

“Mended Heart” Steampunk Necklace

By Brandy-Michelle

Steampunk has grown on me, and the jewelry inspired by it is a mix of innovation and industrial vintage. The Age of Steampunk, while it was set within the Victorian era, was beyond its time and revolutionary for its day. The inventions and machines designed within this unique era were both functional and unconventional works of art.

This is the inspiration for my “Mended Heart” necklace. While it is not as complex as most steampunk pieces, it conveys not only a steampunk feel but also a mixed media vibe with the different materials I have used. The gears and leather used in the piece are essential steampunk. Rivets, leather lace, pre-fab gears, and scrap fabric are just some of the materials you’ll need to complete this piece. You can also do any kind of variation you would like. Maybe along with the gears, you want to use a lock and key theme, or butterflies are also popular to include. That’s the great thing about art. No two pieces are ever the same and it is always up for interpretation!



Materials List

- Leather disc, approx. 3 inches in diameter
- Leather lace, approx. 8-10” in length
- Leather cord (thin)
- Pre-fab gears (Idea-ology®, Available at Michael’s, Joann’s, or Hobby Lobby)
- Leather rivets
- E6000 glue
- Copper wire
- Fabric scraps
- Don’t forget any extra materials you may need to do a variation on this project.

Tool List – Don’t forget Safety Glasses!

- Rubber Mallet/hammer
- Bench block
- Wubbers Classic Bent nose Pliers
- Wubbers Classic Round Nose Pliers
- Flush cutters
- Safety glasses
- Hole punch
- Scissors

Step 1

Cut the shape of the heart out of a 3 inch leather disc. (Leather scrap packs can be found at Hobby Lobby for about \$8-\$10) Cut down the center using a zig-zag cut. (This doesn't have to be perfect and it actually looks better if it's not.)

Step 2

Punch 3 holes along each half of the the zig-zag area. You do not really want to go all the way to top because you want the heart to look like it's still broken but being mended.

If you need to widen the holes, you can use the Wubbers Classic Round Nose Pliers to open them up a bit more on both front and back so that the leather lace will fit through.

(In the picture it shows the gears and rivets are already applied, but the necklace had been made prior so I had to work a little backwards and could not remove gears without damaging leather)



Adding Rivets

Step 3

Punch a hole at the top rounded corner of the heart half and place rivet. You can use a rubber mallet or ball peen hammer with flat side to hammer in the rivet. (Make sure you wear safety goggles during this process because the rivet can take flight!)



Adding Laces and Gears

Step 4

Lace the heart up from back to front starting at the bottom, so that the tied bow ends up in the front and near the middle of the heart. It's ok if the pieces do not end up symmetrical. It adds more interest if the pieces look off-center. You can use any color leather lace you would like. In this tutorial I used forest green.

Add the gears in an interesting mix of big and small. They can even come off the edge as you see in the photo. Use E6000 glue to adhere the gears to the leather. A small pea-size drop is just enough. Allow to set and dry for about 5 minutes.



Linking Gears Together

Step 5

Cut and tear scraps of fabric for linking the gears together. Cut six 4 inch long pieces, three for each side. Alternating between wheels and gears, tie them together in double knots as shown. (You will not have fabric knots on the first or last gears because you will have different media attaching them to respective parts.)



Attaching Gear Links to Heart

Step 6

Once all the gears are linked together, make sure the front side of gears are facing the front and tie them with small leather cord to the heart using the hole in the rivet.



Completing the Look

Step 7

On the other end of gear links, take a thicker leather lace and wrap around last gear/wheel and then wire wrap the lace using copper wire for a more finished look. Do this on each side and tie the ends together. This lace should be about 8-10 inches in length. Tie the ends together in a bow for easy on/off removal of the necklace.



Step 8

After all is said and done, your finished project should look like this!

This is a romantic project, which is both feminine and fun. Enjoy wearing it.



Review Questions

- 1) What is NOT an element of Steampunk design?
 - a) Keys
 - b) Gears
 - c) computers
 - d) skulls

- 2) True or False. It is acceptable to use flat nose pliers to widen the holes punched into your leather.
 - a) True
 - b) False

- 3) The _____ are applied while wearing safety goggles.
 - a) Gears
 - b) Wire
 - c) Rivets

- 4) Steampunk is the revolutionary era of invention and design within the _____ Age.
 - a) Bronze
 - b) Victorian
 - c) Stone

- 5) Linking your gears to your heart happens in what step of the project?
 - a) Step 2
 - b) Step 4
 - c) Step 5