

How To; - String a Necklace

You will need: -

- Beads
- Flexible Beading Wire (approx 0.4mm)
- 2mm (or smaller) Crimps
- Clasp
- Side Cutter Pliers, Snipe Nosed Pliers
- Bead Stopper
- Bead Design Board &/or Bead Mat



Tip - Position your favorite beads first, at key points in your design, then fill in the gaps with different combinations until you find a design that works. Keep bigger heavier beads towards the front.

Step 1 - Design your necklace

Lay out your beads on your beading mat (the mat stops them rolling away) or in the outside channel on a bead design board.

Experiment with designs by laying out your beads in different sequences until you find your favorite combination.

For an average sized necklace you will need at roughly 45cm (18") of beads.



Step 2 - Thread your beads

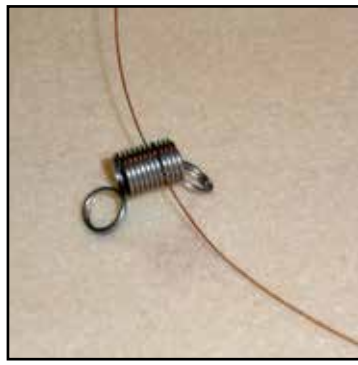
Cut a piece of wire approx 25cm longer than you expect your finished necklace to be.

Attach a bead stopper near one end (or tie on a spare bead) to stop the beads falling off as you work.

Thread on your beads, in your chosen sequence, starting at one end of the necklace (by the clasp) and working your way around.

Check the length and pattern regularly until you have a sequence you are happy with.

Hold the wire securely while you check the length and how the beads sit, by hanging it around your own or a friend's neck to ensure you have a design that works well.

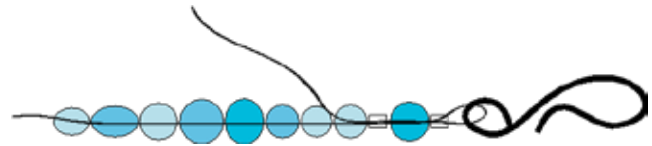


Step 3 - Secure the ends

Leave the stopper in place and at the free end of your necklace, take off the last bead. Thread on a crimp, then put the last bead back, a second crimp and your clasp, then pass back down through the crimp, bead, crimp and the next bead or two as well.

Pull the wire up so that there is just a small loop where the clasp is attached and secure the two crimps by squashing them flat with your snipe (chain) nosed pliers. Check they are secure and the wire won't pull loose. If the wire can move, squash them again until they hold fast.

Repeat this at the other side, but before you secure the crimps you also need to check the tension of the necklace. Hold the clasp and pull on the loose wire tail to pull up any slack in the necklace. If you pull it too tight it will become too stiff and won't hang well, but make sure there are no gaps between the beads.



Check everything again, then secure the crimps with your pliers.

Once the necklace is secure, neatly cut off the wire tails as close to the beads as possible using side cutters.

What to string it on?

Flexible beading wire is often also called 'tigertail' - it has a steel core, coated in nylon and comes in a variety of weights, diameters and colours.

Nylon monofilament ('fishing line') is a good alternative if you don't have tigertail.

These should usually be secured with crimps (not knots) & are usually stronger than textile (cotton, silk etc) threads.

Tip - Use a crimp cover to hide your crimps, once they have been secured.

A crimp cover disguises your crimp as a small gold or silver bead, and encloses any sharp edges that might be scratchy at the back of your neck.

Secure a crimp cover in stages around your crimp with chain / snipe nose pliers.

Tip - Use a bead board to help plan out your design - this will also help give an estimate of the finished length of the necklace. Use the outside channel for a single row.