



Beadweaving basics (Peyote stitch)

Learn the basic principles of beadweaving and try one of the basic beadweaving techniques



Material (for beaded beads)

Matubo 8/0 (approx. 2.7 gram)

Beading needle and thread (Nymo, Fireline...)

Material (for the necklace)

Matubo Wheel Beads

4mm Round beads

Tube-shaped gemstone beads

Beading wire (or other stringing material of your choice) and suitable findings.

Difficulty: For beginners (no prior beading experience required)

Before you start

Threads



There are plenty of threads that are suitable for beadweaving. They are usually very thin and much stronger than threads you usually use for sewing.

In general, you can choose between **nylon threads** (popular choices include

Nymo, Superlon, TOHO One-G, K-O, or Silamide) or **bonded threads** (like Fireline) or **hybrid threads** (like Dura Thread). These threads are usually made in various sizes. Thinner threads allow us to make multiple passes in even the smallest beads, but they are not very strong. Thicker threads are stronger, but they might cause trouble with beads with very small holes.

All of these threads are a little different and I recommend trying out a few ones and then choosing the type and size that suits you best.



Also keep in mind that some kinds of beads (some kinds of pressed glass beads, bugles, crystals or gemstone beads) can have rather sharp edges around the holes and it can cause nylon threads to fray or break. If you're working

with these types of beads, it's best to use bonded or hybrid threads instead, as these are less prone to this kind of damage.

Choosing the right color

Nylon beading threads are available in many colors. When picking a color of thread for your newest project, choose a color that matches the color palette of the beads you are using. It does not have to be exactly the same color as your beads, but it should not be visible between them. If you can't decide or you want to buy your first thread ever, go for a neutral color like gray (works for most

colors of beads), black or brown (for dark beads) or sand/beige/cream (for light beads).

What about white? That's a neutral color too, right?

Not exactly. Many people consider white to be some kind of "universal color" that goes with every color of beads. But in fact the white thread is too bright for most beads and it will be visible between them (and we don't want that). Unless you are working with white (or very light colored) beads, white is not a good choice. If you want a truly "universal" color, go for gray.

How much thread will I need?

Before you start, cut a piece of thread that is comfortable for you to work with. That usually means something between 1 and 2 meters.

If your thread is longer than this, it will become very uncomfortable to work with and it will knot and tangle a lot and it can even start fraying. It is easier to add a new piece of thread than to work with a thread that is far too long.

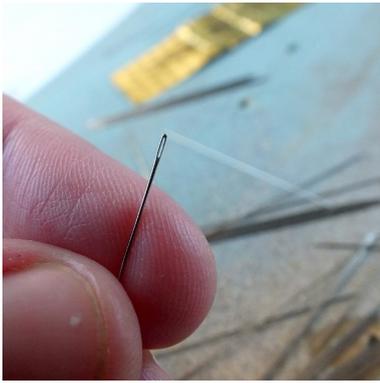
Adding the thread

When you run out of thread (you have less than 20cm / 8in to work with) or if your thread is frayed or damaged, it's best to add a new piece of thread as soon as possible. There are many ways to add new thread, but this one works every time, no matter what project are you working, what kind of thread or what size of beads are you using.

When you want to add new thread, tie it off as if you were finishing your work (tie a few half-hitch knots between the beads and then weave the thread through some more beads before you cut it off - see steps 26-28 of the tutorial). Then take a new piece of thread, tie it around another piece of thread between beads and then weave through beads to get to the point where you stopped your work (you can tie a few half-hitch knots on the way to secure the new thread) and then continue beading.

When adding new thread (or finishing your work) always keep in mind that all the knots you make must be placed between the beads and the thread should always go through the beads, not over them. There should be no threads visible on the outside of beads.

Needles



Needles used for beadweaving are longer and significantly thinner than those you are using for sewing fabric.

Even the beading needles are available in various sizes, most common ones are marked as 10 and 12.

Size 10 needles are the thicker ones. I use them in most of my project. They can be used with most types and sizes of beads, but if when you're working with beads with small holes or if you are making multiple passes through beads, this size might be too big.

Size 12 needles (the needle I'm holding in my hand in the photo above is size 12) are thinner than 10s. They are useful when you're working on a project that calls for multiple passes in smaller beads (seed beads size 15/0 or smaller or most pressed beads), but they are much harder to thread and they bend very easily.

If the needle gets stuck

If you're working with beads that have smaller holes or if you are making multiple passes through beads, you might get into an unpleasant situation when the eye of the needle gets stuck in the bead.

You can try to force the needle through, but even if you are very careful while doing this, there is still a big chance you might bend or break the needle, damage the thread or break the bead you want to pass through.

The safest way out of this is taking the needle out and replacing it with a smaller one.

If you really want to force the needle through:

- Don't wiggle it around in the bead. If you do, you'll most likely destroy both the bead and the needle.
- First, pull the needle out and only put the tip of the needle through the bead you need to pass through.
- Hold the bead the needle is passing through between your fingers.
- Grip the tip of the needle with flat-nose pliers and then pull the needle through, as fast as possible.

What else do I need?



We already have some kind of beading thread and needle.

What else do you need to start beading?

Beads you'll need for your project – see the material list in the pattern you're following and get the exact shapes, sizes and brands of beads listed there – this is what the designer/author used to make the original piece and this is what works best in the pattern. If you make any substitutions, you might need to do some alterations or, in worst cases, the pattern might not work at all.

Beading mat – a piece of fleece or other kind of soft fabric you will be working on.

Small, sharp scissors

Triangular bead tray. This one is not really necessary, but it comes in handy when you finish the work and have to get your beads back in their bags. With this tray you can simply scoop up the leftover beads and pour them back where they belong.

Starting your work

In most beading projects, there is no need to tie a knot on the end of the thread. It will not hold the beads together in any way. Also, tying the first bead from your project to the thread is also not a good idea. It usually means that the thread will be visible on the outside of this bead and it will not align properly with the other beads.

To secure the end of the thread and avoid spilling beads, you can use a "stop bead" – that's a bead that you can

actually tie to the end of the thread, but this bead is not a part of your project and when you finish, you will have to remove this bead. You can also use a bead stopper - it's a little wire spiral that you can "clip" on the thread and remove it when you finish (I'll be using it later in this tutorial). Some beaders even use clothespins or adhesive tapes - actually anything that will hold on the thread and can be easily removed works fine.

Or you can just leave the end of the thread unsecured. You will need to be careful not to spill the beads, but in most beading projects you will soon get to the point where you can tie both ends of the thread together (I use it in my projects very often).

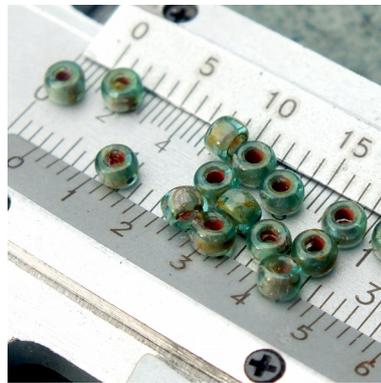
Finishing your work

When your project is finished, tie a few half-hitch knots between the beads and then weave the thread through some more beads before you cut it off.

And again, be careful when tying the knots or weaving through beads, so you don't accidentally show the thread on the outside of beads.

Let's get beading

Today I'll teach you the peyote stitch - one of the basic beadweaving stitches - and also one of the most versatile ones. I'll show you how to make a short piece of flat, even-count peyote stitch and then connect the ends together to create a tube-shaped beaded bead. You can make a bunch of these and string them on an elastic line, memory wire or beading wire and create your first piece of beadwoven jewelry.



First, you'll need **seed beads**. These are the most common type of seed beads and you can find them in every bead store (and most craft stores and fabric stores too).

They come in various sizes. In most beadweaving projects you will be working with sizes from 15/0 (the smallest, about 1,5mm in diameter) to 6/0 (about 4mm in diameter) - in this project we will be using **size 8/0 Matubo seed beads** (as shown in the photo above) but 7/0s or 6/0s (bigger ones) will work nicely too. And after you learn the basic principles of the stitch, you can even go for smaller ones (like Matubo 11/0s).

Prepare two colors of the 8/0s (I'm using **opaque turquoise and opaque pink**).

Then get one **size 10 needle** and about **1 yard of beading thread** of your choice. Since the finished beaded beads are really small, this length would be enough for two, maybe even three pieces.



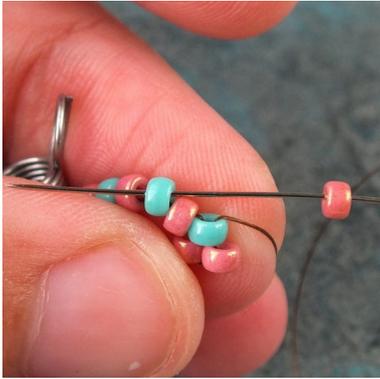
1) Put a bead stopper on the end of your thread.



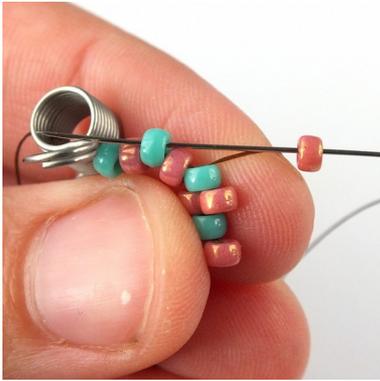
2) String even amount of beads, alternating colors. The number of beads will determine the length of the finished bead. In this case, I used eight beads.



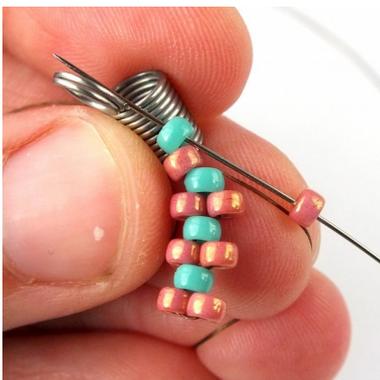
3) The thread is exiting from the pink bead. Add one pink bead. Skip the pink bead that the thread is exiting from and pass through the next turquoise bead. Pull snug.



4) Add another pink bead. Skip the next pink bead in the row and pass through the next turquoise bead.



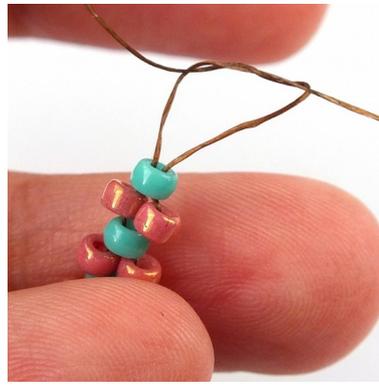
5) Repeat step 4 ...



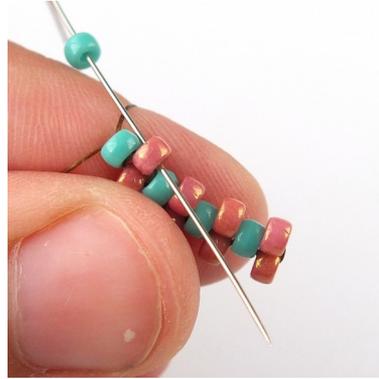
6) ... until you reach the end of the row.



7) This is what you should get.



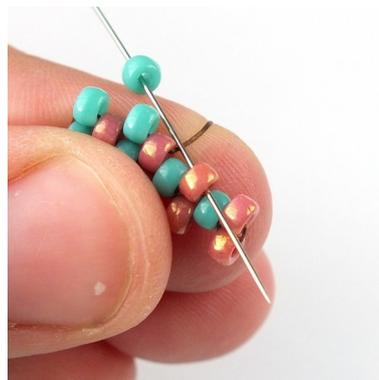
8) Remove the bead stopper and tie a square knot to connect both ends of the thread together.



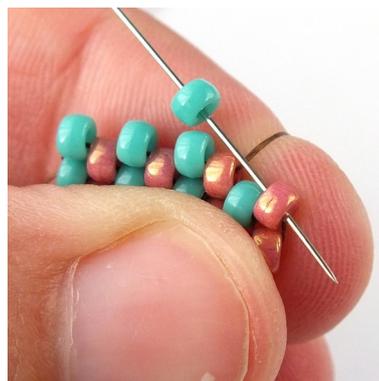
9) Let's make another row. The thread is exiting from the turquoise bead. Add one turquoise bead. Skip the bead that the thread is exiting from and pass through the next pink bead (the one that is sticking out).



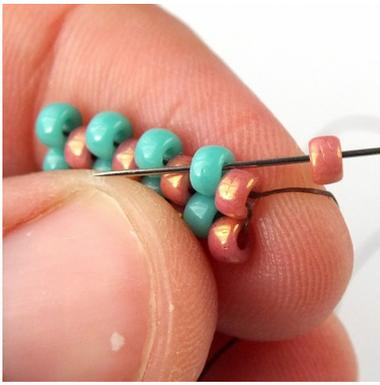
10) Add another turquoise bead. Skip the next turquoise bead (the one that lies below) and pass through the next pink bead (the one that is sticking out).



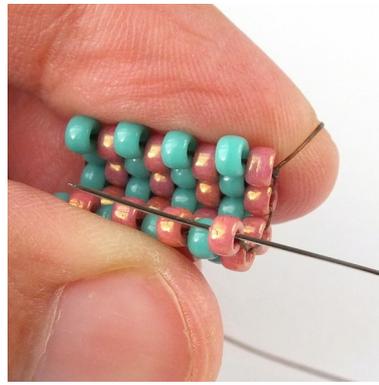
11) Repeat step 10 ...



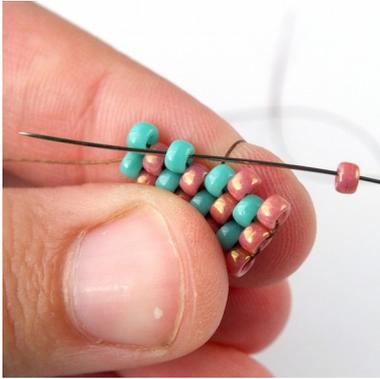
12) ... until you reach the end of the row.



13) Now add another row, just like in steps 9 – 12, but this time you'll be adding pink beads and passing through the turquoise ones ...



17) The thread is exiting from the pink bead on the top. If you were to add another row, you'll add new pink bead and pass through the next turquoise one. But instead of adding the new bead, we'll just pass through the nearest pink

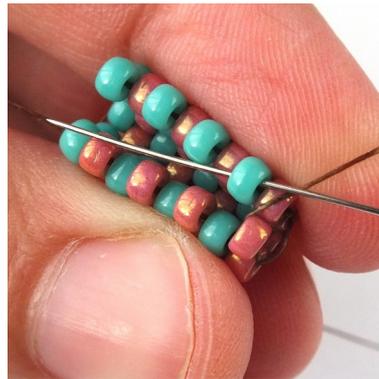


14) ... just like this.

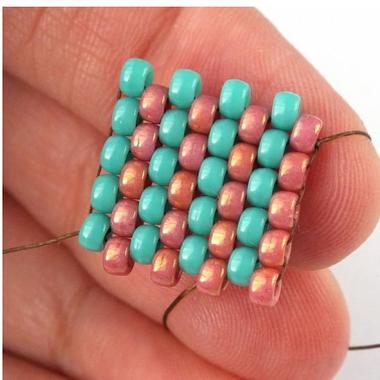
bead on the bottom side of the strip (as shown in the photo) ...



15) Keep adding new rows until you reach the desired length.



18) ... and then pass through the turquoise bead on the top side.



16) If you want to make a beaded bead, you should have the same amount of beads on both sides of the strip – as shown on the photo. There are five turquoise beads on the left, five pink beads on the right – and if you look

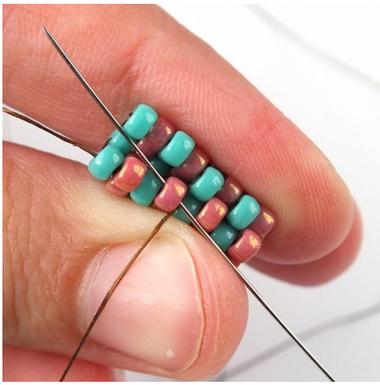


19) And again, pass through the next pink bead on the bottom ...

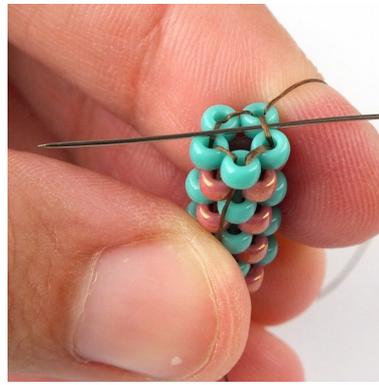
carefully, you'll notice that the pink beads on the bottom will fit right into the gaps between turquoise bead on the top – just like a zipper. And that's what we'll do right now.



20) ... and then through the turquoise one on the top.



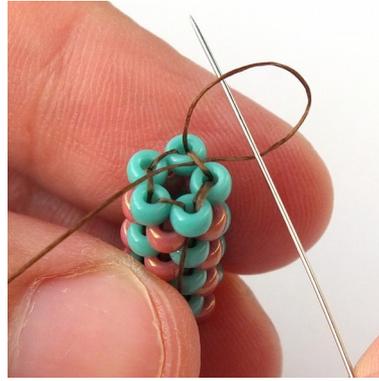
21) Repeat, until you reach the end of the row. This part is the tricky one, be careful not to make any mistakes.



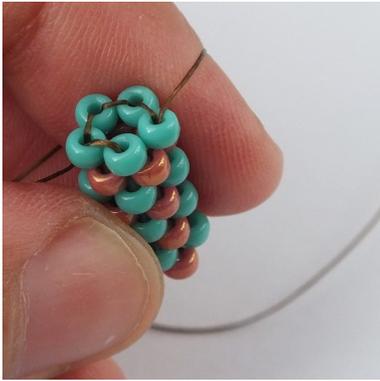
26) Now tie a few half-hitch knots to secure the end of the thread. Pass the needle under the thread between beads ...



22) This is what you should get.



27) ... pull the thread through to create a loop and then pass the needle through this loop.



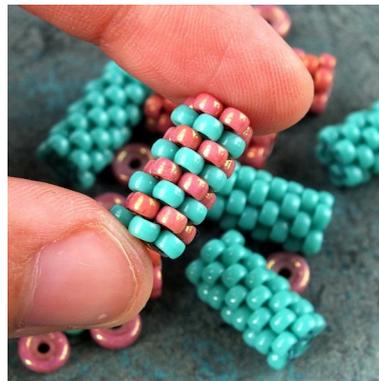
23) If you look on the side of the bead, you'll notice that the last turquoise bead (the one the thread is exiting from) is not yet connected with the first one.



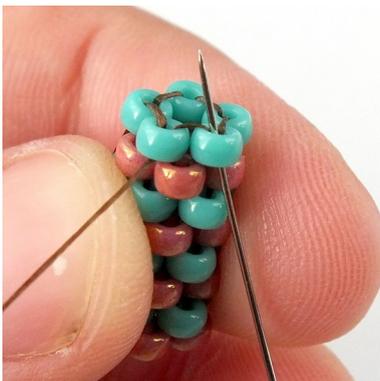
28) Pull the thread through to tighten the knot and then add at least one or two more. Then weave through a few beads and cut the thread off. Then do the same with the other end of the thread.



24) Pass the needle down through the first bead ...



29) The bead is finished.



25) ... and then back up through the last one.

Go make another one. And then another. When you get comfortable with the stitch, you can try using just one color of beads, smaller size of seed beads or even try making more intricate patterns. Get creative and make yourself a bunch of beaded beads.

You can string the finished beads on almost any kind of stringing material. I usually go for beading wire, but you can also use a leather or cotton cord or incorporate them in some simple wire-work – go check out the following beginner-friendly patterns for more inspiration.

www.matubobeads.com/inspiration/wax-cord-bracelet-60/

www.matubobeads.com/inspiration/wire-loop-bracelet-59/

www.matubobeads.com/inspiration/bamboo-beads-23/

