

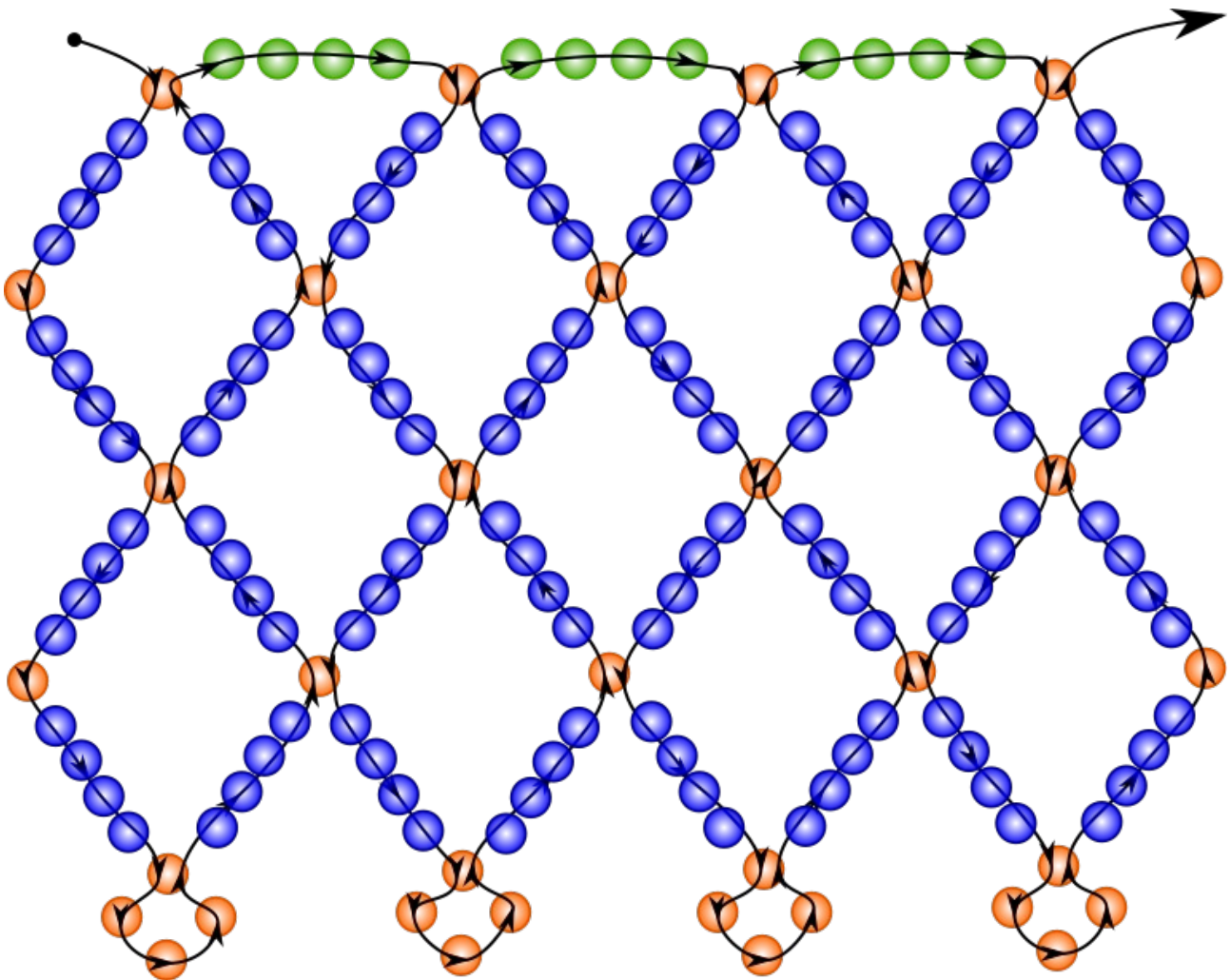
Seed bead netted necklace
by
Paula Caddick



Creative clutter is better than idle neatness.

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Thread path



The different colours shown above are just to make the diagram clearer, and so I can refer to them later and you'll know exactly which beads I'm talking about. You can of course make the whole thing in the same colour beads, or any colour you like. The orange beads can be larger than the others but should not be smaller.

Thread

Thread is a personal choice. There are lots of brands. My current favourite is 10lb woven fishing line (no, not the brand you're thinking of) and I also like loom thread, but you can use pretty much anything. If you're buying fishing line, stick to 0.14mm or thinner or you'll have a lot of trouble threading the needle plus if you're using size 11 seeds you won't be able to fit through the beads enough times, and don't go below 7lb strength.

Work with a single thread, not doubled. It's much easier to get the tension right and you'll get a lot fewer tangles.

Needle

Use the smallest beading needle you can thread, and don't worry if it bends as it definitely will. If it gets too bad you can straighten it up gently with pliers, but very often the curve will actually help anyway and make it easier to access out-of-the-way beads.

Beeswax

I like beeswax if I'm using thread but never use it with fishing line, though it can be handy to wax the very end of fishing line to make it easier to get through the needle. Beeswax looks like a bar of yellow soap and you run the thread lightly over the bar to pick up a thin layer of wax. Make sure you've got proper beeswax and not the paraffin wax sold in plastic circular cases (which is sometimes labelled beeswax even when it's not). Buy it online from a honey supplier, it'll be about £2 plus postage and lasts for absolutely ages because you use barely any.

Weaving in the thread ends

In general I don't like knots. They're too easy to come undone and they also take up valuable space inside the beads. I like to weave through the work as much as possible, and make sure some sections are going round in rough circles so it doesn't pull pack through if the finished piece gets snagged. Then when I am pulling the thread through the very last bead and it is almost all of the way through, I usually put a tiny blob of glue or clear nail varnish onto the last few millimetres of thread so that it disappears into the bead once I pull it through. Apply glue with a cocktail stick, a cotton bud or a matchstick. But if you prefer to knot your thread, go right ahead - it's your work.

Beads

When using small beads such as seeds, you don't actually pick them up with your fingers. Leave them lying on your work surface and use just the needle to pick them up, pushing the point of the needle down into the hole without touching them yourself.

Step-by-step instructions

I made this pattern using size 11 seed beads. It will work just as well with any size. I've used two colours to make the instructions clearer.

I like to use slightly larger beads for the shared beads (shown in orange on the thread path diagram above) if possible as it makes them easier to find when stitching so saves you a lot of counting, and also helps prevent them getting clogged up with thread when you're reinforcing. If you do this, use the smaller beads for the four beads on the very top row (shown in green on the diagram). You can match these in colour to the shared (orange) beads if you like. The orange beads should always be either the same size or larger than the other beads, never smaller.

In the instructions I will refer to the blue beads from the diagram as the main colour and the orange beads as the contrast colour. The green beads could be either main or contrast depending on the beads you have chosen, and I will mention this in the text where needed.

Begin by threading your needle with as much thread as you can comfortably manage. Don't cut the thread, leave the reel attached. When you eventually run out of thread you can just unwind more from the reel and carry on working from the opposite end of the necklace.

Work with single thread, not doubled. It's much easier to get the tension right and you get a lot fewer tangles.



1

Add a seed bead in the contrast colour and four seeds in the main colour.

Repeat this three more time to give a total of 20 beads on your thread.



2

Add four seed beads in the contrast colour and pass the needle back up in the opposite direction through the first bead you just added.



3

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to make a picot.



4

Add four main colour beads, one contrast bead, and four main colour beads.



5

Miss a contrast bead and pass the needle up through the next contrast bead.

If you are using all one colour bead, miss nine beads here and pass the needle up through the tenth bead.



6

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to form a diamond shape.



7

Add four main colour beads, one contrast bead and four main colour beads.



8

Miss a contrast bead and pass the needle up through the next contrast bead (the very first seed you added in the first step).

If you are using all one colour bead, miss nine beads here and pass the needle up through the tenth bead.



9

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to form a diamond shape.



10

Add five contrast beads and four main colour beads.

The first four contrast beads will form the very top row of the necklace, and you can do them in the main colour instead if you prefer. They are shown in green on the thread path diagram.



11

Pass the needle down through the contrast bead on the right hand side of the upper diamond shape.

If using one colour, this is the fifth bead down (the centre bead).



12

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to form a triangle.



13

Add four main colour beads, a contrast bead, and a main colour bead.



14

Pass the needle down through the contrast bead (the centre seed bead) on the lower diamond shape.



15

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to form another diamond shape in between the first two vertical diamonds.



16

Add four main colour beads and four contrast beads.



17

Pass the needle back up in the opposite direction through the first of the four contrast beads you just added.

If using one colour, this is the fourth bead away from your needle.



18

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to make a picot.



19

Add four main colour beads, a contrast bead, and four main colour beads.



20

Pass the needle up through the contrast bead (the centre bead) on the centre diamond shape.



21

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to form another diamond shape.



22

Add four main colour beads, a contrast bead, and four main colour beads.



23

Pass the needle up through the fifth bead on the very top row (contrast colour).



24

Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up together to form a diamond.

25

Now repeat steps 10 to 24 until either it's the length you want or (more likely) you are running out of thread. Once you're down to about the last foot or so of thread, stop when you have reached the top row (after step 24) then make a small loop of seed beads (instructions shown below) which you can later attach the clasp to, using a jump ring, or you can stitch directly through the clasp here.

I don't really recommend stitching directly through the clasp in case the clasp breaks or tarnishes, or you just want to change it for a different style at some point, but you might be using an acrylic or glass clasp (yes they both exist!) so that you can avoid metal allergies, in which case you might want to add the clasp directly and not use metal jump rings.

You could also use a circle of seed beads to join the clasp to the bead loop, or make a beaded clasp, which I'll cover in another tutorial.

To make the loop:



26

Add enough seed beads to make a loop. I've used 14 here but you may need slightly more or less. Don't make the loop too small or the beads will not lie nicely side by side.



27

Pass the needle up through the four main colour beads on the top right edge of the diamond shape,



28

Pull the thread tight to form a loop.

29

Reinforce the loop by sewing through the seeds and bugle as many times as you can, keeping the thread tight so the loop goes quite stiff. I usually work through only the four end seeds and the new seeds I've just added for the loop and not the final contrast seed from the beadwork, because it's already got a couple of passes through it and will mean you can fit fewer reinforcement passes through the loop. Don't force the needle through or you might break a bead.

Weave back through some of the main beadwork to finish off. If you want to, before the last bit of thread goes through the last beads, put a tiny amount of glue or clear nail varnish on the thread so it goes inside the bead.

Cut the thread end.

Don't add your clasp just yet, wait until you've finished the whole thing, otherwise all you are doing is giving yourself a nice little hook to repeatedly get your thread tangled around while you're working. If you're planning to stitch a clasp directly to the work you might want to stop before making the loop, leave the thread end sitting there and come back to it once you've finished the rest of the necklace.

30

Now you can go back to your reel of thread (which you left attached to the work when you started) and unwind some more thread to work with. Again pull off whatever length you're comfortable working with, cut it, thread the needle and carry on weaving the necklace from the opposite end. Just turn your work around so you are working in the same direction as before.

However, first of all, have a guess at how much thread you're likely to need. If you used a long length to start with and you're more than half way through the necklace, you won't need quite that much this time. It's better having too much than not enough, though, to avoid joins, as long as it's a length you can work with without repeatedly getting tangled.

If you do need to add extra thread as you work, leave the ends long enough to weave them in later after you've finished. It's tempting to keep them short to save thread but that just makes them harder to work with and you're probably only saving a penny or so anyway.

31

Once the necklace is the length you want, make another seed bead loop to attach the other half of your clasp (if using a toggle) or a short piece of chain (if using a lobster clasp).

32 (optional)

Now you can either leave the necklace like this or you can smooth out the top edge. Go through the four seed beads on the top row, and depending on the size of the gap add either one or two seeds in the same colour as the four you have just passed through, and go through the next four seeds. Repeat this along the length. This may shorten the length of the necklace, which may or may not be a good thing. You can always undo this and repeat if necessary, perhaps using two seeds then one seed alternately in the gaps so that you're happy with the size. (If all else fails, use a different sized clasp!) If you look closely at the cover picture in this pattern you can see I've done this in the centre and bottom two images and not in the top two images.

And now for the worst part. Go back and sew through the entire thing all over again to reinforce it. Don't pull your thread too tight so your necklace doesn't end up stiff. Be careful here as it's really easy to get the thread snagged around a bead somewhere and not notice until it's too late. Depending on your choice of thread you may like to do this more than once just to be safe, but be careful you don't crack any beads trying to get too many passes through them.

34 Adding the clasp



It doesn't matter which loop you use for which because the necklace is reversible.



Use a jump ring to attach a lobster clasp to one loop.



Use another jump ring to attach a short length of chain to the other loop.

You could use a toggle clasp or magnetic clasp if you prefer.

Your necklace is now finished.



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