



Smithsonian Associates

Intro to Beading

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I'm so looking forward to meeting you in the Intro to Beading class. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions regarding this list. It looks long, but only because I've explained everything in detail to make your shopping experience easier. You can also see what everything looks like, on the Pinterest board:

<https://www.pinterest.com/2dotsoverth0068/intro-to-beading-smithsonian-associates/>

Here's the schedule for the time we'll be together:

Day 1 – Q&A: Tools and Supplies, Project: Stringing (it is possible that 1-3 necklaces and/or bracelets could be completed in this time, depending on the student)

Day 2 – Demo: Working with Wire, Project: Earrings. We'll be learning a variety of techniques that can be applied to earrings, making clasps, and making linked necklaces or bracelets. Due to time, 2 pairs of earrings will be the main products we will aim to complete.

Day 3 – Demo: Knotting, Project: Knotted necklace. Knotting will be shown and discussed as both a functional application and a design element. Most students are able to complete 1 knotted necklace during this class time.

Tools and Supplies needed for the class:

Tools:

- **chain nose pliers** - look like needle nose pliers, but the inside of the jaws is smooth, as opposed to serrated.
- **flush cutting wire snips** - fine wire snips designed for getting into small places and making precision cuts
- **round nose pliers** - (optional) pliers with smooth, round tapered jaws, for bending wire and creating loops (please do not get the kind with the silicone coated tips)
- **crimping tool** - a specialty tool designed for finishing crimps. These come in different sizes so be careful. DO NOT get a tool for "micro" crimps. Check with your bead store employee (if possible) to make sure your tool is good with 2x2mm crimps, which is what I recommend to begin with.
- **knotting tweezers** – specialty beading tweezers used for pearl knotting. Cosmetic tweezers cannot be used as a substitute.
- **Scissors**
- **A ruler**

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Findings:

Findings are the supplies that hold your beads together. A kit containing the findings (**except clasps**) needed for the projects will be **available for purchase for \$30(plus shipping)** on my website starting June 1st All the findings in the kit are sterling silver. Kit purchases are final and non-refundable.

If you'd like to purchase your own, you'll need:

- **Soft-touch or Soft-flex beading wire** – 2 yards of fine gauge (.014). 2 yards
- **4 clamshell beadtips** (used for pearl knotting)
- **3 pairs french hook style earwires**
- **20 headpins** - 2inch, 20 gauge
- **24 2mm x 2mm crimps**
- **2ft 20 gauge wire** – to practice wire working – this can be copper or some other “craft” wire

Findings you'll also need:

- **2-3 clasps** - i.e. lobster claw, hook and eye, s-hook, toggle, or magnetic. Remember: your clasps will look better if they are a similar scale as your beads. (the crimps are very small so you can still by gold clasps and not have them “clash” if gold is your preference)
- **A bead board (optional)** is a useful tool as it allows you to organize and design your piece before you begin stringing

Beads:

I would recommend having at least the following, in coordinating colors to optimize on your design possibilities. If you buy what you love, you're guaranteed to make something beautiful!

For Stringing:

- Seed Beads: 1 bottle/color size 8° Czech and/or 1 bottle/color size 11° Czech (mixed color bottles are a good choice since you get many options from one purchase.) These are mainly used as “spacers” between larger beads
- Strands of various glass, cut glass, freshwater pearls, or gemstones
 - total length of strands should equal 48-54 inches.
 - Bead sizes should not exceed 8mm - this is due to the amount of weight that the .014 Soft-flex can support
- 4-5 kinds accent beads, these may come in smaller packages, shorter strands, or loose to be bought “by the bead” (at a local bead store) They may include larger beads, metal charms, Swarovski crystals, etc. These beads will act as accents to your primary beads above. The number and variety you purchase can be determined by your own budget

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For Wire Work:

You can save beads from your above strands to make matching earrings, or you can purchase some additional “earrings only” beads. Think in terms of how many pairs you might make (2-3) and then how many beads per pair (2 beads per pair for a short earring, 6 or more for a long pair, or up to 60 small beads for the pair that is pictured below).

For Pearl Knotting:

- 1-2 16” strands 4-6mm freshwater pearls or gemstones – 1 16” strand, if all the beads are used, will usually equal 18” overall length with the knots. If you want a necklace longer than 18”, or one that has 2 strands, purchase additional strands of pearls/stones accordingly. **My knotted example is a bit more elaborate than the one you will be making, so just 1-2 strands of one type of bead is needed.**
- 1-2 cards knotting silk – 1 card for each strand you purchase. Please purchase the silk with a needle already attached to the end, and **please** ask your helpful bead-store employee to assist you with deciding what size silk (diameter) to purchase. Thicker silks are made for beads with bigger holes, and smaller silks for smaller holes. The silk must be matched to the bead hole to make the project fun and frustration free.

Resources:

Local bead shops in the greater DC area are easy to find via Google. I would highly recommend “shopping local” so that you can see what you are purchasing, and get design help from store staff.

Or, I recommend the following online resources:

- Rio Grande: - Rio is my go-to for tools and findings. www.riogrande.com
- Another great online supplier is ThunderMoon Supplies - based in Wilmington, DE and found on Etsy. I purchase my jeweler’s brass wire from them. They also have sterling silver & copper wire, and hand tools. <https://www.etsy.com/shop/ThunderMoonSupplies>
- www.firemountaingems.com is another option. They are more like a “big box” store for beads.
- <https://www.beadshop.com/> Order early as this lovely shop is in California. Their site is easy to navigate and their inventory is lovely.