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Introduction

Two-hole beads have exploded! There seems to be a new shape every week, and now the number of holes have multiplied too, with three- and four-hole beads. Some beaders may find the greatly expanded selection overwhelming. I agree it is a lot to wade through, with many decisions to make, especially if you are a hobbyist or part-time beader.

Of course, the stitches all have to be rewritten to accommodate the two holes, and that was the purpose of my last book. As I worked further, I found that certain stitches translated easily into two-hole use. But I also created several new stitches that these new beads evoked. I'm sure the three- and four-hole beads will generate more new forms and stitches to make use of their unique qualities as well.

I've tried to start each chapter with an easy piece and then moved on to more intermediate and difficult designs, but sometimes the easy-to-hard order is not as simple as it may seem. If you're a beginner, there will be plenty of easy pieces and basic techniques for you to learn.

I've included a section of earrings. If you're a longtime beader, you will have lots of extra beads from larger projects. I love to find uses for these. And, I love to wear earrings.

I know when I open a beadwork book, I want to make the first thing that catches my eye. Often that's one of the more difficult pieces. However, take the time to make a simple version with the same stitch. It makes doing the difficult piece much easier.

There are so many two-hole beads, I have not been able to use all of them. However, that leaves a lot of room for you to experiment. I give you options when I see where it is easy to substitute one two-hole bead for another. I'm sure some of you will take off on creative urges of your own, and I wish you all well.

Happy beading!

— Virginia



Basics

TOOLS

My tools have not changed substantially over many years. I still love my #10 beading needle and 8- or 10-lb. Power Pro. But I always encourage beaders to work with what suits them and makes a sound and attractive piece of work.

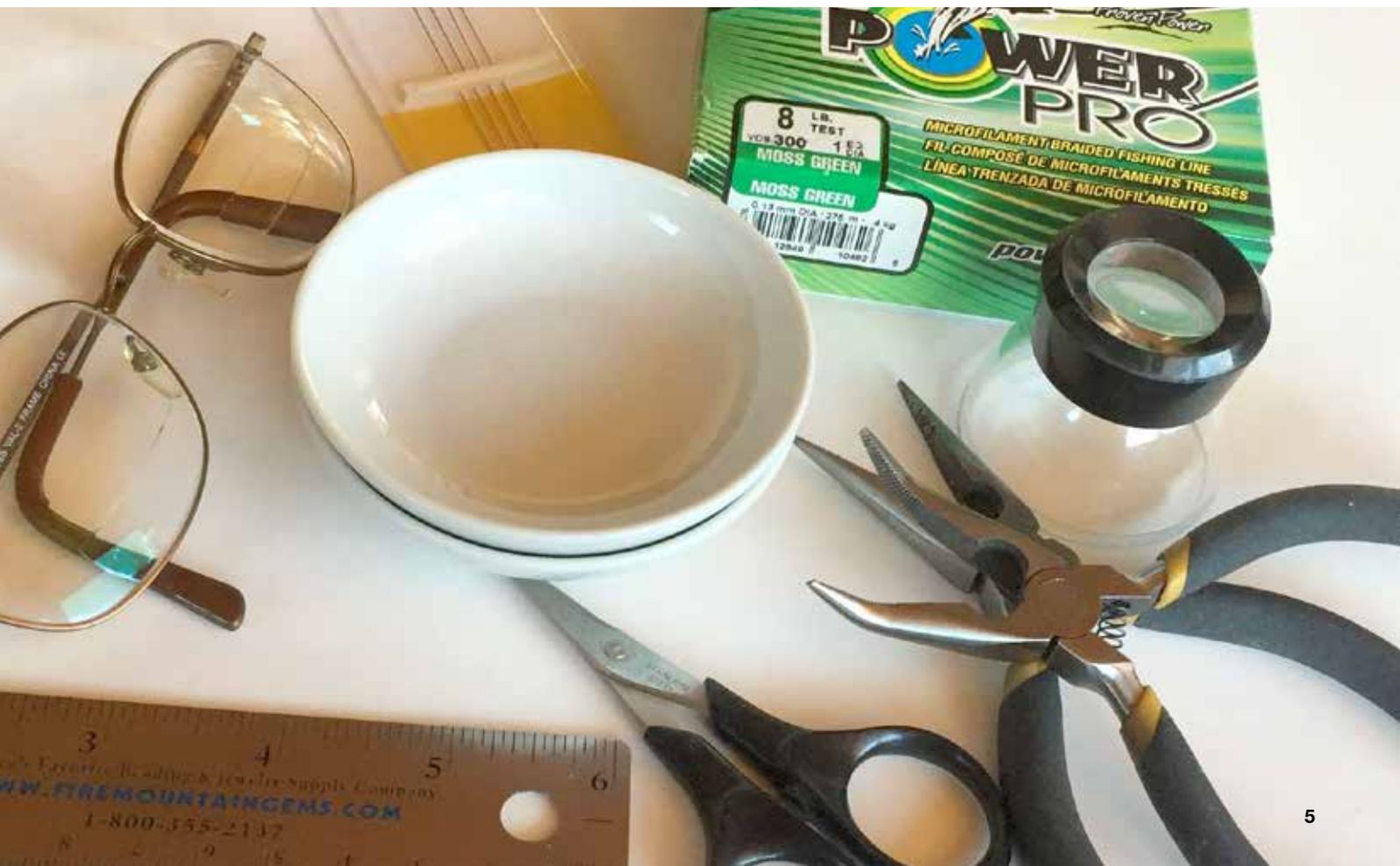
Your thread should be flexible, strong, non-stretch, and if possible, braided (so it's harder to split and catch). I use 8-lb. Power Pro for earrings and fine work, and I switch to 10-lb. for necklaces and heavy bracelets. Fireline is an alternative when I need black. If I need to color-match, I will use C-Lon or something similar.

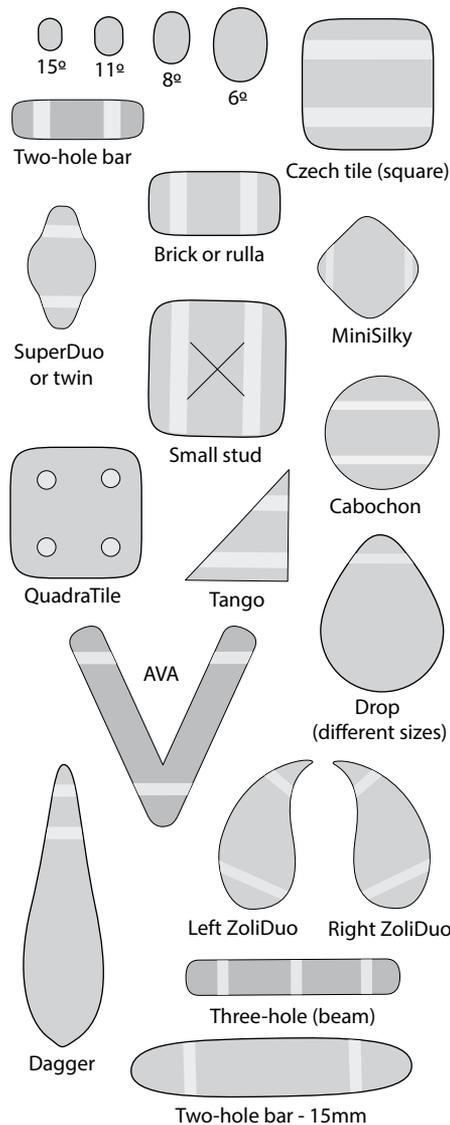
I've tried different needles and will switch to #11 or #12 if needed, but I find my hand works best with the standard #10. Any finer needles, and I find myself bending them into unusable shapes. With my sturdy #10s, I just take the pliers and straighten them a bit, and I'm back in business.

You'll need a place to lay out your beads, such as a felt mat, sticky mat, or bowls. I prefer my little white oriental dipping bowls. It's easy to move the beads around en masse and I can pick up the beads without catching the tip of the needle. They require less contortion of the hand, and when I'm finished, it's easy to pour the beads into my hand and back into their home containers.

Other necessities include: scissors that cut cleanly and closely, a couple of fine pliers, a ruler (preferably with millimeter markings), some kind of magnifier (you're bound to need it eventually), and finally, good light.

Make friends with your ophthalmologist if you have any kind of problem seeing your work. I've solved a couple of problems with just a lens correction or a different pair of glasses more suited to beadwork.





A Note About Illustrations

If you're a visual learner, these illustrations will guide you through each project, step-by-step, in addition to the written instructions. Follow the order of colors as instructed. The beginning of each color is indicated with a matching colored dot, showing where to start.

These illustrated beads are not colored. I've found that using colors in the illustrations is confusing because what

is dark for the author may be light in the beader's palette. These illustrations use shading to indicate old and new beads. The beads already incorporated are lighter and the new beads are darker. I have added a bit of color when it was useful to indicate a pattern or to draw attention to a particular bead or action.

Sometimes the simplest combinations can result in a striking effect. This is an easy project made using stringing techniques. I like the combination of silver or gold AVA beads and 6^o seed beads in a contrasting color. Imagine this piece in gold with hunter green or gypsy red, for example.

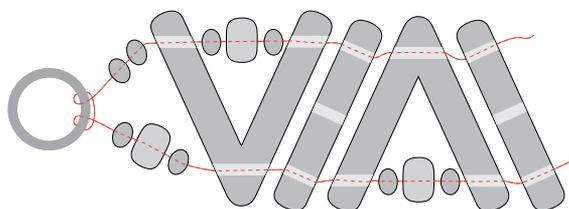


FIG. 1

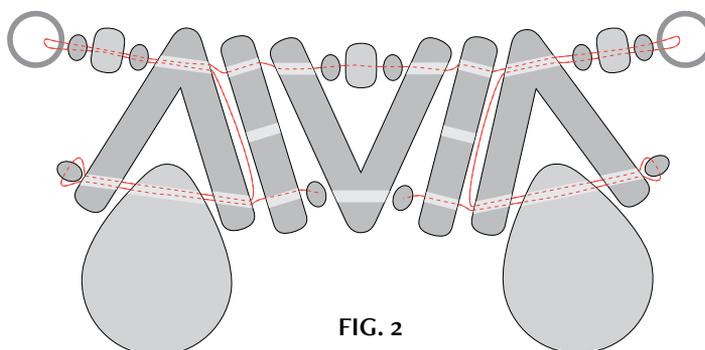


FIG. 2

supplies

- 14 three-hole AVA beads
- 13 three-hole beam beads
- 16 6^o seed beads
- 26 11^o seed beads
- 1 toggle bracelet clasp
- 2 #10 or #11 beading needles
- 10 lb. test Power Pro or similar thread

Make the Bracelet

1 [FIG. 1, red thread] Cut 24 in. (61cm) of thread, and fold it in the center. Thread a needle on each end. Attach the folded center to one half of the clasp with a lark's head knot. With one needle, pick up an 11^o seed bead, a 6^o seed bead, an 11^o, an AVA bead (the tip), * a beam bead (end hole), an AVA (a leg), an 11^o, a 6^o, and an 11^o, and sew through the other leg of the same AVA. Pick up a beam (end hole) and a new AVA (the tip), and continue from *. With the other needle, pick up two 11^os, ** and sew through the first AVA (one leg), pick up an 11^o, 6^o, and 11^o, and sew through the existing AVA (other leg), beam (other end hole), AVA (tip), and beam (other end hole). Repeat from ** until you reach the desired length.

2 At the end, pick up two 11^os with one needle and an 11^o, 6^o, and 11^o with the other needle, and sew through the other half of the clasp and back through the beads just picked up to match the first end. Sew back through the beadwork, and end the threads.

Make a Necklace

To make this bracelet design curve into a necklace, add 11^os on either side of the tip of the Ava along the bottom edge only [FIG. 2]. Fancy up the look with any large bead or drop that fits into the AVA along the bottom edge. I've used lovely 12x16mm pear-shaped drops from Czech.

Note: To make the necklace as shown, add a row of AVAs along the bottom edge. Simply pick up an AVA (narrow end), then add another row to add the 11^o, 6^o, and 11^o, and attach the two round beads to the AVA above with seed beads.



Rococo

PENDANT

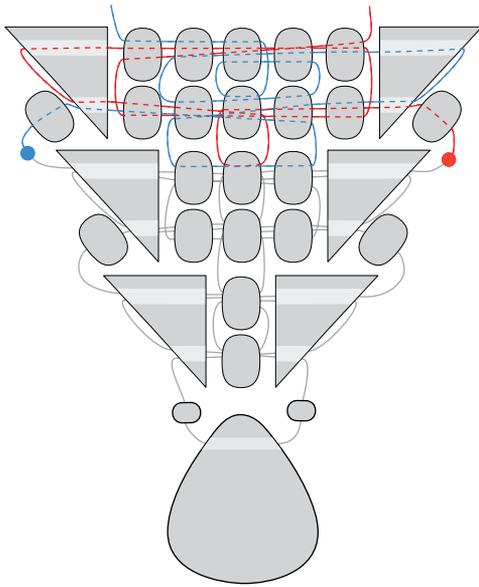


FIG. 3

6 [FIG. 3, red thread] With the first needle, pick up an 8° and a Tango (narrow, angled side). Pick up three 8°s, and attach the last one to the center 8° below. Pick up two more 8°s and a Tango (flat narrow side).

7 [FIG. 3, blue thread] With the second needle, pick up an 8° and sew through the last Tango picked up with the first needle (narrow, angled side). Sew through four of the 8°s, and attach the last three of them to the three 8°s below. Continue through the last 8° and the lower hole of the adjacent Tango.

8 [FIG. 3, red and blue threads] With the first needle, turn and sew through the upper hole of the Tango you are exiting. Pick up five 8°s, and attach them to the five 8°s below. With the second needle, turn and sew through the upper hole of the Tango you are exiting. Attach three of the 8°s to three 8°s below. Center each 8° over the 8° below. Then exit the row of 8°s.

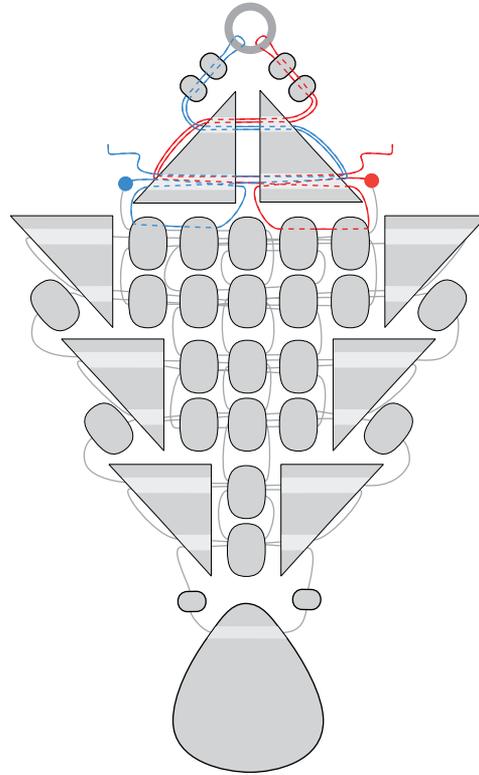


FIG. 4

9 [FIG. 4, red and blue thread] With the first needle, pick up a Tango (wide, angled side) and attach it to the two 8°s below. With the second needle, pick up a Tango (wide, angled side), and attach it to the two 8°s below. With both needles, continue through the opposite Tangos (flat wide holes), crossing the threads. With both needles, turn and sew through the upper holes of both Tangos. Snug up the beadwork. With each needle, pick up two 11°s and the soldered jump ring, and sew back through the 11°s and into the beadwork. End the threads. Attach an earring wire to the jump ring.

10 Make a second earring.



Option

You can also use this design as a small pendant or charm.