WIRE WORK

Making loops or eyes

Figure 1: Cut the wire, leaving a 3/8-in. (1cm) tail above the bead. Bend it against the bead at a right angle with the tip of a chainnose pliers.

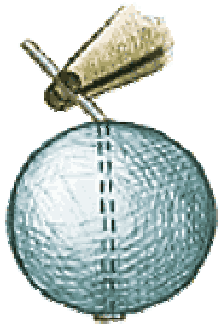


Figure 2: Grip the very tip of the wire in roundnose pliers. If you can feel it, the loop will be teardrop shaped.

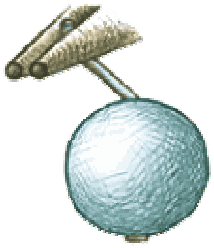


Figure 3: Without pulling, rotate the wire into a loop as far as your wrist will turn. Let go, regrasp the loop at the same place on the pliers, and keep turning to close the loop. The closer to the pliers tip you work, the smaller the loop.

Wrapped loops

Wrapped loops require practice but they're worth mastering. Not only do they increase security for your beads, they also add an elegant designer touch. You can make one wrap or as many as you wish to produce the effect you desire.

Expect to make at least 15 bad wrapped loops before you start making consistently good ones. Use inexpensive copper wire or head pins to practice.

Figure 1: Leaving a 3/4 to 1 in. (1.9 to 2.5cm) tail, place the tip of a chainnose pliers where the bead will be. Bend the tail to form a right angle.

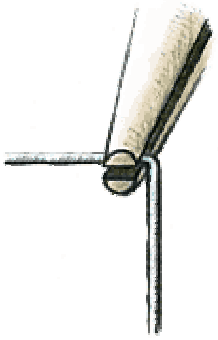


Figure 2: With roundnose pliers, grasp the tail just past the bend and pull it over the jaw to point the other way.

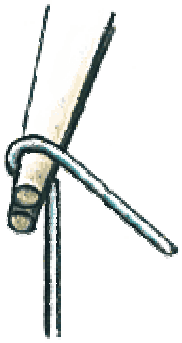


Figure 3: Rotate the pliers so the empty jaw is above the partial loop and continue pulling the tail around the bottom jaw until it's perpendicular to the bead or the wire.

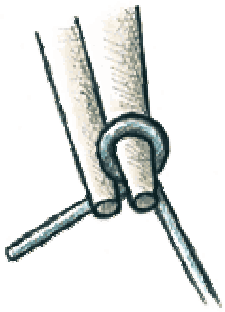


Figure 4: Pull a split ring, chain, etc., from the tail into the loop.

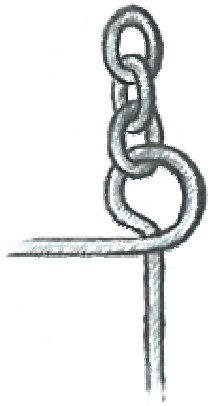


Figure 5: To keep the loop round, grasp it with roundnose pliers in your non-dominant hand just above the cross. Don't dent the wire.

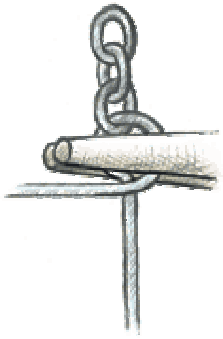
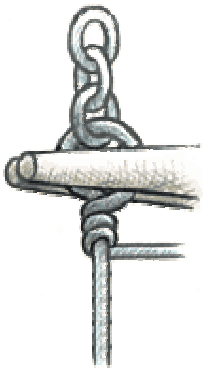
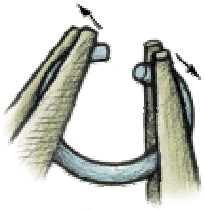


Figure 6: Grasp the tail with chainnose pliers and pull it around the wire until it meets the bead. Make the first wrap against the pliers and keep wraps close. Clip.



Opening and closing loops

To open a loop or ring, use one or two pairs of pliers to grasp the wire at the opening. Pull one pliers toward you and push the other away to bring the ends of the wire apart and out of the plane of the loop. Never spread the loop side to side, which will fatigue the metal. Close the loop by pulling the ends back into the plane.



Making head pins

Make a head on a piece of wire in one of two ways.
Figure left: Strike the end of the wire sharply with a hammer to flatten it. Trim and file the edges smooth.
Figure right: Make a tiny U-shaped loop at the end of the wire with the tip of a roundnose pliers, pinch it closed with chainnose pliers, and trim the wire end just past the bend.

Wraps and Loops

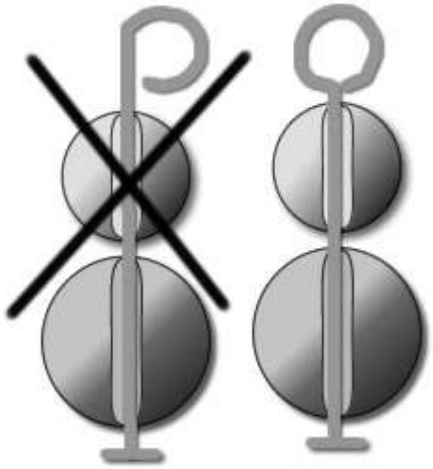
Being able to make simple loops and wrapped loops with wire or headpins will take you a long way. You can easily make lovely dangling earrings with a simple headpin and a few beads.

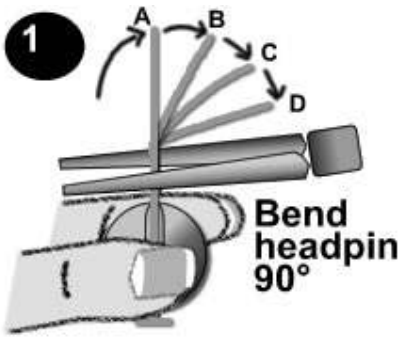
For a more complex and exotic look, try multiple dangles of different lengths on the same earring. Try not to make them too heavy though!

You can also make dangles for necklaces, bracelets, connectors, and a host of other things using this simple technique.

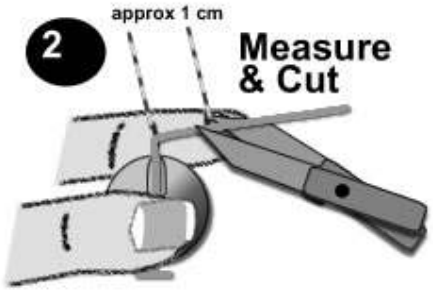
Creating a Simple Loop

Thread a few beads on a headpin and create a simple loop with a few twists of your wrist. You want the finished loop to be centred over the wire. This is much stronger than a “P”-shaped loop, which can pull out very easily.

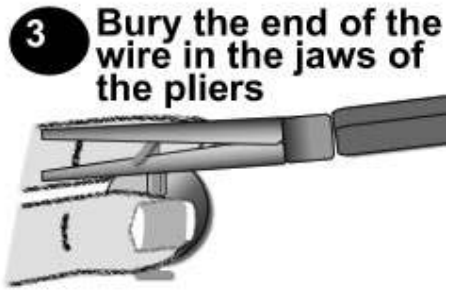




Use roundnose pliers and bend the wire to a 90° angle, making the bend close to the end bead



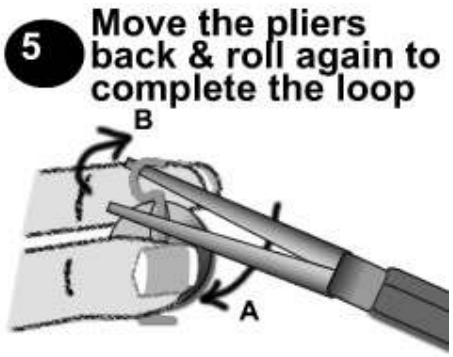
Cut off the wire, at about 1 cm from the end bead. With practice, you won't have to measure, but you can make it easy at first by marking 1 cm on your index finger.



Grab the end of the wire, with the end between the jaws of the pliers and not protruding (sometimes you slip off, that's ok, just try again.)

Hint! for consistent-sized loops, make a mark on your pliers with a felt pen and do all your loops at the same place on the pliers.

Roll your wrist away, making a nice smooth loop. Don't force your wrist all the way over, just make a partial loop.



Take the pliers out of the half-formed loop, reposition them again back at the start of the loop, and roll again to finish the loop. If the loop is leaning to one side, straighten it up with the pliers.

With practice, this will become effortless!

Always open loops & jump rings from the side

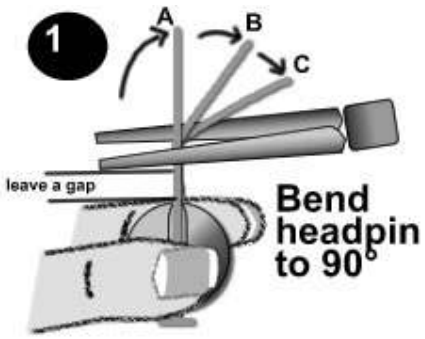
Always open a finished loop by twisting it to the side. Pulling the loop open will bend the wire in such a way as to break it or permanently deform it so that you can't get it closed nicely again.

Don’t let the wire fly
When you cut the wire, the end will fly —
try to catch it or aim it at something soft
so that you don’t have a lot of sharp ends of wire lying around
where they could hurt someone.

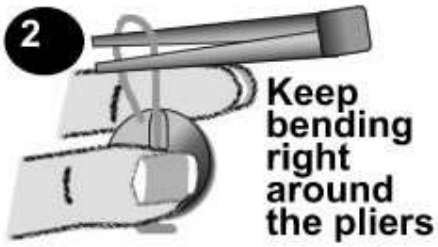
Creating a Wrapped Loop

Alternately, you can create a wrapped loop. Beginners often find this easier and more secure when they are learning. However — if you are struggling with this technique, try using a softer wire.

Use roundnose pliers. Make a 90° bend in the wire. Leave a small space between the bend and the bead. Don’t cut the wire.

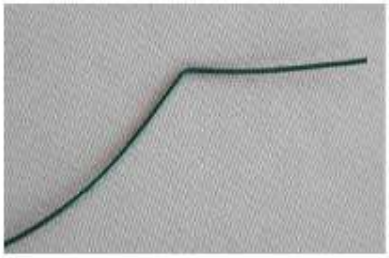


Wrap the wire right around the nose of the pliers. Keep going back down to the wire.



Wrap the tail of the wire around the main stem of wire coming from the bead. Keep wrapping until you run out of room, or wire. A full wrap to the end bead does look better. Cut the wire off close and smooth in the end with chainnose pliers. Straighten up the loop if desired.

Wrapped Loops



Grasp wire with bent chain nose pliers approximately 1" from one end. Bend the wire over the pliers jaw to make a sharp angle.

Using round nose pliers, grasp the wire at the bend, and wrap the short wire tail around the pliers jaw to form approximately 3/4 of the first loop.

Readjust the pliers slightly inside the loop to expose the unwrapped area, and complete the wrap of the loop.

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Wrapped Loops

Continue to hold the loop within the pliers jaws, and wrap the wire tail around the neck of the loop several times.

Place the flat side of the flush cutters against the wire wraps, and clip the wire tail.

Tuck the wire tail by squeezing gently with the bent chain nose pliers, while twisting in the direction of the wrap.

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Twist 'n' Curl Earrings

Twist 'n' Curl Deluxe (largest dowel), 22G and 24G wire, small accent beads.

Using 24G wire (we used brass), form a 1-1/2" length of coils on the Largest dowel of the Twist 'n' Curl Deluxe (see WigJig University-College of Wire Designing Techniques for details). With fingers, stretch coils to 3" in length.

Thread small beads onto 22G wire (we used dark blue). Thread coils over beads. Form a hand-made spiral at both ends, using 2" of wire for each spiral. With fingers, gently bend coils and core wire into place as shown.

Make an ear wire (see free patterns in WigJig University), and attach to outermost spiral.

Make a second "mirror image" earring to complete the pair.

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Twist 'n' Curl Earrings

Twist 'n' Curl Deluxe (smallest dowel), Spiral Maker, 22G and 24G wire.

Using 24G wire (we used brass), form a 2-1/2" length of coils using the smallest dowel of the Twist 'n' Curl Deluxe (see WigJig University-College of Wire Designing Techniques for details).

Thread 22G wire (we used dark blue) through center of coils, and form a loop at both ends to hold coils in place. Using fingers, bend into oval shape, with ending loops overlapping.

Make a spiral with 22G wire (dark blue) using the Spiral Maker. Form an eye loop using the end of the wire, leaving a "neck" so that the spiral hangs in the center of coils. Attach to bottom of two overlapping loops.

Make an ear wire (see free patterns in WigJig University), and attach loop to top of overlapping coils to complete.

Make a second earring with a "mirror image" spiral to complete the pair.

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Twist 'n' Curl Earrings

Twist 'n' Curl Deluxe (medium and large dowel), 22G and 24G wire, small accent beads.

Using 24G wire (we used brass), form a 1-1/2" length of coils on the Largest dowel of the Twist 'n' Curl Deluxe (see Wigjig University-College of Wire Designing Techniques for details). With fingers, stretch coils to 3" in length.

Thread 22G wire (we used dark blue) through the center of the coils, pull core wire tight and twist tails once around each other. Form basic loops in both wire tails. Secure loops with a single jump ring made on the medium dowel of the Twist 'n' curl.

Make an ear wire (see free patterns in Wigjig University), and attach to jump ring.

Make a second earring to complete the pair.

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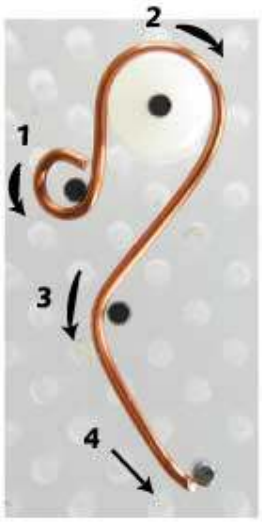
Basic Ear Wire

Use FLUSH CUTTERS to cut end of wire evenly and consistently with a perfectly flush cut.

Use ROUND NOSE PLIERS to make round starting loops.



Use TRANSPARENT WIGJIGS, METAL PEGS, AND SUPER PEGS to form wire designs.

Use BENT CLOSING PLIERS (shown), BENT CHAIN NOSE PLIERS and FLAT CHAIN NOSE PLIERS to manipulate and fine-tune designs.

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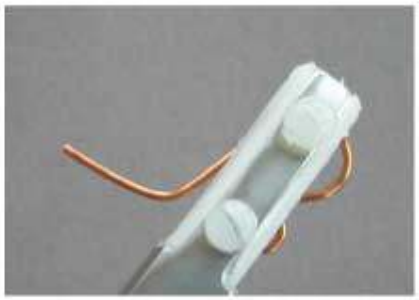
Basic Ear Wire



Use NYLON JAW PLIERS and/or THE WACKETDOWN to flatten/harden designs.

Use CUP BURS to round and smooth ends.

Use BENT CHAIN NOSE PLIERS to access tight areas to manipulate and fine-tune designs.

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Favorite Wigjig Ear Wires

Wigjig Delphi, 1/4" Super Peg (small round set), 22G or 20G 14K gold-filled wire (half-hard)

These ear wires are simple to make, and look so elegant. They are clearly our favorites.

We make them using 22G half-hard wire (another personal favorite). However, 20G half-hard works well too. Flattening and hardening time is reduced notably because of the "half-hardness" of the wire. Smoothing the ends with a cup bur quickly finishes them off.

Details for making ear wires can be found in Wigjig University, College of Wire Designing Techniques.

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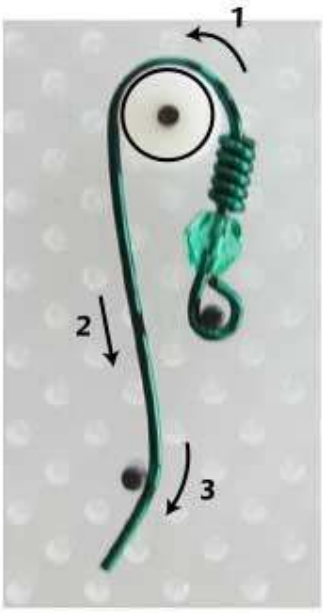
Beaded Ear Wire with Coil

Designed by
Lilli Brennan



WigJig Delphi, 1/4" Super Peg, 20G or 22G wire, 3mm beads.

Make a short wire coil (approximately 5 coils) on the smallest dowel of the mini-Twist 'n' Curl set. Form a starting loop using round nose pliers (see details in WigJig University - College of Wire Designing Techniques). Thread bead, then the coil onto the ear wire. Place loop on jig and follow arrows to form design. Remove from jig, flatten/harden with nylon jaw pliers and/or the Wacketdown. Smooth end with cup bur or metal file.

Using bent nose pliers, place a slight bend in wire above the coil. Gently slide coil over bend to secure in place.

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Round Ear Wires in 7 sizes

Wigjig Olympus, Super Pegs, Nylon Spacers, Spiral Maker, 22G or 20G wire

5/16" Super Peg

3/8" Super Peg

7/16" Super Peg

1/2" Super Peg

1/2" Super Peg plus nylon spacer

For all earrings, make a starting loop, place on jig, and wrap around super peg, nylon spacer or Spiral Maker.

Clip wire tail at peg. Remove from jig, flatten/harden using Wacketdown and/or nylon jaw pliers. File end smooth with cup bur or metal file.

Spiral Maker

Metal peg, small and large nylon spacer

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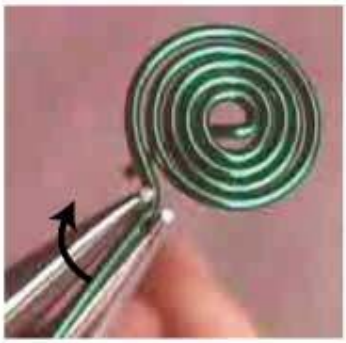
Spiral Earring Posts

Following the directions in Wigjig University, make a spiral on the Spiral Maker. Remove from jig, and clip wire, leaving a 3/4" tail.

Slightly bend the wire tail, near the base of the spiral. Then, using round nose pliers, grasp the bend, and wrap the wire tail around the nose of the pliers to form a loop.



Add a dangle to loop, if desired. Then, using bent chain nose pliers, close the loop to finish.

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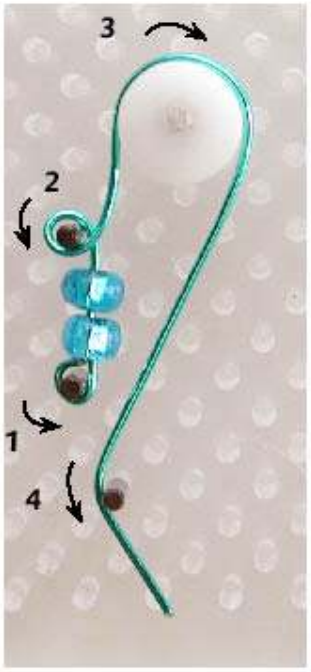
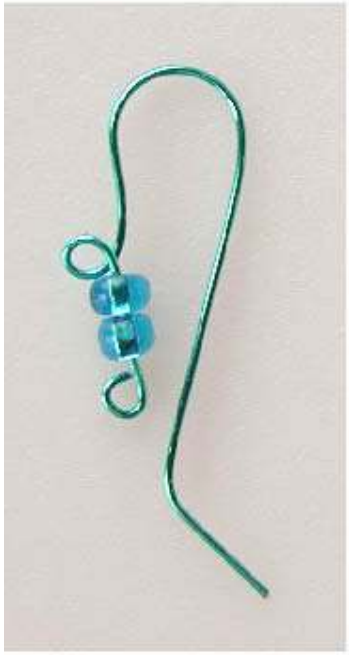
Beaded Ear Wires

by Lilli Brennan

Wigjig Delphi, small round Super Pegs, 20G or 22G wire, accent beads.





Using 20G or 22G wire, form a starting loop, place on starting peg, and thread seed beads onto wire. Wrap around second peg, and follow the arrows to complete the design. Remove from jig, and clip wire tail. Harden/flatten using nylon jaw pliers, being careful near beads.

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Kidney Ear Wires

Wigjig Delphi, small round super pegs, 20G half-hard wire, 3mm or 4mm beads, tube crimp bead.

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Kidney Ear Wires

Make a wrapped eye loop at one end of the wire, leaving a 3/4" tail. Slide a bead onto the longer tail, and crimp with a tubular crimp bead into place.

1/2" Super Peg

Place eye loop onto starting peg and wrap around the Super Peg, forming the curve in the ear wire.

Grasp short tail with round and flat combination pliers, and bend around round jaw to form the hook. Clip the end of the hook with flush cutters.

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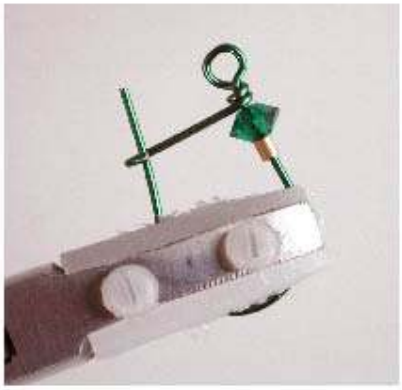
Kidney Ear Wires

Clip the long wire tail. File hook and long tail with a cup bur to smooth.



Flatten hook gently using nylon jaw pliers. Harden the "curve" of each ear wire by lightly tapping with hammer on an anvil or jewelers block to finish.

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The Wrapped Link Bracelet is a simple jewelry project made with a link called the wrapped link. This link is shown below roughly twice normal size.

Wrapped Link

Violet Cubes Bracelet

Tahitian Pearls Bracelet

Jewelry Supplies:

- **22 inches of 20G half-hard gold-filled wire**
- **20 inches of 22G half-hard gold-filled wire**
- **Six 6mm beads**
- **1 gold-filled magnetic clasp**
- **3 inches of fine gold filled chain**

Tools Required:

- **Round Nose Pliers**
- **Flush Cutter**
- **Chain Nose or Bent Chain Nose Pliers (2)**
- **Nylon Jaw Pliers**
- **Any WigJig with 2 metal pegs**
- **30 minutes of free time**

To make this bracelet you will need to make 6 wrapped bead links each 1/2 inch long.

Wrapped Link

Step 1: Cut and straighten a piece of 20G wire 3.5 inches long.

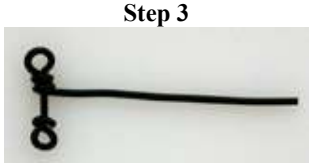
Step 2: Make a wrapped loop in one end of this wire. Wrap only one time around the wire as shown at left. The technique for making this loop is shown here.

Step 2

Step 3: Position two pegs on a WigJig 1/2 inch apart. (For the Delphi, as shown at right, these pegs should be positioned on a diagonal with two empty pegs between them.) Now using your chain nose pliers, grasp the wire just below the second peg and bend the wire 80 degrees. See the picture at right for how the wire should look.

Step 3

Step 4: Now remove the wire from the jig and make a wrapped loop using your round nose pliers where you just made this bend. Continue to wrap the wire tail. The picture at left shows this wrap partially completed. Continue to wrap until the wire segment in the middle is completely covered.



Step 4

Step 5: Cut the wire tail and squeeze it flat using your chain nose pliers. The finished link should appear as shown at right.

Wrapped Bead Link

Step 6: Make six wrapped links.

Step 7: Connect all six wrapped links with wrapped bead links using 6mm beads. Our most detailed instructions for making the wrapped bead link are found in our online book -- "Wire Design Basics". You can find this book here.

Violet Wrapped Link Bracelet

Step 8: Connect both ends of this bracelet to a clasp. A magnetic clasp was used for the bracelets shown above and left. Before wrapping these links closed, add 2.5 to 3 inches of fine chain to each end. This fine chain becomes a guard chain for the bracelet.

Step 9: Wrap both ends closed and admire your finished jewelry making project.

Tahitian Pearl Wrapped Link Bracelet

Bali Style Silver Wrapped Link Bracelet