

Sea Glass and Swirls Earrings

By Alisa Gannon

These fun earrings are great with summer outfits. I happen to be lucky enough to live on the shores of Lake Erie with access to some sea glass. These are rarer, light aqua pieces that I purchased from Etsy. You can also purchase faux sea glass. Just be sure that you don't label it as genuine sea glass.

The hardest part is drilling the sea glass. Make sure you practice on a few pieces before you work on your good glass. Once you have the technique down you'll be creating all kinds of fun sea glass jewelry!



Materials List

- 2 pieces of sea glass-similar in color and size
- 8 inches of sterling silver round wire
- 2 sterling silver ear wires-purchased or handmade

Tool List

- Shallow plastic container
- Piece of wood or sponge
- Drill, rotary tool, or flex shaft for drilling
- 1.5-2mm diamond core drill bit*
- Device for holding glass-old pliers, craft stick, ring clamp
- Liquid lubricant such as Bur-Life
- Safety glasses
- Steel block
- Chasing hammer
- WUBBERS Classic Round Nose Pliers
- WUBBERS Classic Chain Nose Pliers
- BABY WUBBERS Bent Chain Nose Pliers
- Steel wool to remove any tool marks but if you use WUBBERS, you probably won't have any

* available from www.lascodiamond.com

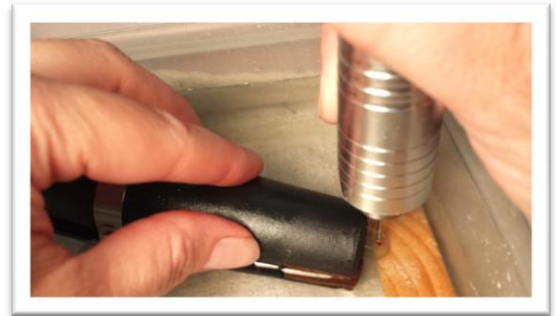
Step One

Fill your plastic container with water so that the top of the sea glass is just barely under water when supported on the block or sponge.

SAFETY TIP: Working with water and electricity can be dangerous. *Even though, if using a flex shaft and the motor is not near the water, make sure only the drill bit will be submerged and no other part of your drilling implement.* Unplug the drill after use and move away from the water.

Mark your glass pieces where you want the holes to be.

Place a liquid lubricant such as Bur-Life on the drill bit. Put on your safety glasses. Then, holding the drill with the diamond drill bit, drill straight down into the glass. Go about halfway through.



TIP: A few drops of Dawn dishwashing detergent in the water will also act as a lubricant.

Step Two

Turn the glass over and you'll see a white bubble where you drilled. Mark that spot with a marker. Then drill from the back side until you reach the middle. *If you just drill straight through, the exit hole will be chipped and ragged looking.*

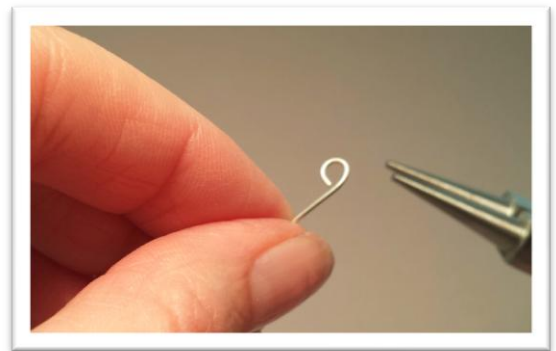
Repeat with your second piece of glass.



Step Three

Flush cut a 4-inch length of round sterling silver wire.

Make a small loop using the tips of your Wubbers Classic Round Nose Pliers.

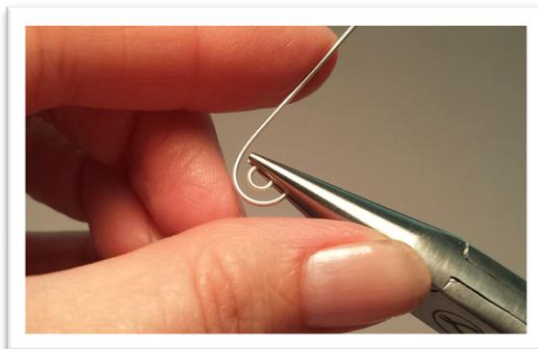


Step Four

Hold your loop with your Wubbers Classic Chain Nose Pliers and carefully bend the wire around the loop.



Continue bending the wire into a spiral going around twice. Remove any tool marks if needed by lightly rubbing with fine steel wool.



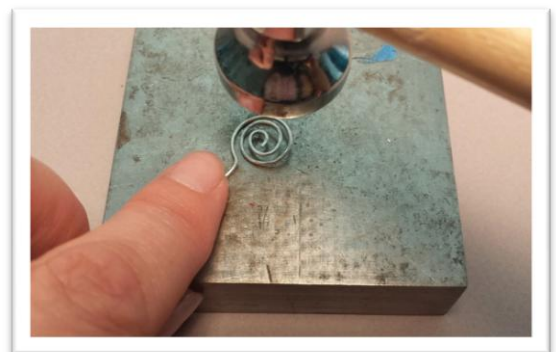
Step Five

Using your chain nose pliers, bend the wire down directly under the beginning of the inside loop. It should look like a lollipop.



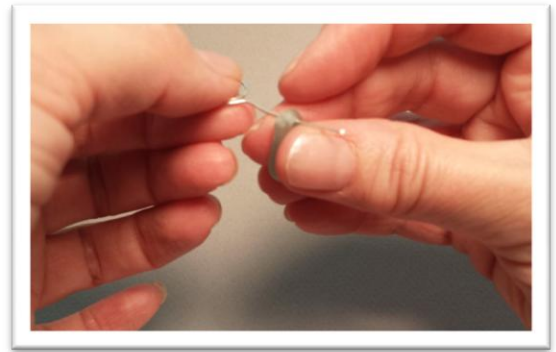
Step Six

Place the spiral on a steel block and, using the round side of a chasing hammer, texture both sides of the spiral. Then give it a couple of taps with the flat side to strengthen it.



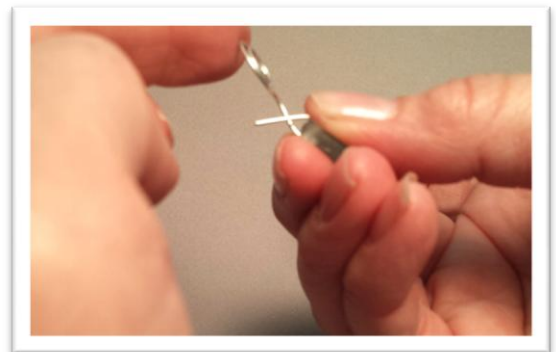
Step Seven

Thread your sea glass onto the wire, leaving about half an inch between the spiral and the middle of the glass.



Step Eight

Use your fingers to bend the wire around the sea glass on both sides. Forming a loose triangle.



Step Nine

Holding the sea glass with your hand, wrap the tail around twice. I like the Baby Wubbers Bent Chain Nose Pliers or the Wubbers Looping Pliers for intricate work like this.

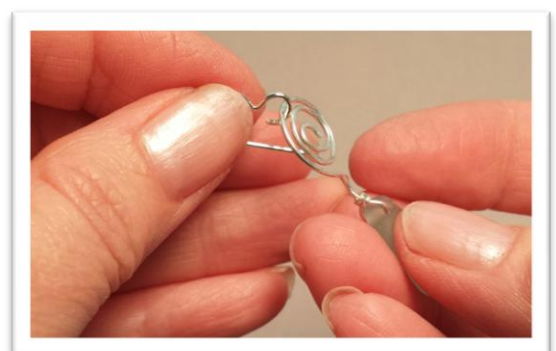
Cut off any excess in back and press the end down.



Step Ten

Attach an ear wire to the top of the loop.

Repeat with your second piece, making sure the spiral faces the opposite direction when threading the glass on.



Admire your earrings and wait for the compliments.



You can even make a matching pendant the same way with a bigger and heavier piece of sea glass.



Review Questions

- 1) The bigger the sea glass, the...
 - a) More fabulous the earrings will be.
 - b) Heavier the earring will be.
 - c) The more wire you will need.
- 2) To drill through glass, you will need...
 - a) A very sharp file.
 - b) A rawhide mallet and a nail or automatic punch.
 - c) A diamond core drill.
- 3) Drill through the glass while having the glass submerged in...
 - a) Water.
 - b) Gel.
 - c) Sardine oil.
- 4) Drill half-way through the glass, then turn it over and drill the other half in order to...
 - a) Make the hole larger.
 - b) Keep from chipping the glass.
 - c) Make 2 holes at different lengths so the wearer has a choice of where to place the spirals.

- 5) Placing the spiral on a steel block and hammering it will....
- a) Make a cool looking oval spiral.
 - b) Loosen up the spirals for a more natural, organic look.
 - c) Work harden the spirals which will strengthen them.