

## How To Make Your Own Jewelry

Looking for a unique gift to give or something special to spice up a favorite outfit? It's quite easy to make your own jewelry which you can wear yourself or give as gifts. Making jewelry is a great way to express yourself and make for unique gifts that don't cost a bundle!

In order to make jewelry, however, you will need to invest in some basic tools and of course, the beads and findings. Once you've made the initial investment, though, the tools can be used over and over for all your jewelry projects. If you are careful and don't go overboard with your bead buying, this doesn't have to be an expensive hobby. On the other hand, you can use expensive components and get a designer necklace for a fraction of the cost.

First off, you need to decide what type of jewelry you want to make. Do you want to use semi precious gems like turquoise, garnet and amethyst? Will you be putting a lot of Bali sterling silver beads in your designs? Maybe you love lampwork beads and want to design your own jewelry using beads? How about crystals and pearls? Perhaps you are attracted to the precise methods of working with seed beads? Or maybe you want to include all the above in the jewelry you make!

In addition to the materials you want to use, you also need to narrow down a method of construction. At first, I recommend that you focus on making one style. This will help keep down the cost of the supplies as well as help you to become an expert in that style of jewelry making. Once you have one method down, you can branch out and try some others.

The easiest way to get started is to make your own memory wire jewelry. Memory wire is flexible wire that holds its shape when released. It comes in bracelet, necklace and ring sizes. It's quite easy to use and you don't have to worry about sizing. You simply cut a length of wire to suit, close off one end by making a circle with pliers, string the beads on and then close the other end. Add a little garnish by hanging a beaded dangle off the end and you are done! The necklaces made with memory wire are nice because they sit tight against the throat and bracelets can be made with multiple wraps for a thick chic look.

Another method for making your own jewelry include stringing the beads on a flexible coated wire (tiger tail or beadalon) and crimping the ends shut with special beads and a crimp tool. This allows for more flexibility in design than a memory wire piece but is a bit harder to make and the crimping does take a bit of practice. With this method, you will most definitely need a beading board to lay out your design on as you want to be sure it is symmetrical.

If you like the look of cascading necklaces and charm bracelets, you can make jewelry using lengths of chain. You can buy the chain in sterling, silver plated or gold filled and cut it to suit. Use headpins to attach the beads and finish off the piece with a clasp.

If you do decide to start making your own jewelry, you might need to rein in your impulse to buy every pretty bead and jewelry making component out there. Make a plan of exactly what you want to make and purchase only those things necessary for that design. If you don't you might end up with a closet overflowing with excess beads like me!

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### About the Author

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