

Materials and Supplies

All of the items below can be bought from the stores listed in Sources (see page 126).

STRING AND THREAD

] NYMO [is a popular nylon beading thread for small, lightweight beads. It comes in several colors and weights; the most common weights are B and D. D is the heaviest and most durable, and for that reason it is recommended for the projects in this book.

] PEARL COTTON [is a soft, versatile string that is not strong enough for stringing heavy beads, but it's a great fiber for knotting over other cords, knitting, or crocheting. It is sold in over a hundred colors and at least four weights.

] SILK THREAD [is ideal for knotting between beads. I also like to use silk when the thread will show in the final design because it has a beautiful sheen. It is available in over twenty colors and ten weights.

] WAXED LINEN [is strong natural fiber with a slightly sticky coating that works perfectly for coiling and knotting techniques. The best quality waxed linen is from Belfast, Ireland—it comes in over thirty colors and several plies. I like 4 ply for a good medium-weight fiber.

WIRE

] BEADING WIRE [is made from steel strands coated with nylon. It is extremely flexible and durable and comes in three weights. I use the heaviest weight, .024, for large beads. There are several brands of beading wire, but I find Soft Flex the strongest and most flexible.

] STERLING SILVER WIRE [is the most common and easily worked wire. The most common gauges are 18, 20, and 22, with the lower numbers designating thicker wire. Wire can be hard, half hard, or dead soft, depending on the degree of flexibility. (Wire can also be beautiful in gold and other metals.)

TOOLS

] BEADING NEEDLES [come in many types and varieties. I prefer short, sharp needles because I do more appliqué work than stringing. Pony brand needles are my favorite.

] CRIMPING PLIERS [are a special tool that folds and flattens a crimp bead so that it securely attaches two strands of beading wire; see Techniques (page 124) for instructions.

] FLUSH CUTTERS [are pliers designed especially for cutting wire in tight spots.

] JEWELER'S FILES [are used to smooth any rough spots in cut wire.

] ROUND-NOSE PLIERS [have two round tips, making them perfect for bending wire and forming loops.

] T-PINS AND STRAIGHT PINS [are both used for anchoring beading projects. T-pins are useful for stabilizing knotting projects against a Homasote bead board. Straight pins can be inserted through layers of fabric to temporarily bind them while stitching.

] BEAD BOARDS [are used to design and position beads while making jewelry. The kind I like is made from upholstered Homasote (a hardy compressed paperboard) that can be used for beadwork or display purposes. A pin can be firmly inserted many times and no mark is left in the board. They're easy to make—Homasote is available at home-building supply stores, and they can cut it up to your specified dimensions. Cover the Homasote with durable fabric and staple the fabric to the back of the board. (My dad's upholstery shop makes batches of these for me.)

