

1411-2

Mark Nelson demonstrates how to make wire end caps.

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Please continue to page 2 for project instructions.

Guest:



Mark Nelson

Making Your Own Components

With just a little bench knowledge and practice, you can turn many raw materials into custom jewelry components. Give it a try in this project by making fused Argentium® Silver end caps!



steps:

1. Take a mandrel with the same diameter as the cord you want the end cap to fit and insert it into the needle file handle. Begin tightly wrapping about 4"–6" of Argentium® Silver wire around the mandrel; 24–20 ga. wire works great for this project. Place the wire between your thumb and forefinger and pull gently as you rotate the mandrel to keep a slight tension on the wire. This will ensure a nice, tight spiral of wire. **Tip:** You can cut a notch in the tip of the mandrel and use it to grip the wire more easily as you begin wrapping it.
2. Cut the coil off of the end of the straight length of wire with a pair of cutters. If the end of the wire is rough or has a sharp bur sticking out from where you started wrapping, clip it off. Save any piece you remove for scrap.
3. Take your bench knife and carefully wedge it under the first loop and bend it up. Take a pair of flat-nosed pliers and continue bending half the loop up into a 90° angle.
4. Dip your brush stick into the My-T-Flux and lightly cover the end cap. This will keep oxygen away from the metal when you fuse it.
5. Put on eye protection such as the Optivisor™. Stack your working area with a silquar block on the bottom of your bench, the rotating stand on top and a charcoal block on top of the stand. Place the end cap upright on the charcoal block and light your torch. Rotate the flame around the end cap, heating it until it becomes a shiny, bright red. When it looks like little beads are forming on the surface and dancing around, hold that temperature for several seconds and then let the coil cool. **Please Note:** Do not touch the coil while it is hot. Wait 30–45 seconds for it to cool before touching it.
6. The end cap is now one piece of metal. Use the insulated tweezers to dip the coil in water and quench it, then use copper tongs to dip it in the pickle to remove the flux. Finish as needed.
7. Your end caps are finished and ready to use with your cord.



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⚠ **CAUTION!** Always wear eye protection when performing these processes.

supplies:

Order #	Description
103-320	Argentium® 930 Silver round wire, 20 ga., dead soft
636-227	Cord
110-186	Mandrel set
114-756	Needle file
114-849	Needle file handle
114-157	Bench knife
111-026	Swanstrom plier and cutter set
504-025	Pump flux dispenser
504-006	My-T-Flux™
115-146	Natural brush sticks
502-004	Silquar™ high heat block
502-007	Rotating stand
502-025	Charcoal block
500-230	Blazer butane torch
500-181	Butane fuel
113-208	Optivisor™
501-023/3	Rio Pickle™; 3 lbs.
501-012	Little Dipper™ pickle pot
115-051	Insulated tweezers
501-017	Copper tongs
—	Pyrex® dish of water