

*All
About...*

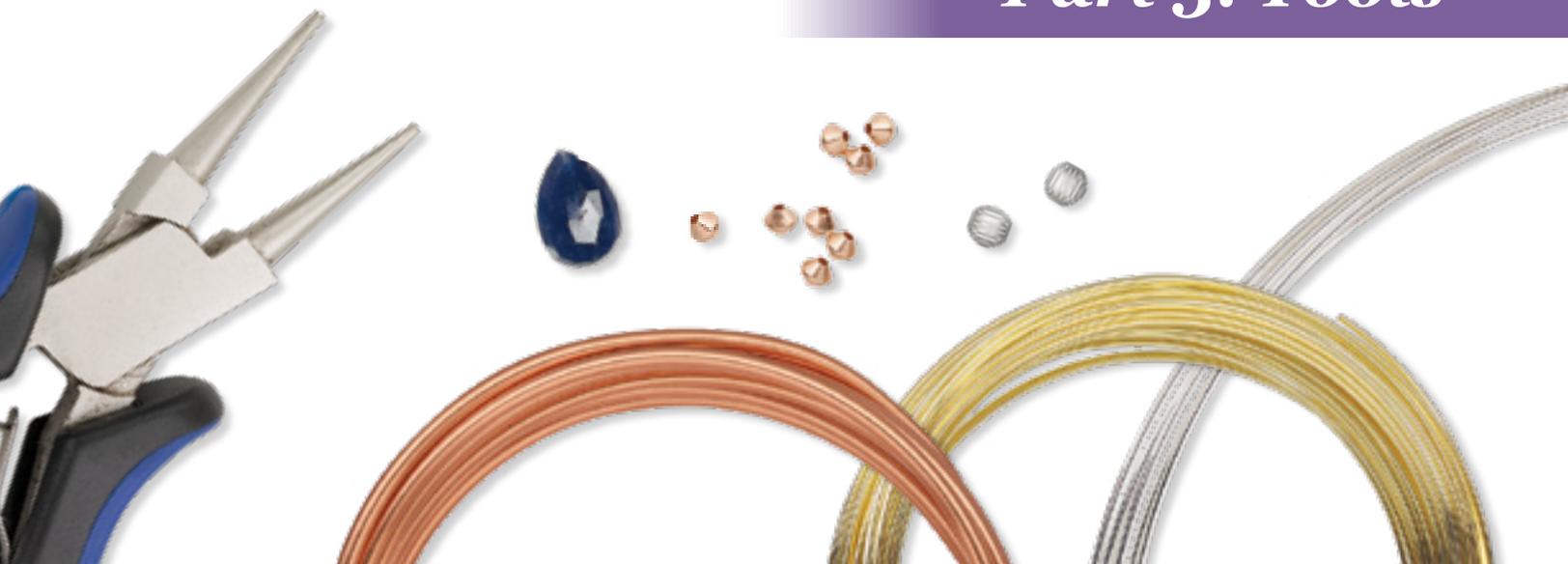


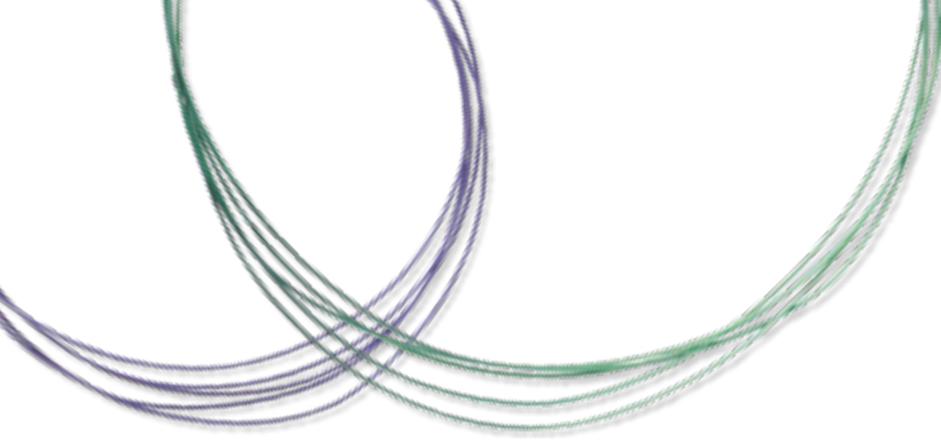
Design
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Wire

for Jewelry-Making

Part 3: Tools





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Table of Contents

Wire-Working Tools 3

As with any jewelry-making technique, there are tools you'll want to consider using when working with wire.

A Guide to Jewelry-Making Hand Tools 4-5

What are the best pliers for jewelry making? This guide will give you a crash course.

Treatments 6

Here are some common treatments that are used to transform wire and recommended wire to use for each.

Shop Wire-Working Tools and Supplies 6

Find additional resource gems sprinkled throughout – just look for the teal boxes!



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Wire-Working Tools

As with any jewelry-making technique, there are tools you'll want to consider using when working with wire. A tried-and-true set of pliers is a must.

Non-Marring Pliers

There are specific "[Non-Marring Wire-Wrapping Pliers](#)" discussed at length by Tammy Honaman, and these pliers are considered essential for wire-working. If you prefer to stick with your favorite set of pliers, Tool Magic® is an easy-to-use rubber coating you dip your pliers in to prevent marring and other unsightly marks on your jewelry designs.

Draw Plates

Draw plates and a sturdy set of tongs are tools you'll want around for not only work-hardening but also to ensure a tight, professional finish to wire weaving such as Viking Knit. With varying hole sizes, each draw plate allows you to customize your woven wire piece.

Wire Jigs

Wire jigs allow you to create consistent wire components. Place pegs into a grid for consistently making loops, links and other figures out of wire.

With all the wire tutorials you could ask for, as well as wire how-to videos with basic to advanced techniques, you're ready to start learning or advancing your wire techniques.



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**Protecting Tools with
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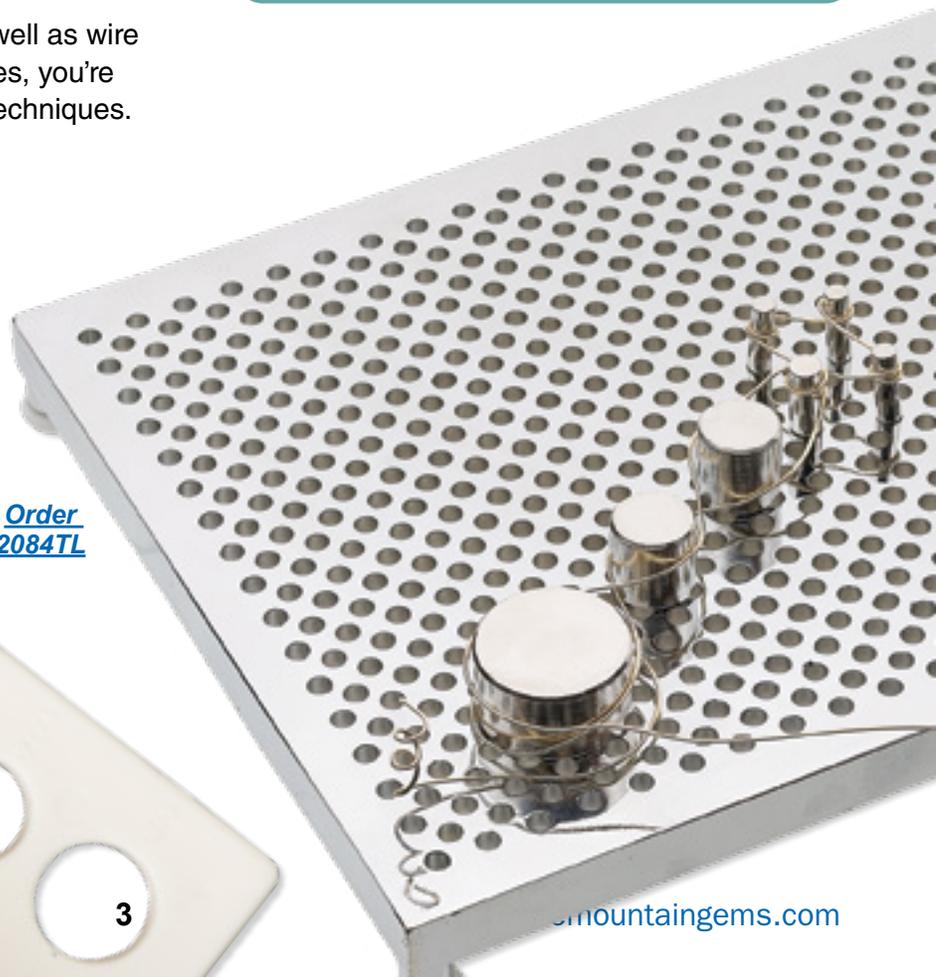
This handy demonstrational video shows how to coat your tools and keep designs pristine.

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A Guide to Jewelry-Making Hand Tools

What are the best pliers for jewelry making? This guide will give you a crash course in the most commonly used jewelry-making hand tools and answer questions about the work they are designed to do, offering tips on each tool, including a number that are useful specifically for wire-working.



[Chain-nose pliers](#) have jaws that are flat on the inside and round on the outside. The jaw tapers from the joint to the tip. The flat inside of the jaw allows for a secure grip on small findings and pieces. The curved outside is helpful in making small loops and curves on wire. This tool can give you a good bend in the wire and make a precise and permanent angle.



[Curved chain-nose pliers](#) (also called “bent-nose pliers”) have all the features of standard chain-nose pliers and can be used for the same techniques. The bend in the jaw lets you reach into tight places without blocking your line of vision and can easily access loops or coils without touching the beads next to them.



[Flat-nose pliers](#) are flat on the inside and outside of the jaws and don't generally taper as much as chain-nose pliers. Use these to securely hold findings. Because of their strong grip without marring or scratching, these are useful when drawing or pulling wire and holding shapes while working with wire. The rectangle shape of the jaw lets you create sharp corners more easily than when using chain-nose pliers.



[Round-nose pliers](#) have smooth conical jaws. These are an essential tool for making wire loops. The length and diameter of the jaws vary from brand to brand. If you choose to grip with round-nose pliers you may see little dings on the surface of the wire. To help prevent the dings, form your initial shape with the round-nose but save the rest for chain-nose, flat-nose or even nylon jaw pliers.

Everything You Need to Know About Jewelry-Making Cutters

Jewelry-making cutters are most typically used to cut wire, but some are designed for sheet metal, memory wire, glass or leather. It's important to be able to distinguish one type of cutting plier from another.

H208



Specialty tool



Mandrel pliers, sometimes called bail-making pliers, have jaws that are not tapered. An exception to this is Wubbers coil-making mandrel pliers, as they have cone-shaped jaws. This type of tool allows you to make bails, jump rings, links and loops in consistent shapes and sizes. There are a variety of options in size and shape.

Specialty tool



Banding pliers are used to create precise double right-angle bends in square and half-round wire. This tool is essential for a professional look when wrapping multiple wires together, such as in wire bangle designs. Each set of banding pliers is designed to work with a specific range of wire gauge.

Specialty tool



Bending pliers gently shape wire and sheet metal into a uniform curve or bend. The shape the metal takes is predetermined by the shape/style of the pliers. This type of tool is especially helpful when shaping cuff bracelets and similar designs.

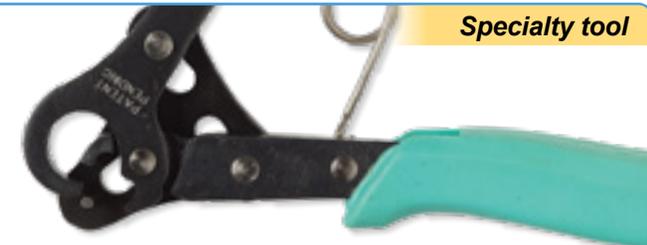
Specialty tool



A few examples of some jaw tip profiles...

Shape pliers that have two different shapes in the jaws are used to form wire in more specific ways than standard pliers. The shape that is created is dependent on the combination of jaws. Examples are concave/half-round, round/flat, round/concave and more. Use these types of pliers to create your own findings, in intricate wire-wrapping projects and when you find you need a better grip while making loops.

Specialty tool



1-step looper pliers: This amazing tool creates a simple loop and trims the extra wire in one fell swoop. You will be able to create consistent loops on wire, eye pins and head pins without having to switch between round-nose, chain-nose, and cutting pliers.

Specialty tool



Rosary pliers are a perfect two-in-one tool—round-nose pliers and side-cutting pliers in one handy tool. Round-nose pliers create loops and curves. Side-cutting pliers trim metal or beading wire. This is a great tool for highly repetitive work such as making rosaries (hence the name) or handmade chain.

View the complete guide online!

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Treatments

Here are some common treatments that are used to transform wire and recommended wire to use for each.

Hammering

Sterling silver and gold-filled wire you can hammer to your hearts' content, same with Argentium® silver and other precious metal wire. It will get more brittle, but it can be annealed to soften and then hammered more.

Coated metals, such as Zebra Wire® and ParaWire™, can be hammered lightly to stretch the coating a bit. But, hammer with caution to see what works best.

Filing and Sanding

All uncoated wire can be filed or sanded but start lightly. Often, you'll want to soften the end of cut wire to make it smooth, especially when making ear wires. In some cases, you may want to sand coated wire if you want to expose the core of the wire for decorative purposes.

Soldering

When you solder a piece to bond it to another, you heat it to just under the melting point of metal. You can solder precious metal wire and other pure metals including copper, nickel and brass, but plated, filled or coated wire is not recommended.



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