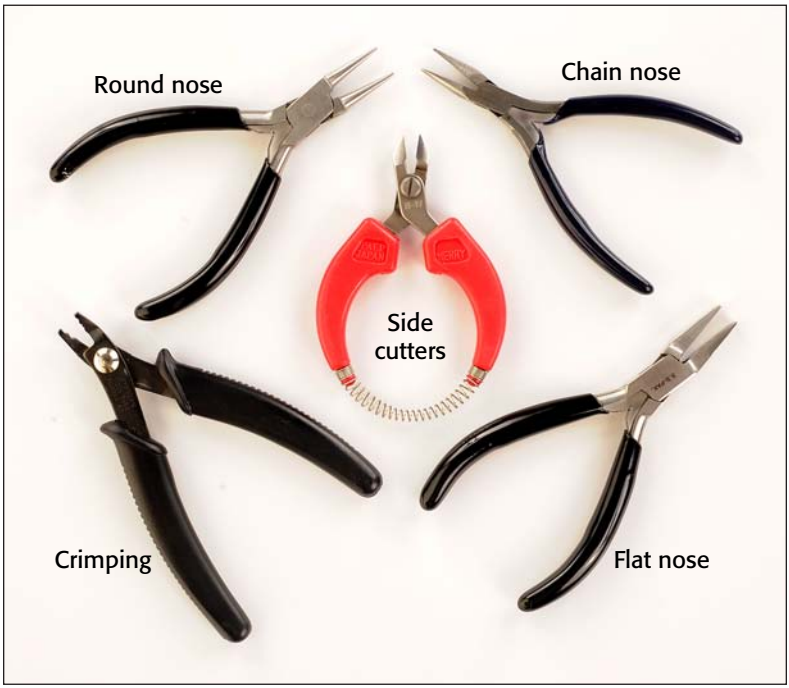
Although most bead stores carry beading scissors and nippers, you can also use small shears called *embroidery snips*, which are sold by many fabric stores. Some models come with an attached lanyard to keep them from getting lost, and others have rounded tips or protective tip covers.

PLIERS AND SIDE CUTTERS

The most common pliers used for beading are chain nose, flat nose, and crimping pliers. *Chain nose pliers* are short needle nose pliers with smooth jaws. *Flat nose pliers* have rectangular, smooth jaws. You can use both varieties for opening and closing jump rings and certain clamp-style end pieces. Chain nose pliers are also used to secure crimp beads and tubes. Alternatively, *crimping pliers* can be used to close crimp tubes (see p. 26).

Round nose pliers have cylindrical jaws that are thinner at the end and wider at the base. You use them to create loops in the ends of head pins and eye pins in order to make beaded charms and links, and to attach end cones. Look for a pair with shorter, rather than longer, jaws for better precision. You can find them at most bead stores.

Side cutters are small, sturdy shears that you use to trim head pins and eye pins. They are also available at bead stores.



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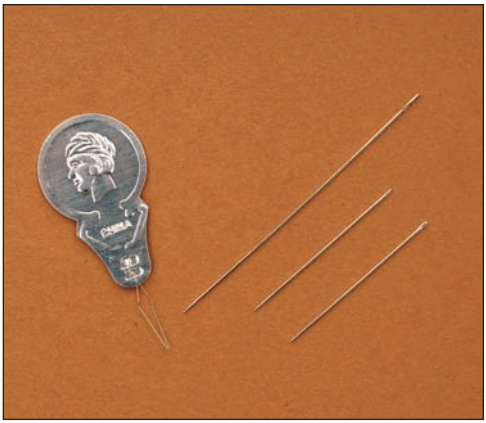
BEADING NEEDLES

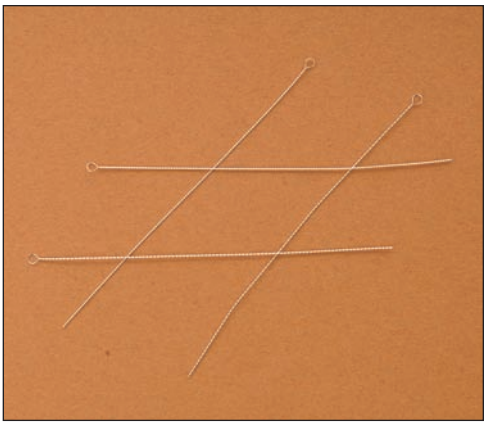
Beading needles look like thin, sharp sewing needles. They are popular for stringing seed beads onto beading thread. If you have trouble threading them, try using a special beading-needle threader designed specifically for beading needles and beading thread. They are available at some bead shops and in beading supply catalogs.



TWISTED WIRE NEEDLES

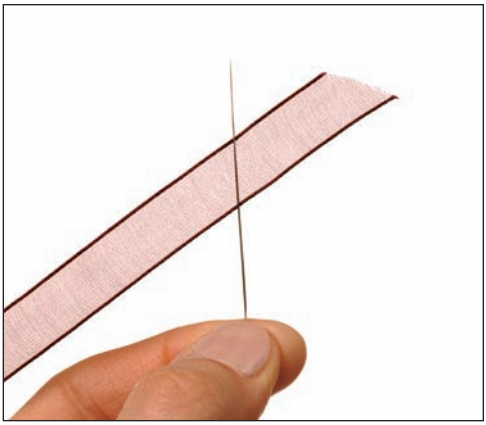
Twisted wire needles are made from thin, twisted strands of steel or brass wire. A wire loop at the end forms the eye. This is the kind of needle you find on needle-attached cards of silk cord. You can also purchase them separately.

The wire in twisted wire needles is relatively soft. You can use pliers to collapse the eyes so that they fit through smaller-holed beads and to secure the needle on the stringing material.



BIG EYE NEEDLES

Big eye needles are most commonly used with materials like cord and ribbon, which are too wide to fit through the eye of a regular needle. The eye of a big eye needle is a long slit that runs nearly the entire length of the needle. You need to be especially careful not to prick yourself when using these because they are sharp at *both* ends.



TIP

To keep your needles secure and organized, store them in small containers labeled by needle size and type. You can find magnetized needle bins at fabric stores that keep needles from falling out, or you can make your own by sticking adhesive-backed magnet strips to the inside surfaces of regular plastic storage containers.

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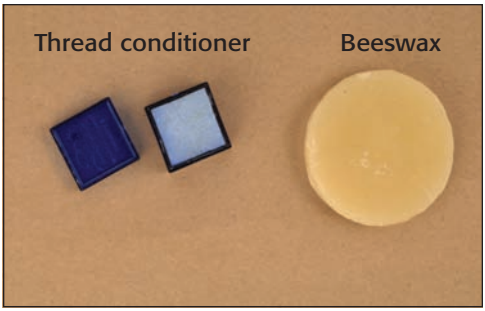
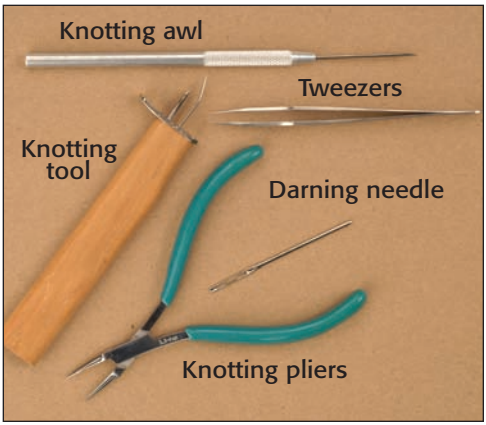
THREAD TREATMENTS



Before you string beads onto a strand of beading thread, it's a good idea to treat the thread with beeswax or thread conditioner. *Beeswax* is sold in blocks at most bead shops. When you rub it along a piece of thread, a layer of wax adheres to the thread to protect it from moisture and to slightly stiffen it, making it easier to work with. However, some beaders avoid beeswax because it can attract dirt and make thread feel sticky.

Thread conditioner is an alternative to beeswax. It is usually sold in small plastic boxes at bead shops and fabric stores. You apply it by gently pressing the thread into the container with your finger and pulling the thread through the conditioner until it is completely coated. Thread conditioner is thought to make thread stronger and to reduce tangling. It is not as sticky as beeswax, and it is less likely to attract dirt.

KNOTTING AWLS AND KNOTTING TOOLS

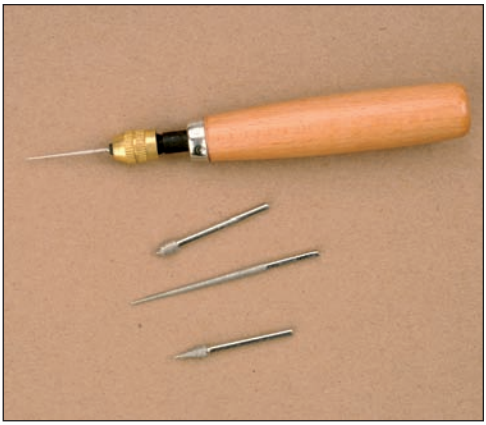


A *knotting awl* helps you position knots against beads. You can find one at most bead shops, or you can use a regular darning needle as a substitute. Narrow tweezers or *knotting pliers* are also useful for sliding tiny knots against beads. Another option is a *specialty knotting tool,* which mechanically maneuvers the stringing material as you make knots.

TIP

Some brands of beading thread are *pre-treated* with either thread conditioner or wax. If your thread is labeled "pre-conditioned" or "pre-waxed," do not treat it before use.

BEAD REAMERS



Bead reamers are hand tools with rough, pointed ends. You use them like sandpaper to *debur,* or smooth out, the holes in some beads before stringing them. Reaming removes jagged edges that might otherwise damage your stringing material. You can also use reamers to slightly enlarge holes on beads made from softer materials. Bead reamers work best on beads made of stone, organic material, plastic, or ceramic. For best results, keep the tip of your bead reamer moist with water while using it.

GLUE AND TOOTHPICKS

Instant bond glue

Glue is often used to help secure knots at the ends of stringing material or to attach components to base findings (see "Jewelry Findings" on p. 26). One of the most popular glues for jewelry making is *E6000*. This thick, clear glue can take time to dry, but it remains flexible and moisture proof when it sets. You can find it at bead shops, jewelry making supply stores, and hardware stores. It's a good idea to keep some toothpicks on hand for applying the glue to small areas, and some paper towels for wiping up glue messes.

Instant bond glue is also used in jewelry making. This is the glue that you typically find in little squeeze bottles at grocery and drug stores. As its name implies, instant bond glue sets very quickly. However, it also becomes brittle and may crack and break. For some applications, especially securing small knots, you can use clear nail polish as an alternative to E6000 or instant bond glue. Whichever glue you choose, always apply it in a well-ventilated area and avoid breathing in fumes.

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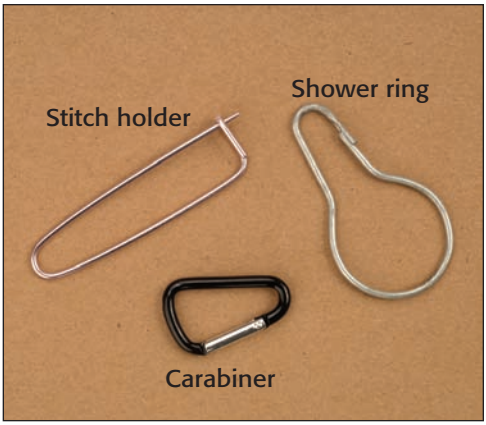
STRAND HOLDERS

Some beading techniques require that you hold or secure multiple strands temporarily while you work. One way to do this is to loop strands through, or tie them around, a thin, generic shower curtain ring. They are available from many jewelry making suppliers and are relatively inexpensive. As an alternative, try using a *stitch holder* for knitting or a small *carabiner* sold as a key chain.



STORAGE AND ORGANIZATION

You can store beads and other beading components in small reusable containers like baby food jars and prescription bottles, or you can purchase modular plastic or acrylic containers sold at bead stores. Use a spoon or *bead scoop* to collect beads and place them back into their containers when you're finished with them. It's a good idea to organize your containers by the type, color, or material of the items they contain.

TIP

The nice thing about strand holders is that they close securely, keeping strands of stringing material from accidentally sliding off. However, in a pinch, you can simply use a pencil or pen, being careful not to let the strands slip off either end.

MACRAMÉ AND BRAIDING SUPPLIES

Twine, waxed linen, waxed cotton, and braided nylon are especially popular cords for macramé work. Smooth satin cord called *rattail* is a more colorful option, and leather and suede can also be used.

A *knotting board* holds your cords in place as you work. You can buy one pre-made, make one yourself, or use an office clipboard as a substitute.

T-pins are sturdy, steel stickpins with tops shaped like the letter T. They are useful for securing, or *anchoring,* cords to a knotting board. (If you don't have a knotting board, use masking tape to anchor your cords instead.)

TIP

Hemp twine is an especially popular cord for macramé work. *Natural hemp* is a rough, rustic style of hemp twine used for more casual designs. It's available in a natural tan color, or dyed in a wide range of artificial colors. *Jeweler's hemp* is a fine, smooth hemp twine that is bleached to have a pale-beige or white color. It works well for more refined or intricate designs.

Jewelry Findings

Jewelry findings are components that serve practical purposes in designs. They attach jewelry parts, keep beads from falling off, and secure jewelry so that it can be worn on the body. Pre-made findings are sold along with beads and other supplies at bead shops and jewelry making supply stores. Most findings are made of metal, but they are also available in other materials. Here are the most common types.

CLASPS

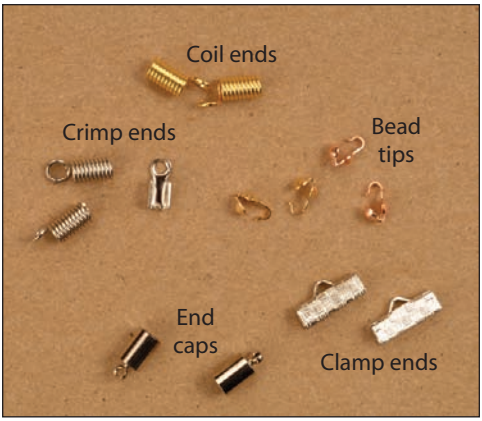
Clasps hold the ends of jewelry together. A clasp can be a simple hook or toggle, or it can be *mechanical,* with moving parts. *Lobster claws* and *spring rings* are examples of mechanical clasps. Most bead shops carry a large selection of clasps in various colors, finishes, and materials.

CRIMP BEADS AND CRIMP TUBES

Crimp beads and crimp tubes are used to secure the ends of bead-stringing wire. *Crimp beads* are rounded and look like tiny metal beads. *Crimp tubes* are tiny metal tubes. You attach crimps to beading wire by squeezing them with chain nose pliers or crimping pliers.

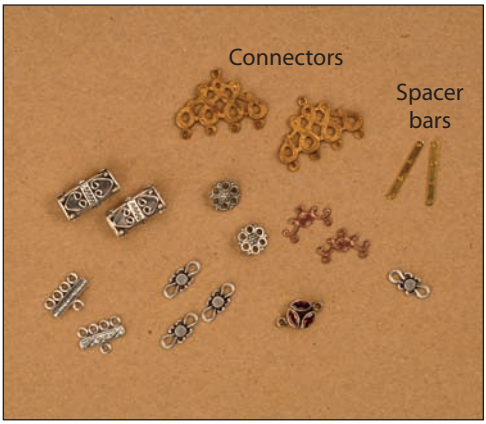
END PIECES

End pieces are metal components designed to secure the ends of various types of stringing material. They often include loops or rings for adding a clasp. Some attach to jewelry with glue, while others are folded over or clamped down with chain nose pliers. End caps, coil ends, bead tips, clamp ends, and crimp ends are common styles of end pieces.



CONNECTORS AND SPACER BARS

A *connector* is a component with two or more rings or holes that can be used to connect strands in a design. Connectors can be functional or purely decorative. *Spacer bars* (also called *separator bars*) have a series of holes or rings that you can string over multiple strands to hold them together side-by-side.



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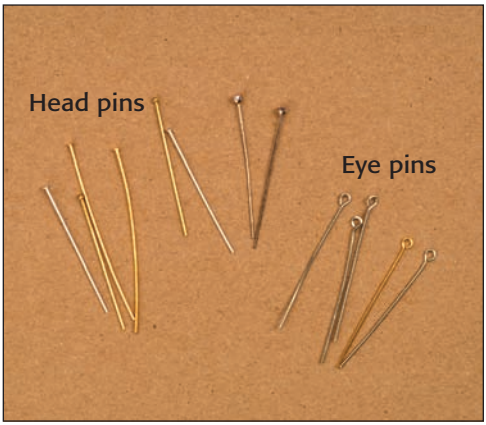
BAILS

Bails are the devices that hold pendants onto necklaces. Some pendants have bails already attached. For others, you need to purchase bails separately or make them yourself. Bails can be as simple as large jump rings or as elaborate and decorative as the pendants they hold.

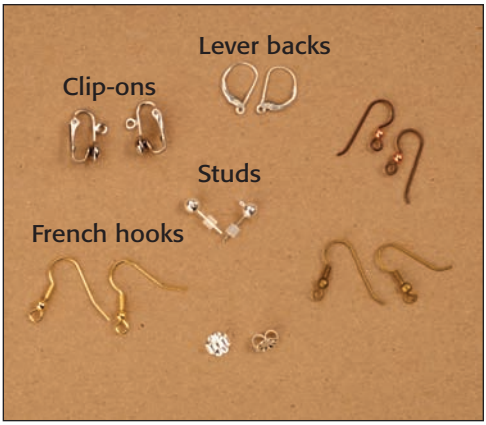
HEAD PINS AND EYE PINS

Head pins and eye pins are short lengths of wire used to create bead drops. *Head pins* typically have flat heads like nails, but some have metal balls, decorative shapes, or even set stones at the end. When you string a bead onto a head pin, the pin's head keeps the bead from falling off. *Eye pins* have a small loop at one end instead of a solid head. You can attach charms or other bead drops to the loop.



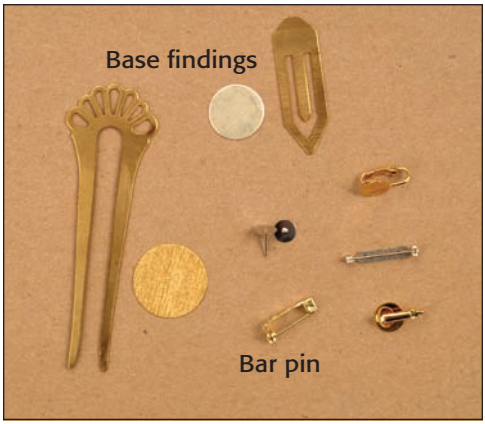
EARRING FINDINGS

Earring findings are components that allow earrings to be inserted through, or clamped onto, the earlobe. Just like clasps, they can be simple (like hooks) or mechanical (with moving parts). One of the most common and simple earring findings for pierced ears is the *French hook.* The most popular mechanical earring findings are called *lever backs.* You can also find *earring studs* with loops for attaching decorative components, as well as various styles of findings for non-pierced ears, including *clip-ons* and *screw backs.*



BAR PINS AND BASE FINDINGS

Bar pins are mechanical findings that you can glue onto other components to create pins and brooches. They are available in a range of sizes. Some come with attached bails so that you can make brooches that may also be worn as pendants. *Base findings* are bare pieces of metal or plain, pre-made pieces of jewelry that you can decorate by gluing, stitching, or wire-wrapping. They include sheet-metal discs, cuff bracelet bases, and pendant bases.



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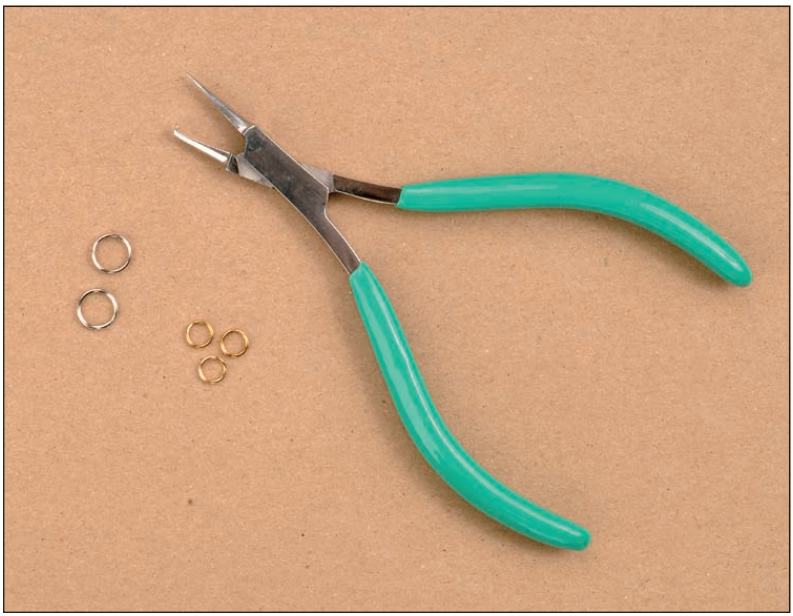
JUMP RINGS AND SPLIT RINGS

Jump rings are small wire rings used to connect jewelry parts. Most jump rings are *open,* which means that they are not soldered closed. You can open and close them using chain nose pliers. (You can also purchase *closed* jump rings, which are soldered and do not open.) Be sure to use the proper method for opening and closing jump rings, as described on the next page.

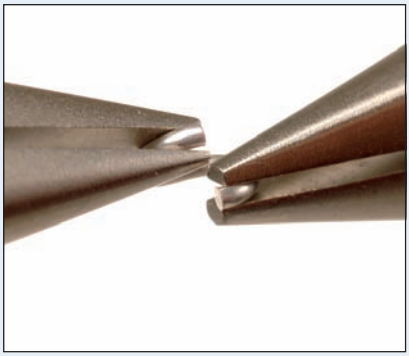
Split rings are coiled wire rings that work like round key rings. You attach them by sliding components between their coils. Split rings are more secure than open jump rings because they cannot accidentally be pulled open; however, they also have a bulkier appearance than jump rings. If you decide to use split rings regularly, consider purchasing a pair of *split ring pliers* to help you attach them more easily.

Jump rings and split rings are usually sized by the gauge of wire they're made from and their outside diameter, called *OD,* or their inside diameter, called *ID.* (For example, an 18-gauge, 6mm OD jump ring is one that is made from 18-gauge wire and has an outside diameter of 6mm.)



TIP

Opening and Closing Jump Rings



You use jump rings when you use beading wire and with many other bead stringing techniques. It is important to open and close them properly to avoid fatiguing the metal and to ensure that they remain secure.

To open a jump ring, hold it in front of you using two pairs of chain nose pliers, with the opening of the jump ring facing upward. Gently bend one side of the ring toward you and the other away from you. To close a ring, bend the ends back in the opposite direction, and wiggle them together until the ring is completely closed; there should be no opening in the seam.

chapter 2

Basic Bead Stringing Techniques

You can use basic bead stringing techniques to create single-strand necklaces, bracelets, and anklets, as well as some simple non-jewelry items, like bookmarkers. This chapter describes the bead stringing process from initial layout to finishing a design using your choice of stringing material.

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Grades of Beading Wire 40
String and Finish Beading Wire 42
Hide Crimps 46
Cover Beading Wire Loops 48
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String and Finish Beading Thread 61
String and Finish Ribbon 65
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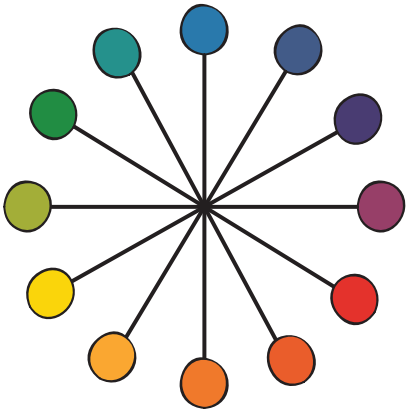
Use Head Pins and Eye Pins 72

Prepare a Design

Before you begin a new project, take the time to lay it out, ream any rough beads, and select the most appropriate stringing material and finishing method. When you create a design from scratch, consider using analogous or complementary colors along with the concepts of motif and pattern.

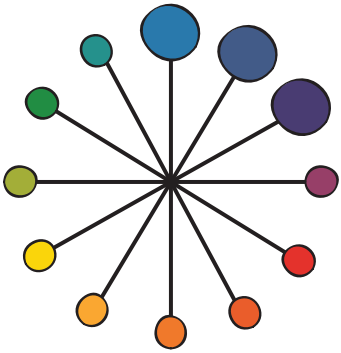
THE COLOR WHEEL

The traditional, 12-part *color wheel* is a circular chart with equally sized sections of color. It contains the *primary colors*, which are red, yellow, and blue; the *secondary colors*, which are green, orange, and purple; and the *tertiary colors*, which are each a combination of one primary color and one tertiary color. Tertiary colors have two-part names that indicate which colors make them up. (For example, the color "yellow-orange" is a mixture of yellow and orange.)



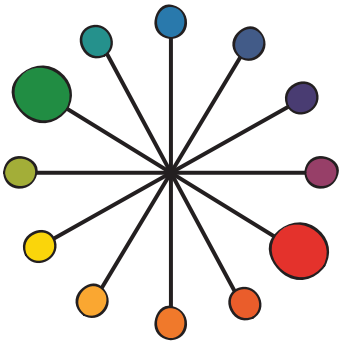
ANALOGOUS COLORS

Two to three colors that are positioned side-by-side on the color wheel are called *analogous colors.* To use analogous colors in a jewelry design, simply select components that match, or are various shades of, two or three analogous colors. Remember that you do not have to use equal parts of colors in a design. One or more colors can be dominant, while the others serve as minor accents.



COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

Complementary colors are positioned opposite one another on the color wheel. These colors show contrast without losing harmony. Consider using them when you'd like to create a bold look.



OTHER COLOR COMBINATIONS

More complicated color combinations—like *split complementaries*, *triads*, and *tetrads*—are delineated on an *artist's color wheel*, available at art supply stores. Typically, these color wheels are moveable so that you can reposition their charts to identify potential color sets.

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COLOR INSPIRATION

You can find inspiration for color just about anywhere. Many color combinations that you find also appear in the color wheel, but seeing them in a real-world context can help spark new ideas. Some examples of color inspiration sources are nature, artwork, and magazines.

MOTIF AND PATTERN

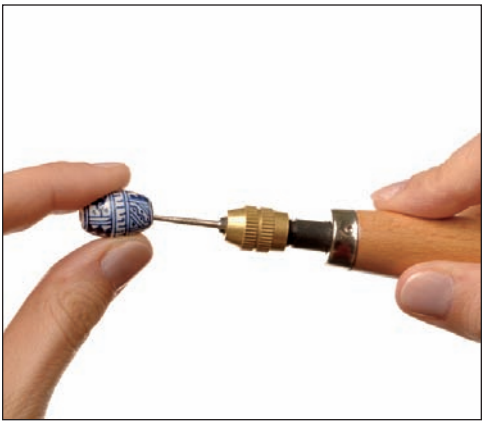
A *motif* is a self-defined element in a design; it has a pleasing and complete look all by itself. In beaded jewelry, a motif can be a grouping of beads or a stylistic piece like an ornate connector. It can be defined by colors, textures, sizes, or a combination of factors. By arranging motifs in a defined order, you create a *pattern*.

LAY OUT BEADS AND FINDINGS

Using a bead board is a great way to lay out and organize your designs, whether you're following project instructions or creating a new design from scratch. Most boards have measurement marks to help you keep track of strand lengths. If your design has a clasp, lay the clasp pieces on the board along with the beads so that you can see how much length it will add.

REAM BEADS

Inspect your beads for rough or sharp drill holes, and use a bead reamer to smooth them. Choose a reamer with a tip that fits into the hole of your bead, dip the tip into water, and gently twist the reamer—or the bead—back and forth a few times. You can also use a reamer to slightly enlarge holes in pearls, which are very soft. Always use care when reaming holes in glass beads to avoid chipping them.



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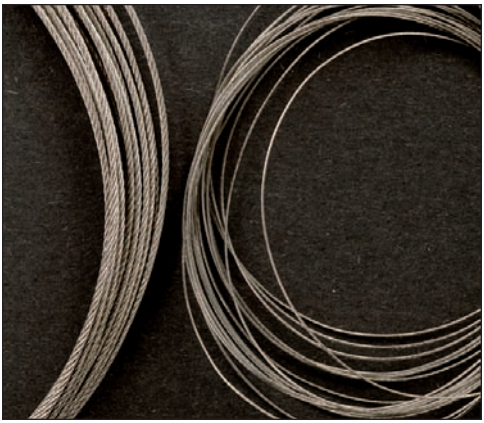
SELECT A STRINGING MATERIAL TYPE

The type and size of stringing material you need depends on the textures, sizes, and weights of beads in your design, and how you'd like your jewelry to look and feel. Use the chart, "Stringing Materials and Uses," on p. 194–195 in the Appendix to help you make the proper choice for your project.

TIP

When you plan a new design from scratch, you can estimate how many beads of a given size it requires by performing a simple calculation. See Beads-per-Inch on p. 198 of the Appendix for the formula and a chart to help you make estimates quickly.

SELECT A STRINGING MATERIAL SIZE



Beading wire, beading thread, cord, and ribbon are available in various widths and strengths. For cord and ribbon, select a size that will fit through your beads and securely carry the weight of your design. To select the best size of beading thread, refer to the chart, "Needle and Thread Size Recommendation," on p. 202 in the Appendix.

Beading wire is labeled according to its *number of strands*, *size*, and *pound test strength*. See p. 40 to learn what these terms mean.

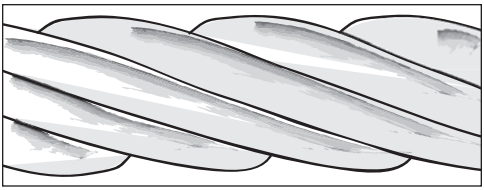
SELECT A FINISHING METHOD

Finishing refers to the techniques used to close strand ends so that the beads don't fall off, and so that you can attach a clasp. Usually, you finish one end of a strand before you begin stringing beads. You finish the other end after all your beads are strung. Use the chart on p. 200 in the Appendix for help in determining which finished method to use.

Grades of Beading Wire

Before you begin a project using beading wire, you must determine which *grade* of beading wire to use. Grade consists of three separate measurements: number of strands, beading wire size, and pound test strength.

NUMBER OF STRANDS



Beading wire is made up of many small steel strands that are wound together. Typically, the number of these strands determines the beading wire's flexibility. Beading wire that contains more steel strands is more flexible than beading wire with fewer strands.

More-flexible beading wire has a softer feel and resists kinking better than less-flexible beading wire. However, more-flexible beading wire is usually more expensive than less-flexible varieties.

BEADING WIRE SIZE

Beading wire size is denoted by its diameter. Smaller-diameter beading wire is recommended for smaller, lighter-weight beads. Larger beading wire is preferred for larger-holed or heavier beads. If you use beading wire that is smaller than recommended for the beads you're using, your jewelry may break prematurely.

Beading wire diameter is usually measured in thousandths of an inch. You can find nylon-coated beading wire ranging from about .010 inch (very small) to about .024 inch (large). To determine which size is best for your project, refer to the chart, "Beading Wire Sizes" on p. 201 in the Appendix

POUND TEST STRENGTH

Some beading wire is also labeled with its pound test strength, which denotes the maximum weight the wire can hold under the manufacturer's testing conditions without breaking.

Pound test strength is a good general indicator of beading wire strength, but do not take it too literally. Many factors affect the durability of your jewelry, including how much friction is caused by the beads and end findings. Therefore, a necklace strung on "7-pound test" wire would not necessarily hold up under the weight of a 7-pound pendant.

TIP

Making Beading-Wire Jewelry Last Longer

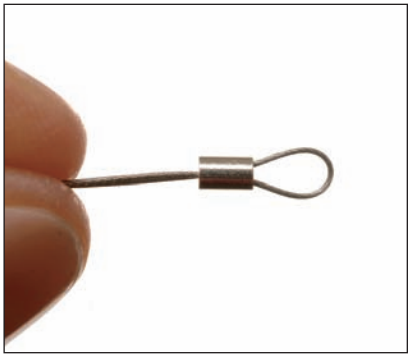
Unfortunately, all strung, beaded jewelry eventually needs to be restrung. Even steel beading wire weakens and deteriorates over time. Here are some tips for making your beaded jewelry last as long as possible.

1. Always use quality crimps. Less expensive, base-metal crimp beads are more likely to crack and break than sterling-silver crimp beads or higher-quality crimp tubes.
2. Leave a little space in your design. Tightly-strung beads create friction, which is thought to be the number one cause of wire breakage. When you have a finished strand laid out flat, you should be able to see a small portion of beading wire showing through near the ends. (Keep in mind that the space will not be as noticeable when the strand is worn, because the beads will then come together more tightly.)
3. Use the proper beading wire. Take the time to determine which grade of beading wire is best for a given project.

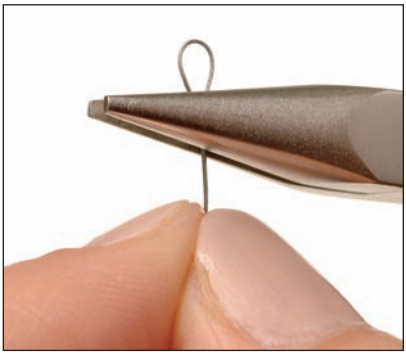
String and Finish Beading Wire

For a secure finish, it is best to use crimp beads, crimp tubes, or crimp ends on beading wire. You can attach them by flattening them down onto the wire using chain nose pliers. Crimp tubes can also be curled around wire using crimping pliers.

FLATTEN CRIMP BEADS OR CRIMP TUBES



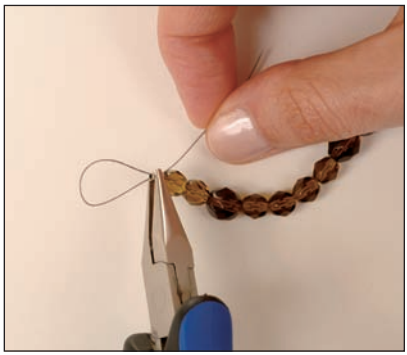
1. Beginning with a length of beading wire about 6 inches longer than the desired jewelry length, string on a crimp and position it a few inches from the end of the beading wire.
2. Holding the crimp in place with one hand, use the other hand to pull the end of the beading wire back into and through the crimp.
3. Continue holding the crimp in place, and gently pull the beading wire end until you have created a small loop large enough to hold a jump ring.



4. Use chain nose pliers to squeeze the crimp flat. The crimp should now be secured over both strands of beading wire.
5. Using small wire cutters or nippers, trim the tail of extra beading wire close to the crimp.

6. After stringing on all the beads in your design, string on the second crimp and position it close to the last bead.

7. Repeat Step 3 to begin making a loop.
8. When the loop starts to become small and the beading wire more difficult to pull through using your fingers, use chain nose pliers to gently hold the crimp close to the last bead, while you continue pulling the wire to complete the loop.



9. Repeat Steps 4–5.
10. Attach a clasp part to each loop using jump rings.

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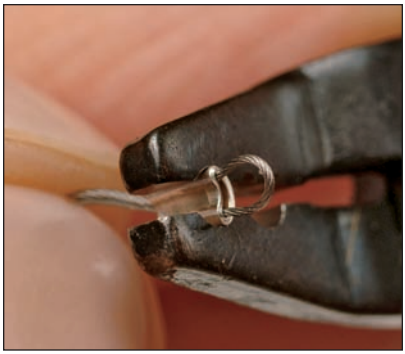
ATTACH CRIMP TUBES USING CRIMPING PLIERS

1. When you're ready to close the crimp tube, place it inside the V-shaped indentation in the pliers.
2. Use your fingers to position both beading wire strands so that each strand is up against one side of the tube, on either side of the V in the indentation.
3. Gently squeeze down the pliers.

4. Turn the beading wire sideways so that the V shape you just created is pointed to the side.
5. Place the crimp into the rounded indentation in the pliers, and squeeze the pliers closed.

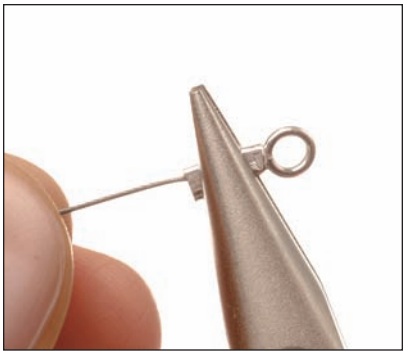


The final rounded crimp is shown here.

ATTACH CRIMP ENDS

Crimp ends have pre-attached rings or clasp parts. You crimp them directly to the ends of your beading wire.

1. Insert the first wire end into the opening in the crimp end.
2. Use chain nose pliers to squeeze down on the collapsible part of the crimp (usually the middle area).



3. After stringing on all of your beads, use the tips of one pair of chain nose pliers to hold the beading wire close to the last bead.
4. Trim the end of the beading wire short, so that it will fit inside the crimp end as far as possible.
5. Insert the beading wire end into the crimp end, and use a second pair of chain nose pliers to squeeze down the crimp.

The final beaded strand with the crimp ends in place is shown here.

Hide Crimps

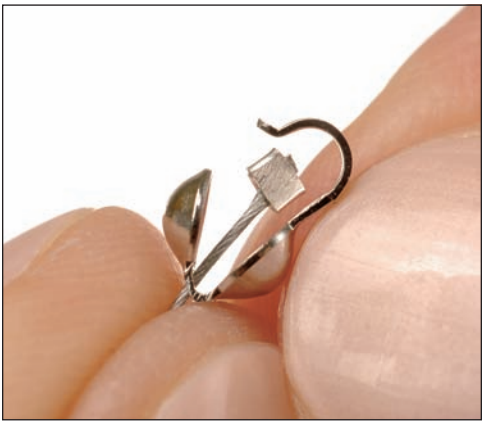
For a more professional appearance, you can hide crimp beads and crimp tubes by covering them with crimp covers, bead tips, or bullet ends.

HIDE CRIMPS WITH CRIMP COVERS

Crimp covers are special findings that you can secure over crimp tubes. They make crimps look more like beads so that they blend with your design. Most are intended for use with crimp tubes that have been closed with crimping pliers. You use the rounded indentation of the crimping pliers to attach the covers to your crimps.

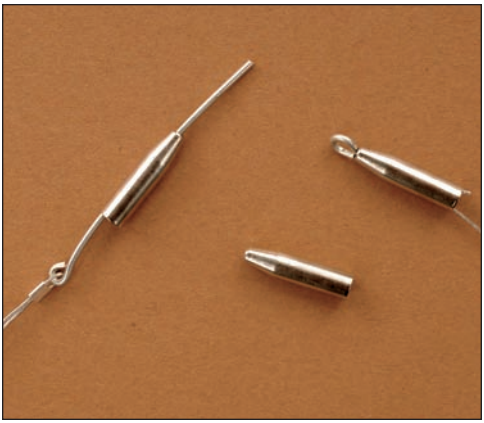
HIDE CRIMPS WITH BEAD TIPS

Bead tips are most commonly used to cover finishing-knots in cord. You can also use them to cover crimps or rings. Because bead tips have metal "claws" for attaching jump rings and clasps, you don't need to make wire loops after your crimps. Instead, just attach a crimp to the end of your wire, and then cover the crimp with a bead tip. For more information on using bead tips, see "String and Finish Beading Cord," later in this chapter.



HIDE CRIMPS WITH BULLET ENDS

You can use small-diameter bullet ends to hide crimps. Use a head pin to pull the end of the strand into the bullet end, and then use round nose pliers to loop the end of the pin to hold the strand in place (see p. 79). You will learn to use this technique to make multiple-strand bead jewelry using end cones in Chapter 3.



TIP

Always keep an eye out for new products that make it easier to hide crimps or that simply make crimps more decorative. A good way to stay up-to-date with new technology is to subscribe to a beading magazine. The most popular magazines always contain announcements and ads for new products, and they often provide product reviews.

Cover Beading Wire Loops

If you don't like the look of beading wire loops, you can use either the bead tip or bullet end method described on the previous page, or disguise your loops using French bullion wire or Wire Guardians.

USE FRENCH BULLION WIRE

This tiny, coiled wire (also called *gimp*) is most often used for finishing silk cord. Its main purpose is to protect cord from breakage, but bullion can also be used with beading wire to give end loops a metallic look.

To use it, string a short length of bullion onto your beading wire before sliding it back through the crimp to make a loop. For more information on using bullion, see "Use French Bullion Wire on Cord," later in this chapter.

USE WIRE GUARDIANS

Wire Guardians are specialty findings that are designed to protect beading wire loops, while also giving them a more professional appearance. You attach them by stringing them onto your beading wire after a crimp bead, before you string the wire back through the crimp (similar to bullion wire).

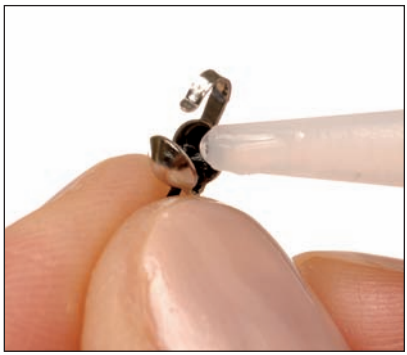
String and Finish Beading Cord

There are several ways to finish beading cord. The method you choose depends on the type and size of your cord, as well as personal preference. For help selecting an appropriate method for your cord, see p. 200 in the Appendix. For a review of the knots used in beading, see p. 203 in the Appendix.

USE BEAD TIPS ON CORD

Bead tips look like little clamshells that close over a knot. They have an open end loop, or an attached ring, which you can attach to a jump ring and clasp.

1. Thread your cord into the hole at the base of the bead tip, with the clamshell opening facing the end of the cord.
2. Tie a double-overhand knot between the end of the cord and the bead tip.
3. Trim off the end of the cord close to the knot.
4. Slide the bead tip up over the knot.
5. Apply a drop of E6000 glue to the knot, inside the bead tip.



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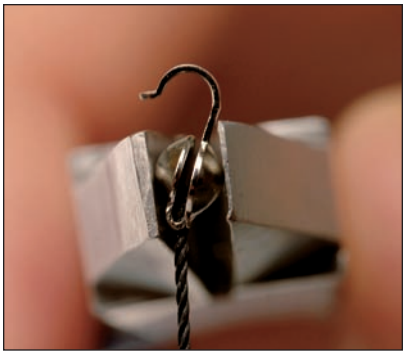
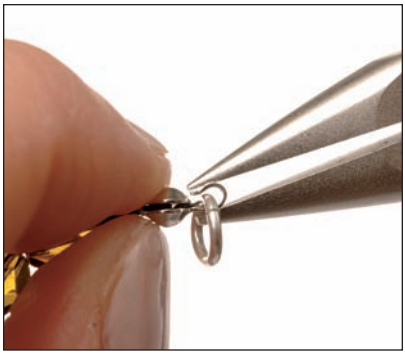
String and Finish Beading Cord *(continued)*

6. Use flat nose pliers to close the clamshell over the knot, with the knot contained inside.
7. After stringing on all of your beads, repeat Steps 1–6 to finish the other end of the cord.

   Note: *If necessary, use a beading awl to position the second knot inside the second bead tip. For more information on using a beading awl with knots,* *see p. 86.*



8. If your bead tips have claws, use chain nose pliers to open each claw, and slip in a jump ring that you've already attached to a clasp finding. If your bead tips have closed rings, open each jump ring to attach it to a ring.
9. For bead tips with claws, close down each claw using chain nose pliers.



The bead tips with the clasps attached are shown here.

USE FRENCH BULLION WIRE ON CORD

French bullion wire can protect your end loops from damage, while giving them a more professional appearance.

1. String on a bead with a hole large enough for the cord to pass through twice.
2. Use sharp side cutters to cut a length of bullion about ½ inch long.
3. String the bullion onto the cord, next to the bead.

4. Thread the cord back into the bead to create a loop in the bullion, leaving a cord tail of several inches at the end.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

String and Finish Beading Cord *(continued)*

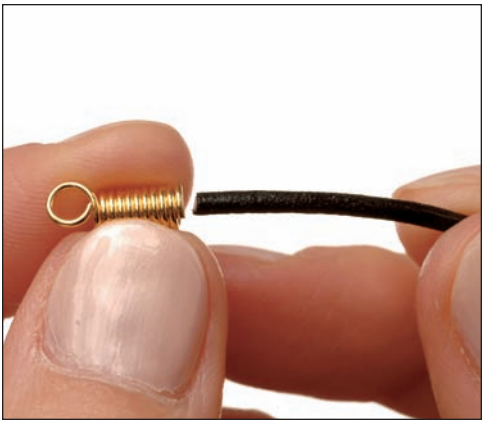
5. Tie a square knot or double-overhand know at the base of the bullion loop.
6. If desired, apply a tiny drop of E6000 glue to the knot.
7. String on the beads for your design, and repeat Steps 1–4 to apply bullion to the other end of the cord.
8. To conceal the cord tails at each knot, use a twisted wire needle to thread them back into the beaded strand.
9. Attach clasp findings to each bullion loop using jump rings.

The bullion loop with clasps attached is shown here.

USE COIL ENDS

You can use coil ends to finish larger-diameter cord, like satin, rattail, and leather. Choose a size that fits snugly over your cord.

1. After trimming your cord to the desired length, slide a coil end onto the end until the tip of the cord is flush with the top coil of the coil end.



2. Use chain nose pliers to squeeze down the first coil of the coil end.

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String and Finish Beading Cord *(continued)*

3. Turn the cord and squeeze evenly all the way around the first coil until it is securely attached to the cord.

4. String the beads or pendant for your design.
5. Repeat Steps 1–4 to finish the other end.

Note: *For added security, you can add a drop of E6000 glue near the end of the cord before attaching the coil end.*

USE END CAPS

1. After trimming your cord to the desired length, apply a drop of E6000 glue to the last few millimeters of the cord end.

2. Slide a snugly fitting end cap over the end of the cord, as far as it will go.
3. Quickly wipe away any excess glue with a paper towel.
4. Gently string on the beads for your design, being careful not to dislodge the end cap.

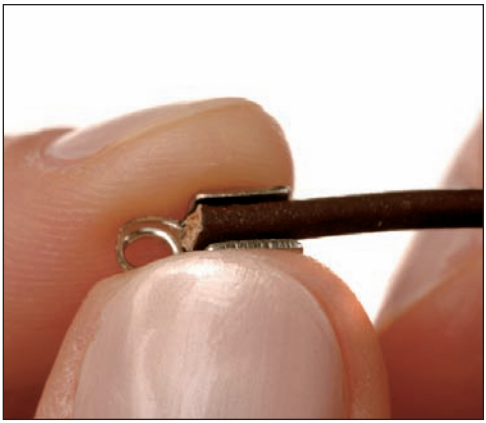
   Note: *If the end cap moves, wait until the glue sets before stringing your beads.*

5. Repeat Steps 1–2 to attach the other end cap.
6. Allow the glue to set for 24 hours.
7. Attach clasp findings to both end caps using jump rings.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

USE FOLD-OVER CRIMP ENDS

You can use fold-over crimp ends to finish soft or flat cord, like satin or suede. They also work for folded-over ends of ribbon (see "String and Finish Ribbon," later in this chapter).

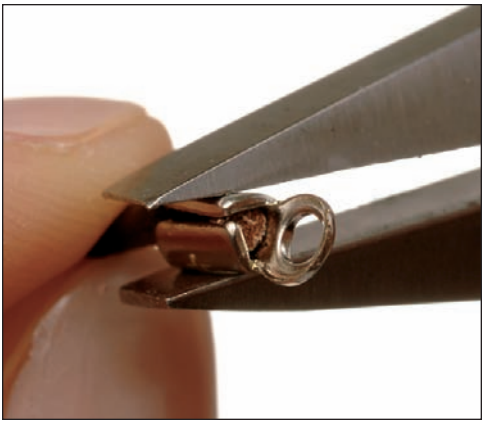


1. After trimming your cord to the desired length, lay the very end of the cord inside the fold-over crimp, with the little "wings" of the crimp facing up.

   Note: *Fold-over crimp ends tend to hold pretty well on their own, but for added security you can add a drop of glue to the inside back of the crimp end before placing the cord inside.*

2. Using chain nose or flat nose pliers, slowly squeeze down one wing of the crimp end, so that it clamps down securely onto the cord.

3. Repeat this process for the second wing, squeezing it down over the first.
4. String on all of the beads for your design.
5. Repeat Steps 1–4 to finish the other cord end.



6. Attach clasp findings to each crimp-end loop using jump rings to complete the cord ends.

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String and Finish Beading Cord *(continued)*

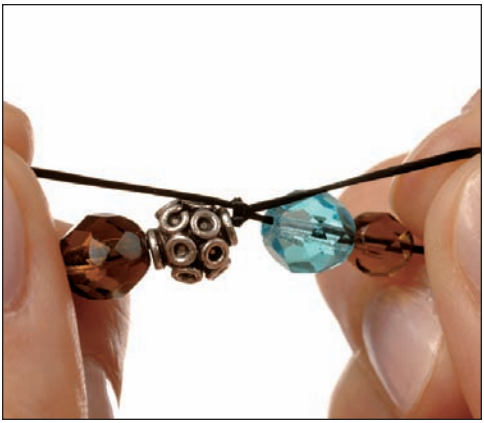
FINISH STRETCH CORD

Knotting is the best way to finish stretch cord. You can hide the knot by covering it with a larger-holed bead.

1. Attach an alligator clamp or Bead Stopper to the cord, at least 4 inches from the end.
2. String the beads for your design, leaving at least 4 inches at the other end of the strand.

3. String on one last bead with a hole just large enough to cover a knot in the cord.
4. Holding both ends of the cord together, carefully remove the alligator clamp or Bead Stopper.

5. Tie a square knot.
6. Apply a small drop of E6000 glue to the knot.



7. Slide the larger-holed bead over the knot.
8. Use a paper towel to wipe away any extra glue.
9. Allow the glue to set for 24 hours.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

String and Finish Beading Cord *(continued)*

10 Use sharp scissors to trim off the extra tails of cord.

TIP

Always apply these rules to make your stretch jewelry as durable as possible:

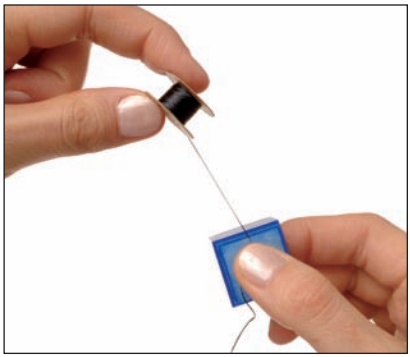
1. Don't string beads tightly.
2. Size your jewelry so that it's not worn too snugly.
3. Avoid using heavy or sharp-edged beads.
4. Use the largest-diameter stretch cord that will fit through your beads.
5. Avoid using crimp beads on stretch cord.

String and Finish Beading Thread

Beading thread is used for beaded lace (see Chapter 3), bead weaving (see Chapter 4), and to string simple strands of small, lightweight beads. For information about thread and needle sizes, see p. 202. To review the knots used in these techniques, see p. 203 in the Appendix.

USE BEAD TIPS ON BEADING THREAD

1. Apply thread conditioner to a length of beading thread that is twice the desired jewelry length, plus about 20 inches.



2. String on a beading needle, and position it halfway along the strand.

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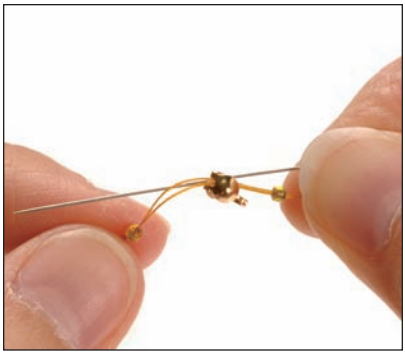
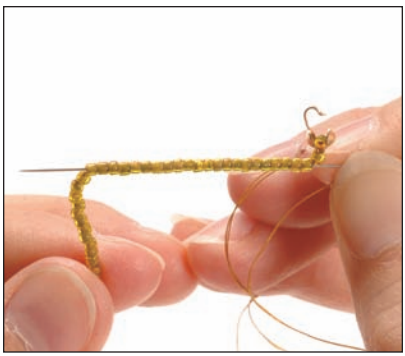
String and Finish Beading Thread *(continued)*

3. String on one seed bead and then a bead tip with the open clam shell facing the ends of the thread.
4. String on another seed bead.
5. Position the two seed beads and the bead tip about 8 inches from the ends of the thread.
6. String the needle back down through the bead tip and the first seed bead you strung on in Step 3.



7. Tie a square knot just below the first seed bead.
8. String on all the beads for the design.
9. At the other end of the beaded strand, string another bead tip (with the open clamshell facing the needle) and one more seed bead.
10. String the needle back through the bead tip and the very next seed bead in the strand, and tie a double overhand knot.

11. Pass the needle back through the next 2 inches of beads in the strand, and bring it out again.
12. Trim off the needle and thread close to the strand.



13. Go back to the first end of the strand and thread the needle onto one of the thread tails, and then pass back through the strand and trim off the thread, as you did in Steps 11–12.
14. Repeat Step 13 for the other thread tail.
15. Use chain nose pliers to close each bead tip, and use jump rings to attach clasp findings.

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TIP

Traditionally, "bead tips" had an open cup instead of a closing shell. They simply held onto an end knot and provided a claw for attaching findings. Today, most artisans use a clamshell-style bead tip, and the terms *bead tip* and *clamshell* are used interchangeably. However, you can still find traditional bead tips at some bead shops.

USE FRENCH BULLION WIRE ON BEADING THREAD

1. Prepare your thread by completing Steps 1–2 of "Use Bead Tips on Beading Thread."
2. Complete all of the steps for "Use French Bullion Wire on Cord," earlier in this chapter, using the beading thread in place of cord and the beading needle in place of the big eye needle.

TIP

There may be times when you need to string beads onto thread before finishing one end. Instead of using tape, clamps, or alligator clamps to hold the beads on temporarily, try using a stop bead. Stop beads are commonly used for bead weaving. To review how to use one, see p. 119.

String and Finish Ribbon

You can use ribbon to string pendants and large-hole beads using a big eye needle. The most common types of ribbon used for beading are organza, silk, and satin. For a clean finish, always use very sharp scissors to cut ribbon.

USE FOLD-OVER CRIMP ENDS ON RIBBON

1. After cutting the ribbon to your desired length, fold over the edges at one end.
2. Optionally, add a tiny drop of E6000 glue to the folded end (to help it remain secured in the crimp end).
3. Insert the folded end into a crimp end, between the two wings, glue-side down (if you used glue).

4. Use flat nose pliers to squeeze down each wing of the crimp end securely over the ribbon.
5. String on your pendant and/or beads.
6. Repeat Steps 1–4 on the other end of the ribbon.

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USE CLAMP ENDS ON RIBBON

Many clamp ends are large enough to hold multiple strands of ribbon, but you can also use them on a single-strand. Try to select clamp ends that are just slightly wider than your ribbon.

1. Cut the ribbon 1 to 2 inches longer than your desired finished length.
2. Roll over one end of one ribbon twice to create a rounded fold small enough to fit completely inside the clamp end.
3. Use a needle and beading thread to stitch the fold in place.
4. Optionally, add a drop of E6000 glue to the fold.

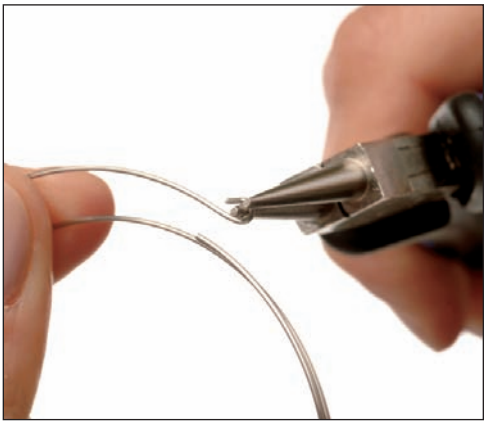
5. Insert the fold into the clamp end, pushing it between the jaws.
6. Use flat nose pliers to squeeze the jaws of the clamp end closed over the ribbon.
7. String on your pendant and/or beads.
8. Repeat Steps 2–6 on the other end.

String and Finish Memory Wire

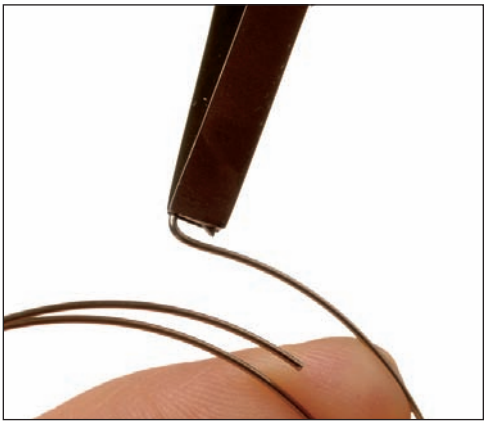
For best results, design multiple-coil memory wire bracelets to have at least three coils. Necklaces and anklets typically have just one coil. Remember that larger beads may make memory wire jewelry uncomfortable to wear, and only cut memory wire with heavy household, or specialty memory-wire cutters; it will damage your regular side cutters.

FINISH MEMORY WIRE BY LOOPING

1. After cutting the desired number of loops of memory wire from the coil, firmly grasp one end of the wire with round nose pliers.
2. Roll the pliers away from you to create a loop.



3. Use flat nose pliers to wiggle the loop closed, as if you were closing a jump ring.
4. String on all of the beads for your design, leaving about ¾ inch of bare wire at the other end.



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String and Finish Memory Wire *(continued)*

5. Holding the wire up so that no beads fall off, position the round nose pliers at the end of the wire as you did in Step 1, and create a closing loop.
6. Use flat nose pliers to close the loop, as you did in Step 3.

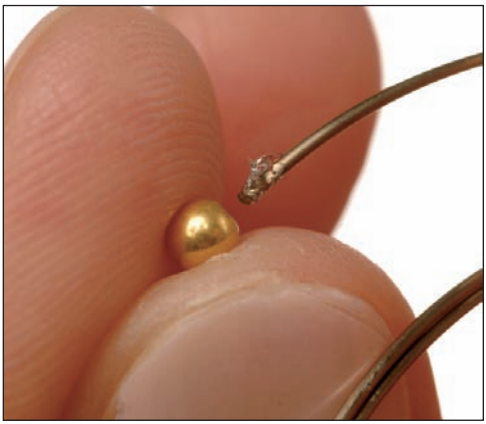
7. If you want, you can attach a charm to one or both end loops, either directly or using a jump ring.

USE MEMORY WIRE END CAPS

For a more professional look, try finishing memory wire jewelry with end caps instead of loops. Some end caps even have built-in loops for attaching charms.

1. After cutting the desired number of loops of memory wire from the coil, dip one end into E6000 glue.

2. Slide the end into the hole in a memory wire end cap as far as it will go.
3. Set the project aside for 24 hours, to allow the glue to fully set.



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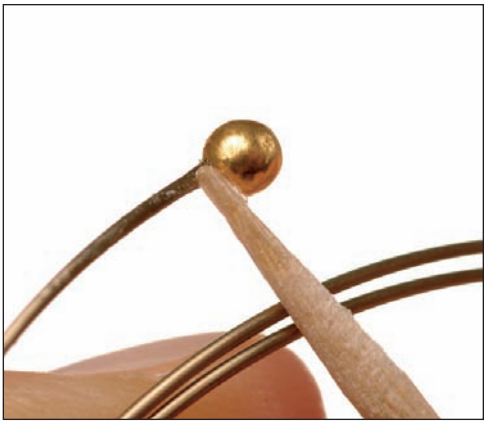
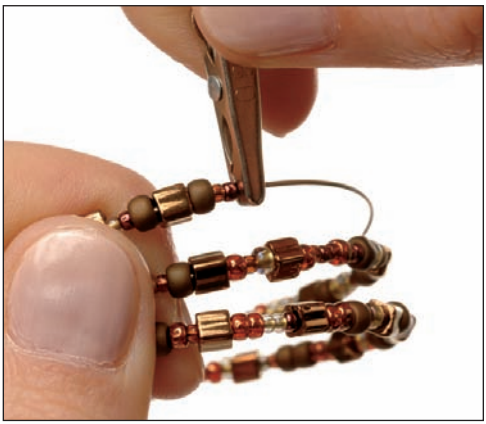
String and Finish Memory Wire *(continued)*

4. Use a toothpick to apply a tiny drop of glue to the end cap where it connects with the memory wire.
5. String on all of the beads for your design, leaving a little extra bare wire at the end to attach the other end cap.



6. Holding the wire up to keep the beads from falling off, clamp a small alligator clip to the wire, up against the beads.
7. Perform Steps 1–2 on the other end of the wire.



8. Carefully remove the alligator clip.
9. Repeat Step 4.
10. Slide the last bead in the design up against the memory cap, so that it sticks in the glue.
11. Set the project aside for another 24 hours to allow the glue to fully set.

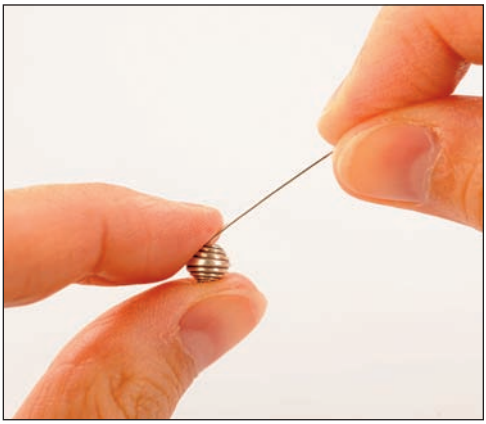
A complete memory wire bracelet with end caps in place is shown here.

Use Head Pins and Eye Pins

You can use head pins to attach beaded drops to your designs and eye pins to created beaded links.

MAKE A CHARM WITH A HEAD PIN

1. Select a head pin that is long enough to accommodate the bead or beads that you would like to convert into a drop, with at least ¼ inch of wire to spare.
2. String one or more beads onto the head pin, and slide them all the way down.
3. Hold the bead(s) against the head of the pin with one hand, and use the fingers of your other hand to bend the end of the head pin to a 45-degree angle just above the bead(s).



4. If the end that you just bent is longer than about ¼ inch, use side cutters to trim it down. Position the side cutters so that the flat (not the concave) edge of the blades is facing toward the beads. (This ensures a *flush*, or flat, cut.)

5. Position the head pin so that the bent end is pointing toward you.
6. Grasp the very end of the pin with round nose pliers at approximately the middle point of their jaws. (Depending on the size of your pliers, you may need to experiment to determine the best place.)
7. Roll the pliers away from you to create a loop.
8. Remove the pliers. The charm is now complete.

9. To attach the charm to a beaded strand or another component, use chain nose or flat nose pliers to gently bend the loop to its side to open it.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Use Head Pins and Eye Pins *(continued)*

10. Slip the open loop over the strand or component ring, and use chain nose or flat nose pliers to bend it closed.

MAKE A LINK WITH AN EYE PIN

1. Perform Steps 1–7 of "Make a Charm with a Head Pin," using an eye pin in place of the head pin.

2. You now have a beaded link with a wire loop at each end. Attach one loop to your design (as you would with a head-pin charm) and attach a charm or another link to the opposite end.

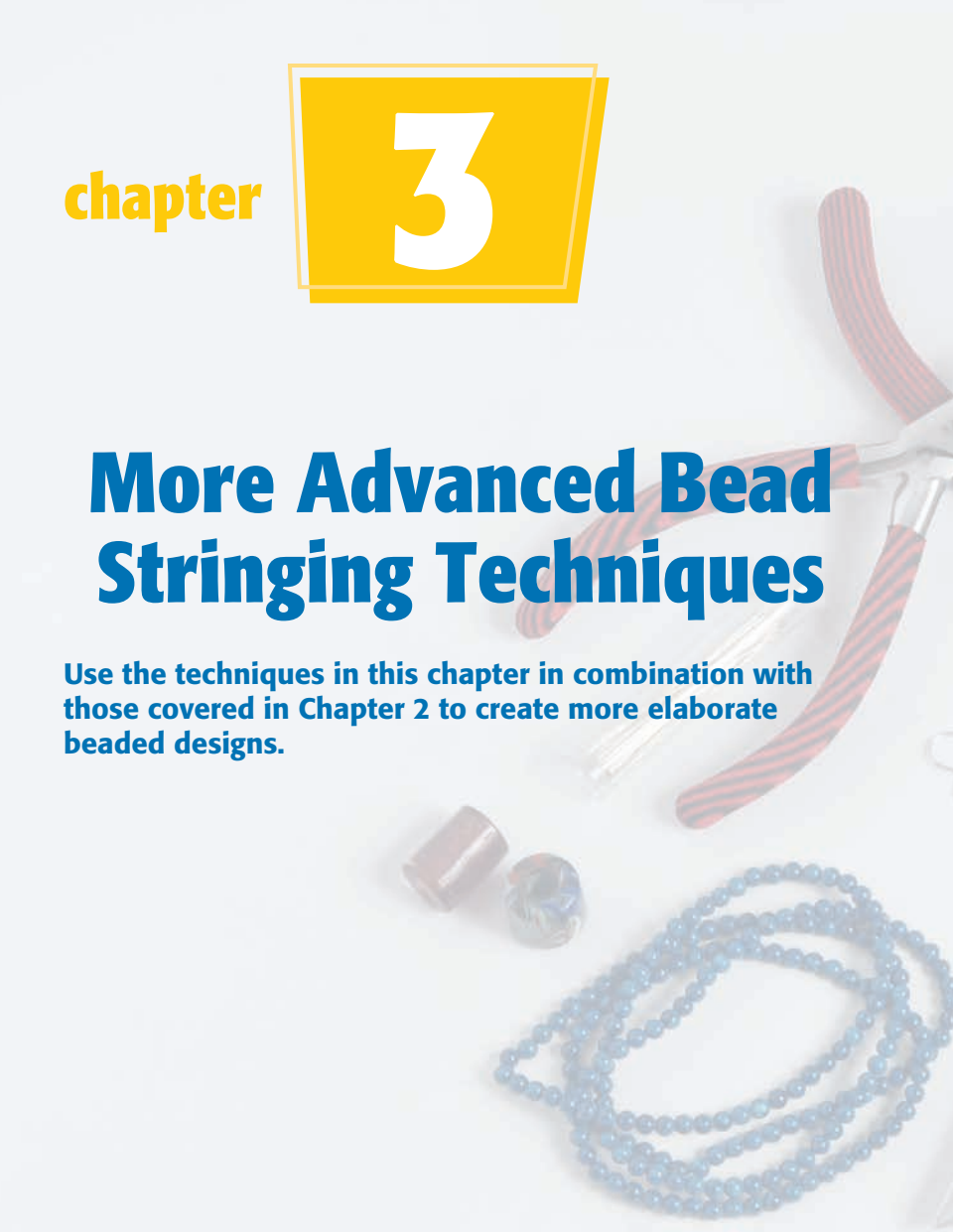
TIP

Earring findings have metal loops to hold beaded drops or charms. You can either attach your drop or charm directly to the loop on the earring finding, or use a jump ring to link the two pieces together.

chapter 3

More Advanced Bead Stringing Techniques

Use the techniques in this chapter in combination with those covered in Chapter 2 to create more elaborate beaded designs.



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Use a Multiple Strand Clasp

You can add drama and elegance to jewelry by combining more than one strand of beads in a single design. The simplest way to accomplish this is to use a pre-made, multiple-strand clasp.

1. Complete all of your beaded strands and finish them with jump rings. (See Chapter 2 to review bead stringing and finishing.)
2. Lay out the strands parallel to one another on your work surface in the order that you would like them to be in your jewelry.

3. Position the clasp parts at either end.
4. One by one, attach each strand to matching connection points on both clasp ends using jump rings.

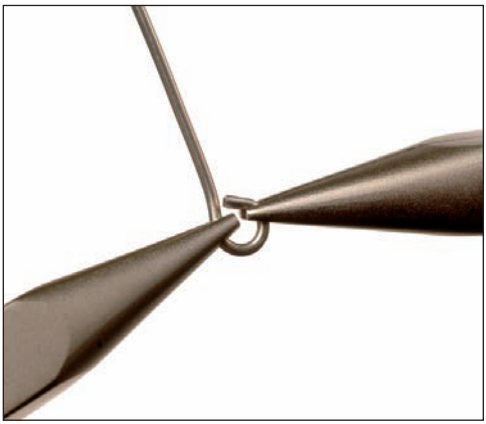
Use End Cones

An *end cone* is a cone-shaped metal component with a small hole at one end and a much larger hole at the other end. You can gather multiple strands together and hide their ends inside the cone. The method for gathering the strands together depends on whether or not your strands have end findings, like crimps or bead tips.

GATHER STRANDS WITH END FINDINGS

When you finish strands using findings, you can usually use the findings or the loops they create to gather the strands together.

1. Select an eye pin with a loop large enough to hold one end of all of your beaded strands together.



2. Open the "eye" of the eye pin by twisting it gently to the side using chain nose pliers, as if you were opening a jump ring.

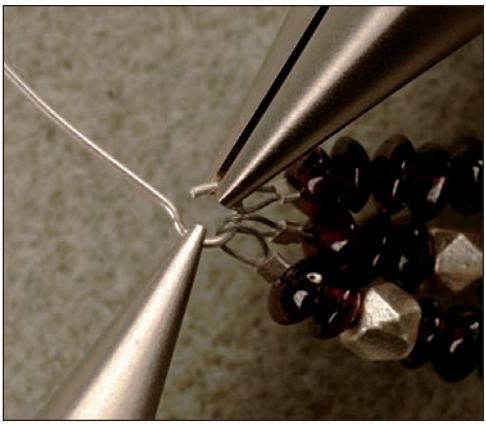
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Use End Cones *(continued)*

3. Slip one end of each beaded strand onto the eye pin loop, through the cable loop if you're using cable and crimps, or through the ring on the end piece if you're using cord findings.

   Note: *If the beads near the ends of the strands are too large for the strands to bunch closely together at the eye pin, try attaching the strands to the eye pin with small jump rings instead of attaching them directly. This may help the strands to fit inside the cone.*

4. Carefully close the eye pin using chain nose pliers as if you were closing a jump ring.



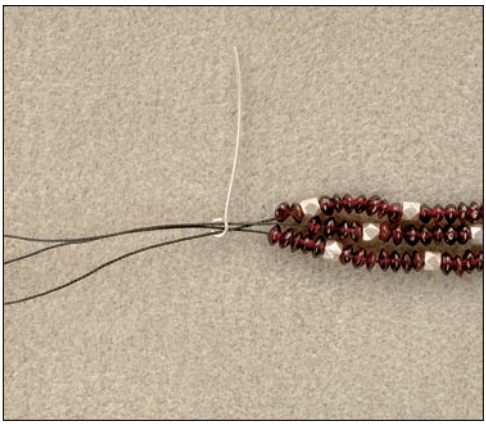
5. Hold up the eye pin and shake it a little to make sure that the strands are securely attached.
6. Repeat these steps to finish the other end of the design.

Skip forward to p. 83 to review how to attach the end cones.

GATHER STRANDS WITHOUT END FINDINGS

You can gather multiple strands of beaded thread or small-diameter cord (like silk) without using end findings.

1. As you string the beads, leave tails of about 8 inches of thread or cord at the strand ends after the finishing knots.
2. String an eye pin onto the tails.



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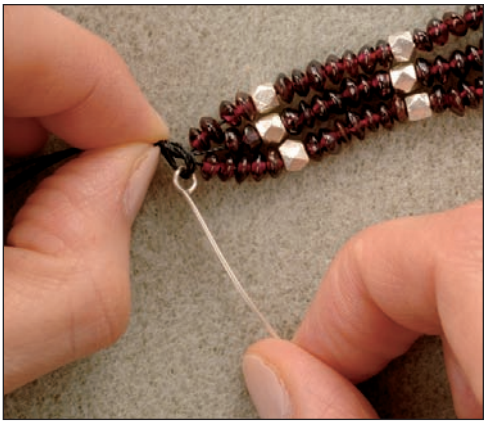
Use End Cones *(continued)*

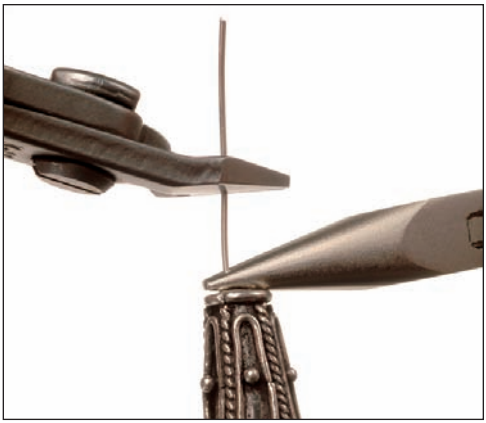
3. Holding the tails together, tie an overhand knot around the eye pin as close to the beads as possible.



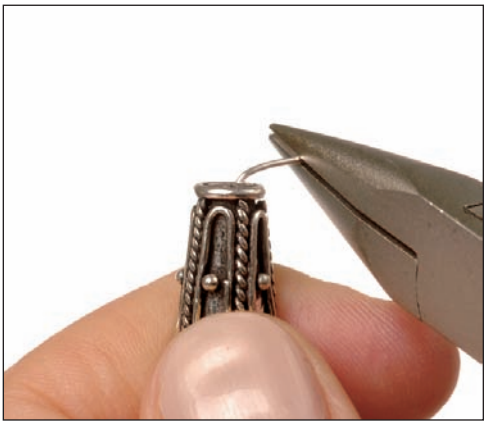
4. Apply a drop or two of clear nail polish or glue to the completed knot.
5. Use scissors to trim down the tails so that they will fit inside the cone.

ATTACH END CONES

1. Thread the eye pin through the end cone, pulling the gathered strands into the cone as far as they will go. If you have chosen the proper size of end cone, then the ends of the strands should now be hidden inside.
2. Holding the base of the eye pin wire with chain nose pliers, use side cutters to trim the eye pin (if needed) to about ¼ inch from the top of the end cone.



3. Use the chain nose pliers to bend the eye pin toward you.



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Use End Cones *(continued)*

4. Grasp the end of the wire with round nose pliers.
5. Slowly roll the pliers away from you to create a loop.

   Note: *If the new loop doesn't close all the way, use chain nose pliers to wiggle the end back and forth to close it, as you would to close a jump ring.*

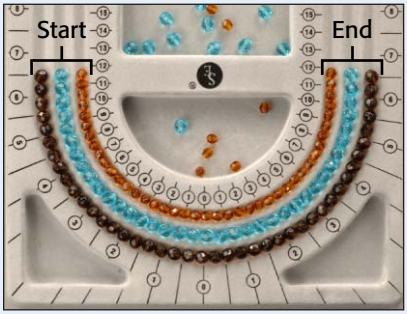
6. Finish by attaching a clasp to the loops using jump rings.

TIP

Make a Graduated Strand Necklace Using a Bead Board

If you're creating your own necklace design, you might like the strands to be graduated in length. With graduated strands, the topmost strand is the shortest, and each strand below it is a little bit longer than the one above.

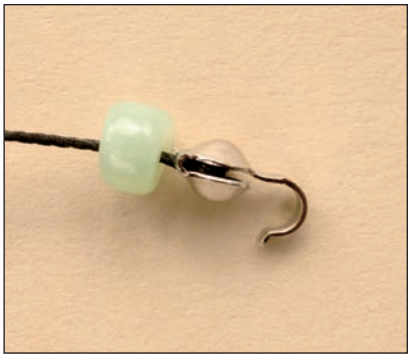
To accomplish this, use a bead board with multiple, curved bead channels to lay out your design (see the photo on the right). Start with the shortest strand, laying it out to the desired length. Then lay out each subsequent strand, being sure to start and end each strand at the same marks on the board.



Knot Between Beads

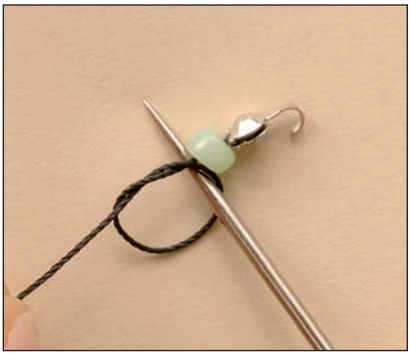
You can give beaded jewelry a softer feel, and better protect the beads, by placing knots between some or all of the beads in a strand. Pearls are traditionally strung this way to keep their soft surfaces from scratching against one another, but you can knot between beads that are made of just about any material. Soft cord, like silk, is the best stringing material for knotting. Here are the two most common between-bead knotting methods.

KNOT WITH A DARNING NEEDLE OR AWL



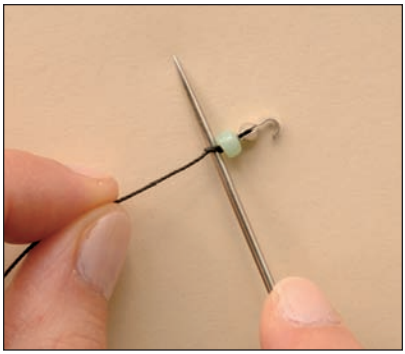
1. Finish or tape one end of an unbeaded strand of cord that measures at least five times longer than you would need if you were beading without knots.
2. String on the first bead, and position it up against the finished end or tape.

   Note: *If you used French bullion wire to finish the strand, this will actually be the second bead on the strand. You will have already knotted behind the first bead during the finishing process.*

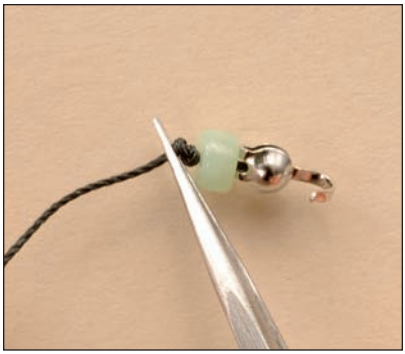


3. Make a very loose overhand knot near the bead.
4. Insert a darning needle or awl into the open part of the knot.
5. Close the knot loosely over it.

6. Holding the unfinished end of the string in one hand, use your other hand to slowly pull the knot up against the first bead with the needle or awl.
7. Remove the needle or awl, but do not pull the knot tight just yet.



8. While still holding the unfinished end of string in one hand, use the other hand to place the tips of tweezers or knotting pliers against the knot you just made, and use them to position the knot as close to the bead as possible. The knot should tighten down during this step.



9. Continue stringing on beads and securing knots to the desired length.
10. Finish the other end of the strand.

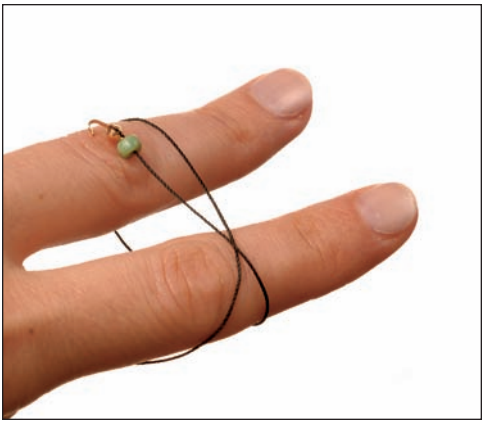
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Knot Between Beads *(continued)*

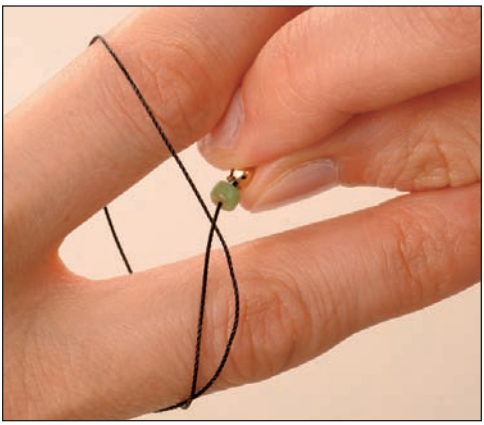
USE A SPECIALTY KNOTTING TOOL

Specialty knotting tools combine the action of a needle and tweezers in one unit. With a little practice, they can speed up your knotting.

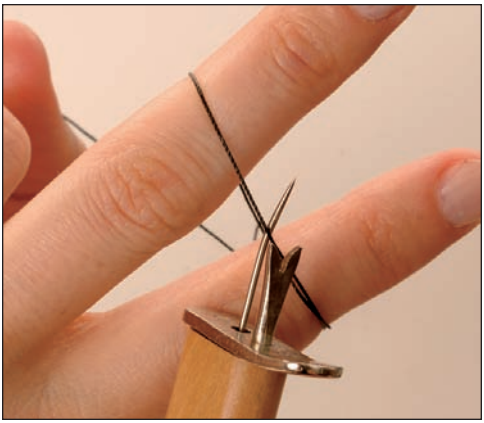
1. Hold the finished or taped end of the strand in one hand and use it to wrap the string around the index and middle finger of your other hand.
2. Wrap the string up over your index finger again and cross over the first wrap, so that the finished end of the string is pointing slightly toward the base of your fingers.



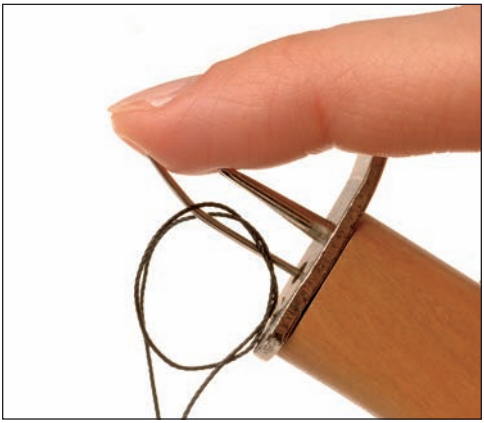
3. Drop the finished end down through the loop you created between your fingers, making sure that it goes through in a direction moving toward your fingertips.



4 While still holding the looped string between your fingers, insert the awl device of the knotting tool into the loop, behind the top string, with the bend in the awl facing away from you.



5 Place your index finger on the side of the awl, above the string, to keep the string from sliding off.



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Knot Between Beads *(continued)*

6. Remove the fingers of your other hand from the loop, and use them to grab the string behind the loop.
7. Position the knotting tool perpendicular to your abdomen, and pull the strand slowly upward toward your chin until the loop creates a knot and is positioned close to the bead.

8. Rotate the knotting tool so that the awl is pointing toward you.
9. Gently position the strand inside the fork-shaped device on the tool.

10. Holding the strand taut, remove your index finger from the side of the awl device. Use your thumb to push up on the metal lever while pulling the knotting tool away from you until the completed knot slips off the end of the awl device.

One completed knot is shown here.

TIP

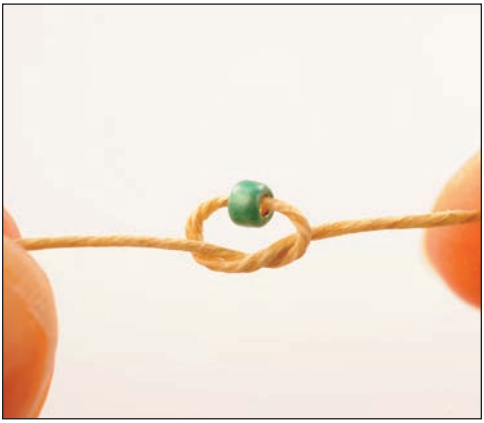
Make a "Tin Cup" Necklace

In a tin cup necklace, beads are held in place by knots and separated by unbeaded intervals of stringing material, usually silk. To make one, cut a strip of paperboard to the length you'd like the intervals to be, and fold it in half lengthwise. After securing a bead with a knot, place the folded paper over the string, and secure it with a paper clip or alligator clamp. Create the next knot against the end of the guide, and remove the guide when the knot is complete.

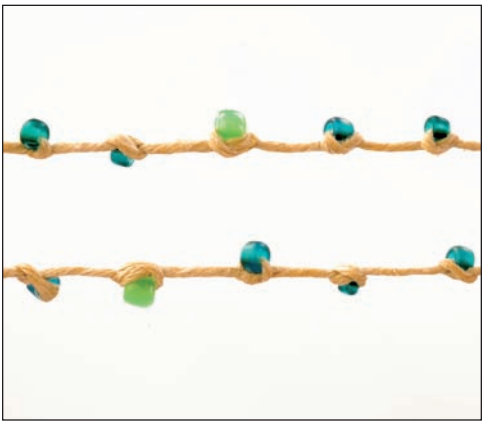
String Beads Within Knots

Use this very simple technique alone, or in combination with knotting between beads, to add texture to your designs that are strung on cord. It works best with smaller, rounded beads and small-diameter cord. Keep in mind that you can also tie charms inside of knots. Instead of stringing on a bead in Step 2 below, string on the loop of a charm, or a jump ring attached to a charm.

1. Begin with a strand of cord that measures about five times longer than you would need if you were beading without knots. (The actual length of cord you use depends on how close together you knot the beads.)
2. String on a bead that you would like to include inside a knot, and position it where you would like the knot to be.
3. Tie an overhand knot, capturing the bead inside the loop of the knot.
4. Pull both ends of the cord tight to secure the bead in place.



5. If you'd like to add another bead within another knot right away, string on a second bead.
6. Make a loose overhand knot with the bead inside its loop, and slide the knot along the strand to the place you would like to secure it. If you'd like to secure it very close to the first bead, use a darning needle or awl to help you position it—but make sure that the bead remains inside the knot.
7. Pull the ends of the cord tight to secure the second bead in place.
8. Continue stringing as usual.



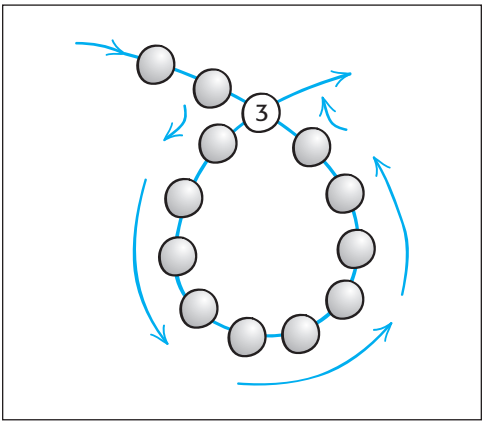
Create Beaded Lace

Beaded lace is inspired by traditional fabric adornments. You can create it using seed beads on beading thread, or regular beads on soft, small-diameter cord or beading wire. You string through some beads more than once, so if you use a needle, be sure that it can pass through your beads with extra room to spare.

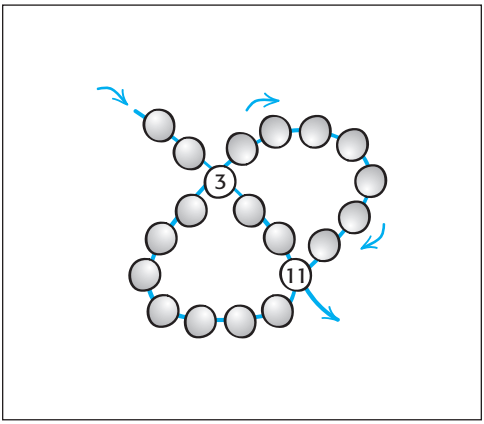
CHAIN LACE USING ONE STRAND

This pattern has even-sized loops on the top and bottom, making it useful for bracelets.

1. Beginning with a finished or taped unbeaded strand, string on 13 beads.
2. Insert the needle back up through the third bead, in the opposite direction that you strung through it the first time, and pull the thread taut to form a loop.



3. String on seven more beads.
4. String back through the 11th bead that you originally strung on, as you did with the third bead in Step 2.



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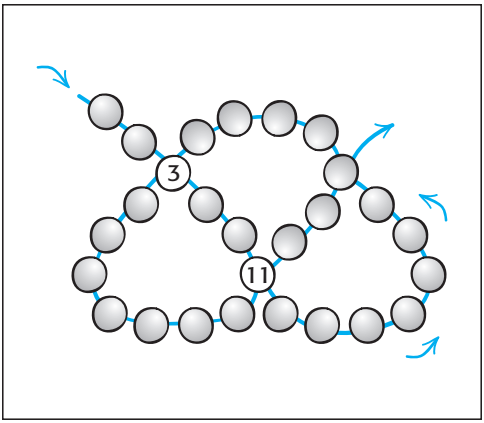
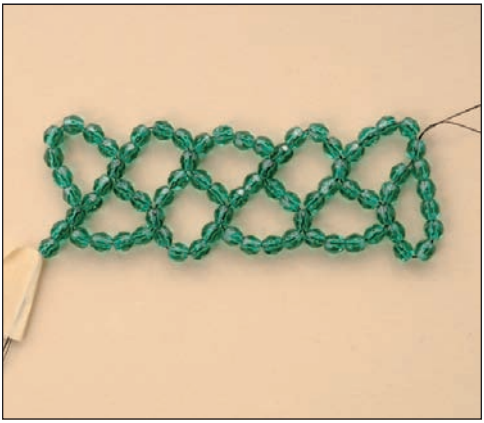
Create Beaded Lace *(continued)*

5. String on seven more beads.
6. String back through the 19th bead that you originally strung on.

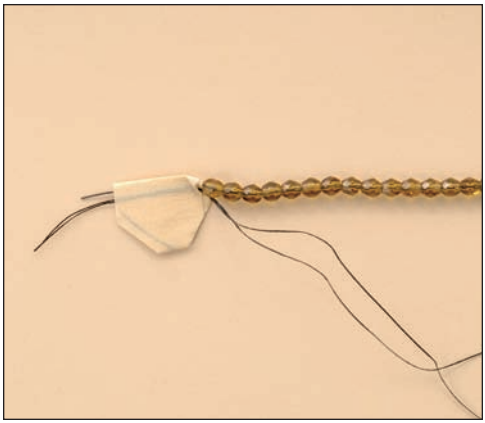


7. Continue this pattern until you get to the desired length.

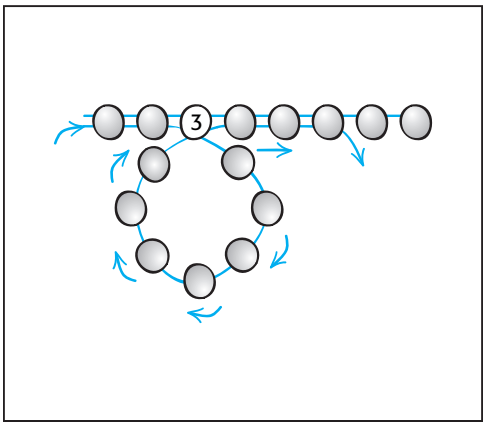


CHAIN LACE USING TWO STRANDS

In this pattern, loops drop down from a straight upper strand. It is a nice design for necklaces.



1. Finish or tape together the same ends of two unbeaded strands.
2. String beads loosely along the entire upper strand, leaving some extra space between beads, and tape the other end.

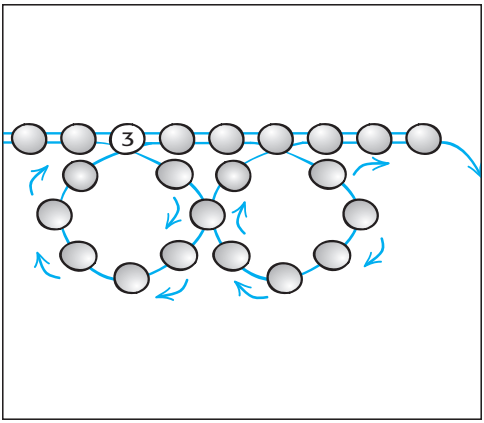


3. Thread the lower strand through the first three beads of the upper strand, and out again.
4. String on seven more beads.
5. String back into the third bead, in the same direction you strung it the first time, and all the way through the next three beads on the upper strand, then out again.

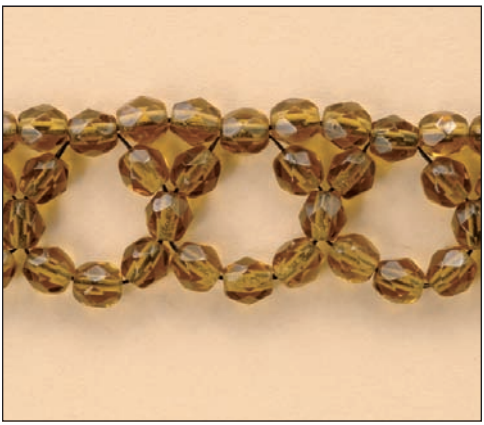
CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Create Beaded Lace *(continued)*

6. String on five more beads.
7. String up through the second bead on the previous loop, and out again.
8. String on one more bead.
9. String back into the upper strand as you did in Step 5, passing through a total of four beads.
10. String on another five beads.



11. Continue this pattern to the desired length.



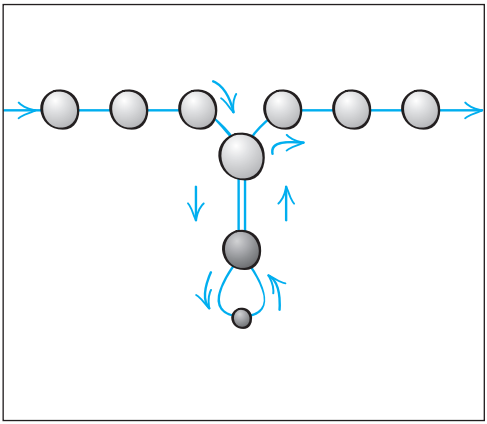
TIP

You may find it helpful when working with two strands to secure both ends of the main beading strand to your work surface with masking tape. This keeps some tension in the thread and allows you to string up through the beads more easily.

Create Beaded Drops

You can make simple beaded strands or lace-pattern loops more decorative by adding beaded drops. For the best results, select a drop bead that is larger than the rest of the beads along the loop or strand.

1. At the location where you'd like to place a beaded drop, string on three beads: a larger-size bead, a smaller bead, and then a seed bead.
2. String back up through the smaller bead, and the larger bead, and then pull the strand taut.

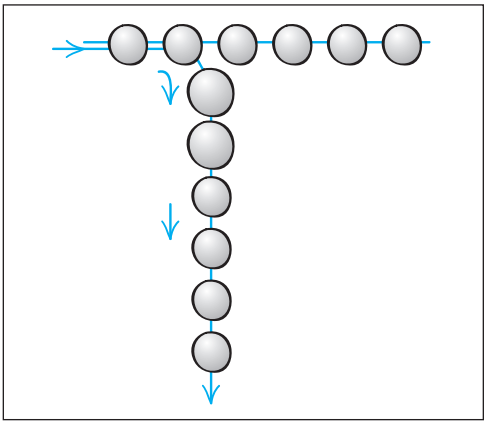


3. Continue stringing on beads as required for your pattern.

Create Simple Beaded Fringe

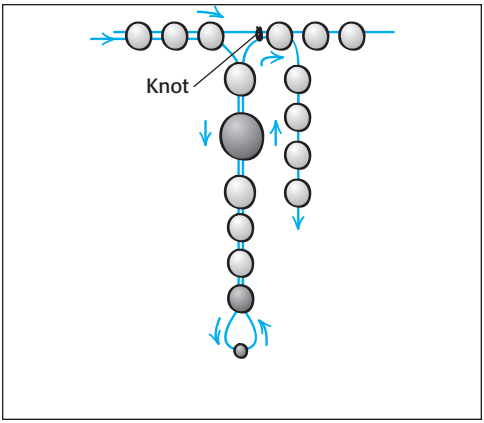
Simple beaded fringe is made by using two strands of stringing material. One strand is the main beaded strand, and the other is used to string and attach the fringe. As with other techniques where two strands run through the same sets of beads, you may find it helpful to tape both ends of the main beaded strand to your work surface.

1. Beginning with a loosely beaded strand taped at both ends (the main beaded strand), string a second, unbeaded strand into the beads at one end, and bring it out where you would like to begin making fringe.
2. String on the beads that you've chosen to make the fringe to the desired length.



3. After stringing on the last fringe bead, string back up into the bead just before it, and then all the way back up the entire fringe piece.
4. Pull the fringe taut but not too tight, allowing the fringe to drape softly without exposing bare areas of thread or cord.
5. Keeping the fringe piece in that position, tie an overhand knot or a half-hitch knot around the top beaded strand to keep the fringe piece in place.

6. Thread into the main beaded strand to the point where you'd like to create the next fringe (at least one bead away from the previous fringe).
7. Repeat Steps 2–6 until you have the desired number of fringes.



8. Complete the second strand by stringing it through the remaining beads on the top strand.

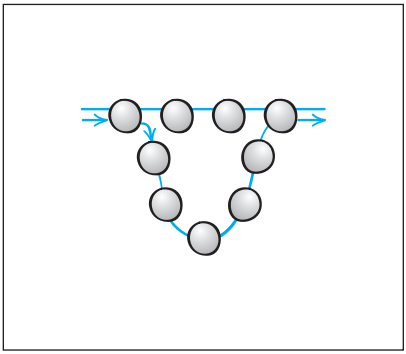
TIP

When you create fringe using beading thread or very thin cord, you can finish the ends with bead tips the same way you would with a single strand (see Chapter 2). Simply bundle the two strands together and treat them as one.

Create Looped Beaded Fringe

With looped fringe, beaded loops hang from the main beaded strand. String it using two strands of stringing material, just like you would for basic fringe. As with simple beaded fringe, you may find it helpful to tape both ends of the main beaded strand to your work surface.

1. Perform Step 1 of "Create Simple Beaded Fringe" on p. 98.
2. String on the beads that you've chosen to make the first fringe loop.
3. Pull the thread taut.
4. Thread back into the main beaded strand.
5. Bring the needle out where you would like to begin the second looped fringe.



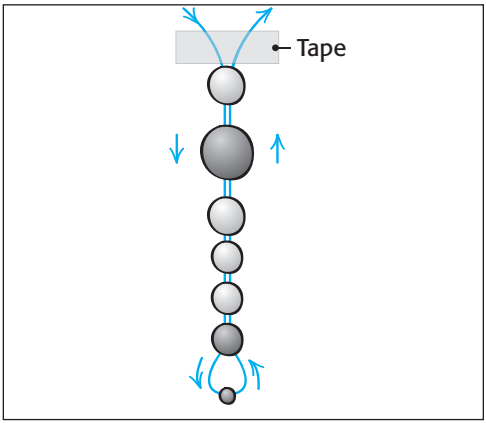
6. Repeat Steps 2–5 until you have the desired number of looped fringes.

Construct Beaded Tassels

There are many different methods for making beaded tassels. This section covers two of the most popular, which share a common technique for making the tassel fringe. First make the fringe; then select either the end cone/end cap tassel-top method or the focal bead tassel-top method to complete your piece.

MAKE TASSEL FRINGE

1. Tape a strand of thread or cord about 8 inches from one end.
2. Attach a needle to the other end, and string on all of the beads that you've chosen to make the first piece of tassel fringe to the desired length.
3. String back up into the bead just before the last bead you strung on in Step 2, and all the way back up the entire fringe piece.
4. Add the strand to the tape at the top of the fringe piece.



5. Trim the strand, leaving a 5- or 6-inch tail after the tape.
6. Repeat Steps 1–5 until you have completed the desired number of fringe pieces for your tassel.

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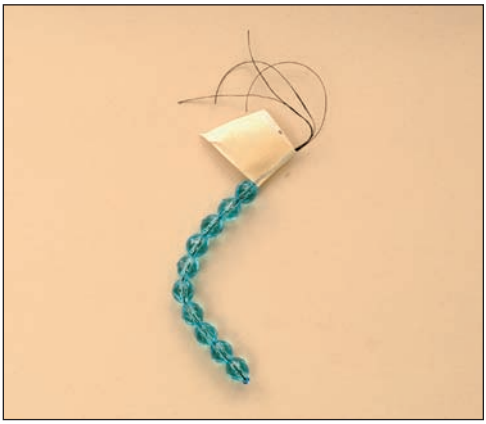
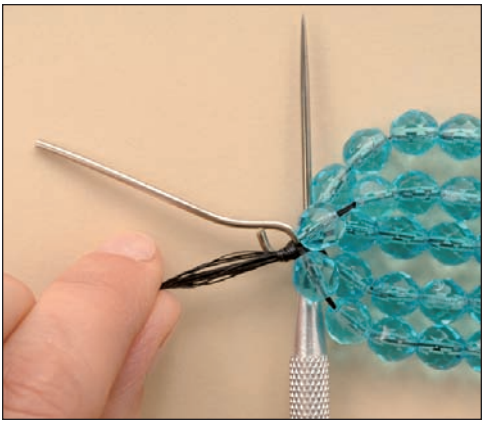


USE AN END CONE OR END CAP TASSEL TOP

1. Remove the tape from all fringe pieces, and thread the tails through the eye of an eye pin.

   Note: *If this proves difficult, open the head pin loop with chain nose pliers and twist the fringe tails together before placing them inside.*

2. Use the tails to tie a secure overhand knot around the eye as close to the beads as possible.
3. After applying a drop of clear nail polish or glue to the completed knot, trim the tails down to ¼ inch in length or shorter.



4. Thread the eye pin through an end cone or end cap as far as it will go.

5 Use round nose pliers to create a loop to hold the eye pin in place. (See "Attach End Cones" on p. 83.)

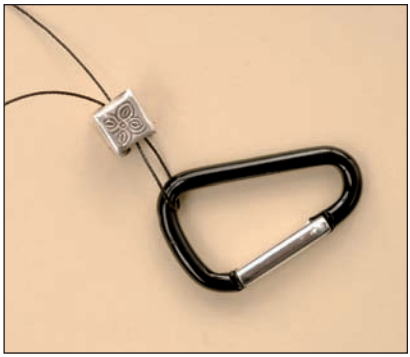
6 Attach a jump ring to the loop for hanging, if desired.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

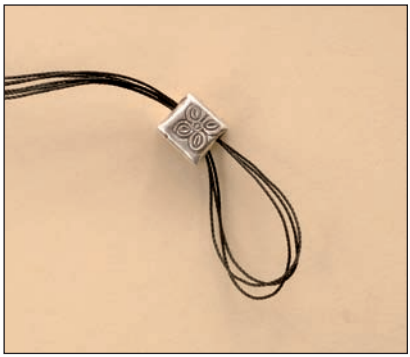
USE A FOCAL BEAD TASSEL TOP

This tassel is typically strung directly into a necklace through a focal bead. The bead's hole must be large enough to contain the knot at the top of the fringe and double the number of strands the necklace will have.

1. String the focal bead onto an unbeaded strand long enough to bead the desired length of necklace.
2. At the center point of the necklace, wrap the strand through a small carabiner or shower curtain ring, and thread it back up through the focal bead in the opposite direction.



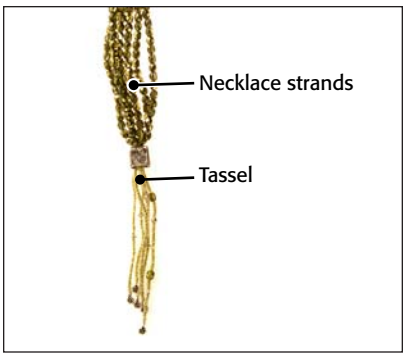
3. Repeat Steps 1–2 for the desired number of necklace strands.
4. Remove the carabiner or curtain ring, leaving a loop of strands at the bottom of the focal bead.



5. Remove the tape from the fringe pieces, and thread them all through the loop.
6. Tie the fringe tails securely around the loop with an overhand knot, as close to the fringe beads as possible.
7. After adding a drop or two of clear nail polish or instant bond glue to the knot, trim the ends.

8. Gently pull the necklace strands up through the focal bead, pulling the fringe knot inside the bead, until the upper fringe beads touch the focal bead.

9. String beads onto the strands on each side of the necklace, and finish as usual.



Stitch Ladder Beads Between Cords

You can create a beaded band by weaving a ladder of beads between two strands of cord. In the following steps, the thicker cord that makes up the bracelet or collar is referred to as the *frame cord*, and the thinner cord or thread used for weaving-in the beads is called the *weaving cord*. To create a one-piece cord frame for ladder beads, see "Make a Doubled Leather Cord Closure" on p. 186 in Chapter 6.

With this technique, always use an extra-long strand of weaving cord. About 8 feet of waxed linen cord was used in the example bracelet.

1. Attach a needle to *both* ends of the weaving cord. If you're using actual cord, use a big eye needle. If you're using beading thread, use a beading needle.
2. String on a bead, and center it along the weaving cord.
3. Position the bead between both strands of the frame cord, close to one end, with the weaving cord *beneath* the frame cord on both sides.

4. Holding the bead in place with your fingers and thumb, pass one needle *over* the frame cord and back through the bead.
5. Pull the weaving cord taut.

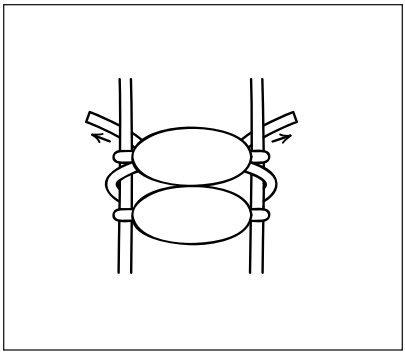
6. Repeat Step 4 using the other needle, stringing back through the bead in the opposite direction.
7. Turn your work over, and make sure that the weaving cord strands are emerging from *beneath* the frame cords, not on top of them.

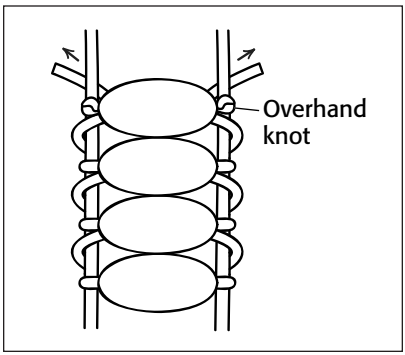
8. String a new bead using one needle, and position it a few inches away from the needle.
9. Now pass the other needle through the bead, in the opposite direction.
10. Gently pull both strands of weaving cord away from one another, sliding the bead all the way down into your work so that it is aligned beside the first bead.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Stitch Ladder Beads Between Cords *(continued)*

11. Holding the second bead in place with your thumb and fingers, pass one needle *under* the frame cord and back through the second bead, and pull taut.
12. Repeat Step 11 using the other needle and passing through the bead in the opposite direction.
13. Pull the weaving cord taut to secure the bead in place.
14. Continue weaving-in beads until you reach the end of the bracelet.
15. After stitching the final bead in place, pass one needle beneath the loop of weaving cord that wraps around the frame cord, adjacent to where the needle emerges from the bead.
16. Make an overhand knot around the weaving cord.
17. Optionally, apply a tiny drop of E6000 glue to the knot.
18. Bring the needle underneath the frame cord and pass it back through the final bead one more time.
19. Pull the weaving cord taut.
20. Use sharp scissors or nippers to trim the weaving cord as close to the final bead as possible.
21. Repeat Steps 15–20 with the other needle.





TIP

This example uses a single row of long barrel beads for the ladder. You can also use beads of other shapes, either singly or in multiples (stacks). Be sure to select beads with holes large enough for the weaving cord to pass through several times relatively snugly.

A completed bracelet with bamboo barrel beads and brown waxed linen weaving cord is shown here.

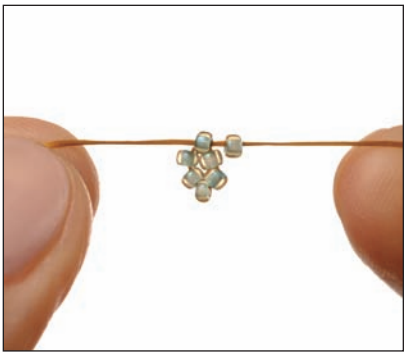
TIP

The needle may fit very snugly through the final bead, because you will have strung through it several times. If the needle becomes stuck part-way through, use chain nose pliers or flat nose pliers to very carefully pull the needle all the way out. However, keep in mind that if the bead's hole size is too small for your project, the needle may break. Always use caution.

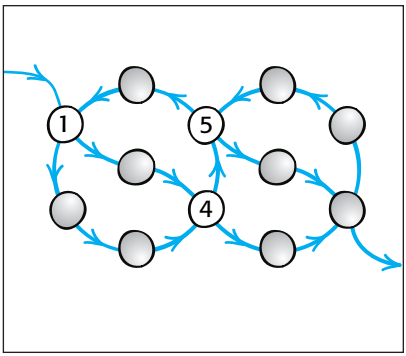
Weave a Daisy Chain

The daisy chain stitch is typically performed using seed beads and beading thread. It creates a narrow band of woven beads that resemble six-petal flowers.

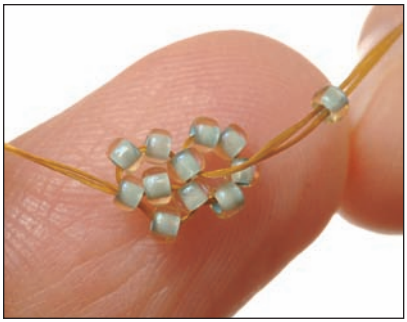
1. After securing a stop bead to a conditioned strand of thread, string on the first six beads of your design.
2. Thread back into the first bead in the same direction that you did the first time.
3. Add one new bead.



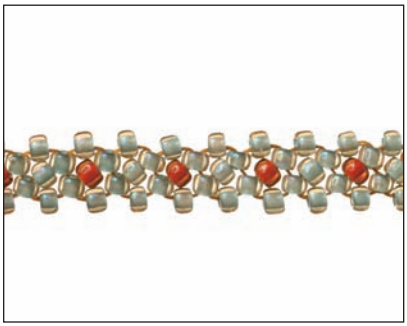
4. In the opposite direction than you did the first time, thread down and through the fourth bead.
5. String on four more beads.
6. String back into the fifth bead that you strung on in Step 1.



7. Add one new bead as you did in Step 3.
8. Continue this pattern to the desired length.



A completed length of daisy chain is shown here.



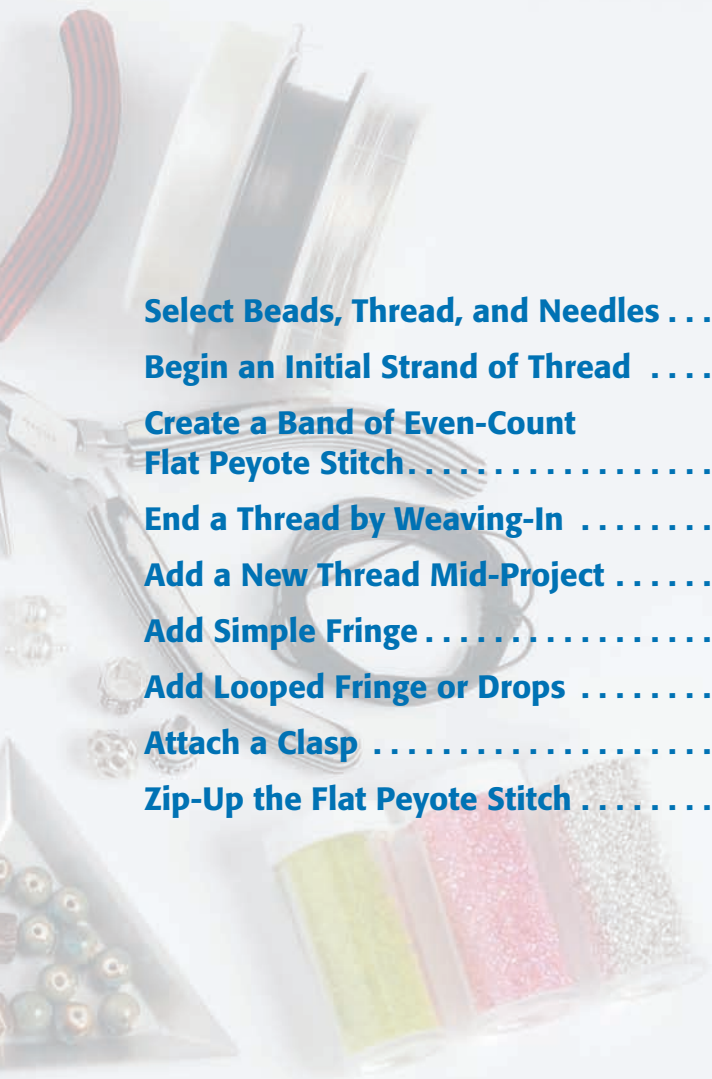
TIP

You can use every other "flower" in the daisy chain as a separator between the previous one by making the 8th, 11th, and 12th beads a contrasting color. In this example, those three beads (in green) create a vertical separator bar.

chapter 4

Bead Weaving with the Peyote Stitch

Using a needle and thread, you can weave together small beads to create beaded fabric. This process is called *bead weaving*. The *peyote stitch* is one of the most popular bead weaving techniques. You can use it to create a band for a necklace, bracelet, or anklet, and as a base to attach fringe or beaded drops. This chapter provides a review of the most basic peyote method, the *even-count flat peyote stitch*. It also explains how to select beads, thread, and needles for bead weaving, how to end a thread and begin a new one, and how to attach a clasp to a beaded band.



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End a Thread by Weaving-In 126

Add a New Thread Mid-Project 129

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Attach a Clasp 134

Zip-Up the Flat Peyote Stitch 139

Select Beads, Thread, and Needles

Before you begin bead weaving, take the time to select the best beads, thread, and needle for your project.

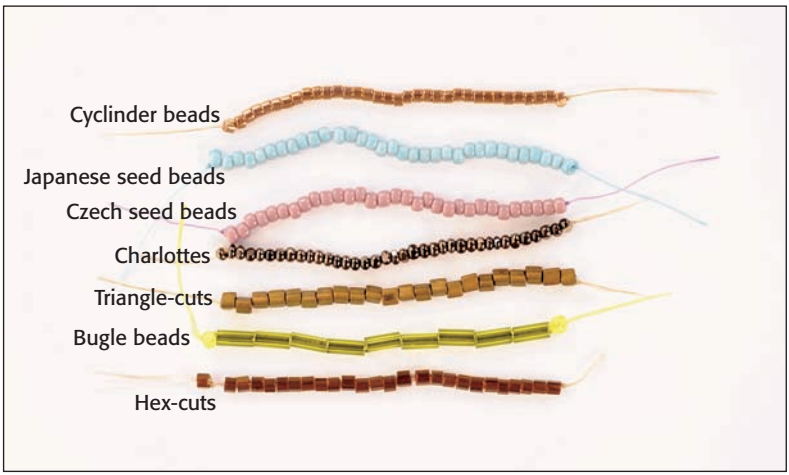
SELECTING BEAD TYPE

Most quality seed beads are manufactured in the Czech Republic or Japan. Less expensive seed beads from other countries are available at craft stores, but they're not recommended for bead weaving because of their uneven size.

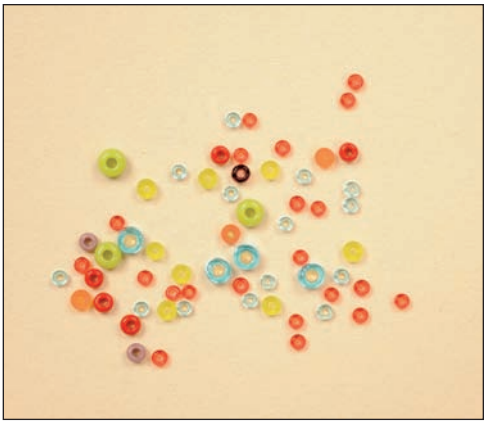
Czech seed beads and Japanese seed beads have a slightly different shape and look. Czech beads are oval and rounded in shape, and Japanese beads are slightly longer and more squared. Although you can use either type for any bead-weaving stitch, Japanese beads are recommended for close weaves like the peyote stitch, and Czech beads for looser varieties of stitches.

Instead of seed beads, you may opt for a similar style of bead called *cylinder beads*. Most cylinder beads (often sold as Delicas or Toho Treasures) are manufactured in Japan, but they are different from Japanese seed beads. Instead of being rounded or "seed-shaped," they are short, precisely cut tubes with extra-large holes. Cylinder beads give any bead-weaving stitch a smoother, more even appearance.

You can also incorporate other bead shapes into your designs. Tiny glass bugle beads, 3-cuts, triangles, and cubes can all be used in bead weaving (see p. 11 in Chapter 1). Larger glass beads, like Czech fire polish beads and crystal, can be used as focal pieces or accents.



SELECTING BEAD SIZE



Which bead size you choose depends largely on how you'd like your design to look and feel. Smaller beads have a more condensed, delicately woven appearance than larger beads. Other considerations are how many beads you want in your design, and how proficient you are with bead weaving. Projects using smaller beads will require a larger number of beads and may take more time to complete than projects using larger beads. Smaller beads are also harder to work with than larger beads, and you may have more difficulty threading through them multiple times. To review seed and cylinder bead sizes, see p. 12 in Chapter 1.

TIP

Bead Size Versus Hole Size

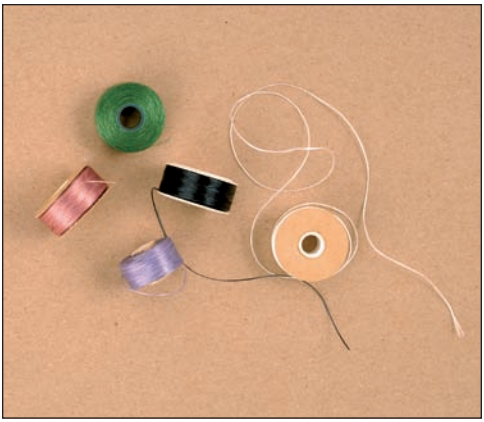
You have probably guessed that your beads' hole size—not the beads' overall size—is what affects the size of thread and needle that you can use for a project. Unfortunately, not all beads of the same size have the same size holes. For example, Japanese seed beads may have slightly larger holes than the same size Czech seed beads. Cylinder beads have very large holes but thin sides, making them both small and more prone to breakage than many seed beads.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Select Beads, Thread, and Needles *(continued)*

SELECTING BEADING THREAD

Beading thread is available in a range of sizes (thicknesses), denoted by zeros and letters. A typical range of available sizes is provided below. For bead weaving, you typically use threads sized 00 to D.



Beading Thread Sizes

Thinner	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	***Thicker***
00	0	A	AA	B	C	D	E	EE	F

You should try to use the thickest thread possible for your project, both for strength and to ensure that the beads lie properly. After you select the type and size of beads to use, try to determine the maximum number of times you need to thread through any bead in your design. All stitches require you to pass through some beads twice, and most require at least three passes. You need to factor in any thread ends that need to be woven-in, and whether you are attaching fringe or findings.

Use that number as the basis for determining which thread to use. For example, if you need to pass through some beads four times, test to make sure that the thread you choose can do this without breaking a bead.

Use the chart on p. 202 in the Appendix to narrow your options of thread sizes to try. Then, take the time to experiment before you begin weaving your project.

Beading thread is also available in a variety of colors. Try to use a color that matches some of the beads in your design, or an accent color that complements them.

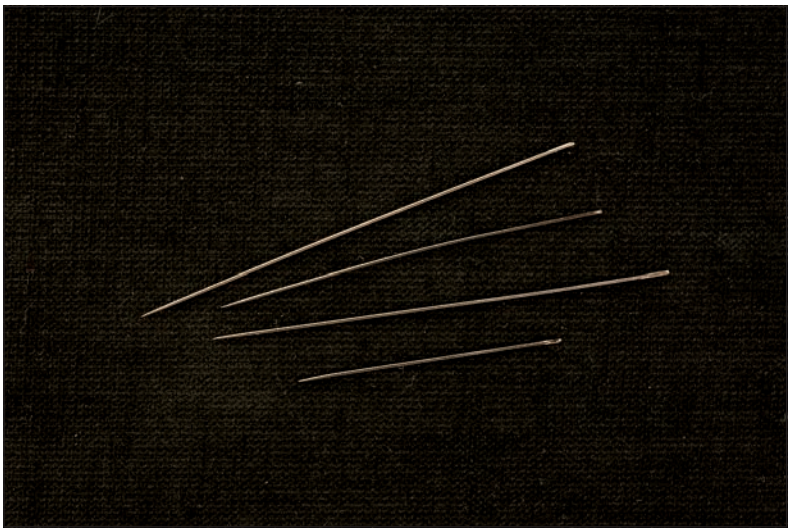
Finally, experiment with different brands of beading thread to see which you like best. Brands differ in how easily they tangle, how much they stretch, and how likely they are to fray.

SELECTING A NEEDLE

You always need to use a beading needle for bead weaving. Beading needles are available in a range of sizes, typically ranging from #16 (the thinnest) to about #10 (the thickest). These sizes approximate the aught sizes used for seed beads, but they do not match exactly. You need to experiment with needle size as you did with thread size, before you begin your project. Always check to make sure that the eye of your needle is not so large that it breaks a bead, especially when you make multiple passes.

Beading needles are also available in varying lengths, from about 1¼ inches long to about 3 inches long. As a beginner, you will probably find that a needle about 2 inches long is easiest to work with.

Over time, you will discover your favorite thread, needles, and bead types and sizes. You'll also learn which combinations work best for the types of bead weaving projects you prefer. In the meantime, refer to the Needle and Thread Size Recommendations chart on p. 202 in the Appendix for some general guidelines.



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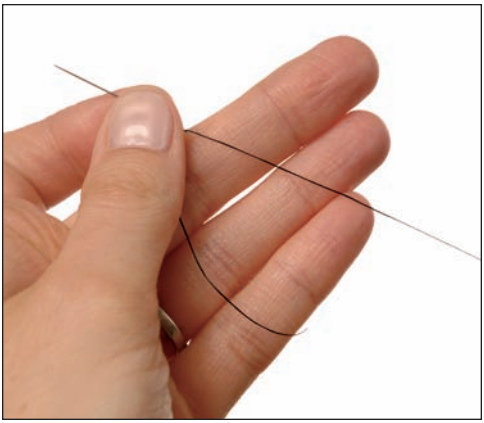
Begin an Initial Strand of Thread

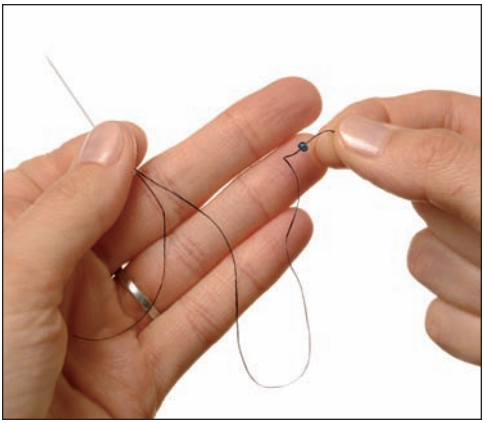
Most bead weaving is performed using a single strand of thread. This allows you to temporarily remove the needle to fix a mistake, or to end an old thread and begin a new one.

BEGIN THE THREAD

1. Begin with a length of conditioned beading thread no more than about 3 to 4 feet in length (see p. 22).
2. String on a beading needle.
3. Position the needle several inches from the end of the thread.
4. Fold over the thread tail, and hold both strands between your fingers at the eye of the needle.

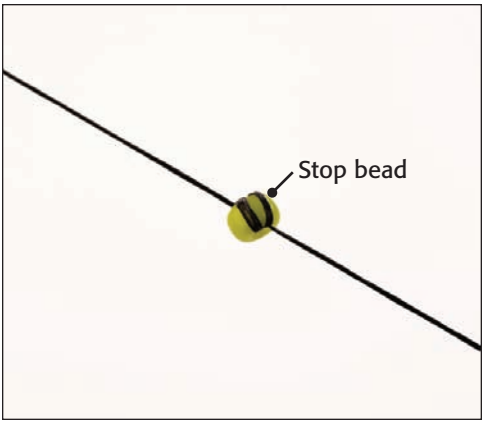


5. String on and secure a stop bead or stop bead alternative (see the next page).

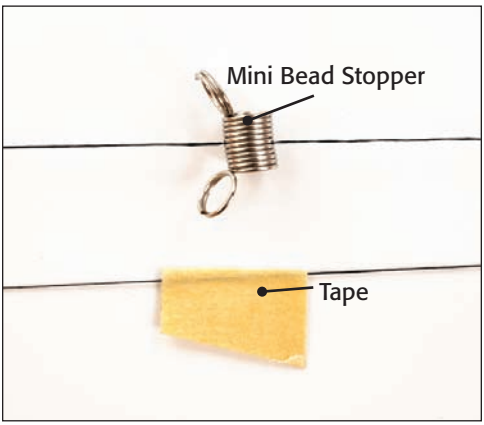


STOP BEADS AND ALTERNATIVES

A stop bead's sole purpose is to keep other beads from falling off of the thread. To secure one, string on a bead and position it about 8 inches from the end of the thread. String back through the stop bead again, and pull the thread taut. Optionally, string back through the stop bead one more time to make it as secure as possible.



The stop bead only needs to remain in place until you are ready to weave-in the tail of the thread (see p. 126). You then use a needle or beading awl to carefully loosen the thread running through the stop bead, and pull the bead off of the thread.



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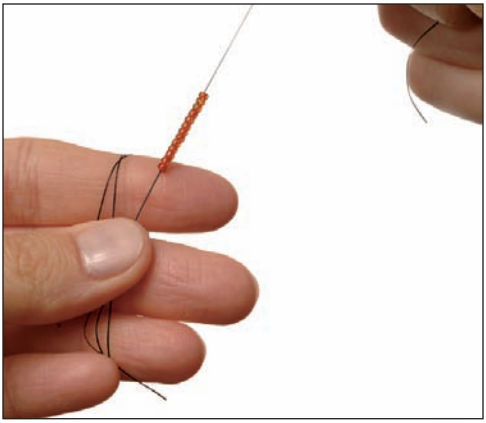
Begin an Initial Strand of Thread *(continued)*

As an alternative to a stop bead, you can use a folded piece of masking tape or a Mini Bead Stopper (as seen in the photo on p.119) or simply wrap the end of the thread several times around your fingers, and hold it there while you work.

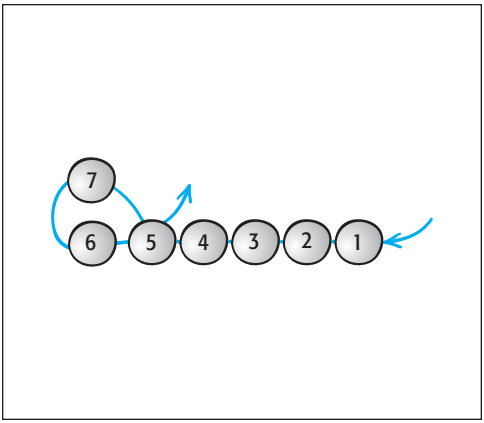


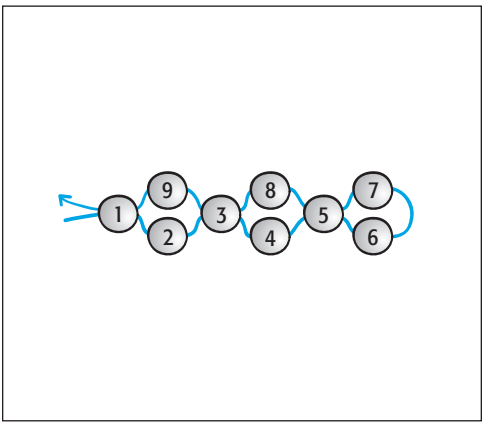
Create a Band of Even-Count Flat Peyote Stitch

The *even-count flat peyote stitch* creates a flat band of beaded fabric with an even number of columns. You weave it one row at a time, back and forth across your design. Always work slowly and deliberately to avoid tangling the thread. When it begins to twist, stop and straighten it before continuing on.

THE BASIC STITCH

1. After preparing your thread, string on an even number of beads to equal the number of columns that you'd like the band to have. (As you will see, these beads will make up the first two rows of the band.)
2. String on one more bead (Bead 7 in the diagram).
3. Holding the beads between the index finger and thumb of one hand, use your other hand to string back through the second-to-last bead that you strung on in Step 1 (Bead 5 in the diagram), in the opposite direction.
4. Turn your work around.
5. String on another bead (Bead 8 in the diagram).
6. String back through the fourth-from-last bead that you strung on in Step 1 (Bead 3 in the diagram).
7. Continue adding a new bead and stringing through a lower bead until you arrive back at the beginning of the first row, stringing back through the first bead that you strung on in Step 1.





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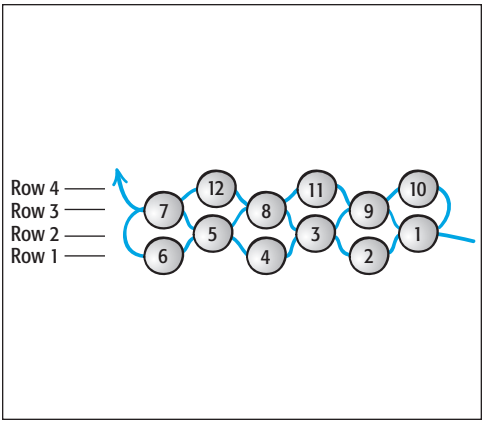
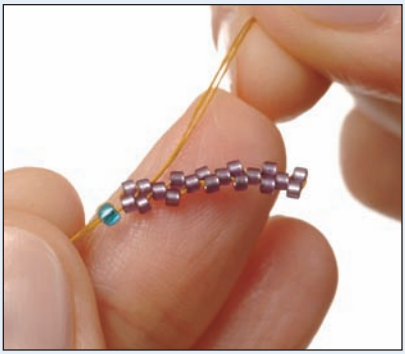
Create a Band of Even-Count Flat Peyote Stitch *(continued)*

8. Turn your work around again.
9. String on a new bead (Bead 10 in the diagram).
10. String back through the first bead in the second row (Bead 9 in the diagram).

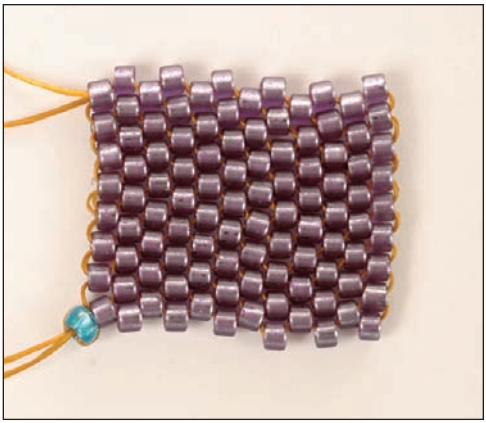


TIP

Stitch on beads from left to right, or right to left, whichever is more comfortable. At the end of each row, turn your work around so that you can work the next row in the same comfortable direction.



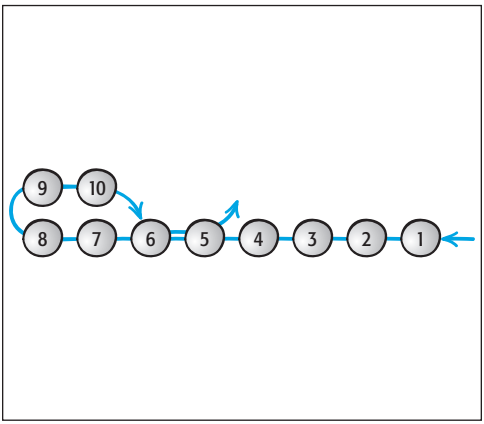
11. Continue this pattern to complete this and future rows.



TWO-DROP FLAT PEYOTE STITCH

The two-drop flat peyote stitch also has an even number of columns, but you string through two beads at a time instead of one.

1. After preparing your thread, string on an even number of *pairs* of beads equal to the number of columns that you'd like the band to have.
2. String on two more beads (Beads 9 and 10 in the diagram).
3. String back through the third- and fourth-from-last beads that you strung on in Step 1 (Beads 6 and 5 in the diagram), in the opposite direction.



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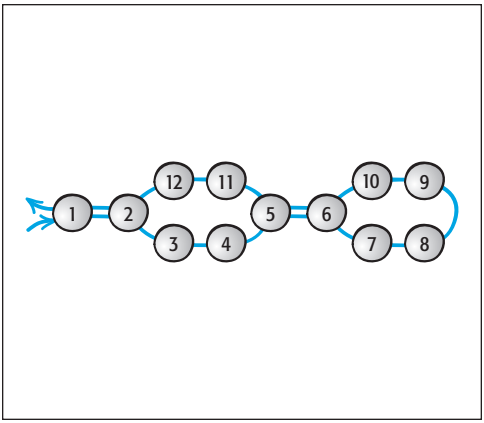
Create a Band of Even-Count Flat Peyote Stitch *(continued)*

4. Turn your work around.
5. Continue stringing on two beads, then stringing down through two beads, until you reach the end of the row.



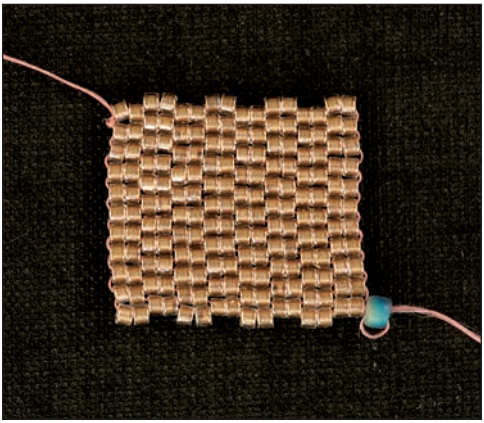
TIP

Correcting Mistakes and Tangles

Occasionally you may weave a bead of the wrong color, or mistakenly stitch through a bead in the wrong direction. To correct a mistake, remove the needle from the thread and use the needle to gently dislodge each bead that you added after the mistake. Remove each bead as you go. Replace the needle and continue weaving when the mistake has been eliminated.

If your thread tangles, use your needle to tease apart the knots. If that doesn't work, trim off the thread just below the tangle, and undo your beadwork (if necessary) until you have about 8 inches of thread to weave-in. Begin a new thread, and continue weaving as usual.

6 Turn your work around again, and continue stringing on pairs of beads, and weaving through pairs of beads, back and forth for each row, to your desired length.



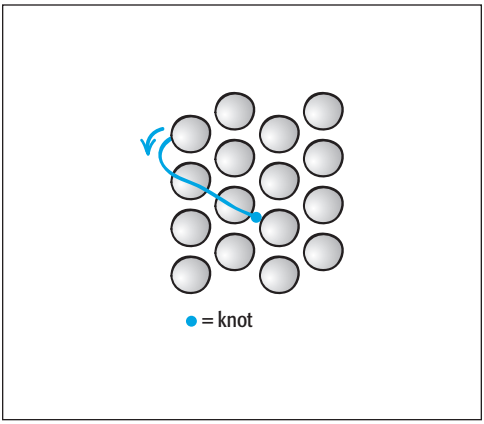
TIP

You can weave the peyote stitch in other multiples as well. For example, to weave an even-count three-drop stitch, weave sets of three beads at a time. You can use different drop multiples in the same design, as long you have an even number of columns.

End a Thread by Weaving-In

For most bead weaving projects, you need to use more than one length of thread to complete the design. When you have no less than 8 to 10 inches of thread remaining after completing a row, stop and end the thread by *weaving-in*.

1. After completing a row, reverse direction by passing the needle through the adjacent bead in the previous row.
2. Moving diagonally, pass the needle through one or more beads in adjacent columns, and pull the thread to remove all slack—but do not pull it tight. (If you create too much tension with the thread while weaving-in, your beaded fabric may pucker or warp.)
3. Tie an overhand knot or a half hitch knot over and around the thread that runs between the last bead you strung through and an adjacent bead. (To review these knots, see p. 203 in the Appendix.)

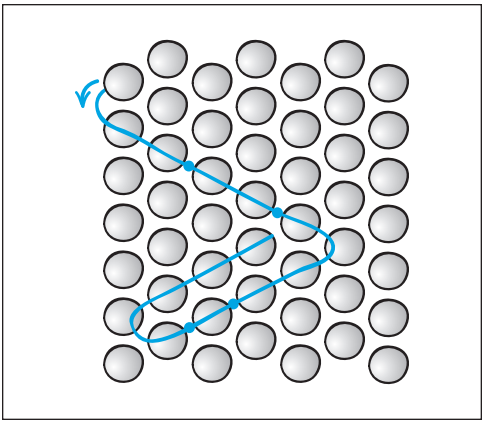


An overhand knot is stronger than a half hitch knot, but a half hitch knot is easier to hide within the band because it is smaller.

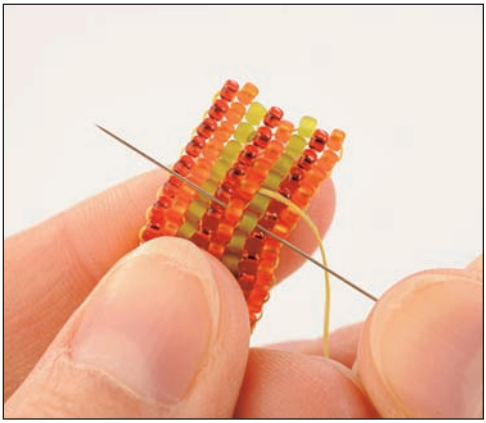
TIP

In some designs, the beads may be so close together that it is nearly impossible to make knots between them. When that happens, you can weave-in without using knots. Simply weave through the beadwork back and forth and up and down, two beads at a time, switching directions repeatedly until the thread seems secure. Trim off the excess as usual.

4. Moving diagonally, pass the needle through the next one or two adjacent beads.
5. Repeat Step 3.
6. String through another bead or two in the same direction, and then reverse direction by passing the needle back through an adjacent bead in the previous row.



7. If you are using half hitch knots instead of overhand knots, repeat Steps 2–4 in the new direction, two more times.
8. Pass the needle through a few more beads in the design (reversing direction if you come close to the edge), and bring it out again.



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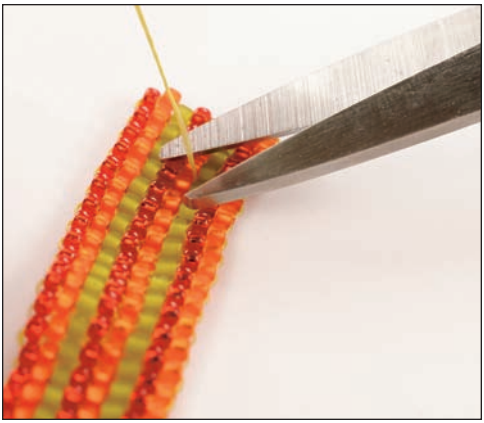
End a Thread by Weaving-In *(continued)*

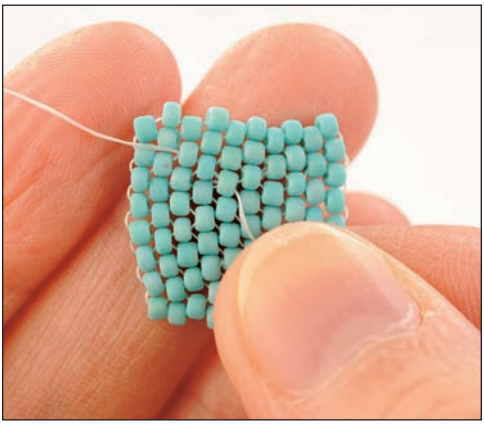
9 Pull the thread taut and trim it off as close to the beadwork as possible.



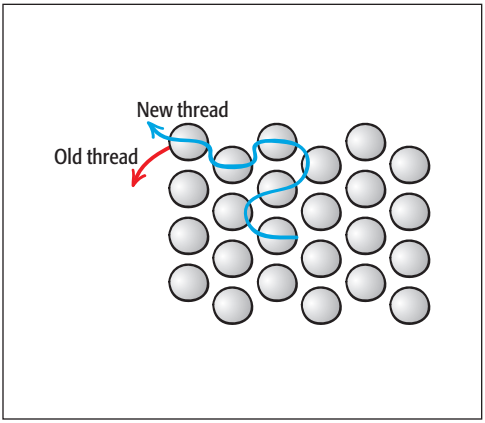
Add a New Thread Mid-Project

Use this technique when you need to begin a new thread mid-way through a design.

1. After preparing the new thread without a stop bead, pass the needle into the design several beads away from where you need to begin weaving again, but in a different place than you wove-in the end of the old thread.
2. Go through a few beads, leaving a tail of about 8 inches of thread at the entry point.
3. Press down on the thread tail to hold it in place.



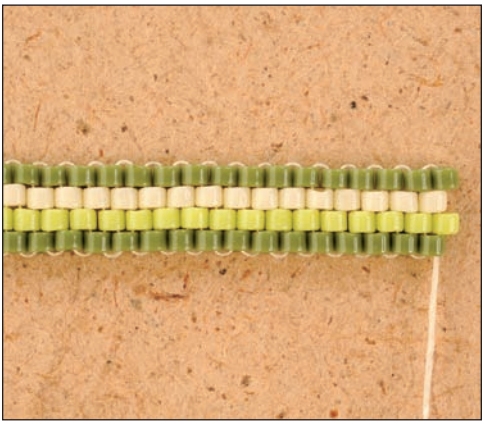
4. Weave the needle through the band, one or two beads at a time, until the thread is emerging from the same bead that your old thread emerged from. There are usually several different paths you can take. The diagram shows one example.
5. Pull the new thread taut, while continuing to hold down the tail so that it doesn't slip out.
6. Continue weaving the peyote stitch using the new thread.
7. Before completing your design, go back to the thread tail you created in Step 2, string on a needle, and weave-in to end the thread as usual.



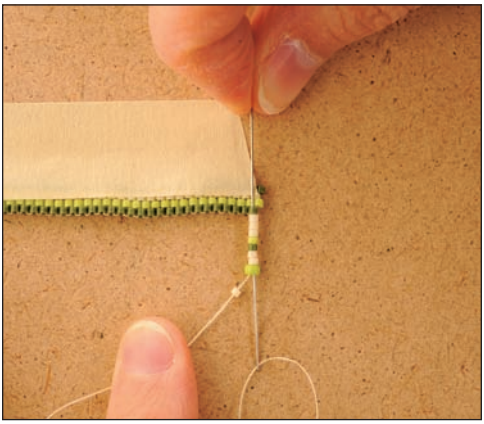
Add Simple Fringe

You can attach beaded fringe to one or both edges of a peyote stitch band. You may find it helpful to tape your beadwork to your working surface, as shown in the examples.

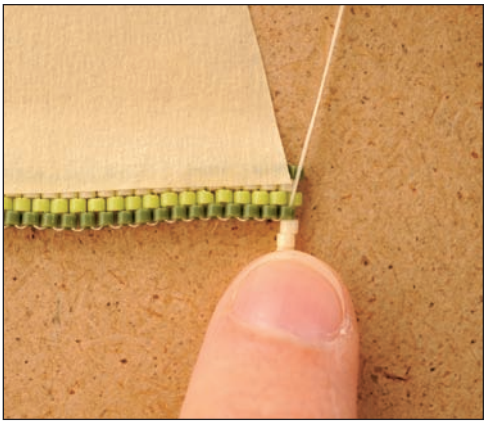
1. After completing the peyote stitch band, begin a new strand of beading thread. (If you haven't ended your thread from making the band, you may use it instead by weaving through the band toward an outside column.)
2. Bring the thread out through a bead (or a set of two beads, for two-drop peyote) in one of the outside columns of your band, at the place where you would like to begin adding fringe.



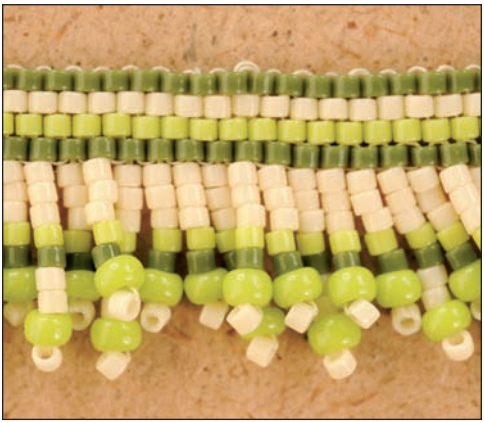
3. String on all of the beads for your first piece of fringe.
4. Slide the beads against the edge of the band.
5. Using a finger on your free hand, hold the thread down against your work surface, about an inch away from the last bead you strung on in Step 3. This will keep the thread taut as you complete the fringe piece.
6. String back through all of the beads in the fringe piece, except for the very last bead you strung on, and then back through the outer bead that you originally passed through in Step 2.



7. When you have brought the thread through so far that it pulls against the finger you're using to hold it down, move that finger up to the fringe piece and gently press the beads down against your work surface.
8. Pull the needle to bring the thread all the way through the fringe piece, and pull it taut (but not so tight that the fringe begins to curl).
9. Pass the needle down through the very next bead in the outer column, and pull the thread taut.
10. String on all of the beads for your next piece of fringe.



11. Repeat Steps 3–8 to make your desired number of fringe pieces.
12. After completing the final piece of fringe, end the thread by weaving-in.

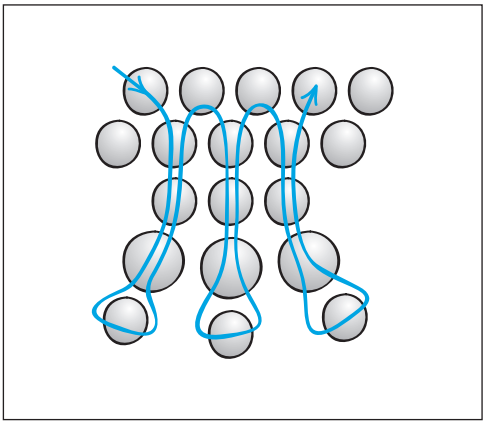


TIP

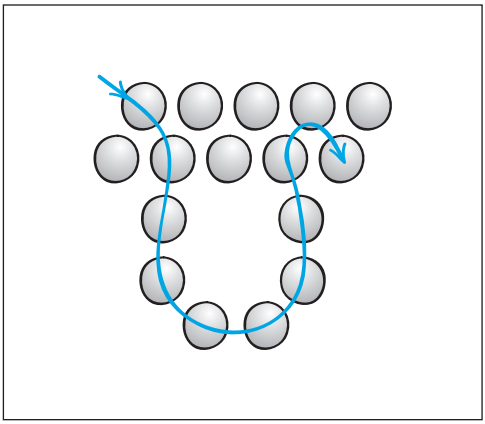
If you run out of thread before completing all of your fringes, simply pass the needle back into the band, and weave-in to finish the thread as usual. Begin a new thread from within the band.

Add Looped Fringe or Drops

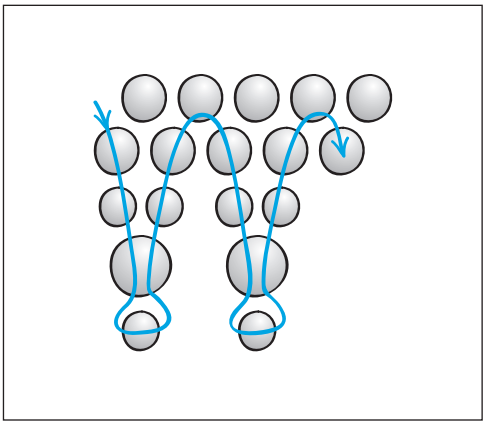
You can add looped fringe or beaded drops to your band using the same basic technique you use to add simple fringe. The following diagrams provide some examples in comparison with simple fringe.



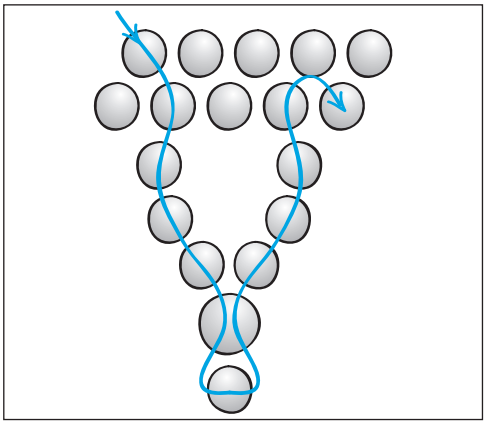
Simple Fringe



Looped Fringe



Beaded Drops



Combination Fringe

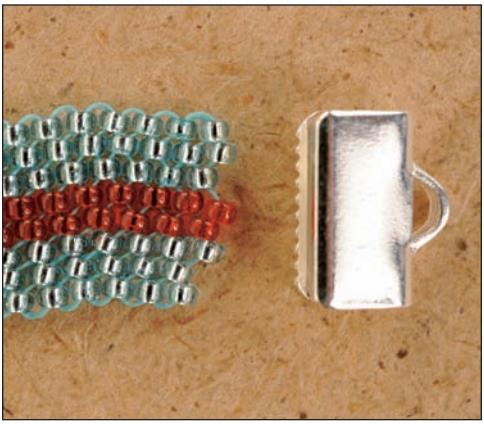
Attach a Clasp

You can attach a pre-made clasp to a peyote band, using a clasp end or by making beaded loops. To learn how to weave a beaded toggle clasp for band, see Chapter 6.

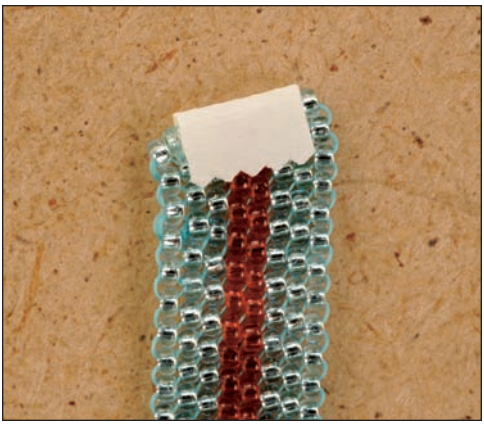
ATTACH A CLASP WITH A CLAMP END

Clamp ends, also called *basket-weave* ends, work best with designs made with smaller seed beads or cylinder beads.

1. Select a set of clamp ends that are the same width as, or just slightly wider than, your band, and that will accommodate the thickness of the beads in your design.



2. If your band is made of seed beads (rather than cylinder beads), apply a narrow strip of fabric first-aid tape to one end, with the edges folded over to adhere to both sides of the band, as shown. Make sure that the tape is narrow enough that it will be entirely covered by the clamp end (trim it down with scissors first, if necessary).



3. Use a toothpick to apply a thin layer of E6000 glue to about the last ⅛ inch of beads on both sides of the band (if you are not using first-aid tape), or to both surfaces of the tape (if you are using it).
4. Insert the end of the band into the open jaws of the clamp end.
5. Use flat nose pliers to *gently* squeeze the jaws of the clamp end down against the beads. Be very careful not to break the beads.
6. Repeat Steps 2–5 on the other end of the band.
7. Allow the glue to set for 24 hours before attaching a pre-made clasp to the clamp ends using jump rings.

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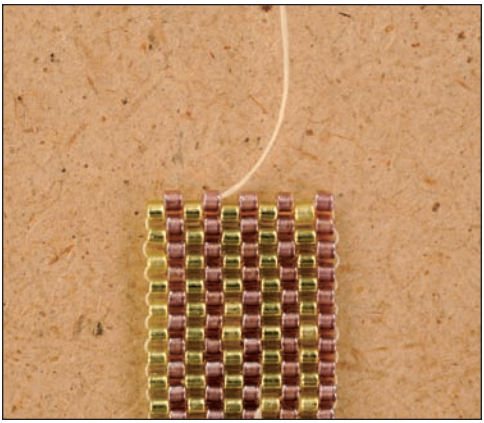
ATTACH A CLASP WITH A LOOP

Use this technique to attach a pre-made clasp directly to your design, without using a clamp end.

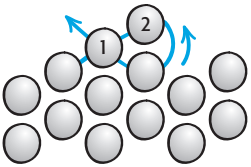
1. Begin a new thread (see p. 118), or use existing thread that is still emerging from your beadwork.
2. Weave through the beaded fabric, making a series of two or three half hitch knots between sets of two beads as you go.
3. Bring the needle out at the place in the last row where you would like to attach the clasp, emerging from an upper (protruding) bead, and toward the center column.



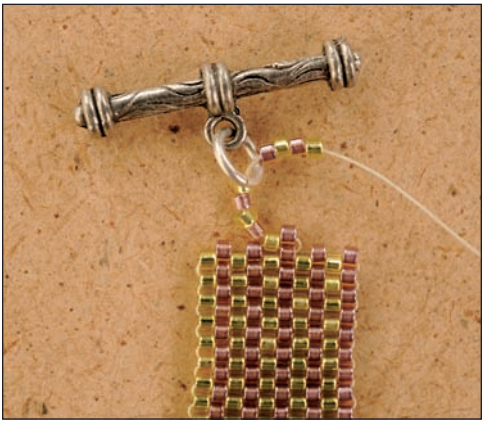
TIP

To attach a bead-and-loop clasp (see p. 174 in Chapter 6), create a larger loop on one end of your band and weave-in to attach the clasp-bead to the other end. To attach a peyote-stitch toggle to your band, see p. 188 in Chapter 6.

4. String on a new bead (Bead 1 in the diagram).
5. Pass the needle through the next upper bead in the last row of the band.
6. Add another new bead (Bead 2 in the diagram).
7. Pass the needle back through the bead you added in Step 4, and pull the thread taut.



8. String on enough beads to form a small loop.
9. Pass the needle through a jump ring attached to a clasp piece.



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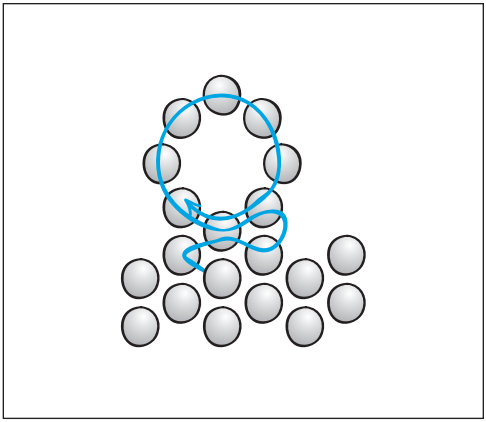
Attach a Clasp *(continued)*

10. Pass the needle through a bead adjacent to the bead you emerged from in Step 3.
11. Passing through two or three beads at a time, string back through the entire loop, and then back down into the band.
12. Weave-in to end the thread.



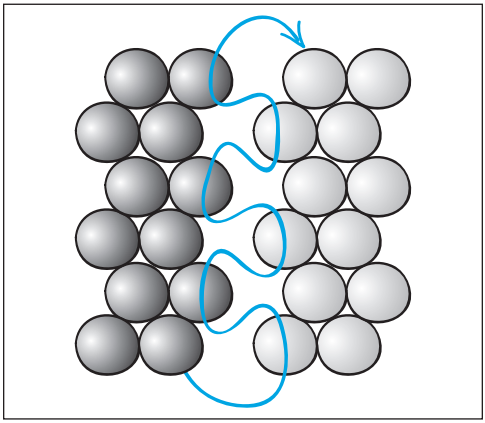
13. Repeat Steps 1–7 on the other end of the band to attach the other side of the clasp.

Zip-Up the Flat Peyote Stitch

You can seamlessly join the top and bottom ends of a peyote stitch band by *zipping-up*. Use this method to create a peyote stitch finger ring or a wide bail for a "donut" pendant, or to join two peyote stitch bands together end-to-end. In order to zip-up the opposite ends of the same band, it must have an even number of rows.

THE BASIC METHOD

1. Align the ends of the band(s) where you would like them to come together. Each protruding bead on one end must be matched with a non-protruding bead on the other end, so that they will come together like the teeth of a zipper.
2. Bring your thread out at the end of the row where you would like to begin the join. (Weave an existing thread through the fabric to get there, or weave-in a new piece of thread).
3. Keeping the thread taut, string back and forth through the protruding beads on each side.
4. At the end of the row, reverse direction and pass the needle back down through the last bead on the other end. (This zips-up the final two beads.)
5. Weave-in to end the thread as usual.



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ZIP-UP TO CREATE A RING

To create a peyote stitch finger ring, begin by weaving a length of peyote stitch band, with an even number of rows, that is long enough to wrap around the widest part of your finger. Bend the band into a ring, align the top and bottom ends, and then zip-up.

You can also use this method to create a bail for a donut-shaped pendant by slipping the pendant onto the ring before zipping-up.

ZIP-UP TO CREATE A BEADED BEAD

To create a peyote-stitch tube bead, first weave a short band of peyote stitch. This band should be long enough to wrap around the material that you plan to string the bead on, and as wide as you would like the bead to be long.

Stop after weaving your desired band length (usually between about 6 and 8 rows), and zip-up the ends. String the bead onto the stringing material of your choice.

This technique is also used to make a peyote stitch toggle bar (see p. 188).

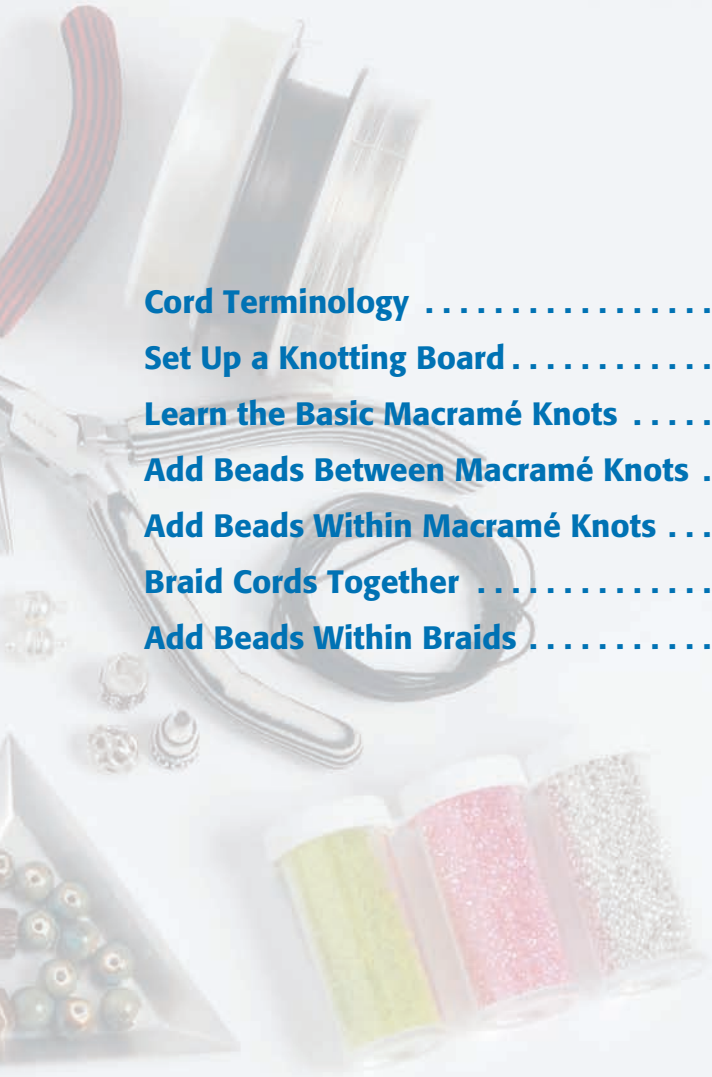
TIP

When you make a beaded bead, use thread that matches the color of the material that you plan to string the bead onto. The beading thread then becomes almost invisible, and the woven beads become the focal point.

chapter 5

Beading with Macramé Knots and Braids

Macramé and braided jewelry can range from very simple to surprisingly complex. By stringing beads between or within knots and braids, you can create especially colorful and interesting designs.



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Add Beads Within Macramé Knots 160
Braid Cords Together 162
Add Beads Within Braids 165

Cord Terminology

When you make macramé jewelry, you work with multiple strands of cord that all have different purposes. The cords may be the same color, material, and size, but they have different names depending on their function. These names are used in most project instructions, and so it's good to become familiar with them.

WORKING CORDS

Working cords include all of the cords that you use as part of your design. There are two main types of working cords: *filler cords* and *knotting cords*.

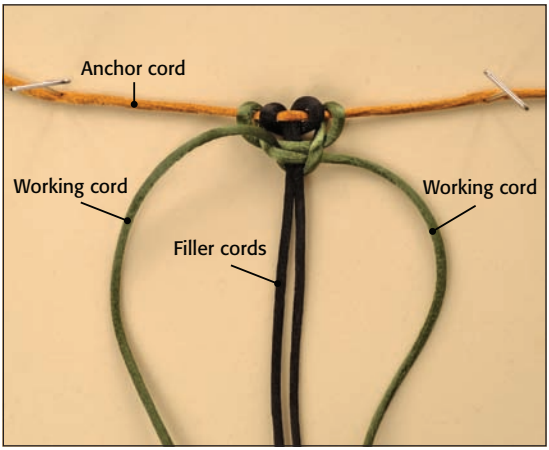
When you begin a macramé jewelry project, your first step is to secure the *filler cords*. These are long, straight cords that you hold down, or anchor, so that you can tie knots around them using other cords.

KNOTTING CORDS

Knotting cords (also called *tying cords*) are the cords you use to tie knots around filler cords. You can anchor them to your work surface with tape or pins.

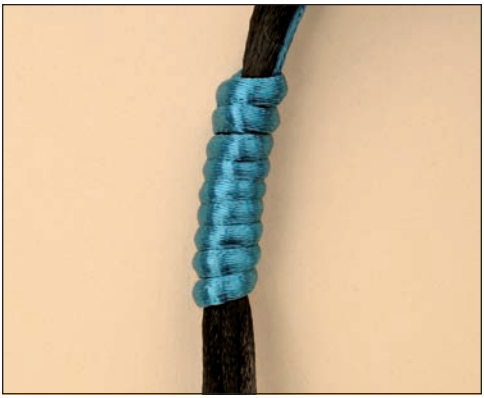
ANCHOR CORD

An *anchor cord* (also called a *holding cord*) may or may not be part of a design. It is typically anchored at both ends, and you tie working cords directly to it.



WRAPPING CORD

You use a wrapping cord whenever you make a wrap knot (see p. 154). It is a loose length of cord that wraps around a bundle of working cords to hold them together.



TIP

Determining How Much Cord You Need

When you create your own designs, it can be difficult at first to estimate how much cord they will require. As a general guideline, begin with working-cord strands that are each at least 2½ to 3 times the desired length of your jewelry. (If you anchor your cords by folding them over, then each piece of cord needs to be twice this length.) Consider adding several extra inches if you plan to make a loop closure to finish your work.

Note that filler cords can be cut much shorter than knotting cords if they remain straight and unknotted throughout the design.

As you experiment with new ideas, always keep track of how much cord you actually use. Over time, you will develop a feel for the lengths of cord you need to create the styles of jewelry that you enjoy creating.

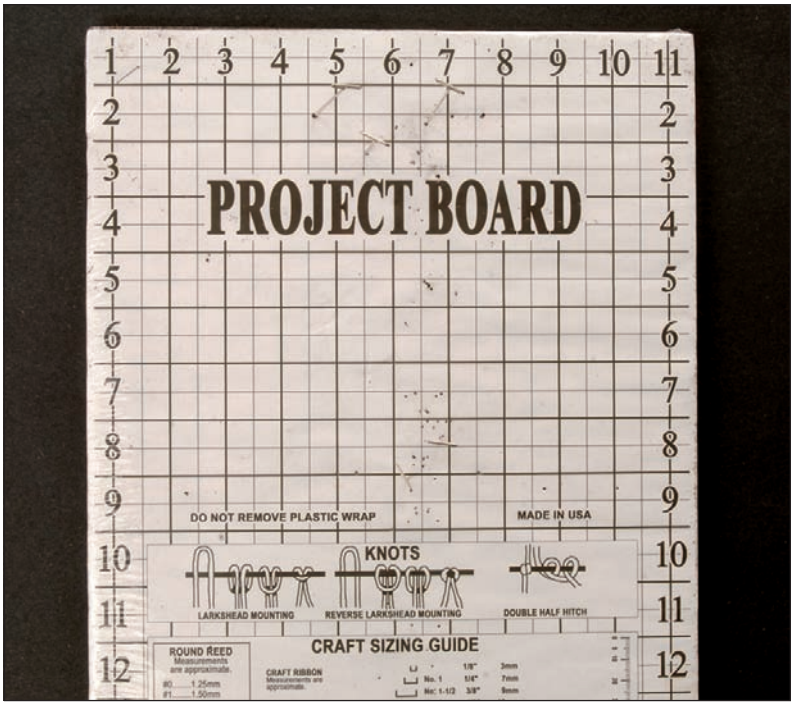
Set Up a Knotting Board

Your macramé work area can be either fixed or portable. If you don't need to move your work from place to place, you can anchor your cords to any heavy or immoveable object, like a table leg or an eye hook fastened to a wall. However, if you prefer a portable work area, or a setup that is simply more convenient, you can use a knotting board.

PRE-MADE KNOTTING BOARDS

Pre-made knotting boards make macramé knotting easier, and they're relatively inexpensive. Most are marked on one side with a 1-inch grid that you can use to keep your work even and to make your jewelry to the desired length.

The simplest way to anchor your work to a pre-made board is by attaching a horizontal anchor chord using T-pins. Another option is to tape a metal ring (like a washer) to the board and attach your working cords to it.



HOMEMADE KNOTTING BOARDS

You can make your own knotting board out of just about any material that is soft enough to insert T-pins and strong enough to hold them in place. Try a piece of dense foam board from a craft store or corkboard from an office supply store. If you'd like to add a grid of measured squares to your board, you can draw one out on heavy paper or light paperboard (or print one from a computer) and attach it to the board with push pins, thumbtacks, or tape. You can use the same anchoring methods with a homemade board as you can with a pre-made board.

USING A CLIPBOARD

If you'd rather not purchase a pre-made knotting board or bother with making one, try knotting on a simple clipboard. Double-over a length of scrap cord and tie an overhand knot near the ends to create a loop. Clip it down to the board, with the knot just behind the clip. Use the loop below the clip as your anchor cord. Anchor the other ends of your cords as needed, using masking tape.

FINISHING MACRAME DESIGNS

Macramé jewelry is usually finished with bead-and-loop or knot-and-loop closures (see Chapter 6). However, you can also use pre-made findings by attaching the ends of your design to jump rings. One method is to begin by attaching your cords to a jump ring using a lark's head knot (see p. 148), and then complete your design by tying the cords in a secure overhand knot around another jump ring at the other end. Alternatively, you can attach jump rings to each end by passing all of the cords through a jump ring, folding-over the cords to create a loop, and then securing the base of the loop with a wrap knot (see p. 154).

Learn the Basic Macramé Knots

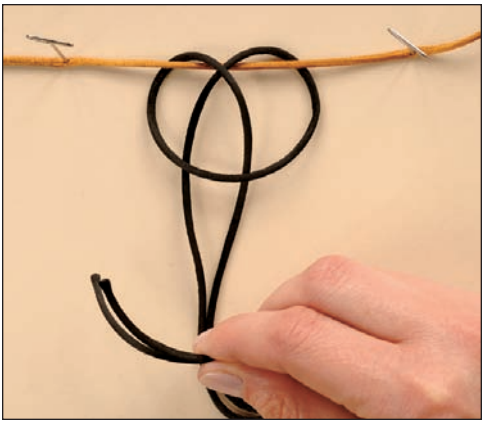
You can make all kinds of interesting knotted patterns using combinations of several basic knots. To learn how to make a built-in bead-and-loop clasp, for a macramé design, see Chapter 6.

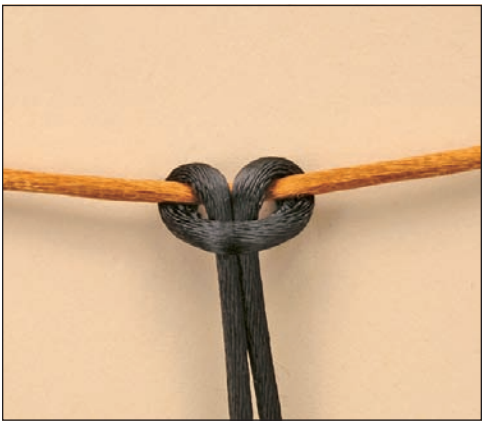
LARK'S HEAD KNOT

You can use a *lark's head knot* to attach your working cords to an anchor chord or to a finding, like a clasp piece.

1. Double-over the working cord and place the folded end on top of the anchor cord.
2. Tuck the folded end of the working cord downward beneath the anchor cord to create a downward loop.
3. Insert both strands of the working cord into and through the folded portion.
4. Holding the top of the working cord with your fingers, gently pull down on its two strands to tighten the knot.

The completed lark's head knot is shown here.

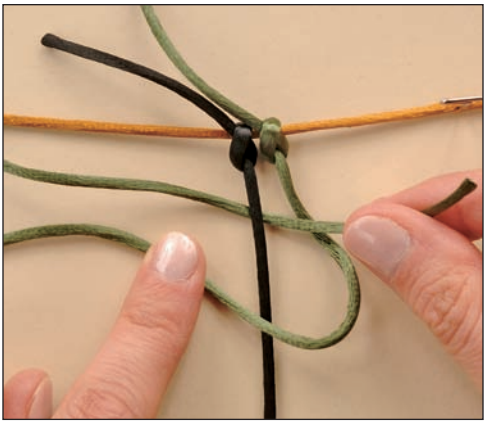




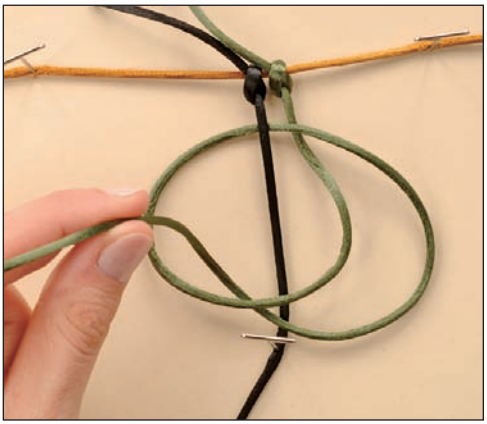
MACRAMÉ OVERHAND KNOT

To make a *macramé overhand knot*, use a working cord to tie a simple overhand knot over a filler cord.

1. Tape or pin the end of one strand of working cord to your work surface. This will be the filler cord.
2. Position the other cord (the knotting cord) over the filler cord.
3. Tuck the end of the knotting cord beneath the filler cord to create a small loop.



4. Bring the knotting cord back to the other side of the filler cord, and thread it up through the loop.
5. Use your fingers to tighten the knot while positioning it up against the anchor cord or the previous knot in your design.



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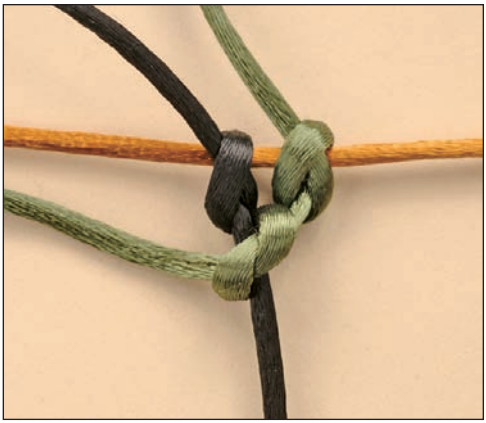
Learn the Basic Macramé Knots *(continued)*

A completed macramé overhand knot is shown here.



TIP

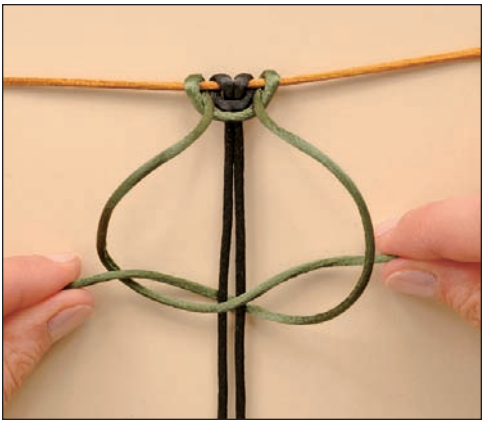
Keep Macramé Cords from Tangling

When you work with longer cords, try making butterfly bobbins to keep them neat and orderly. Beginning about a foot away from where you will begin knotting, wrap one cord in a figure-eight pattern repeatedly around your extended thumb and index finger. Bring your thumb and finger slightly toward each other to remove the cord. Slip a rubber band over the center of the figure eight where the loops of cord cross. Pull cord out of these bundles as needed when you work your design.

HALF KNOT

The *half knot* uses two filler cords and two knotting cords. You repeat half knots to create a twisted rope.

1. Beginning with four working cords, anchor the two middle strands to your work surface. These are the left and right filler cords, and the loose cords are the left and right knotting cords.
2. Tuck the right knotting cord beneath both filler cords.
3. Position the right knotting cord over the left knotting cord.
4. Bring the left knotting cord over both filler cords, and tuck it beneath the right knotting cord.
5. Simultaneously pull both knotting cords to their respective sides to tighten the half knot.



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MACRAMÉ SQUARE KNOT

The *macramé square knot* consists of two half knots tied in opposite directions.

1. Beginning with two filler cords and two knotting cords, tie a half knot.
2. Bring the left knotting cord under both filler cords.
3. Position the left knotting cord over the right knotting cord.
4. Pull the right knotting cord over both filler cords, and tuck it beneath the left knotting cord.
5. Simultaneously pull both knotting cords to their respective sides to tighten the second half of the macramé square knot.

TIP

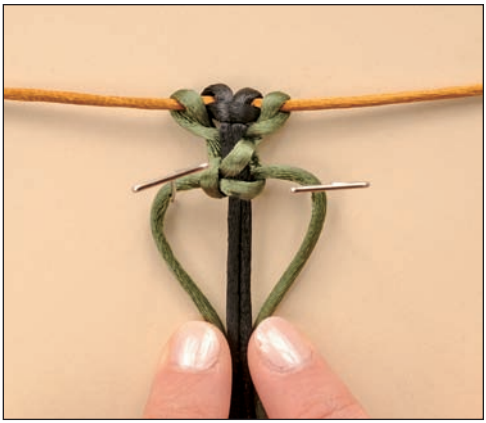
Changing Macramé Square Knot Direction

On one side of the macramé square knot, the cord loops upward; on the other side, it loops downward. In the example above, the upward loop appears on the left side of the knot. You can make a macramé square knot facing the other direction—that is, with the upward loop on the right side—by beginning the half knot (see Step 1 under "Macramé Square Knot") with the left knotting cord instead of the right one.

SQUARE KNOT PICOT

A *picot* is a length of cord that has been left loose between two knots. You can use it to create looped fringe along the sides of your work. It's best to use a knotting board for picots, so that you can use T-pins to help create them.

1. Tie one square knot.
2. Insert two T-pins into your work surface at an equal short distance from the filler cords on either side of the cords.
3. Position both knotting cords around the T-pins.



4. Tie another square knot below the T-pins.
5. Remove both T-pins.
6. Position the second square knot up against the first one.

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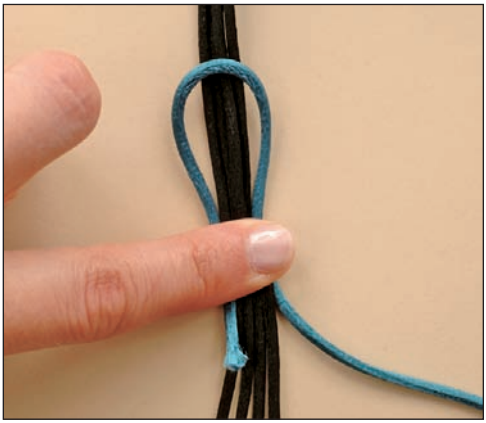
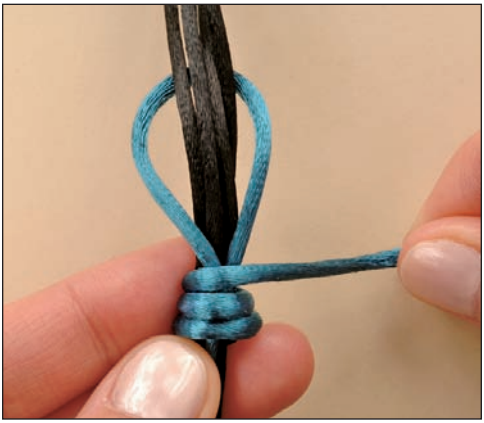
WRAP KNOT

When you make a *wrap knot* (also called *gathering cords*), you wrap one cord (the wrapping cord) around a group of other cords to hold them neatly together. This technique is also used for making a wrapped bead-and-loop clasp in Chapter 6.

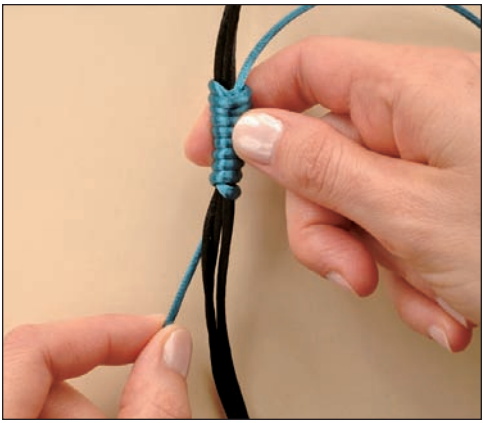
1. Anchor the top ends of four working cords to your work surface. These are the filler cords for the wrap knot.
2. Cut another piece of cord about 17 inches in length. This is the wrapping cord.
3. Fold-over about 2 inches of the wrapping cord on one end to create a long loop.
4. Position the loop parallel to and against the filler cords.



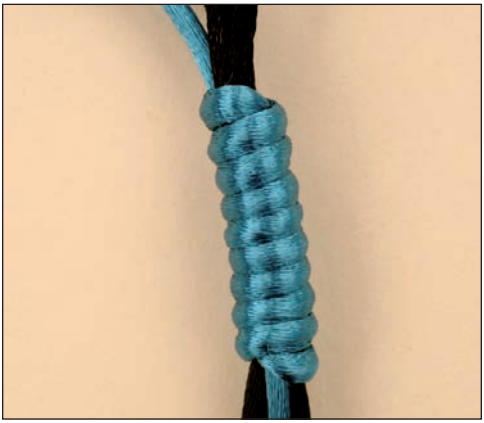
5. Hold the base of the wrapping cord loop closed and against the filler cords with the fingers of one hand.
6. With the other hand, wrap the other end of the wrapping cord around all of the filler cords at the base of the loop, leaving about ½ inch of unwrapped tail at the bottom of the loop.
7. Continue wrapping around the filler cords, and the loop itself, in an upward direction until the wraps almost reach the top of the loop.



8. Insert the end of the wrapping cord into and through the loop, and pull it taut.
9. Release the top end of the wrapping cord from your fingers.
10. Pull on the bottom tail of the wrapping cord until the top of the loop is positioned completely inside the wraps.
11. Trim off the extra cord tails at both ends.



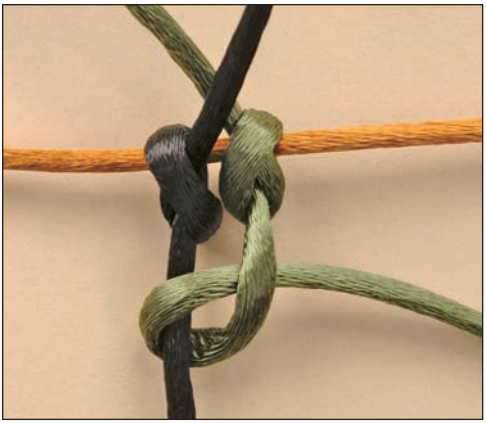
A completed wrap knot is shown here.



MACRAMÉ HALF HITCH KNOT

To make a *macramé half hitch knot*, simply loop one cord around another cord. You can repeat half hitch knots to create a twisted rope effect.

1. Beginning with one knotting cord and one filler cord, bring the knotting cord under and then over the filler cord.
2. Tuck the end of the knotting cord back underneath itself.
3. Pull the knotting cord to tighten the knot.



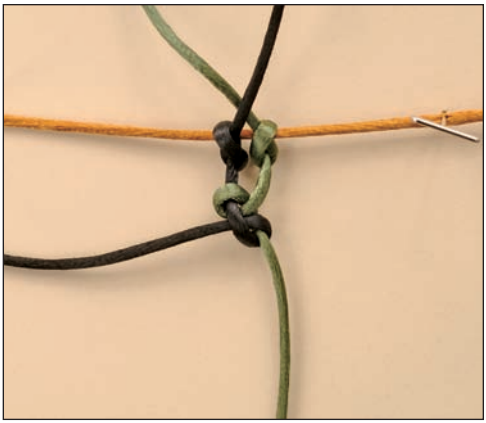
TIP

Correcting Mistakes

You may find that some knots that you attempt do not come out looking right, or you may occasionally lose your place in mid-knot and forget where you left off. When this happens, use a T-pin or awl to gently pull out each knot in reverse order until you reach a comfortable point to begin working again.

ALTERNATING HALF HITCH KNOTS

Alternating half hitch knots are repeated half hitch knots that switch direction with each knot. They result in a flat rope.



1. Make a half hitch knot.
2. Remove the T-pin or tape from the filler cord, and use it to anchor the knotting cord instead. The original filler cord is now the knotting cord, and the original knotting cord is now the filler cord.
3. Using the new knotting cord, tie a half hitch knot around the new filler cord. This half hitch knot faces the opposite direction to the first knot.
4. Remove the anchor from the filler cord, and anchor the knotting cord. The filler cord and knotting cord have switched roles again.
5. Make another half hitch knot.
6. Continue switching the filler and knotting cords and making half hitch knots to the desired length of rope.

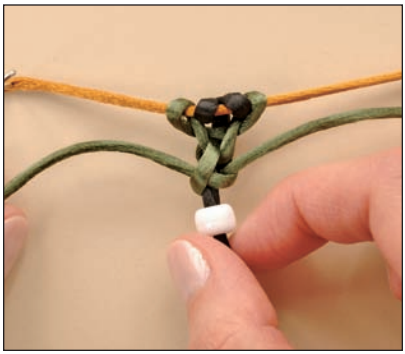
Add Beads Between Macramé Knots

It's easy to string beads into macramé knotted designs. If you have beads with large enough holes, you can string them over all of the working cords just about anywhere in your design. If your beads' holes are not that large, or if you'd like a more integrated look, try the following techniques instead.

STRING BEADS LENGTHWISE

Use this method to string a bead so that its hole runs lengthwise with the design.

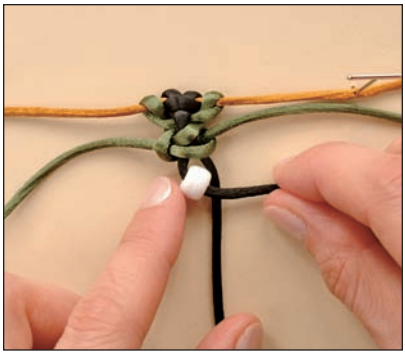
1. Beginning with four working cords (two filler cords and two knotting cords), tie a macramé knot of your choice. This example shows a square knot.
2. Remove the pins or tape that anchor your filler cords.
3. String a bead onto both filler cords.
4. Re-anchor the filler cords.
5. Position the bead up against the knot that you made in Step 1.
6. Tie another knot at the bottom of the bead to continue the design.



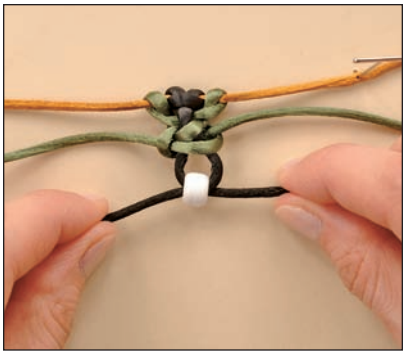
STRING PERPENDICULAR BEADS

Use this method to add a bead with its hole running perpendicular to the design.

1. Complete Steps 1–2 under "String Beads Lengthwise" on the previous page.
2. Holding the bead with its holes facing side-to-side (perpendicular to the cords), thread one filler cord sideways through the bead.
3. Pull the filler cord taut.



4. Continue holding the bead in place, and thread the other filler cord through the bead from the opposite direction.
5. Pull the second filler cord taut.
6. Re-anchor the filler cords.



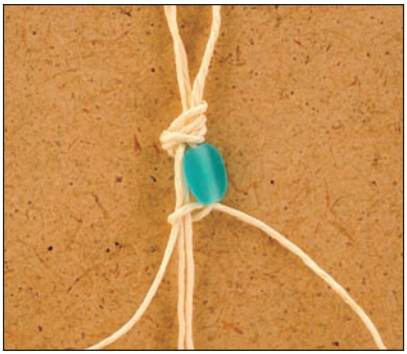
7. Securely tie another knot up against the bead to continue the design.

Add Beads Within Macramé Knots

Instead of stringing beads between macramé knots, try stringing them within a knot. You can string a bead within every knot in a design, or alternate between beaded and unbeaded knots to create a more complex pattern.

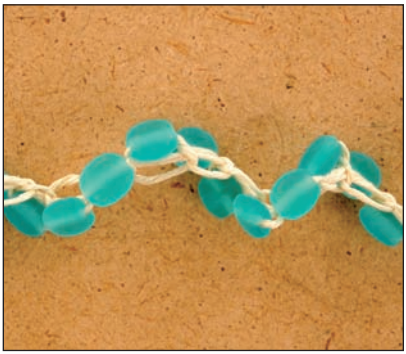
BEADED MACRAME HALF KNOT

This technique creates a twisted spiral of beads.



1. At the place where you would like to begin adding beads, string a bead onto the knotting cord on the right, and slide it all the way down against the filler cords.
2. Bring the knotting cord on the right beneath the filler cords, and complete the half knot as usual (p. 151).

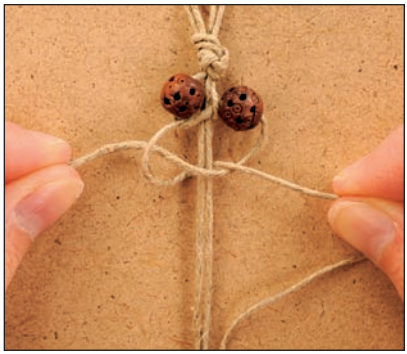
As you complete half knots, your work begins to form a spiral. You may find it helpful to unanchor, turn, and re-anchor your design as you work. Try using a clipboard instead of a traditional knotting board with this technique for faster re-anchoring.



BEADED MACRAMÉ SQUARE KNOT

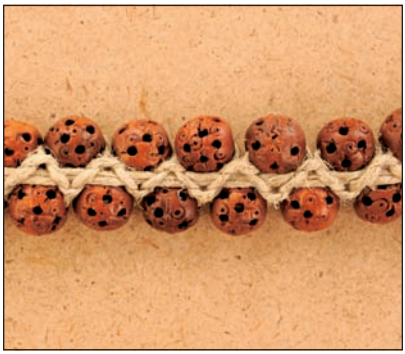
This technique creates a band with two rows of beads.

1. At the point where you would like to add a bead, string a bead onto the knotting cord on the right, and slide it down against the filler cords.
2. Complete the half knot.
3. String a second bead onto the knotting cord on the left, and complete the second half knot.



A completed length of beaded macramé square knots is shown here. Notice how the front side of the band differs in appearance from the back. Either side can face up in your design, or you can create a reversible design that can be worn in either direction.

Front



Back

TIP

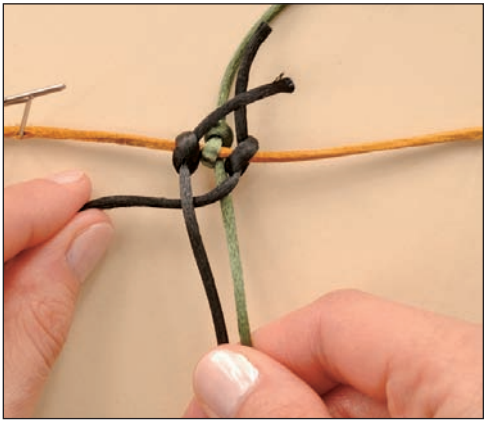
You can use this technique to bead within many different types of macramé knots, including half knots and half hitch knots.

Braid Cords Together

You can braid together multiple strands of cord to create thicker and more decorative cording for your beading projects. Here are the three most popular braids used in jewelry making.

THREE-STRAND FLAT BRAID

You can make the three-strand flat braid with three single cords or three groups of cords.

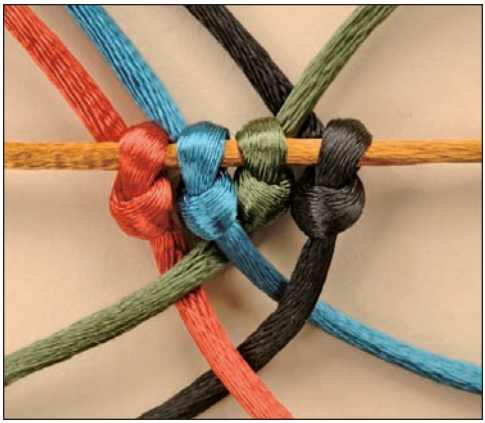


1. Beginning with three cords anchored at the top ends, pick up the left and middle cords with your left hand.
2. Using your right hand, bring the right cord over the middle cord and position it between the middle and left cords.
3. Bring the left cord over the original right cord.

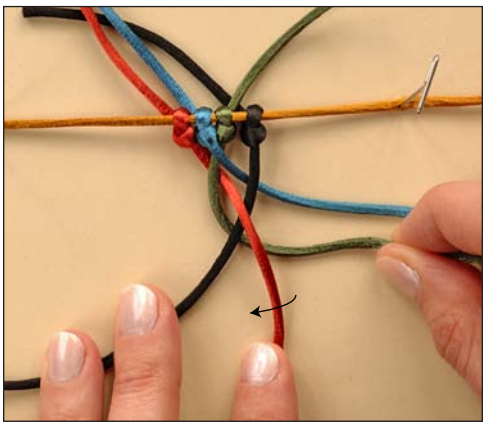
4. Pull the cords gently to the sides to tighten the beginning of the braid.
5. Bring the cord that is now on the far right over the cord that is now in the middle.
6. Bring the left cord over the middle cord.
7. Continue bringing each side cord over the middle cord, tightening the braid as needed to keep it even.

FOUR-STRAND ROUND BRAID

This braid is round with four even sides. First, set up the cords with an initial flat braid. Then make repeated round braids.



1. Beginning with four working cords anchored at their top ends, bring the second cord from the left over the second cord from the right, so that the two cords are crossed.
2. Cross the far-left cord under the second cord from the right.
3. Bring the far-right cord over and under the two cords that are closest to it, respectively. The initial flat braid is now complete.

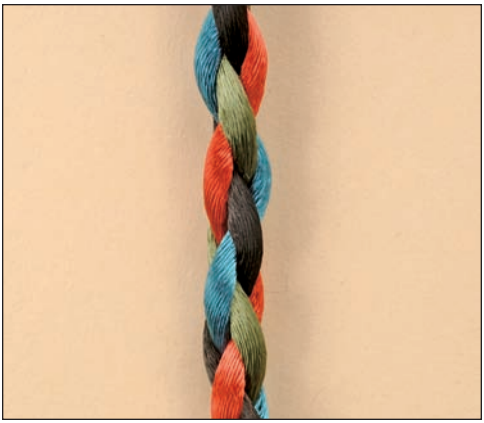


4. To begin round braiding, cross the cord that is now on the far left (green) beneath the next two cords to its right (at the point where they cross), and then back over the second cord it crossed under (orange).

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Braid Cords Together *(continued)*

5. Repeat this process on the other side. Cross the cord that is now on the far right (blue) beneath the two cords next to it (where they cross) and then back over the second cord it crossed under.
6. Pull the cords to tighten the developing braid.
7. Continue crossing each side cord under the two adjacent cords and back over one cord, alternating sides from far left to far right, and tightening the braid as you go.



TIP

Selecting Beads for Knotting and Braiding

It's easier to knot and braid with cords of thicker diameter, rather than thin cords, but thicker cords require beads with larger hole sizes. Beads made of metal, ceramic, and organic materials are more likely to have larger holes than are glass beads. When you shop for beads, take along scrap pieces of cord to test on beads you consider purchasing.

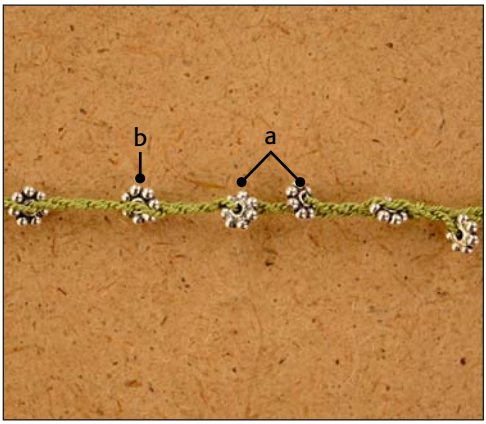
If you want to knot and braid with thinner cord, like silk, remember that you can attach twisted wire needles to the ends of your working cords to make it easier to string beads.

Add Beads Within Braids

To add beads within braids, simply string a bead onto one of the cords, and continue braiding as usual. Use your fingers to hold the bead in place until you have completed one or two more braids, to keep the bead from sliding out of position.

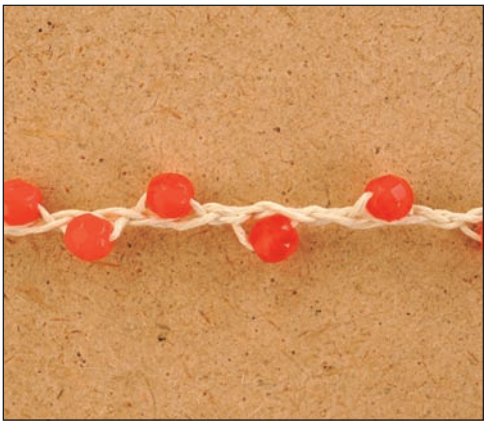
BEADING WITHIN FLAT BRAIDS

With a flat, three-strand braid, beads added to outside cords protrude from the edges of the design (a), and beads added to the middle cord are encased within the design (b).



BEADING WITHIN ROUND BRAIDS

With a round braid, you can scatter beads around the edges of the braid by stringing beads onto the outermost cords as you braid.



chapter 6

Beaded and Knotted Bails, Clasps, and Closures

You can save money and customize the look of your designs by creating bails, clasps, and closures yourself using basic beading and knotting skills. Because these techniques eliminate the need for metal findings, they are also great options for people with metal allergies.

Construct a Beaded Faux Pendant Bail 168
Make a Simple Bead-and-Loop Clasp 174
Make a Button-and-Loop Clasp 179
Make a Wrapped Bead-and-Loop Clasp 181
Create a Sliding Knot Closure 183
Make a Double Leather Cord Closure 186
Weave a Peyote Stitch Toggle Clasp 188

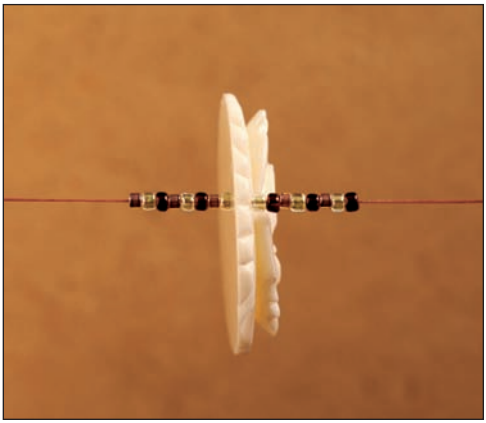
Construct a Beaded Faux Pendant Bail

Use small beads to create a beaded bail for a pendant. The bail can be a simple, loose ring of beads, or a built-in feature of a necklace.

MAKE A BEADED-LOOP BAIL

A simple beaded loop works as a bail for most pendants that are drilled front-to-back.

1. Beginning with a single strand of beading thread about 18 inches long, thread a needle onto one end and secure a stop bead, tape, or Mini Bead Stopper about 6 inches from the other end.
2. String on enough seed beads to form half of a bail for your pendant. The length of bail you need depends on the position of the hole in your pendant, as well as the thickness of cord you hang the pendant from.
3. String on the pendant.
4. String on the same number of seed beads that you strung on in Step 2.



5. String back through the first bead you strung on in Step 2, and pull the thread taut to create a beaded loop.

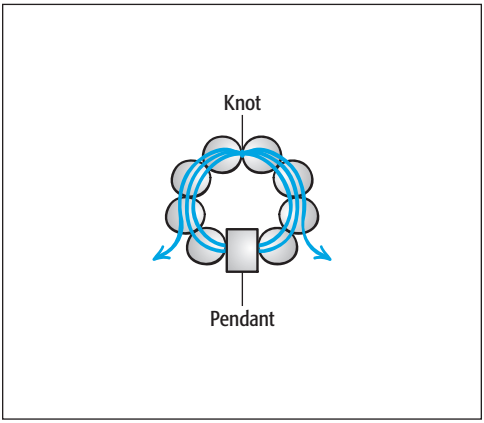
6. Keeping the thread taut, string back through the rest of the beads in the loop, a few at a time, and then out again.
7. Remove the needle and tie a square knot between the center, upper beads with both ends of the thread.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Construct a Beaded Faux Pendant Bail *(continued)*

8. Re-attach the needle on one end of the thread, and string back through the next several beads in the loop, and then out again.

9. Remove the stop bead, tape, or Bead Stopper from the other end of the thread, and attach the needle there.
10. String back through the next several beads in the loop, going in the opposite direction that you did in Step 8.
11. Trim the thread very close to the beads.



You now have a beaded loop bail with the knot and ends of the thread hidden within the beads.

TIP

If your pendant is a donut shape, or if it otherwise has a very large hole, try making a beaded band for its bail by weaving a length of even-count flat peyote stitch (see p. 121), slipping it through the pendant hole, and then zipping up the ends as you would to make a finger ring (see p. 139).

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Construct a Beaded Faux Pendant Bail *(continued)*

MAKE A BUILT-IN BEADED BAIL

With this technique, the bail is fixed in place at the center of the necklace. It requires one bead large enough to cover two strands of your stringing material knotted together.

1. Using a strand long enough to bead your necklace plus a few inches, string on one medium-size bead and enough smaller beads to create a half loop extending toward the pendant hole.
2. String through the pendant hole, and then string on another set of the same number of smaller beads.
3. Moving the medium-size bead back a little so that it is out of the way, tie the two strands above the pendant together using a square knot, as close to the smaller beads as possible.
4. String back up through the medium-size bead in the opposite direction to what you did the first time.
5. Push the medium-size bead down over the knot.

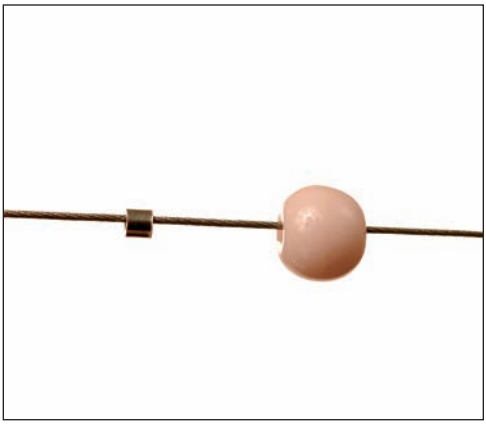
6 Continue beading both sides of the necklace, and finish as usual.

Make a Simple Bead-and-Loop Clasp

You can make beaded clasps to use in place of pre-made, metal clasp findings. The bead-and-loop clasp works like a toggle; a large bead slips into a loop strung with smaller beads.

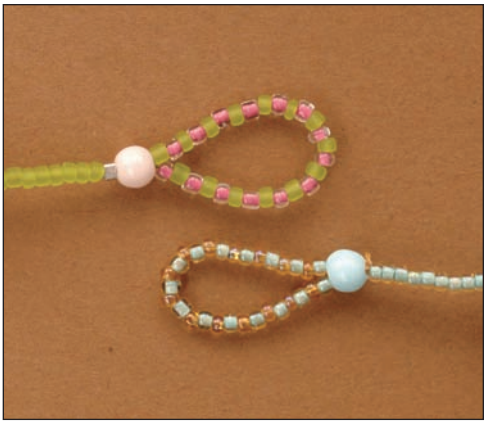
BEAD-AND-LOOP CLASP

1. Prepare a strand about 15 inches longer than you would need for a bracelet or necklace with pre-made findings.
2. If you're using beading wire, string on a crimp bead.
3. String on a bead of your choice that is larger than a seed bead, with a hole large enough to be threaded through twice.

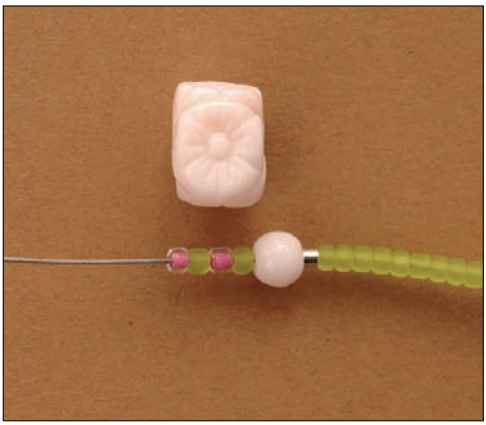


4. Select a medium- to large-size bead for the clasp, but do not string it on yet.
5. String on enough seed beads to make a continuous loop of beads around the clasp bead.
6. Add or remove beads until you can insert the clasp bead comfortably through the loop, without it fitting too tightly or too loosely.

7. String back down through the first bead and the crimp (if you're using one), in the direction opposite to which you strung through them the first time.
8. Secure the crimp or tie a square knot to close the loop, as close to the larger bead as possible.
9. Continue stringing on beads in the pattern of your choice.



10. When you're ready to finish the other end of the strand, string on another crimp bead (if you're using one) and another larger bead to form the base of the loop.
11. String on a length of seed beads a little longer than the width of the clasp bead.



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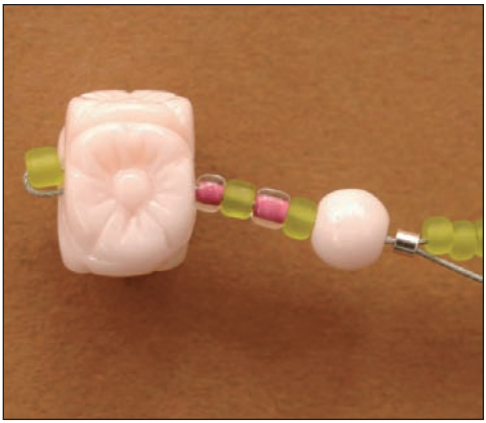
Make a Simple Bead-and-Loop Clasp *(continued)*

12. String on the clasp bead and one more seed bead.
13. String back down into the clasp bead and through the seed beads, larger bead, and crimp (if you're using one).



14. Secure the crimp or tie another square knot, and finish as usual.

MAKE MULTIPLE LOOPS

1. After stringing on the first larger bead, string on half the number of beads that you would like each completed loop to have.
2. Add a second larger bead and then all of the beads for the end loop.
3. Pass back through the larger bead that you strung on in Step 2, and then string on the same number of smaller beads that you strung on in Step 1.

4. Pass through the first larger bead, pull the thread taut, and make a square knot (or secure a crimp).
5. If you made a knot, pass through several more beads, pull taut, and then trim off any extra thread.
6. If you used a crimp, trim off the excess beading wire as usual.

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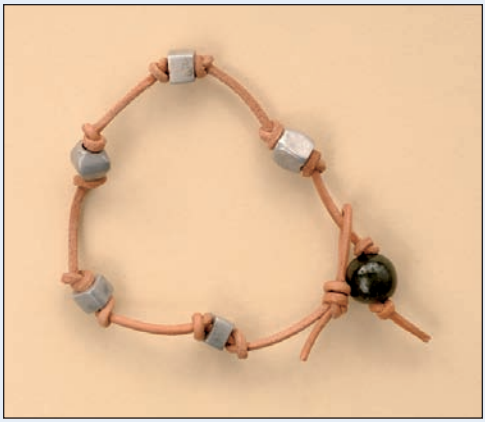
Make a Simple Bead-and-Loop Clasp *(continued)*

TIP

Make a Built-In Clasp Using Thicker Cord



Some cording, like leather, is too thick to pass through small beads. To make a bead-and-loop clasp with thick cord, begin by making the loop. Fold over the end of an extra-long strand of cord, and tie a secure overhand knot in the doubled strand. Make the bead toggle at the other end by tying an overhand knot, stringing on the large clasp bead, and then tying a second overhand knot.

If the cord is thick enough, you can even use a knot in place of a bead for the clasp. Simply tie a secure overhand knot on the second end of the cord to fit inside the loop you made on the first end. With either method, finish by adding a tiny drop of E6000 glue to each knot, if desired, and trim off the extra cord ends at least ¼ inch past the knots.

Make a Button-and-Loop Clasp

This clasp works just like the bead version, but uses a button as the toggle.

1. Perform Steps 1–3 from "Make a Simple Bead-and-Loop Clasp" on p. 174.
2. Select a medium-size, two-hole button for the clasp, but do not string it on yet.
3. String on enough seed beads to make a continuous loop of beads around the button.
4. Add or remove beads until you can insert the button comfortably through the loop, without it fitting too tightly or too loosely.

5. When you're ready to finish the button-end of the strand, string on a series of seed beads a little longer than the width of the button.
6. Pass through one hole in the button, add a few more seed beads, and then thread down through the other hole.
7. String on another series of the same number of seed beads.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Make a Simple Button-and-Loop Clasp *(continued)*

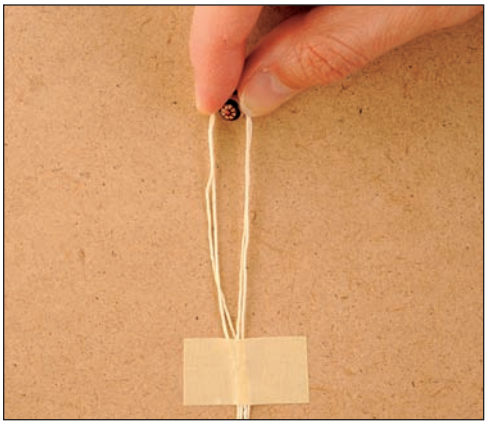
8. String back down through the larger bead and the crimp (if you're using beading wire).

9. Secure the crimp or tie another square knot to close the loop, and finish as usual.

Make a Wrapped Bead-and-Loop Clasp

This technique uses macramé wrap knots to create a built-in bead-and-loop clasp on multiple strands of cord. Begin your design by making a wrapped bead end, which you can then anchor to your work surface. End the design with the wrapped loop end.

WRAPPED BEAD END



1. String all of the cord strands through a large-hole bead. If you're beginning a macramé design using doubled (folded-over) cords, position the bead at the center point of the cords.
2. Divide the cords that are emerging from the bead into two equal groups.
3. Holding the bead vertically, fold each group down over opposite sides of the bead.
4. Bring all of the cords together below the bead, and anchor them to your work surface (with masking tape) several inches away from the bead.

5. Using a wrapping cord that is at least 7 inches long, make a wrap knot with about ½ inch of wraps over the cords below the bead (see "Wrap Knot" on p. 154 in Chapter 5).
6. Use your fingers to slide the wrap knot up against the bead.

The completed wrapped bead end, shown here, was made with four doubled-over strands of jeweler's hemp twine.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Make a Warped Bead-and-Loop Clasp *(continued)*

WRAPPED LOOP END

To make a wrapped loop end, leave at least 11 inches of bare cord at the end of your design to use for the loop.

1. Stop knotting and beading your design about ¼ to ½ inch from where you want to begin the end loop.
2. Beginning at that ¼- to ½-inch mark, use one of the cords to make continuous wraps around the rest of the cords, as though you were making a wrap knot.
3. Continue wrapping until you have a length of wrapped cord that will form a loop just large enough to slip over the bead on the other end of the design.
4. Fold-over the wrapped cords to create the loop, and gather all the cords together at the base of the loop.
5. Using a wrapping cord that is at least 7 inches long, make a wrap knot that is about ¼ to ½ inch long around the entire bundle of cords. This wrap knot should fully cover the space you left in Step 1.
6. Slide the wrap knot securely against the base of the wrapped loop.
7. Use sharp scissors to trim the cord tails.

In this example, the cord tails were left about ½ inch long to create a short fringe.

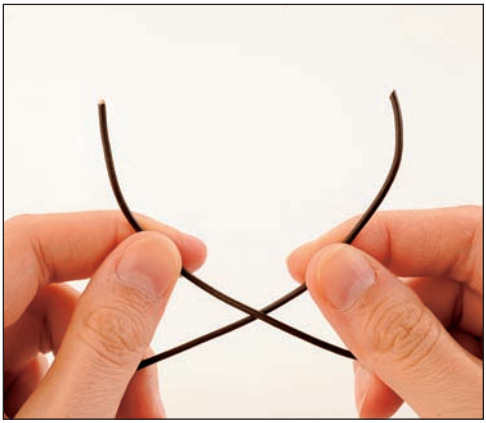
TIP

You can also use this technique to make loops that are braided or covered in half hitch knots, rather than wrapped.

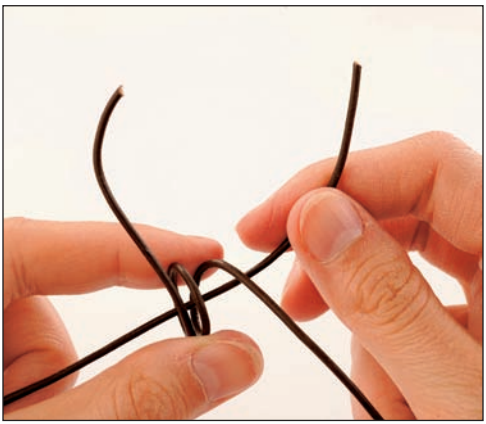
Create a Sliding Knot Closure

This method is often used with single-strand leather cord jewelry. It creates an adjustable, sliding closure that allows the jewelry to be enlarged enough to slip over the head, wrist, or ankle, and then tightened down again.

1. Begin with a length of cord that is your maximum desired length *plus* at least 9 inches. (Remember that the jewelry will be adjustable in size, and the maximum length must be large enough to slip onto the body.)
2. Holding both ends of the cord in front of you, cross the right cord in front of the left. The crossing point should be a few inches from the end of each cord.



3. Wrap the right cord loosely around the left cord twice, creating a double-coil.



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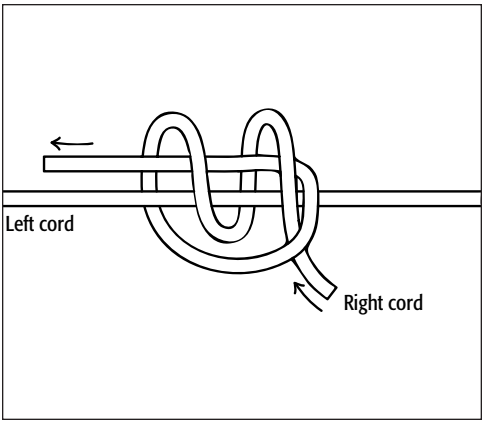
Create a Sliding Knot Closure *(continued)*

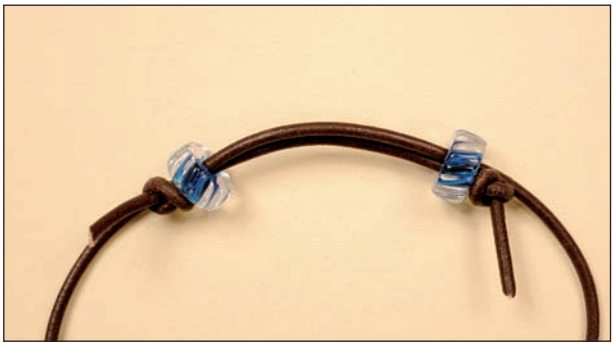
4. Bring the end of the right cord around the outside of both coils, and then pass it back through both coils.
5. Pull the end of the right cord to tighten the knot, but leave it loose enough that the left cord slides back and forth through it easily.
6. Repeat Steps 2–5 using the left cord end (coil it around the right cord twice, weave it back through both coils, and pull it taut).
7. If necessary, trim the tips of the cord so that the two short tails are the same length, but do not make them shorter than about ½ inch long.



TIP

To create more prominent-looking knots, you can make triple-loop coils instead of double-loop coils. Be sure to begin with a slightly longer length of cord to accommodate the additional loops.

8. You now have two sliding knots. To shorten the length of the jewelry (as you would to secure it on the body), pull both cord tails in opposite directions.
9. To loosen the cord, slide the knots toward one another.



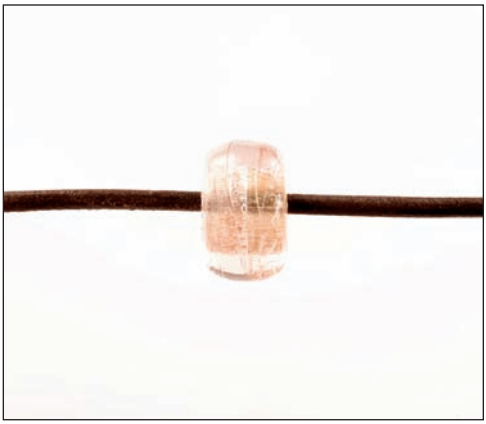
TIP

You can also make an adjustable, sliding closure using beads in place of knots. Select two beads that have holes large enough to fit closely over two strands of your cord but still allow the cords to slide through. String on both beads, and then pass each cord end back through a bead. Make overhand knots at the ends of the cord to keep the beads from falling off.

Make a Double Leather Cord Closure

You can make casual, two-strand jewelry with built-in clasps by folding one long length of cord in half. Select a cord that is both thick and somewhat stiff, like leather or braided cotton. Use this technique to make a two-strand bracelet or collar with or without strung beads, or to create a frame for stitching a band of ladder beads (see p. 106). Keep in mind that the frame cords must be longer than your intended finished length, in order to accommodate the length of the beads you weave-in.

1. Starting with a length of cord several times longer than your intended finished length, string on a medium-to-large size bead for the clasp. (About 26 inches of 2mm leather cord was used in the example bracelet.)
2. Center the bead on the cord.



3. Fold-over the cord at both sides of the bead.
4. Squeeze the cord strands together just below the bead, and tie an overhand knot with both strands, using your fingers to push the knot as close to the bead as possible.

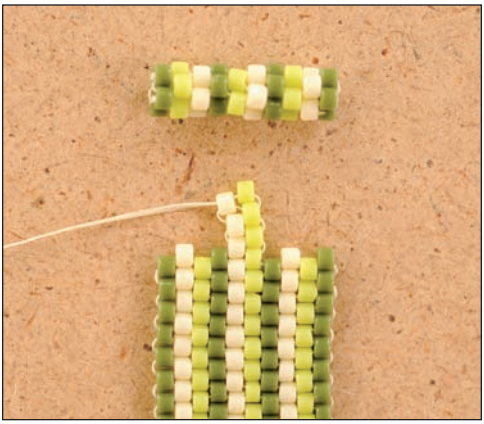
5. Pull the knot tight. You now have finished one end of the bracelet or collar.
6. **Optional:** String on the beads for your design. (Skip this step if you are making a ladder-bead design.)
7. Holding the bead from Step 1 in one hand, use your other hand to extend both strands of cord away from the bead.
8. Keeping the strands aligned side-by-side, tie an overhand knot with both strands, about an inch away from their ends.
9. Pull the knot as tight as possible with your fingers and, optionally, use chain nose pliers to gently pull the cord tails tighter. (Be careful not to mar or tear the cord with the pliers.)

10. Tie another overhand knot in both strands below the knot you made in Step 7, leaving enough room between the two knots for a loop that will fit over the clasp bead.
11. Pull the knot very tight.

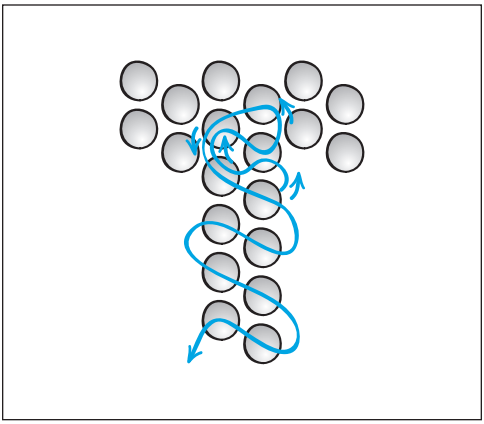
Weave a Peyote Stitch Toggle Clasp

This clasp can be designed to blend seamlessly with any bracelet, necklace, or anklet band that you create with bead weaving. The example uses a basic even-count flat peyote stitch band (see Chapter 4).

1. With the band that you would like to attach the toggle to, perform Steps 1–6 of "Attach a Clasp with a Loop" on p. 136.
2. Continue weaving 2 columns of peyote stitch outward for a total of 6 or 7 rows (each column will contain 3 or 4 beads). This is the toggle's shank.
3. Without weaving-in the thread, set the band aside.
4. Using a new thread, create a thin beaded-bead using the even-count flat peyote stitch (see p. 121 in Chapter 4). This will be the toggle's bar. A typical toggle bar using size 11/0 seed beads requires about 8 rows of peyote stitch.

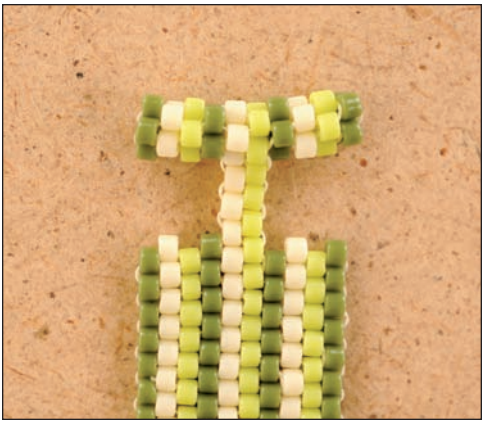


5. Align the shank so that it is centered on the bar.
6. Using the thread tail on the shank, weave through two beads in one row of the bar, as if you were stitching another 2-column row of peyote stitch. The two beads on the bar and the two beads at the end of the shank should come together like the teeth of a zipper.
7. Pass the needle through one more bead in the toggle, and then weave back and forth all the way down the shank.

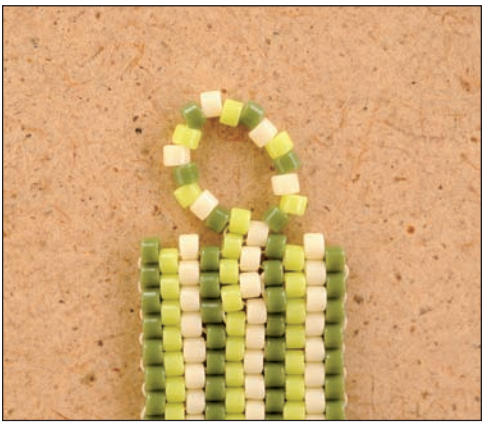


8. Weave back into the band, and weave-in the thread as usual.

   The toggle bar is now attached.



9. On the other end of the band, perform Steps 1–7 of "Attach a Clasp with a Loop" on p. 136.
10. String on enough beads to make a loop large enough to slip over the toggle bar.
11. Pass the needle through the beads at the base of the loop, and then back through the entire loop one more time, going through 2 or 3 beads at a time.
12. Weave-in the thread as usual.



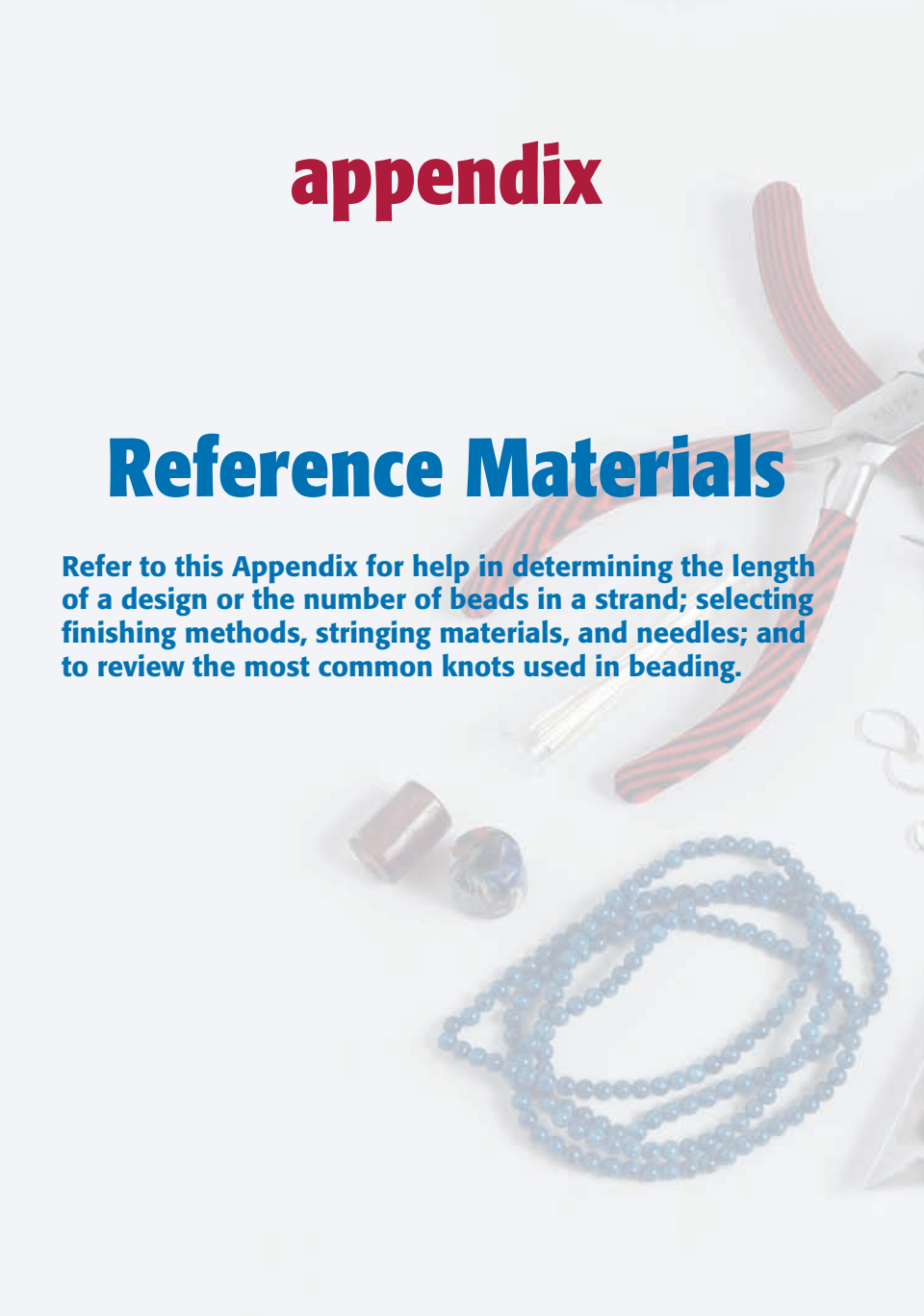
TIP

You can also create a simple button-and-loop clasp (see p. 174) for a peyote stitch band. Simply weave-in the bead-end on one end of the band, and create the loop on the other end using the same technique you would for the peyote stitch toggle.

appendix

Reference Materials

Refer to this Appendix for help in determining the length of a design or the number of beads in a strand; selecting finishing methods, stringing materials, and needles; and to review the most common knots used in beading.



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Standard Jewelry Lengths

	Style or Size	Common Measurements
Necklaces		
Women's	Collar	14–15 inches
	Choker	15–16 inches
	Pendant length	18–19 inches
	Matinee length	20–24 inches
	Opera length	28–32 inches
	Rope length	40–45 inches
	Traditional lariat (has no clasp)	48+ inches
Men's	Choker	18 inches
	Medium length	19–23 inches
	Long	24+ inches
Bracelets		
Women's	Small	6–7 inches
	Medium	7½–8 inches
	Large	8½–9 inches
Men's	Small	8–9 inches
	Medium	9½–10 inches
	Large	10½–11 inches

	Style or Size	*Common Measurements*
Anklets		
Women's	Small–Medium	9 inches
	Medium–Large	10 inches
Men's	Small–Medium	11–12 inches
	Medium–Large	13–14 inches

TIP

Although jewelry sizes are traditionally described in terms of length, keep in mind that the fit of *beaded* jewelry is also affected by the size of beads used. A necklace, bracelet, or anklet with larger beads will fit more snugly than the same-length piece made with smaller beads.

Stringing Materials and Uses

Material	*Best for*
Beading Wire	Most bead types, sizes, weights, and materials.
Silk Cord	Lighter-weight glass, gemstone, or pearl beads.
Braided Nylon Cord or Line	Lighter-weight glass, gemstone, and pearl beads; seed beads.
Linen Cord	Light- to medium-weight beads in most materials.
Cotton Cord	Most bead types, sizes, weights, and materials.
Leather, Suede, and Rubber Cord	Beads with larger holes in most sizes, weights, and materials.

Needle Required?	Special Considerations
No.	Be sure to choose the correct weight and flexibility for your design.
Yes. Look for cards of silk cord with twisted-wire needles already attached.	Silk cord is prone to stretching and can be frayed and broken by sharp-edged or heavy beads. If the pre-attached needle breaks off before you finish stringing, it may be difficult to finish your project.
Maybe. Some brands and styles do not require a needle, and some do.	May be less prone to stretching and slightly more durable than silk, but may also be less flexible.
No.	Linen cord is available in a variety of colors and is popular for braiding and cord weaving. Purchase it pre-waxed for easy beading.
No.	Cotton cord is a nice alternative to leather cord. It is also available waxed.
No.	The quality of leather cord varies, depending on how and where it is made. Typically, more expensive leather cord is softer and smoother in texture. Less expensive leather may be rough and have a funny smell.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Stringing Materials and Uses *(continued)*

Material	*Best for*
Satin Cord (Rattail)	Light- or medium-weight beads with larger, smooth holes.
Ribbon	Light- to medium-weight beads with larger, smooth holes.
Stretch Cord	Lighter-weight beads with smooth holes.
Tiger Tail	Heavy necklaces and designs that are less prone to kinking.
Memory Wire	Light- to medium-weight beads in relatively durable materials.
Beading Thread	Seed beads.

Needle Required?	Special Considerations
Maybe. If needed, use a big eye or twisted wire needle.	Rattail is a very soft cord that can fray easily. It should only be used for very casual jewelry, or jewelry that is not worn often.
Usually, yes. Use a big eye needle for ribbon and similar large, but collapsible, materials.	Ribbon is available in a variety of sizes and weights. Make sure that the size and weight of your beads don't visually overpower the ribbon, or vice versa.
Maybe. If needed, use a twisted wire needle.	Stretch cord is especially prone to breakage because it must be stretched to take the jewelry on and off. Use the thickest cord possible, and size your pieces not to be worn tightly.
No.	Tiger tail is a less-advanced version of beading wire. It kinks easily and may fatigue and break where kinks form. However, it is usually less expensive than other beading wire.
No.	Lower-quality memory wire may be susceptible to being stretched out and losing its shape. Also, some people find memory wire uncomfortable to wear.
Yes. Use a beading needle.	Beading thread is very thin and most commonly used for beaded lace and bead weaving. It can also be used for simple, strung jewelry, but be careful to use only very small, smooth, lightweight beads.

Beads-per-Inch

There are two situations where you may want to estimate the number of beads that make up a bead strand of a given length. One is during the design phase, when you need to estimate how many beads a project requires.

The second is when you purchase beads *by the strand* (where they are sold temporarily strung) and you want to know how many beads you are buying and to determine the cost per bead. The process is made more complicated by the fact that beads are measured in millimeters, and bead strands are measured in inches. However, if you know the length of a strand and the size of its beads (assuming the beads are all the same size), then you can calculate about how many beads are on the strand using this formula:

(25.4 ÷ bead size in mm) x length of the strand in inches = total number of beads in the strand

The chart below provides the approximate beads-per-inch (the first part of the formula) for the most popular bead sizes. To use it, find the size of bead you are looking for, and then multiply the corresponding beads-per-inch by the length of your strand.

For example, to determine how many 5mm beads are in a 17-inch strand, multiply 5.08 by 17 for an estimated total of 86 or 87 beads. Keep in mind that these are only estimates. When you use them for designing, add a few extra beads to make sure you have enough.

Bead Size	Beads per Inch	Bead Size	Beads per Inch
3mm	8.47	10mm	2.54
4mm	6.35	12mm	2.17
5mm	5.08	14mm	1.75
6mm	4.23	16mm	1.82
7mm	3.63	18mm	1.41
8mm	3.18	20mm	1.27
9mm	2.82	22mm	1.16

TIP

If you are designing a project that has *different* sizes of beads in the same strand, the easiest way to estimate the number of beads you need is to draw the design on paper.

Begin by drawing a straight line that is the exact length you would like your finished strand to be (not including the clasp). Then use a ruler to make marks along the line representing the boundaries between beads. (For an 8mm bead, make two marks that are 8mm apart). An alternative is to use a *metric circle template*, sold by most drafting supply companies. With a template, you can draw a circle along your initial line to represent the length of each bead. Whichever method you use, label each space or circle with the size of bead it symbolizes so that you can quickly count the number of each size when you finish.

Finishing Methods

String Material	Common Finishing Methods
Beading Wire	Crimp beads, crimp tubes, crimp ends, or bead- or button-clasps; the smallest sizes can also be knotted.
Silk Cord	French bullion wire, clamshell bead tips, or bead- or button-clasps.
Braided Nylon Cord or Line	French bullion wire, clamshell bead tips, or bead- or button-clasps.
Linen Cord	Fold-over crimp ends, larger clamshell bead tips, or bead- or button-clasps.
Cotton Cord	Bullet ends, coil ends, or fold-over crimp ends, bead- or button-clasps, or sliding knot closure.
Hemp Cord (macramé)	Bead- or button-and-loop closures, knot-and-loop closures, or end findings attached with jump rings and knots.
Leather, Suede, and Rubber Cord	Coil ends, end caps, or fold-over crimp ends. Leather and suede cord can also be finished with bead- or button-clasps, knot-and-loop closures, sliding knot closures, or double cord closures (see p. 186).
Satin Cord	Fold-over crimp ends or sliding knot closures.
Ribbon	Fold-over crimp ends or clamps.
Stretch Cord	Knotting.
Beading Thread	Clamshell bead tips, or bead- or button-clasps.
Memory Wire	Looping with round nose pliers or glue-on end caps.

Beading Wire Sizes

Beading wire is described by its number of strands, size, and pound test strength. Use this chart to select the proper size. For help in selecting the number of strands and pound test strength, see p. 40.

Beading Wire Diameter (Inches)	*Best Used for*
.010	Very lightweight beads, such as small pearls and seed beads.
.012–.014	Lightweight beads with very small holes, including crystal beads, seed beads, and pearls.
.015–.019	Lightweight to heavy beads, including beads made from stone and metal.
.020–.021	Medium-weight to heavy beads, especially gemstone beads with uneven hole diameters.
.024–.026	Large and heavy beads, or any beads with larger holes, including trade beads, glass, and stone.
.030–.036	The largest, heaviest beads made of glass, metal, or stone.

Needle and Thread Size Recommendations

This chart offers some general guidelines for deciding which needle and thread sizes to use for stringing or weaving beads. Through experimentation, you will develop your own preferences over time.

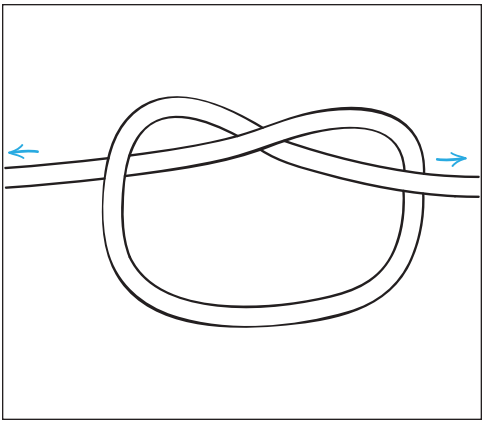
	Bead Size	Needle Size	Thread Size
Larger	8/0	#10	E, F, or FF
	9/0	#10	D, E, or F
	10/0	#10	B or D
	11/0	#10	A or B
	12/0	#11	A or B
	13/0	#12	A or 0
	14/0	#13	A or 0
Smaller	15/0	#13 or #15	0, 00, or 000

Knots Commonly Used in Beading

OVERHAND KNOT

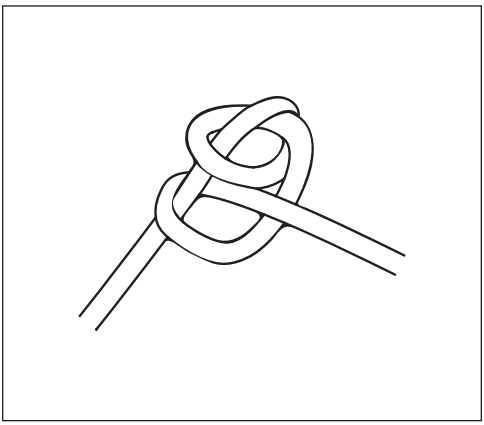
You can use an *overhand knot* to place knots between beads, trap beads within knots, make loops with cord, or weave-in thread when bead weaving.

1. Pull the end of your cord or thread back up and over itself to form a loop. If you're weaving-in a bead-weaving thread, create this loop around another thread that is running between two beads.
2. Pass the cord or thread end through the loop.
3. Pull the cord end to tighten the knot.



DOUBLE-OVERHAND KNOT

A *double-overhand knot* is simply one overhand knot tied on top of another. Use it to finish cord ends, or whenever you need to create a strong, single-strand knot.



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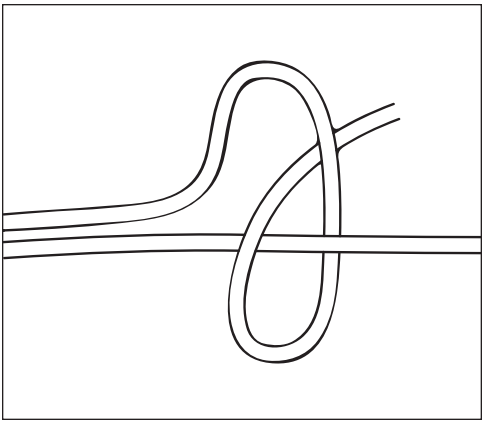
Knots Commonly Used in Beading *(continued)*

HALF HITCH KNOT

Use the *half hitch knot* in macramé, or as a less-conspicuous alternative to an overhand knot to weave-in a thread when bead weaving.

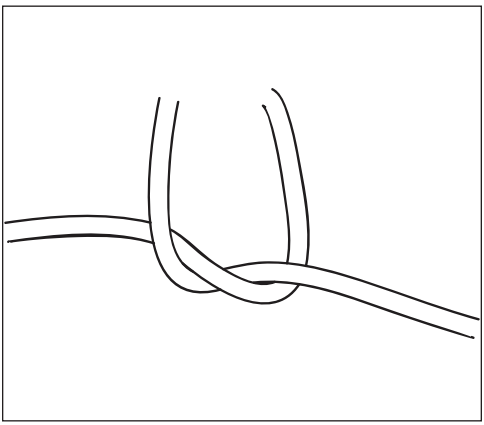
1. Pass the cord or thread beneath another cord or thread, creating a small loop or "U." If you're weaving-in a bead-weaving thread, the thread you pass under will be a thread that is running between two beads.
2. Pass the first cord or thread back over the other, and through the loop.
3. Pull taut.



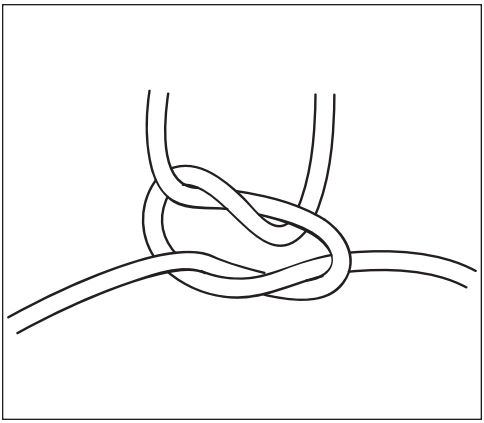
SQUARE KNOT

You can use a square knot to join two cord ends, or to tie a cord back onto itself after making a loop.

1. Beginning with one strand in each hand, wrap the left strand around the right strand. The strands will look twisted around each other.

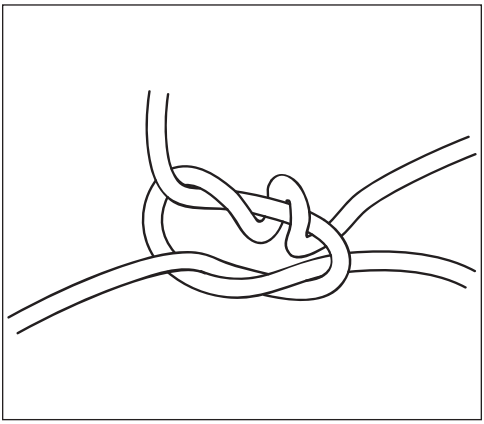


2. Now wrap the right strand over and around the left strand, creating a second twist.
3. Pull down the second twist snugly onto the first twist.
4. Pull the two strand ends to tighten the knot.



SURGEON'S KNOT

The surgeon's knot is a square knot with the right strand wrapped around the left strand twice, instead of once. Use it when you need an especially strong knot to join two cords.



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