Beaded Hoop Link Bracelet

Created by Donna Spadafore

In this lesson you will learn how to shape beautifully simple links to create a bracelet. Beads are placed on the links to add a hint of sparkle, although, you can make this without beads as well for a unique look.

When deciding how long to make this bracelet, you will need to remember that, because of the thickness of the links, you will have to make the total length longer than the size of the wrist it is to be worn on. For instance, the bracelet in this tutorial will just fit a 7" wrist. However, the total length of the bracelet, including the clasp, is 7 ½" inches.

The amount of beads and 20 gauge wire you will need for this project depends on the length you require to finish your bracelet. Each link is approximately 3/8" long, which would translate to .375". To determine how many links you will need, divide the total length of the bracelet you need by .375. For instance, for a 7" bracelet you would divide 7 by .375, and the answer would be 18.7. So, for 7 inches of chain, you will need 19 links. I like to make sure I have enough wire and beads for 2 more than needed, just in case, which will bring it to 21 links. Each link has 2 beads. So for a 7 inch chain, you will need 38-42 beads. Also, each link uses 3" of wire. To get the amount of wire needed, multiply the needed number of links by 3. For 21 links you will need approximately 63" of 20 gauge wire.

Materials:

- 20 gauge wire, dead soft or half hard. Amount will depend on size of bracelet.
- 3mm beads with holes large enough to fit onto 20 gauge wire (Czech fire polished beads work well for this. So do some of the Swarovski 3mm round beads) Amount will depend on size of bracelet.
- 2" 18 gauge wire, dead soft or half hard

Tools:

- Round Nose Pliers
- Chain Nose Pliers (aka Needle Nose Pliers)
- Wire Flush Cutter
- Wubbers Small Round Mandrel Pliers, or other mandrel that is approximately 2mm wide
- Wubbers Large Round Mandrel Pliers, or other mandrel that is approximately 7-8mm wide

Step 1:
Cut a 3" piece of 20 gauge wire. Hold the center of the wire on the 7-8mm mandrel and wrap it around so that the wire overlaps itself on one side of the loop. Make sure to keep the loop in the center of the wire.

Step 2:
Using the chain nose pliers, bend both wires upward at the spot where they overlap so that they are parallel to each other, and touching each other.

Step 3:
Hold the 2mm mandrel against the link at the point where the two top wires are bent upwards. Fold the wires down over the mandrel until they touch the bottom of the link.

If needed you could use regular round nose pliers for this. However, because of the taper on regular round nose pliers, it will be best if you bend the wires one at a time.

Step 4:
Using your chain nose pliers, hold one of the wires at the top of the link at the bend, and using your fingers, push the bottom of the wire to the side just a little bit. Do the same on the second wire, pushing the bottom of the wire to the opposite side of the link.

Step 5:
Cut both of the wires about 4mm below the bottom of the link.

note
This **needs** to be cut flush (so it is flat, not pointy). Flush cutting the wires will give it a cleaner look and be much more comfortable to the person wearing it. If you do not have flush cutters, use a needle file, sand paper, nail file, or other sanding/filing tool to remove the pointed cut and burs.

You could also have made this cut before step 4 if you prefer (I usually do, I just forgot to do it for the pictures).

Step 6:
Add one bead to each of the wires.

Step 7:
Using your round nose pliers, bend the wires over the bottom of the hoop towards the back of the link.

Step 8:
Use your chain nose pliers to press the ends of the wires inwards and close the loop.

Step 9:
Repeat steps 1,2 and 3 on the second link. Insert the wires into the first link. You will bring the wire in from the back to the front, keeping them between the front wires on the previous link.
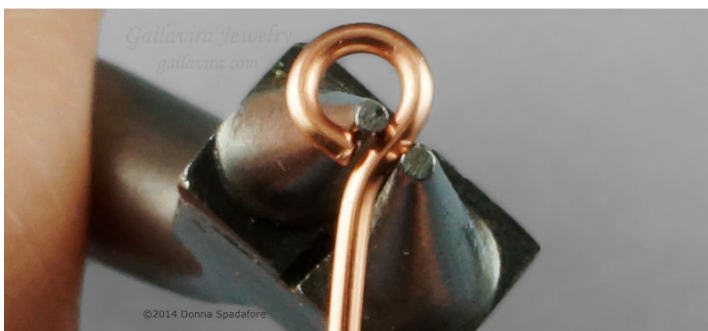

Step 10:
Repeat steps 4-8 to finish the second link.

Step 11:
Continue adding links until you have a chain that is about ½" shorter than you need the bracelet to be. The clasp will make up for the last half inch.
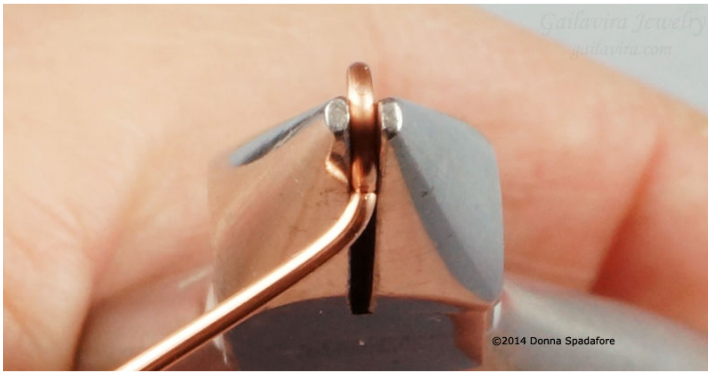

Step 12:
Take the 2" piece of 18 gauge wire, flush cut (or file flat) one end. Curl that end into a loop. I used my round nose pliers, and made the loop to about 2.5mm on the inside.

Step 13:
Place the tips of your round nose pliers at the bottom of the loop, then bend the wire downward at almost a 90° angle.

Step 14:
Hold the loop flat in your chain nose pliers, then bend the wire to the side at a 45° angle at the bottom of the loop.

Step 15:
Shape the wire just past the bend from the previous step into a hook shape. At this point there should be about 12mm from the bottom of the loop to the curve in the hook.

Step 16:
Cut the wire so that it is even with the bottom of the loop.

Step 17:
Curl it up into a small loop with your round nose pliers. Press the loop closed tightly with your chain nose pliers.

Step 18:
Add the clasp onto the bracelet by twisting the loop open that same way you would a jump ring and passing it through both loops at the top of the starting link of the bracelet.

I position mine so that the clasp is facing outward because it is more comfortable for me when wearing. If you prefer, you can have the clasp facing inward.

As you can see in this photo of the finished bracelet, the clasp hooks into the last link to close the bracelet. If you prefer to add a different type of link for the clasp to latch onto that will work as well.

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