

THE BEAD HOLD

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Queen Bead's FREEFORM WIRE PENDANTS



Materials required

- 60cm of 18g wire
- 1m of 24g wire
- 1 main feature bead - fairly large
- Small beads/chips/seed beads as desired.
- A bead mat to work on
- Wire Cutters, flush if possible
- Round nose pliers
- Chain nose pliers
- Nylon jaw pliers are handy for holding and gripping - they will not mark the wire or chip off the colour.

NOTE: Whenever we talk about cutting in this tutorial, it is assumed you will make a flush cut - ie a straight cut with no point in the wire. If you do not have flush cutters that is ok, but expect to see a little point of wire at the end of each piece of wire. If you are looking to get a set of flush cutters it is well worth investing in a pair of Linstroms.

TIP: When wrapping, swing the wire firmly around and around with a lean to the left - this will help the wraps form close and tight. If your wraps are too separated, gently squeeze them together with chain nose pliers (preferably nylon jaw ones) and continue wrapping with a harder left hand lean.

1. Take your 18g wire and cut about 15cm off. Cut the remaining piece in half. Take your round nose pliers and make a medium open loop at the end of the short wire.

Overturn the loop a little.

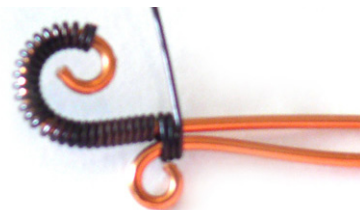
Take one longer piece of wire and make a slightly smaller loop (overturned) at one end of that.

2. Cut the 24g wire in half. You will now wrap it 6-8 cm along the shorter piece of 18g wire. Hold the tail of the 24g wire firmly under your left thumb, and wrap firmly, tightly and closely using your right hand. You can wrap anywhere on the base wire, so long as you are working away from the spiral. Then, push the wraps hard down toward the spiral so that they cover approx half of it. Trim the tail.

3. Take the second piece of 18g wire and hold it parallel to the short piece with the top of the spiral resting against the end of the wrapping.



Make 3 tight wraps over both pieces of 18g wire.



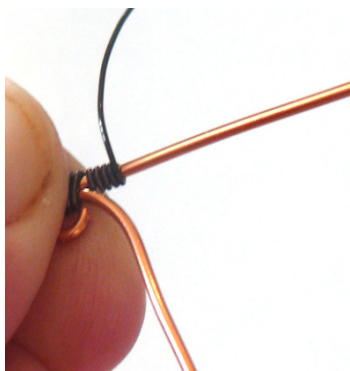
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4. Separate the base wires and make 5 tight wraps on the short wire. You may need to push them firmly down toward the long wrap so they sit close.

Pull the wires parallel again and make 3 long tight wraps over both base wires.



Continue in this fashion until you have approx 6 sets of long wraps.

Make a final set of 5x single wraps on the long base wire and stop.

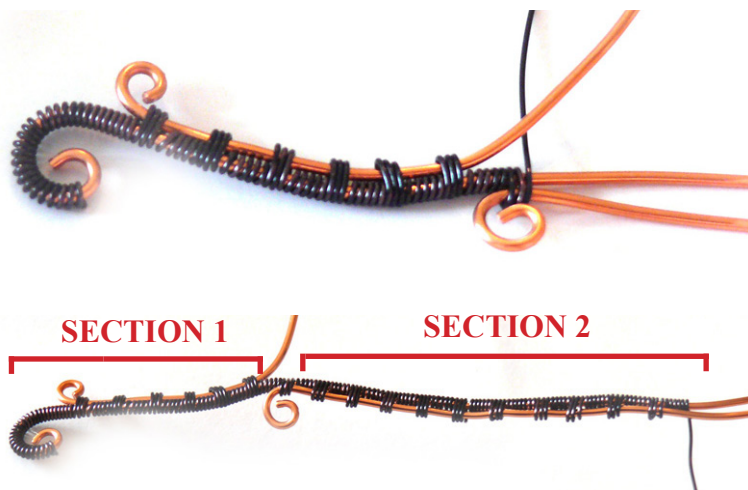


5. Take the third piece of 18g wire and make a medium - large overturned loop at the end. Hold it parallel to the longer of the base pieces with the top of the spiral resting against the end of the wrapping.

Bend the short piece of base wire gently out of the way.

Make 3 x long wraps over both pieces of 18g wire - the new piece and the longer base piece.

Continue with short and long wraps until you have approx 10 sets of long wraps.



6. Now we will form the bail. Take your round nose pliers and grip section 1 of the wrapping at the half way point (midway along your pliers). Gently bend forward so the end loops are sitting over the short piece of wire.

You will be able to adjust the bail further throughout/at the end of the project.



Front View



Side View



7. Take your feature bead and slide it up the short wire hard against the bail. Take section 2 of the wrapping and curve it around the bead.

This example has the wrapped section following the form of the bead closely, but it could curve out and back so that there is a gap between the wire and bead.

This step may take several goes - not to worry, the wire is flexible! Play around a little as you may come up with something you had not anticipated but which looks better than what you had originally planned.

You may need to add some extra wraps to get your length right - you will have enough wire ends to do so. *NOTE: You could also add more wire, either for length or embellishment - follow step 5.*

Once happy, wind the 24g wire more if desired then cut it close at the end of a wrap. Cut the 18g wire 1 - 3 cm from the end of the wrapping. Curl each in an open loop - one big and one small/er. These loops can be pressed on to the bead, or 'float' out to the side.



Take the 24g wire and wrap around the last of the short length (enough to reach up to the bail when curved).

8. Push the wrapping hard to the base of the bead (making sure that the bead is also hard against the bail) and bring the wire up toward the bail in a big curve. Tuck the end through one of the pieces of base wire at the base of the bail and firmly pull through, shaping the wrapped section around the bead as you go.

Wrap around the base a second time, pulling tight. Make sure the bead is firm and not moving up and down.

Trim the wire and finish off with a final open loop.

OR

use some left over 24g wire to do some more wrapping before you loop

OR

add in another section of 18g wire as per step 5.

Finally, make any final adjustments needed to the bail to make sure it is sitting straight above the top of the bead.



Variations . . .



Adding beads to the plain wrapped lengths works well. Size 11 seed beads and small (2 -3 mm) chips/pearls/beads are best. Simply slide a bead down the 24g wire, wrap 3 - 5 times as normal, then slide down another bead and wrap.

This sample also has a dangle made using basic chainlinking skills.

In this sample, the wire from section two was curved left at step 7, and an additional small pieces of 18 gauge wire added at both step 7 and 8, just to get the extra curls.



In this sample, instead of the basic short long wrap, basket weave was used at Step 5. The wires can be any distance apart, and after the initial wrap to join the wires, the 24g wire is woven in and out in a tight figure 8 pattern - this is basket weave.

For this sample, the short wire was wrapped directly around the base of the second section - Step 8 was missed out.

This sample is hanging from our gorgeous Italian mesh.

I hope you enjoyed exploring some wire working and creating a beautiful and unique pendant. For more projects, kits and inspiration, please do visit our website - www.thebeadhold.co.nz

Until next time

Queen Bead

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