

Bead Pattern Central Beading Tutorial

Surface Beading

Be sure to visit our animated surface beading primer at beadpatterncentral.com!



HERE ARE SOME METHODS FOR PUTTING THE PATTERN ONTO THE SURFACE:

PENCIL Simply draw the pattern onto the surface using a pencil. In most cases, graphite pencil will wash out with light detergent and water, so this is a good choice for surfaces that will not be damaged by water.

INDELIBLE MARKER PEN If you're covering the surface completely, indelible pens such as Sharpie fine point can work well. If you're working on a dark color, use a black pen. On lighter colors, use a lighter color, preferably one that blends with the color scheme of your beadwork.

TRANSFER PENCIL If your surface won't be damaged by heat, you can make a mirror image drawing of your pattern using a transfer marking pencil (available in most fabric and quilting stores) and then iron the pattern onto the surface. It's a good idea to preshrink both your paper (before using the transfer pencil on it) and your surface, or the pattern may "ghost" as shrinkage occurs.

NON-WOVEN SANDWICH Print, draw or copy your pattern onto very lightweight paper. Iron very lightweight fusible interfacing over the front of the pattern; when it's cool, iron heavier fusible interfacing to the back of the pattern. You've created a stiff beadable surface that won't ravel or shred, with the pattern visible through the upper layer of fusible interfacing. This method is especially easy when it comes to finishing since non-wovens don't ravel and are extremely pliable.

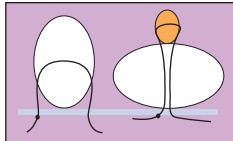
lightweight fusible nonwoven
paper (print facing up)
heavy weight fusible non-woven
NON-WOVEN SANDWICH

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

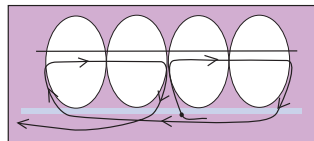
You'll want to use needles with sharp points. If you're working with very tiny beads, you'll have to use a fine needle such as a #12; these can break with too much pressure when you're trying to force them through a surface. It's helpful to keep a heavier needle such as a #9 embroidery needle on hand for making holes in the surface. Use the largest needle possible that will fit through your smallest bead. You can use beading nylon such as Nymo or C-Ion for beads that don't have sharp edges. Ordinary sewing thread works well with seed beads. For crystals or metal beads, you can use fireline or Toho beading thread, which is less prone to being cut by sharp bead edges.

SEWING SEED BEADS IN PLACE

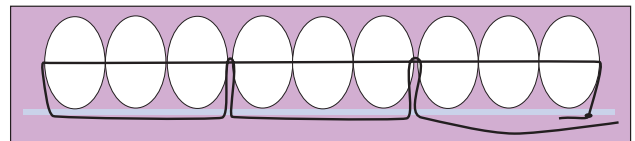
The diagrams below show simple methods for sewing seed beads onto your surface. The diagrams show rounded seed beads, but the techniques are equally good for Delicas, hexes, cuts and triangles. Seed beads size 6° and larger should be sewn on individually.



For a single seed bead of any size, simply bring the thread from back to front, put the bead on the needle, and then run it back from front to back. Larger seed beads can be laid flat and anchored with a small seed bead (14°, 15°)

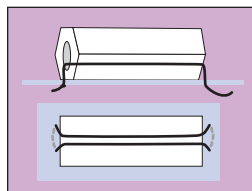


Backstitching is great for putting two beads in place at once. It's great for encircling a cabochon with beads in preparation for attaching it to the surface, because you can use it as a base row for building peyote stitch. The upper thread in the diagram is a stabilizing thread; run it through the entire span of backstitch to smooth curves and make lines look crisp and neat.

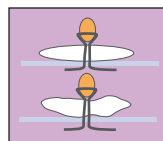


Couching works well for sewing on long continuous lines of beads. Bring the thread up at the starting point and put the beads on the needle. Check the fit by laying the beads onto the surface before you commit to running the needle through the surface to the back. You may need to add or subtract beads to get a proper fit. The beads should just lay neatly on the surface, and should not appear crowded. There should be no visible gaps between the beads in the line. Bring the needle up to the surface every third bead or so and anchor with one thread. Repeat until the entire line is secure.

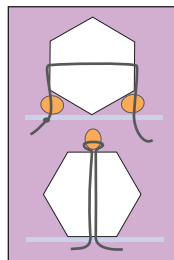
SEWING LARGER BEADS IN PLACE



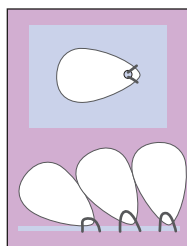
Bugles can be sewn with a single or double pass of thread depending on how sharp the edges are



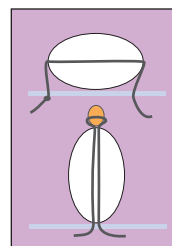
Flat beads can simply be anchored in place with a seed bead



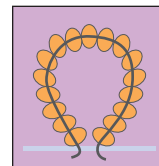
Bicones may need to be supported under the sides with seed beads, or they can be anchored with a seed bead to stand upright



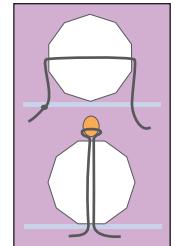
Drops can be laid flat or they can be forced to stand up by layering them over each other; great for florals!



Oval beads such as pearls can be laid on their sides or they can be made to stand up by anchoring them with a seed bead



3-D loops of seed beads can add a special texture to your pattern



Faceted rounds can be stood upright with a seed bead anchor or sewn from side to side

HINTS FOR FINISHING

When all the beading is complete, you can sew, glue, or fuse a backing in place. Leather, ultrasuede, felt, vinyl, and other non-fraying materials are good choices. For a decorative edge, whip-stitch beads around the outer edge as shown in the diagram.

