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Beading Lesson – Tips for Bracelets from Katie's Beading Secrets

By Katie Hacker

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When using beading wire to string a bracelet, lay the bracelet in a curved shape before crimping it. This will ensure that the bracelet is flexible enough to bend around the wrist when the clasp is fastened.

Stretchy bracelets are quick and easy to make. Just string beads onto stretchy cord and tie the ends in an overhand or square knot. Add a drop of jeweler's cement to the knot, let it dry, then tuck it inside the nearest bead for extra security.

A length of chain adds great texture to a stretchy bracelet design. Cut a piece of medium-to-large link chain that's 2 ½ times longer than the desired length of the bracelet. Thread stretchy cord through every other link, scrunching it together as you go.

Charm bracelets make great gifts! To make your own bracelet, just attach a clasp to the end of a piece of medium-to-large link chain. The standard length for bracelets is 7-8". If you're using a toggle clasp, remember to allow space at the end for the toggle bar to pass through the ring.

A center focal section is an easy way to create a striking bracelet design. Odd numbers of beads are more eye-catching than even ones, so feature three, five or seven beads at the center.

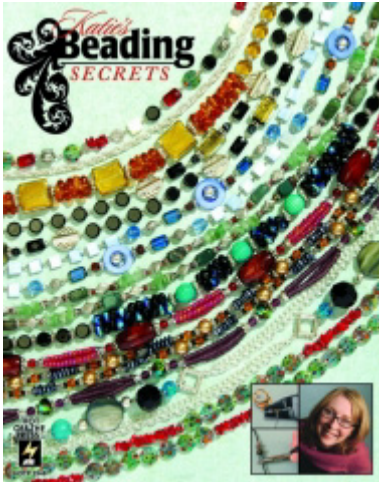
Since bracelets are much shorter than necklaces and you can see less of the pattern when it's worn, simple beading patterns work really well. An interesting clasp adds a nice finishing touch.

Making Durable Bracelets

Since bracelets receive so much wear and tear, it can be a little tricky to get them just right. Here are a few tips:

- Use the most flexible beading wire, 49-strand, when making bracelets or watches.

- Use the largest diameter of beading wire (or other material) that will pass through the bead holes.
- Use a bead reamer to smooth any rough bead hole edges.
- Lay the bracelet in a curved shape before attaching the clasp. If the beads are too tight, the bracelet will not bend properly around the wrist and abrasion can occur.
- When using large, chunky beads, separate them with a single smaller bead to make it easier to bend around the wrist.
- Remember that large beads will affect the fit and plan accordingly when creating your design.



Katie's Beading Secrets

Katie Hacker spills her tips, tricks and techniques in this 40-page instruction book. It's packed with over 100 projects, including necklaces, earrings and bracelets...all created with readily-available beads and findings. Necklaces are shown with the clasps so you know exactly how to recreate the piece; necklaces are also shown with alternates done in different bead combinations to get your creativity going! You'll learn the basics of beading, plus the most versatile beading techniques. Full-color, with step-by-step instructions—and tips on every page! Hot Off The Press 2009.

Links:

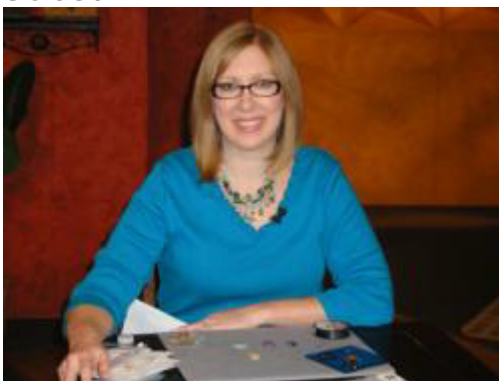
Bracelets in the Beadalon Design Workshop <http://www.beadalon.com/braceletslist.asp>

Katie's Beading Secrets <http://www.katiehacker.com/shop.htm>

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