



bead
IN HAND

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How
TO

Make Simple & Wrapped Loops with wire

ABOUT HEADPINS AND EYEPINS

Headpins and eyepins are the basic building blocks for earring design.

Headpins are wires with a flattened bottom that keeps beads on; eyepins are wires with a loop at the bottom, used for attaching a link of some type.

Headpins and eyepins are available in a variety of lengths, metals and gauges (gauge refers to the thickness of the wire—the bigger the number, the thinner the wire).

Use thinner wire, such as 24 gauge, for making wrapped loops. Use 22 or 20 gauge for simple loops.

MATERIALS

- Headpins, eyepins or wire, depending on the project
- Beads.

TOOLS

- Chain nose pliers
- Round nose pliers
- Wire cutters

MAKING SIMPLE LOOPS

1. Arrange the beads in the desired pattern on the headpin. Leave about 1 to 1 ½ inches of headpin for making the loop.



2. Place your round-nose or chain-nose pliers just above the top bead. Bend the wire away from you until it is *almost* at a right angle.



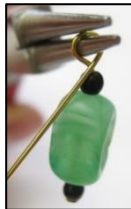
3. With the wire pointing away from you and the round-nose pliers in the bend, use your hands to bring the wire UP and over the pliers. Keep the wire firmly against the pliers to maintain the round shape.



4. Bring the wire all the way over and down the top jaw of the pliers as far as possible. The bottom jaw of the pliers will stop you, but we'll take care of that in the next step.



5. Loosen the pliers and move them so the top jaw can open and the bottom jaw is no longer in the way. Pull the wire a little further so the ends cross where they meet at the top of the bead.



6. Remove the pliers and use wire cutters to cut excess wire.



7. Use chain nose pliers to straighten and center the loop, and attach to an earwire.

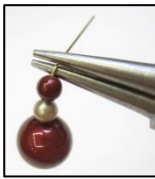


Making Wrapped Loops

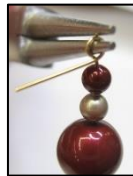
1. Follow the steps for making a simple loop, but do not cut the wire.



Bend wire above top bead.



Bring wire over pliers to create loop.



Loosen pliers and readjust so top jaw can open.

2. Keeping the wire pressed firmly against the jaws of the pliers to maintain its round shape, bring the wire as far as possible around the stem of the headpin above the bead.

Re-adjust your piece on the pliers as necessary so your arm doesn't get tangled trying to wrap the tail around the stem. Simply remove your piece from the pliers and replace it facing in the other direction.



3. Keeping the tail of the headpin at a right angle to the top bead, continue wrapping around the exposed wire above the bead, moving down from the loop toward the beads until all of the exposed wire is wrapped.



4. Use wire cutters to snip excess wire close to the wrap. Tighten the cut edge, if necessary, close to the wrap with chain nose pliers, and attach an earwire.



Remember, the size of the loop is determined by where the wire is placed **on** the pliers. Very close to the tip of the pliers creates a small loop. Closer to the handles creates a larger loop.

Be conservative with your wires, but not stingy. If you're making wrapped loops, you need to leave enough wire at the end of your headpin to hold onto and wrap around the stem. Having too little wire will simply frustrate you. But if you're making simple loops, you just need enough wire at the end for that loop.

