

Steel Gate Bracelet Pattern
by
Paula Caddick



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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.

If you 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. You can always save any decent sized pieces for doing earrings with.

If your thread starts to fray at any point, don't carry on. Fasten it off and start again with a new thread. Throw the old piece away even if most of it seems undamaged.

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. Don't use an ordinary sewing needle even though they are stronger; the eye is wider than the rest of the needle and it will prevent it going through your 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 back 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

The colours used here in the diagrams are just for clarity and are not intended to represent the bead colours used.

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.



bugle bead (any length)



size 8 seed bead (3mm)



size 11 seed bead (2mm)

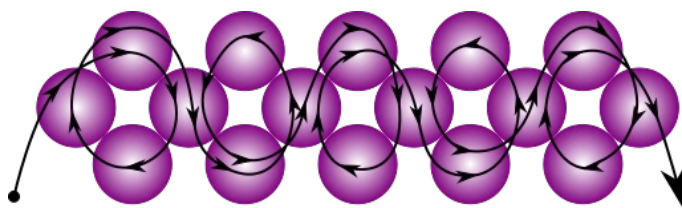
You will only need a small amount of each type of bead. The entire bracelet without the clasp weighs just 9 grammes in total.

You will also need a toggle clasp or a lobster clasp and extension chain, two jump rings and two pairs of pliers to attach them.

I have used 7mm bugle beads for the bracelets in the photos. The pattern will work with any length of beads. Work with a fairly loose tension so the bracelet will drape nicely and not be stiff.

Right Angle Weave

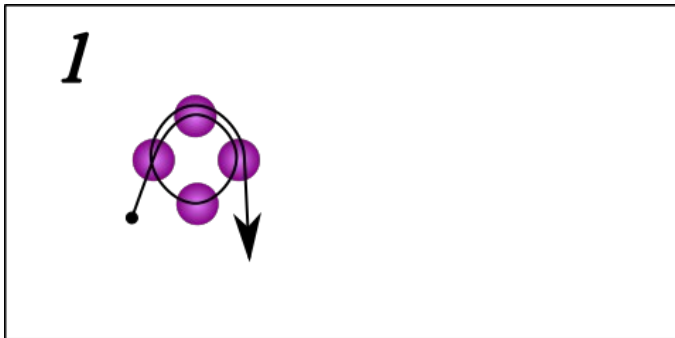
This stitch is called right angle weave because each time you pass through a bead, you are forming a right angle with the previous bead. You will never pass through two beads in the same direction. (A right angle is like an L shape and can also be upside down or a mirror image.) You will often see the stitch abbreviated as RAW.



Pattern

Begin by threading your needle with about two metres of thread. Don't cut the thread, leave the reel attached. When (or if) you eventually run out of thread you can just unwind more from the reel and carry on working from the opposite end.

Work with single thread, not doubled. It's much easier to get the tension right and you get a lot fewer tangles. You will probably need around 3.5 metres of thread in total for this pattern.



(1) The first row is made from ordinary right angle weave using size 8 seed beads and working from left to right.

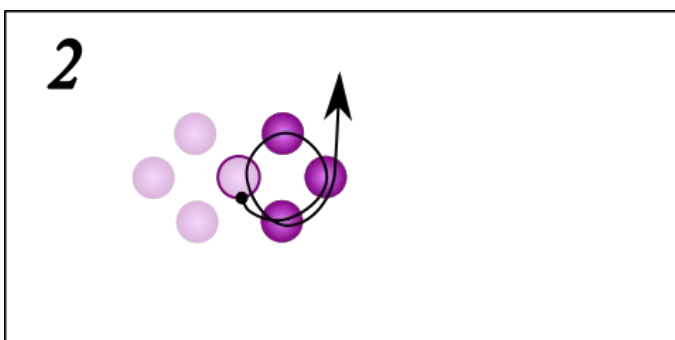
(2) Pick up four size 8 seed beads and push them down to the far end of your working thread.

(3) Leave a bit of space between the beads and the thread reel so the reel isn't getting in your way.

(4) Go through all four beads again so that the beads snug up to make a circle.

(5) Work your way round through the beads until your thread is exiting from the seed bead opposite the one that the tail thread is exiting.

(6) Now pass through all four beads again, one at a time, so that your thread ends up exiting from this same place again. This is to keep the tension firm so they stay in position. For clarity this is not shown in the diagram.

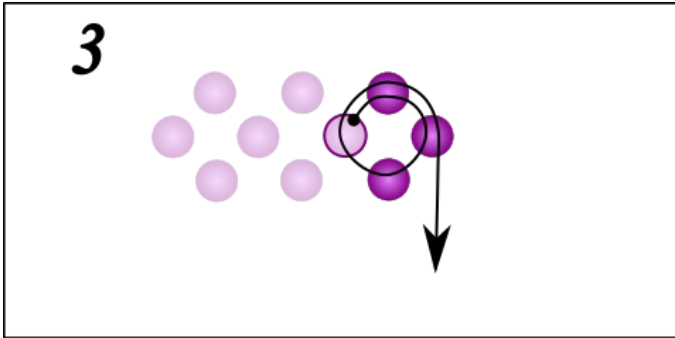


(7) Pick up three size 8 beads and pass down in the same direction through the last bead of the first circle.

(8) Pull the thread through so the beads snug up to form a second circle,.

(9) Go forwards through the next two beads so your thread is now exiting from the end bead.

(10) Go through all four beads again, one at a time, so that your thread ends up exiting from this same place again.

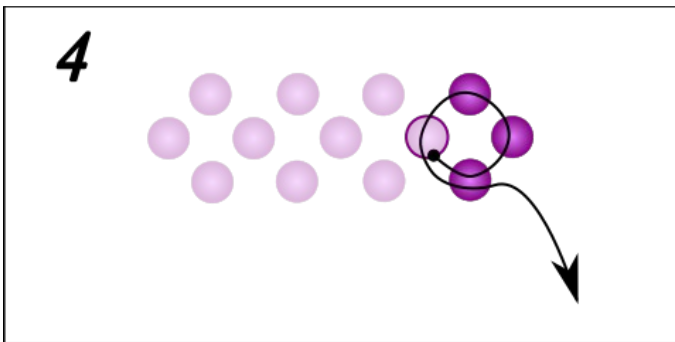


(11) Pick up three size 8 beads and pass up in the same direction through the last bead of the second circle.

(12) Pull the thread through so the beads snug up to form a circle,.

(13) Go forwards through the next two beads so your thread is now exiting from the end bead.

(14) Go through all four beads again, one at a time, so that your thread ends up exiting from this same place again.

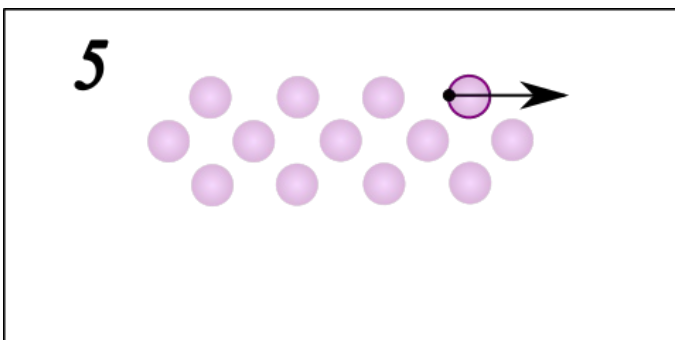


(15) Pick up three size 8 beads and pass down in the same direction through the last bead of the third circle.

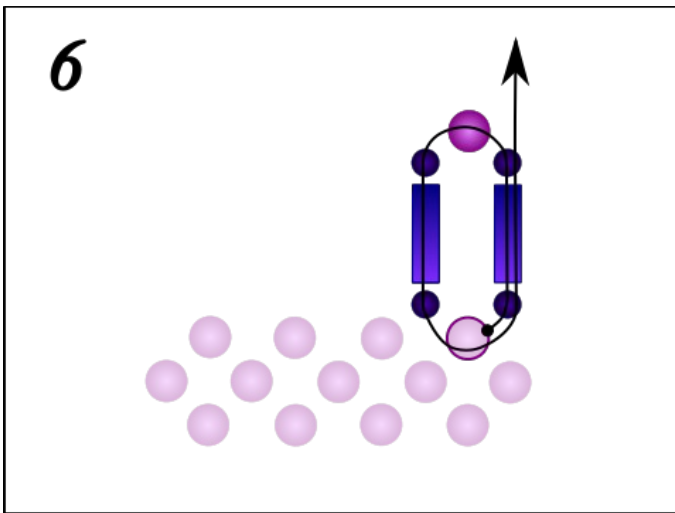
(16) Pull the thread through so the beads snug up to form a fourth circle,.

(17) Go through all four beads again, one at a time, so that your thread ends up exiting from this same place again.

(18) Go forward through the bottom bead of the end circle.



(19) Turn your work over so that the bead your thread is exiting is now at the top right with the thread exiting towards the right.



(20) The next row is also made from right angle weave but this time you will use three beads at each side instead of just one, and work from right to left.

(21) Pick up:

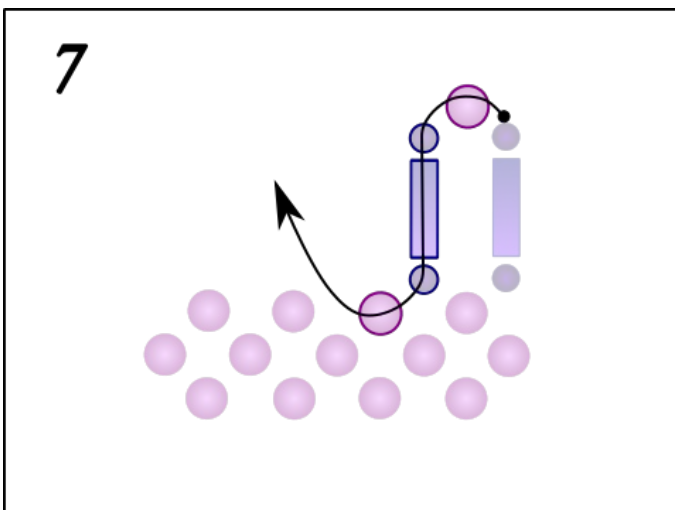
- a size 11 seed, a bugle and a size 11 seed
- a size 8 seed
- a size 11 seed, a bugle and a size 11 seed

(22) Go in the same direction through the size 8 bead that your thread is exiting on the previous row.

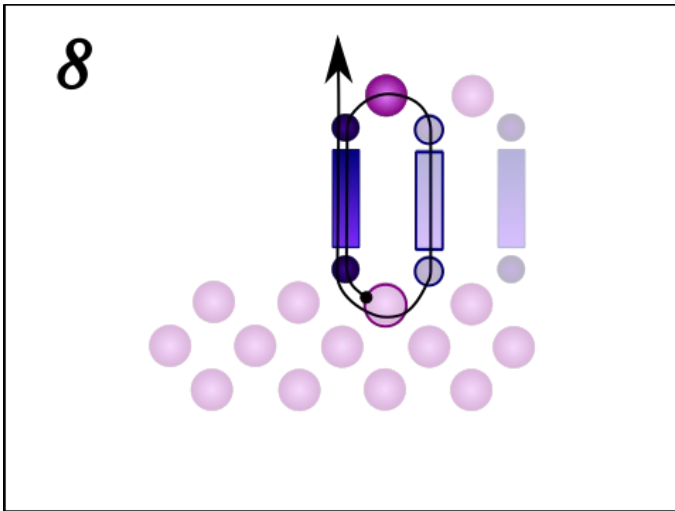
(23) Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up to form a loop and the bugles are vertical.

(24) For all the bugle rows do NOT go through all the beads a second time like you did in the seed bead row because bugles tend to have small holes and will get too full of thread.

(25) Go up through the size 11 seed, the bugle and the size 11 seed.



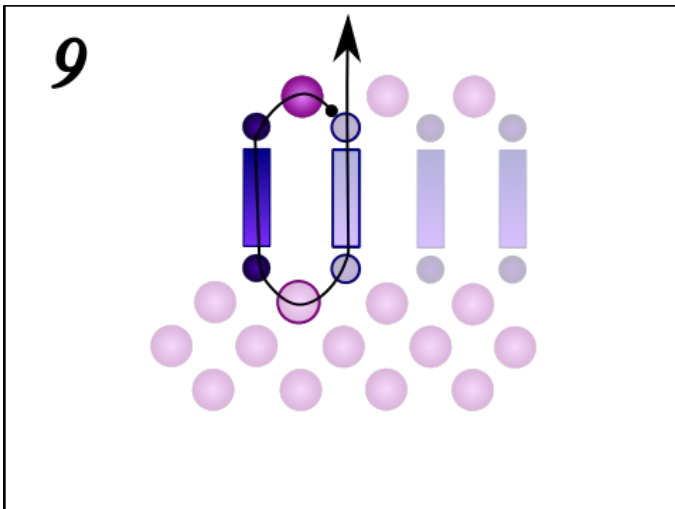
(26) Go forwards through the rest of the new beads you have just added, then through the top size 8 seed bead of the next circle in the previous row.



(27) Pick up a size 11 seed, a bugle, a size 11 seed and a size 8 seed.

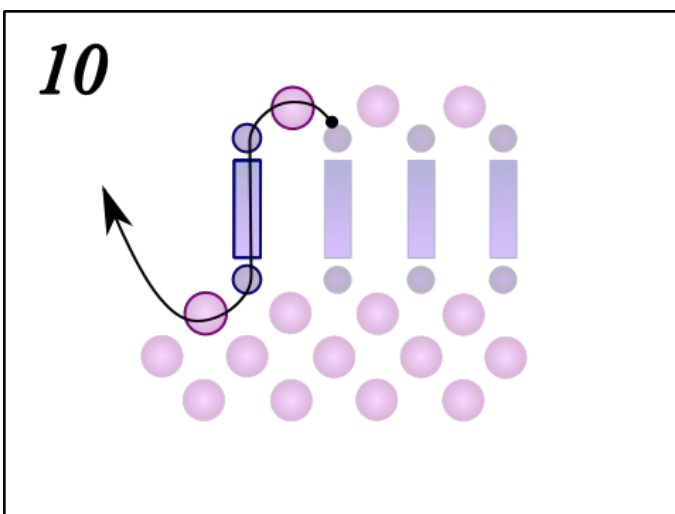
(28) Go down through the size 11 seed, the bugle and the size 11 seed from the previous loop.

(29) Go forwards through the top size 8 seed bead from the second circle of the top row, then up through the size 11 seed, the bugle and the size 11 seed that you have just added.



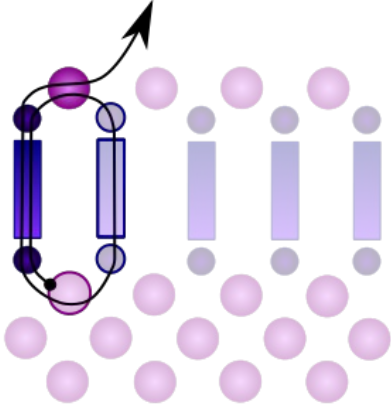
(30) Pick up a size 8 seed, size 11 seed, a bugle and a size 11 seed.

(31) Go backwards through the top size 8 seed bead from the next circle of the top row, then up through the size 11 seed, the bugle and the size 11 seed from the previous loop.



(32) Go forwards through the new beads you have just added, then through the top size 8 seed bead of the end circle in the previous row.

11

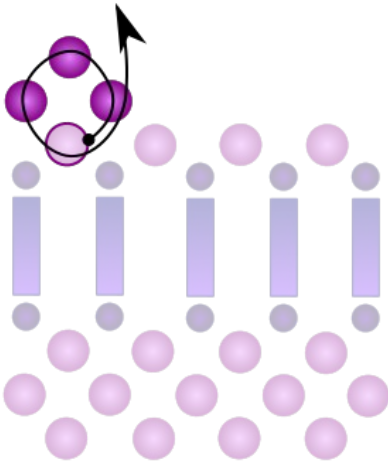


(33) Pick up a size 11 seed, a bugle, a size 11 seed and a size 8 seed.

(34) Go down through the size 11 seed, the bugle and the size 11 seed from the previous loop.

(35) Go forwards through the top size 8 seed bead from the end circle of the top row, then through all the new beads that you have just added.

12



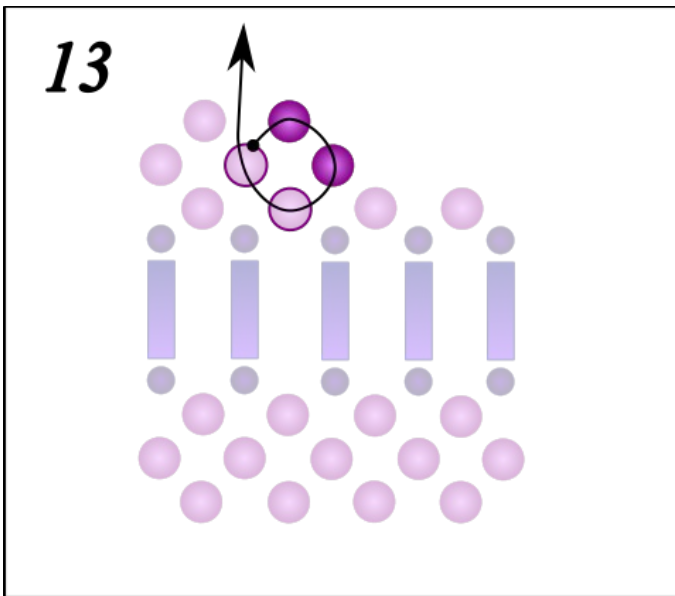
(36) The next row is made from right angle weave using size 8 seeds and is worked from left to right.

(37) Pick up three size 8 seeds and go forwards through the seed bead on the previous row that your thread was exiting.

(38) Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up to make a circle.

(39) Go through all four beads in the circle again to maintain the tension.

(40) Go up through the next seed bead in this circle.

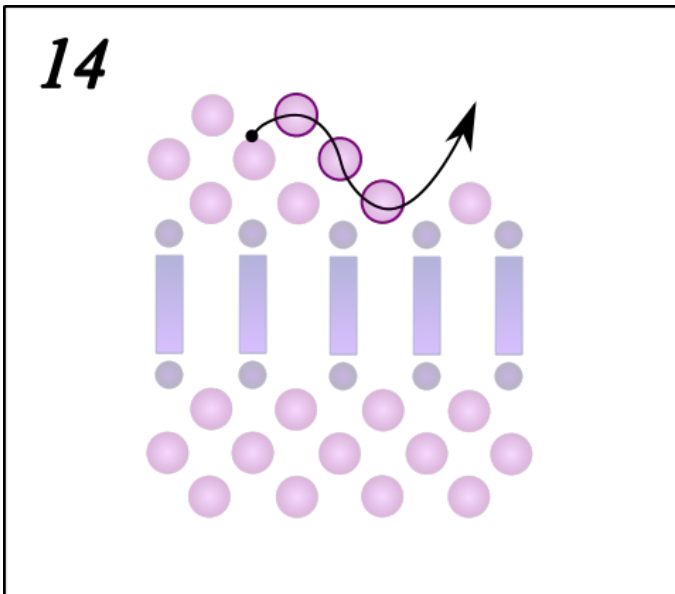


(41) Pick up two size 8 seed beads.

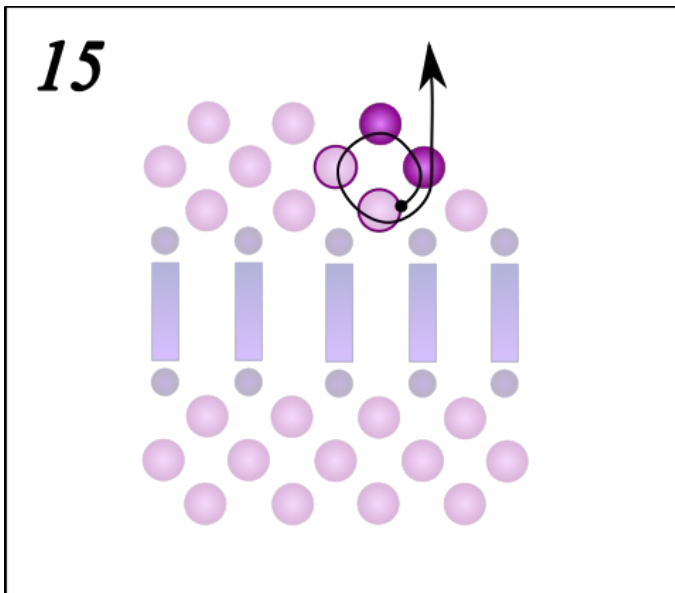
(42) Go backwards through the size 8 seed at the top of the next bugle loop, then up through the right hand seed of the first circle you made.

(43) Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up to make a second circle.

(44) Go through all four beads again to maintain the tension.



(45) Continue forward through the two beads you have just added and the size 8 seed at the top of the next bugle loop.



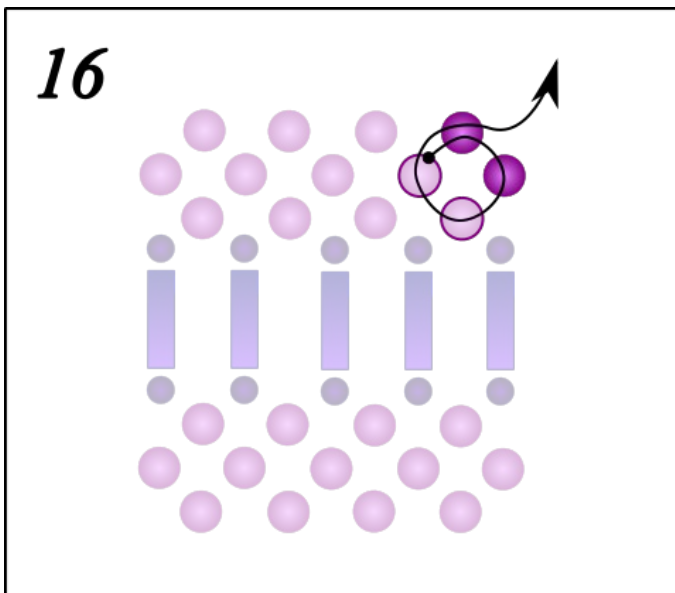
(46) Pick up two size 8 seed beads.

(47) Go down through the right hand seed of the previous circle then forwards through the size 8 seed at the top of the next bugle loop on the previous row.

(48) Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up to make a third circle.

(49) Go up through the next bead in the circle.

(50) Go through all four beads again to maintain the tension.



(51) Pick up two size 8 seed beads.

(52) Go backwards through the size 8 seed at the bottom of the end bugle loop on the previous row, then up through the right hand seed of the third circle you made.

(53) Pull the thread through so that the beads snug up to make a fourth circle.

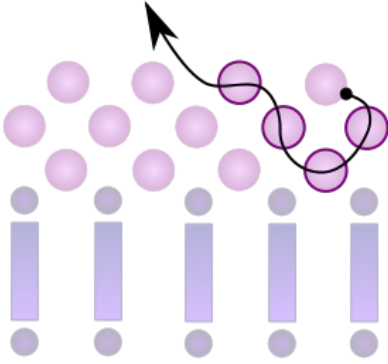
(54) Go through all four beads again to maintain the tension.

(55) Go forward through the next seed bead so your thread is exiting towards the right of your work.

(56) Now repeat the pattern from step 21 to step 55 until either you are running out of thread or your bracelet is the length you want it to be, ending after step 55.

(57) Next you will make a small loop at the end to which you can later attach the clasp.

17

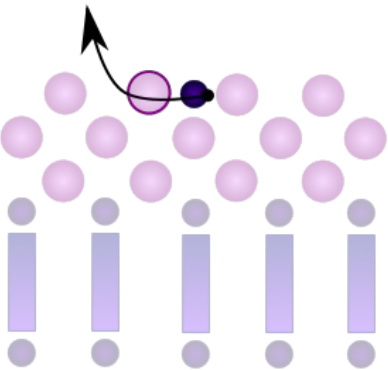


Making the end loops

(58) Work your way round through the next three beads of the circle you are exiting.

(59) Go left through the top bead of the next circle.

18



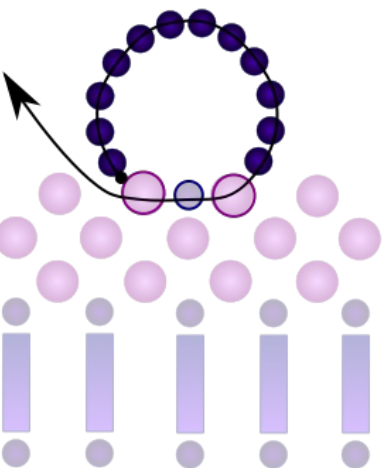
(60) Pick up a size 11 seed bead.

(61) Go left through the top bead of the next circle.

(62) You will work the end loop off these last three beads.

(63) If you need to alter the bracelet size by less than one pattern repeat, you can make these end loops larger to increase the bracelet length.

19



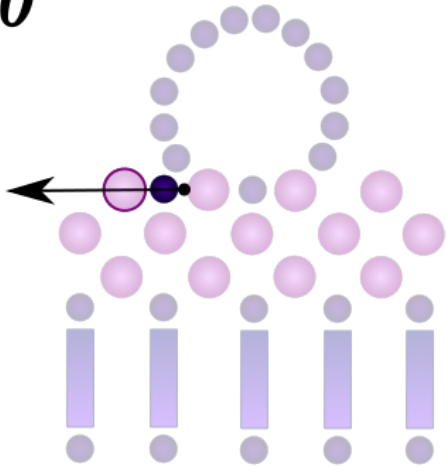
(64) Add enough seed beads to make a loop to attach the clasp. I've used 12 here but you may need slightly more or less. Don't make the loop too small or the beads will not lie nicely side by side.

(65) Go through the three beads again at the bottom centre of your bracelet.

(66) Pull the thread through so the beads snug up together to form the end loop.

(67) Reinforce the loop by sewing around through this thread path two more times. (Or more if your thread is very thin, but make sure you will still have room to pass through the bottom three beads again later.)

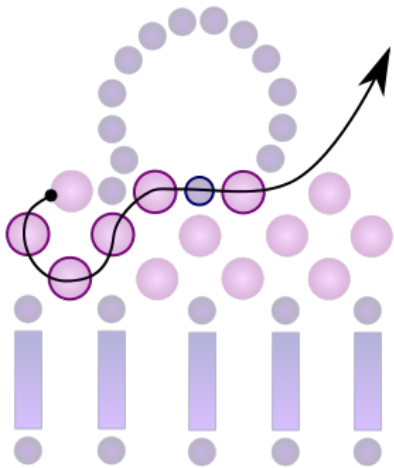
20



(68) Pick up a size 11 seed bead.

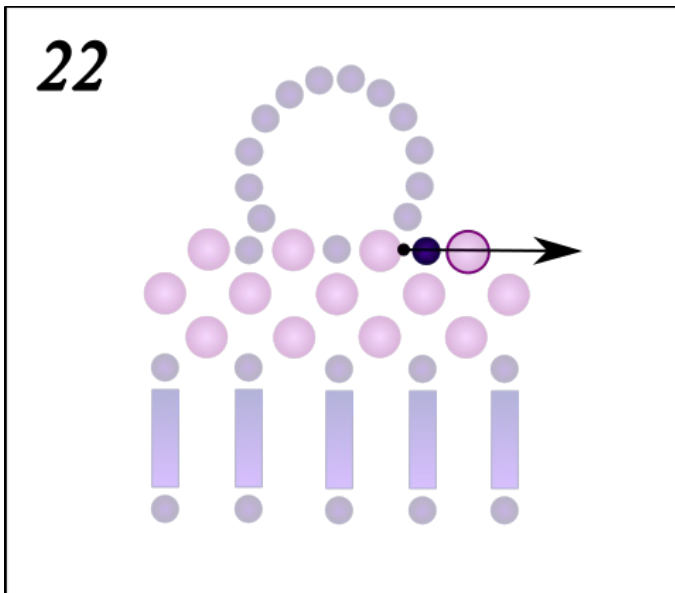
(69) Go through the top size 8 seed bead of the end circle.

21



(70) Work round through the next three size 8 seed beads of the end circle.

(71) Go through the three centre beads at the bottom of the end loop.



(72) Pick up a size 11 seed bead.

(73) Go forwards through the final size 8 seed bead on the bottom row.

(74) Work your way round through the next two beads of this end circle.

(75) Weave back in several directions through some of the main beadwork to secure your thread.

(76) 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.

(77) Cut the thread end.

(78) 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.

(79) However, first of all, have a guess at how much thread you're likely to need. You will probably need another two metres but if you're much more than half way through the bracelet, 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.

(80) Work through the other three beads of the end circle that your thread is exiting so that it will be in the correct place, then continue from step 21 as before.

(81) Once the bracelet is the length you want, work until you have completed step 55 then make another end loop in the same way as previously.

(82) Attach the clasp components to each end using a jump ring.



Pattern 12

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Sparkle a little bit every day