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FROM THE AUTHOR

It’s hard to believe that it has been more than 25 years since I started making jewelry. Starting with a few beads from the local bead purveyor (who is shockingly still in business in Miami, Fla) was all I needed to get hooked. Through this time, my passion has morphed from a jewelry line to two bead stores to now a distribution company (The Urban Beader) and writing and teaching nationally. It has been the most enjoyable career, and it has afforded me many memorable experiences.

I am still gleeful every day I get to work this job. When you can work a career that everyone believes is not real, you know you are on the right track. Because it is not possible to have this much fun while working, is it? My neighbor (of only 18 months) has asked me on several occasions upon entering my studio: “You make money doing this?” Her daughter continues to ask me what I do “for work” during the week. It’s sort of irresponsible to tell a 14-year-old that my career is having fun, right?

This career has given me many experiences as I meet people from around the world from whom I learn not only about jewelry, but about life. Every event I have participated in has somehow enriched my life as I learn how to better my skills and myself as a person. I can only hope that I have been able to do just little bit of the same for others as they have done for me.

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REFERENCES

TheUrbanBeader.com
Parawire.com
RioGrande.com

ABOUT ME

I have been creating jewelry for more than 25 years, starting with my desire to look the part while working in retail management for Neiman Marcus. Since then, I have sold my jewelry to more than 30 stores in 10 states, and I have participated in numerous juried art shows. I teach a wide range of popular classes at my stores, at the annual Bead&Button Show, and throughout the US. My husband Andy and I run The Urban Beader (TheUrbanBeader.com), an online metal specialty shop that offers stamps and other tools and supplies for jewelry making.
**WRAPPED LOOPS**

A wrapped loop offers more security than the simple loop. This technique is an extension of my simple loop technique.

Use 24- or 26-gauge wire or headpins. Usually I use the heaviest wire that fits through the bead (unless the hole is ridiculously large). If the final product is going to take a lot of wear (as in a bracelet), use a heavier gauge, such as 20 or 22. For earrings, where the loop will only be used to dangle a few beads, you can use a thin gauge like 24 or 26.

1. Start by sliding a bead onto a headpin. Hold the bead between your index finger and your thumb, with your middle finger stabilizing the headpin from below. Grasp the wire ¼” (6.5mm) above the bead with your pliers, with the bead and wire underneath the pliers. Where you grasp the wire determines the loop size. Grasp the wire with the pliers and begin to roll the wire toward your body (photo a). Roll the pliers until the wire has made more than a half turn to create a “T” with the wires (photos b and c). Do not roll beyond this point, or you may damage your bead.

2. If you have gone too far, pull back on the pliers and reduce the size of the loop. Looking down at the wires, the cross wire should be on the bottom and to the side. Switch to chainnose or flatnose pliers (using your nondominant hand if you need to), and grasp the loop.

3. Holding the loop with chainnose pliers, use either a roundnose or another chainnose pliers to grasp the extended wire (photo d) and pull it down toward the ground. It is a pulling motion, not a turning motion. Pull upward to begin wrapping around the base wire, and then pull down again (photo e).

4. Continue until the stem is completely wrapped. When the wire begins to roll around your pliers, release the wire, turn your hand, and adjust your grasp. The number of wraps you make is up to you.

5. With flush cutters or wire cutters, snip the excess wire close to the bead (photo f). Tuck any excess wire by pinching the wire in with the tip of the chainnose pliers (photo g). To straighten the loop, reinsert roundnose pliers and guide the loop back into shape (photo h).
**MAKE THE LINKS**

1. Measure a piece of 16-gauge wire to 1½-1¾" (3.8–4.4cm), and cut. Use this piece as a template to cut 16 more pieces.

2. Draw a 2mm ball on one end of each cut wire, quench in clean water, and dry. File the cut ends to make them smooth—or use a cup bur, which will make quick work of filing the ends (photo a).

3. With a pair of roundnose pliers, create a small loop at the ball end of each wire (photo b).

4. On a 5/8" (1.6cm) wooden dowel rod, bend the wires in the opposite direction of the loop (photo c). At the cut end, bend a small loop in the same direction as the curved bend (photo d).

**Optional:** Place a link onto a bench block and with a chasing hammer, flatten the curves (photo e). Take care to only use the face of the hammer and not the sides, as this will cause a weak spot on the wire.

**SUPPLIES**

**Bracelet, 7–8" (18–20cm)**
- 24–28" (61cm) 16-gauge wire, copper
- 8–10 19-gauge 5mm jump rings, copper
- 1 18-gauge 8mm jump ring, copper
- Copper paste solder

**TOOLS**
- Basic soldering toolkit
- Roundnose pliers
- Wire cutters, ultra-flush preferred
- 2 pairs of chainnose pliers
- 5/8" (1.6cm) wooden dowel rod
- Chasing hammer
- Bench block
- #2 student files
- Ruler and permanent marker
- Tumbler with stainless steel shot (jewelers’ mix) and Dawn liquid soap
- Rotary tool with cup bur (optional)
- Patina of your choice (optional)

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![Image a](image-a)

![Image b](image-b)

![Image c](image-c)

![Image d](image-d)

![Image e](image-e)

![Image f](image-f)

![Image g](image-g)
1. Use mixed metals for the jump rings or two color metals for each link. Use solder corresponding to the metal you are using.
2. Exaggerate the stagger of the wires to create a different look.
3. Create balls on both ends of the wire.
4. Make only one loop rather than two.