

Choosing The Right Stringing Material For Your Jewellery Creations

With so many stringing options for your jewellery creations, it can often get confusing about which stringing material to use.

We hope this guide will help you make your choice of product, a little simpler !

Elastic – is the perfect choice for stretchy jewellery, as it's inexpensive and ideal for children's jewellery made with a single strand projects without the need for clasps. It is easily knotted or crimped and pretty strong, although if stretched too far, will lose its elasticity. Always cut off more than is required for your project, as you will need the extra length, in which to double knot, to ensure it does not come undone. It's soft to work with and the clear variety is the best to use, as it can be used with light or dark beads. Elastic is pretty strong, so experiment with various types and sizes. The only downside, is that working with elastic, you will have to check the beads for sharp edges, as it could eventually cut through other than this, a great inexpensive stringing material which can come in various sizes, EG 0.5mm, 0.8mm, 1.0mm – The smaller the size, the more beads you will be able to use, the larger the size, the stranger the elastic will be.

Silkon - is a special heat-set nylon. Because of its exceptional durability and resistance to fraying, it can be used with abrasive stone or metal beads. Use lightweight thread for designs using small gem beads & freshwater pearls. Use medium-weight thread for plastic, glass and wood beads. Use heavyweight thread for gemstone, metal and larger glass beads.

Tigertail – is miniature braided stainless steel cable covered with nylon, this beading wire is excellent with heavier necklaces. Tigertail beading wire should be used with crimp beads. No beading needle is required. This wire is relatively flexible but is prone to kinking, which will be evident in your jewellery. Good for most use of beads as the nylon coating is useful when your bead edges are rough, as it prevents wear on the stainless steel wire inside the coating, giving your pieces a longer life.

Faux Suede Cord - Microfiber suede lace. Very soft to work with. Try this newest lacing on the market; this man-made material is ultra soft, providing incredible comfort and drape. Comes in various thicknesses, it washes easily in warm soapy water. Use for every lacing and stringing application. A great option for stringing pendants and the suede can be tied in a knot with a focal piece in place, making this a piece that can be worked quickly and inexpensively. Cord ends can also be placed at the end, to give a more professional finish to your pieces.

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Monofilament – is naturally waterproof and resists 100% of the sun's damaging ultraviolet radiation. It's 10 times stronger than steel, with superior abrasion resistance. A great starter material, to start stringing with, this single strand nylon thread, similar to fishing line is an inexpensive product which is very strong and a worthwhile addition to your kit. As it is inexpensive, you can make up mock designs with minimum costs, before moving onto a more permanent material. Monofilament is generally clear coloured and can be used in the making of 'illusion' or 'floating' designs, making the string almost invisible and is probably the biggest use of this stringing material. Monofilament can shrink or crack over time, which can be evident in older, vintage pieces of jewellery, maybe as a reaction with oils from the skin etc. Rough beads may also work through, so better to double up if the thickness allows. Monofilament can also be knotted or crimped and this can be backed up with a dab of hypo cement to add extra strength to your pieces.

Rattail – Is the thickest satin cord and measures around 2mm with a lovely soft, satin feel. This man-made product is a good inexpensive cord for stringing pendants, such as dichroics or donuts and comes in an array of colours and knotted to finish off your piece. Can also be finished with cord ends for a more professional finish. Dab the ends into PVA glue and let it dry, then when the ends are stiff enough, attach your cord ends with an extra dot of glue for extra strength. Other variants of this are Mousetail (1.5mm) and bugtail (1.0mm)

Chain – again comes in various sizes. Chain is usually more expensive than some of the other stringing materials, but can also be quite versatile. 2mm cable chain can be used to create your own chains to hang locket or smaller pendants onto. Can also be cut into small lengths to create dangles for a great effect. Larger style chain (Eg 11x6mm) can be used for bag charms, charm bracelets etc, as it is chunky enough to hang dangles, charms from it, to create great looking beaded products.

Memory Wire – is very worthwhile experimenting with, as it's basically a coil of ultra strong tempered stainless steel, to make some really quick jewellery designs. Finishing off memory wire is simple, by turning a loop at your first end to prevent beads from falling off and then doing the same at the other end of the memory wire, once your design has been completed. Charms can then be hung from the loops to finish off your designs. Cutting the wire can be quite difficult due to it's strength and will blunt a normal pair of cutters, therefore we recommend using memory wire cutters, or get two pairs of flat nose pliers and bend back and forth at the point you want, until the wire snaps in two. Memory wire is easy to use, with fast and effective results.

Report written by Bedazzle Beads

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