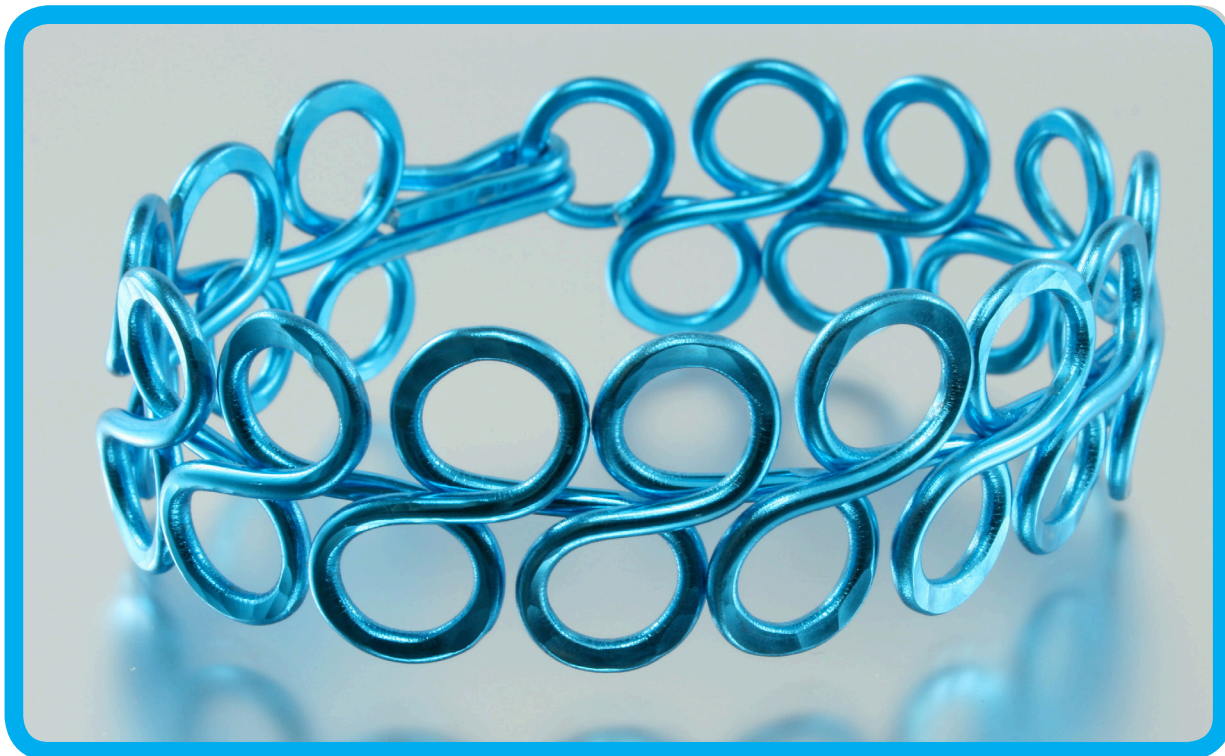


Infinity Bracelet



Author: Patti Bullard, Ph.D.



Difficulty Level: Easy

As fun to make as it is to wear, this anodized aluminum bracelet is sure to spark new ideas and designs that can be individualized with your own unique style of artistry. Anodized aluminum is so lightweight and comfortable to wear. You will lose yourself in the endless possibilities for working with this appealing metal. Working with a soft, color-coated wire such as anodized aluminum may be challenging when getting started, but the proper tools and a little extra attention to some simple techniques will ensure your success. For your convenience, Wired Up Beads has assembled Basic and Deluxe Kits to get you started making your Infinity Bracelets. Just check the "Kits" section of www.wiredupbeads.com.

This project takes a minimal number of tools and materials. When getting started, you may find it helpful to practice Step 1 through Step 8 with a piece of wire that is approximately 12 inches long. You



can then use that section of the bracelet to practice adding the hammered texture. Be forewarned, that once you get the technique down, you will no doubt want to make an Infinity Bracelet in every color. Now, for those of you who would like to try this pattern in copper, brass, or silver, head down to the bottom of this tutorial for some additional tips.



MATERIALS

- Anodized Aluminum Wire--12 gauge (4 ½ to 5 feet per bracelet)

TOOLS

- Large Wubbers Bail Making Pliers
- EuroTool Round/Flat Jaw Coiling Pliers with Nylon Jaw
- Italian Heavy Duty Flush Wire Cutters
- Fretz Mini Planishing Hammer
- Highly Polished Steel Block
- Metal Ruler



SAFETY WARNINGS: Always wear safety glasses to protect your eyes.

Step 1

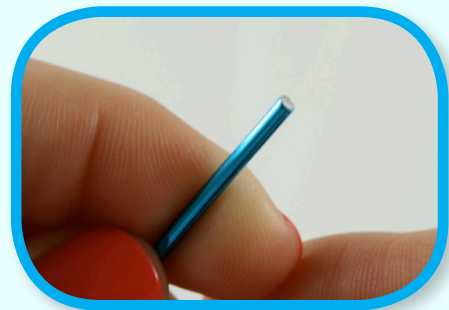


FLUSH CUTTING YOUR WIRE

Flush cut the end of your 12-gauge wire. To do this, place the flat side of jaws of the Heavy Duty Cutter toward the part of the wire that you are going to “keep.” Please remember to always wear protective eyewear and to shield yourself from flying bits of wire.

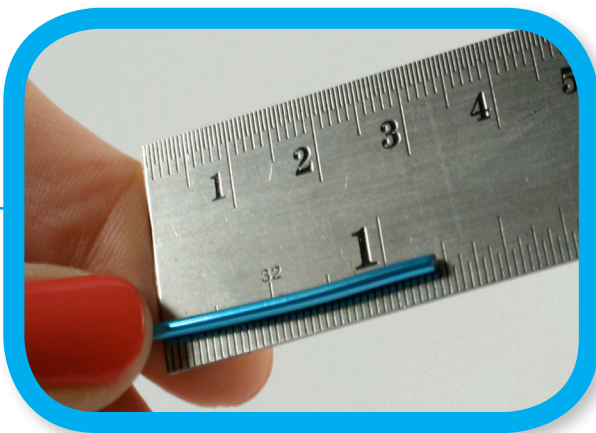
TOOL TIP

Save time and frustration by investing in a quality pair of flush cutters such as the Italian Made Heavy Duty Flush Cutters from Wired Up Beads. A nice flush cut should be flat as shown, with no points or jagged edges. This will make your finished jewelry look much nicer and will significantly reduce your filing and finishing time.



Step 2

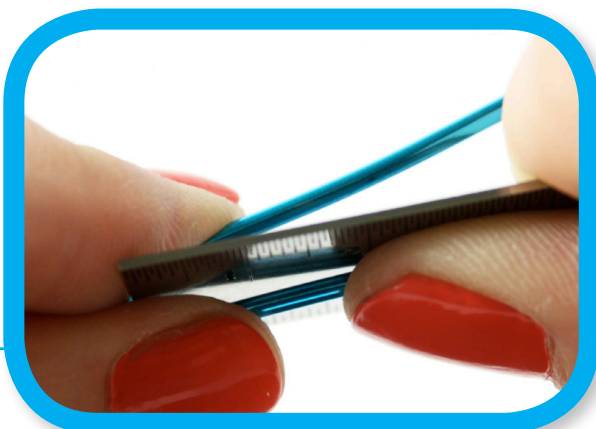
STARTING THE HOOK FOR THE CLASP



A) Place the flush-cut end of the wire on a metal ruler at the 1¼ inch mark.



B) Begin to bend the wire around the end of the ruler.



C) Keeping the tips of your fingers as close to the end of the ruler as possible will make it easier to get a sharp bend in the wire.



D) With the wire still around the end of the ruler, lay it on a steel block as shown. Use a Fretz Mini Planishing Hammer to gently hammer the loop so that the rounded end is more tightly closed.



E) Lay the wire on the block with the cut end of the wire away from you as shown. With light taps, add a hammered texture to this section of wire. This will later be the “right side” of your bracelet hook. You should create a light, but noticeable texture, but the wire itself should not be distorted or significantly flattened.

TOOL TIP

The Fretz Mini Planishing Hammer is an ideal choice for working with anodized aluminum wire. Its highly polished heads leave a nice shine on the colored wire and a lightly hammered texture that is very attractive. Additionally, this texture will make light marring of the soft aluminum wire unnoticeable. The Fretz Mini Planishing Hammer has quickly become a favorite of mine and is the perfect size for working with on this project.



Step 3

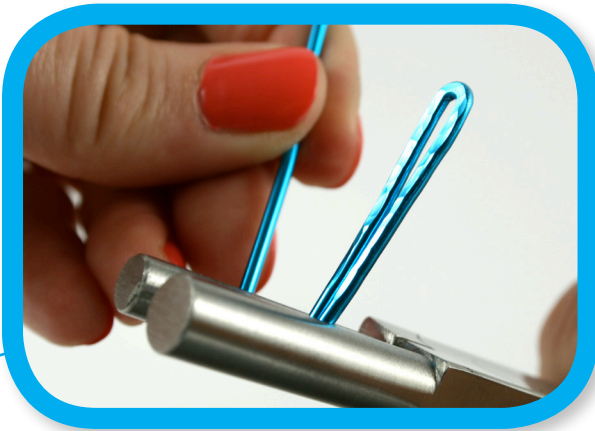
MAKING THE FIRST LOOP

A) Turn the wire so that the hammered side of the wire is away from you. Place the larger jaw of the Large Wubbers Bailmaking Pliers snug against the cut end of the wire and close the jaws of the pliers as shown.

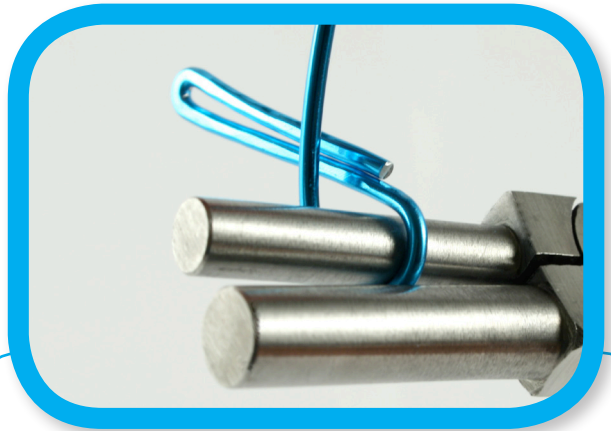


TOOL TIP

When working with a very soft, color-coated wire such as anodized aluminum, practice working with as little pressure as possible when gripping or manipulating the wire. Even with a gentle hand and the best of tools, you will likely see some minimal marring on the wire in places. This bracelet pattern has been designed such that any minor marring is either rolled out of sight when forming the loops or later smoothed over with a light hammered texture.



B) Begin to make a loop around the smaller jaw of your pliers.



C) Notice that the large jaw has now been rotated a little less than 180 degrees from its first position and is no longer touching the flush cut end of the wire. You will continue to coil the wire in such a way that it crosses over the front side of the wire that will later form the hook.



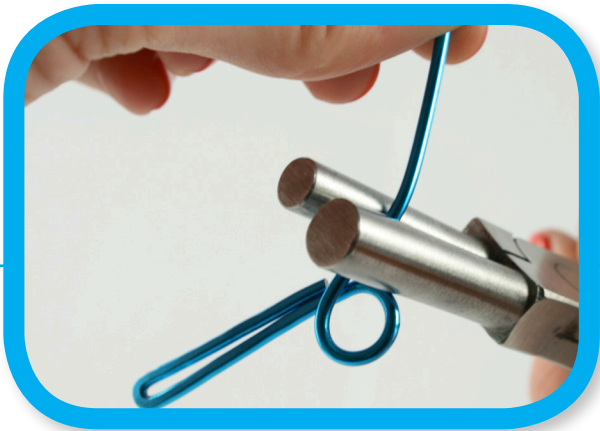
D) This is another view of what the completed first loop should look like as you are finishing it.

Step 4

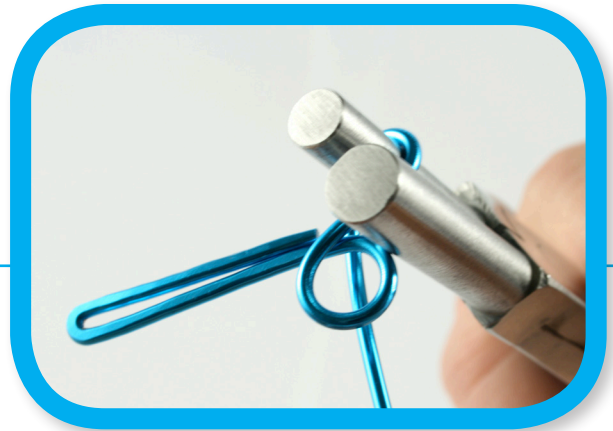
MAKING THE SECOND LOOP

A) To begin making the second loop of your bracelet, flip your work so that the first loop is turned down. The hammered side on the part that will be the hook is still turned away from you. Place the Wubbers Bail Making Pliers with the large jaw next to the first loop and the small jaw on the opposite side of the wire where the flush cut end is located.





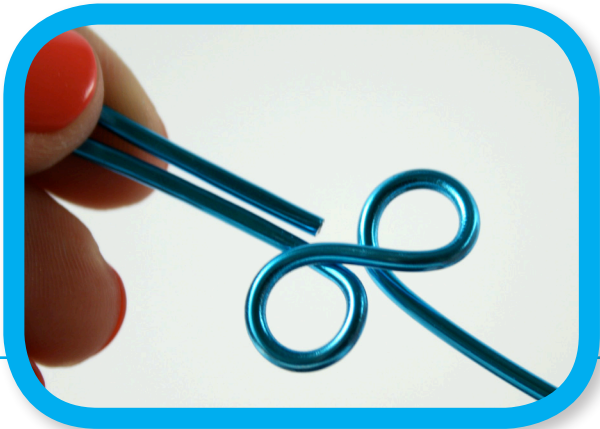
B) You will begin to curve the wire around the small jaw of the pliers.



C) For this second loop, be sure to cross the wire on the back side of your work as demonstrated.

Step 5

ADJUSTING THE SECOND LOOP



A) Once the loop is completed, remove the jaw of the pliers to take a look at your work. It will most likely be positioned similarly to the photo above.



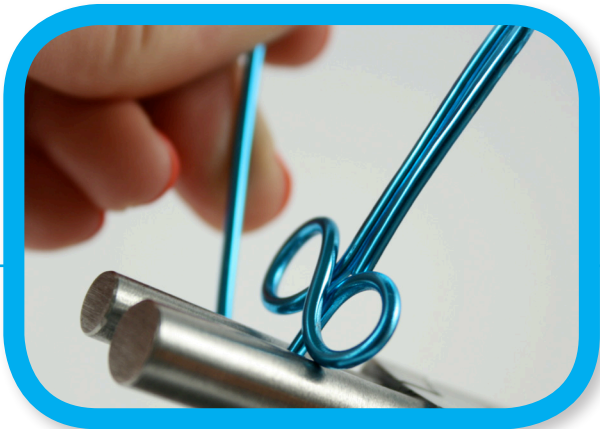
B) Anodized aluminum wire is soft enough that you can use your fingers to adjust the loop so that it touches the flush cut end of the wire. When you make this adjustment, take care not to distort or change the size of your first loop.

Step 6

MAKING THE THIRD LOOP

A) Place the large jaw of your pliers next to the second loop that was just formed.

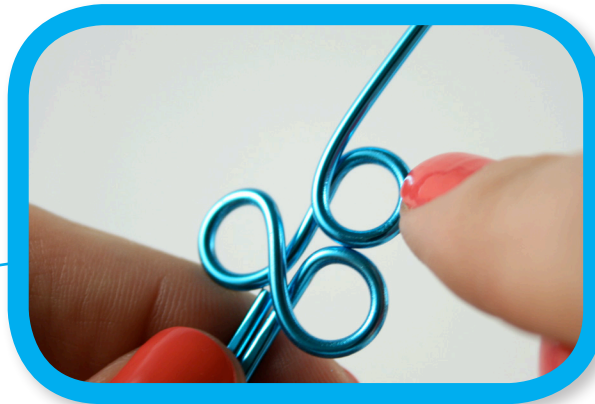




B) Begin to form the third loop by wrapping the wire around the small jaw of your pliers.



C) This loop will be formed just like the first loop, with the wire crossing over on the front side of your work.

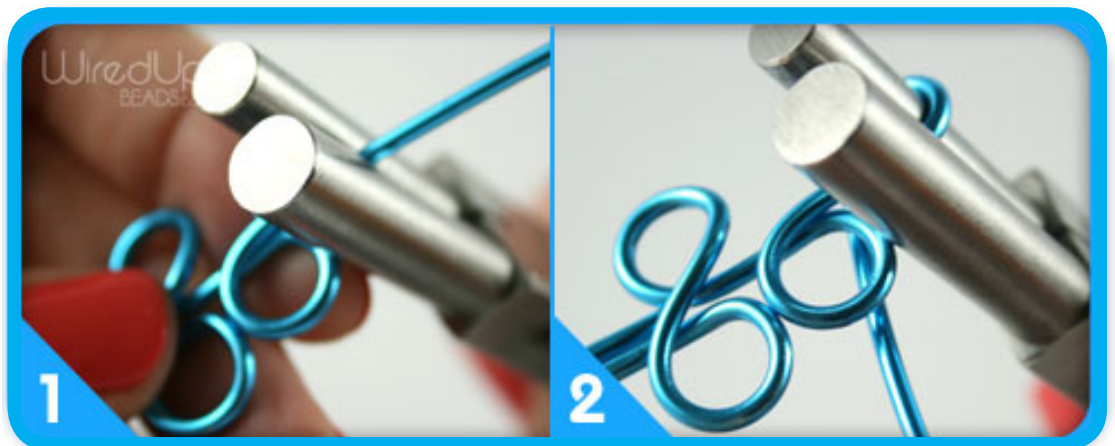


D) Your work should now look like this.

Step 7

MAKING THE FOURTH LOOP

Repeat Step 4 to make the fourth loop. From this point on, you will likely find it easier to roll the loop into place using the pliers rather than your fingers. With a little practice, it will become fast and easy.



Step 8

FINISHING THE HOOK FOR THE CLASP



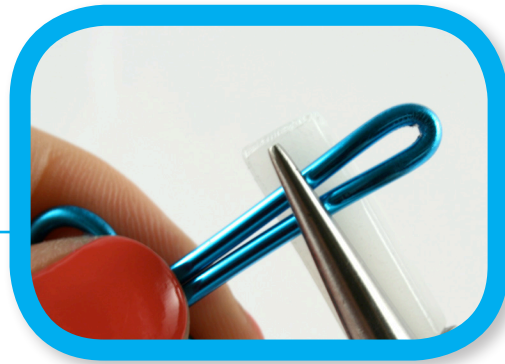
A) After making the first four loops, it's time to complete the hook for the clasp. Using the EuroTool Round/Flat Coiling Pliers with Nylon Jaw, place the end of the loop at the edge of the nylon jaw.



B) Bend the loop gently to about a 45 degree angle. The textured side is still turned away from you.



C) Bend the loop gently to about a 45 degree angle. The textured side is still turned away from you.



D) Rotate your pliers so that the metal jaw is toward you, placing the right edge of the nylon jaw approximately where the first bend is located.



E) Bend the wire toward you to finish forming the hook.



F) If needed, readjust the hook and loops so that the original flush cut end of the wire is snug against the second loop.

Step 9

COMPLETING THE LOOPS

Continue making the loops, making sure to keep the over and under crossing patterns consistent. An average size bracelet will be approximately 14 to 15 loops down each side. Measure the bracelet to your wrist to determine the proper length, allowing for the length of the hook.



Step 10

FINISHING OFF THE LAST LOOP



On the backside of your bracelet, flush cut the wire on the last loop so that the end of the wire does not show from the front side of the bracelet. When using quality cutters and soft wire such as anodized aluminum, the cut should be smooth and will not need filing or sanding.

Step 11

ADDING A HAMMERED TEXTURE

Now for the real fun! It's time to add the hammered texture to your bracelet. You may want to place your bracelet on the edge of your polished steel block, making it easier to avoid hammering on the spots where the wire crosses over itself. With the Fretz Planishing Hammer, lightly tap the wire using the domed end of the hammer.

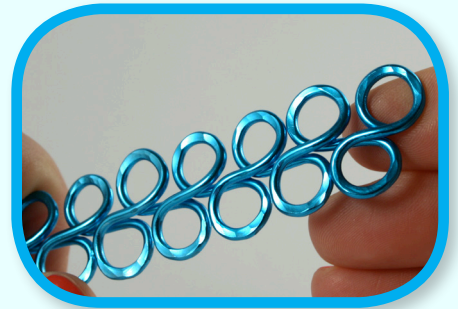


TOOL TIP

A nicely polished steel block is best when hammering anodized aluminum wire because it will not leave any undesired residue or scratches on the finish of your wire. If your block is dull or the surface is rough or dirty, your block can be cleaned with a piece of #0000 steel wool or you can polish it using a felt wheel with a polishing compound. Please remember to always wear safety glasses and to wear a mask to protect yourself from breathing any polishing compound.

TOOL TIP

If you are a beginner at creating a hammered texture, the phrase to remember (particularly when working with anodized aluminum) is the old adage, "Less is more." A typical first experience is often filled with exuberant pounding and frequently ends with a very flattened, overworked piece of metal. That being said, a healthy hammering session can be a great stress reliever and a very satisfying experience that can leave you relaxed and smiling!

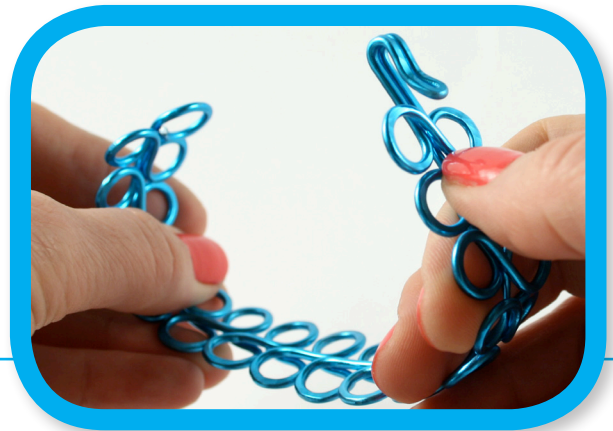


Step 12

SHAPING THE BRACELET INTO A CUFF



A) Start with one end of the bracelet and gradually bend it into a curved shape, making sure the textured side is on the outside of the bracelet. You will find anodized aluminum wire is easy to manipulate, yet able to hold a nice shape once it is finished.



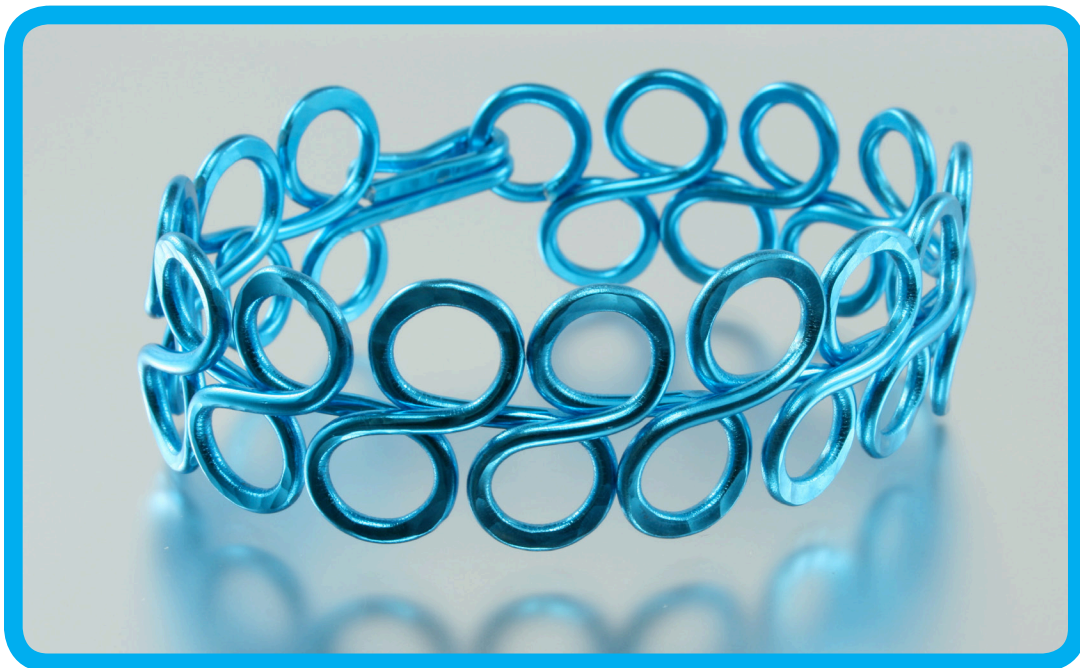
B) Flip the bracelet around and shape the second end so that the bracelet is now beginning to form an oval shape.



C) Next, turn the bracelet so that you can refine the shape by applying pressure with your fingers on the outside of it. Inspect and then adjust any of the loops that are slightly out of place or turned at a little different angle.



D) Make final adjustments to the hook so that it slides nicely into the last loop of the bracelet. One of the benefits of this design is that it is possible to adjust the length of the bracelet by stretching the loops evenly along the entire length of the bracelet. It can be shortened to some degree by pushing the loops a little closer together along the length of the bracelet.



Prepare to love wearing your new anodized aluminum bracelet. It is so lightweight, that you will not even know that it is on your arm. Best of all, you will have so much fun with this new, colorful accessory. It's guaranteed that you will find yourself smiling every time you put it on!