

Wrapped Wire Paddle Earrings

By Patty Frederick

I love making earrings. It is a challenge to get creativity into such a small package, which is why it's so much fun. I also love "sparking" the new student's desire with a fairly simple design, but one that still packs a creative wallop! This design is geared toward the new metal worker.

So here we go!



Materials List

- 14 gauge silver wire approx. 9"
- 20 gauge wire, metal of your choice (I used brass wire on mine) 6-8" long
- 6mm jump rings, Qty: 2
- Focal bead with 2" headpin, or make your own headpin
- 20 gauge silver wire 4-5 " long to make ear wires

Tool List – Don't forget Safety Glasses!

- Butane torch or soldering torch
- Fireproof surface
- Pickle pot and copper tongs
- Liver of sulfur
- WUBBERS Large Bail Making Pliers
- WUBBERS Medium Flat Nose Pliers
- WUBBERS Classic Chain Nose Pliers
- WUBBERS Classic Round Nose Pliers
- Ruler
- Chasing hammer
- Rawhide hammer
- Bench block
- Flush wire cutters
- #2 file
- Tumbler and stainless steel shot, if available

Project Steps

Step 1: Cut 14 gauge silver wire 4 ½" long. Draw a bead* on the end of each wire with a torch.

Quench in water, pickle, and rinse.



* **TIP:** Use a torch to heat the tip of your wire until it "balls up" into a neat bead at the end. Dip the end of the wire in flux before heating if you're using sterling silver.

Step 2: Using a chasing hammer and a bench block, hammer beaded ends to form a paddle.



Step 3: Using a ring mandrel, wrap the wire around the largest area and overlap so that the wires are crossing.

Step 4: Take the 20 gauge accent wire and wrap the two wires together. Wrap tightly for a secure fit. As you approach the center point, leave the wire a little loose so that you can add your jump ring. Finish wrapping.

At the beginning and the end, trim your wire and use your crimp pliers to tighten the cut wires. This will prevent the accent wire from coming loose.

At this point, the flat part of the paddles may be facing you. Twist them gently with the flat nose pliers so that they are facing down.



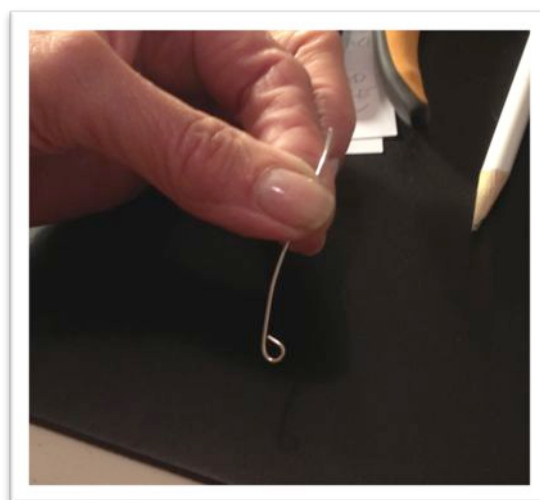
Step 5: Using a ball peen hammer, round end of a chasing hammer, or texture hammer, hammer the earrings so that there is definition or a hammered design in the metal. Flatten with rawhide hammer if necessary. Oxidize the earrings with liver of sulfur and clean. Set aside.

Making the Ear Wires

Step 6: Cut two pieces of 20 gauge silver wire, each 2 ¼" long. Turn a loop at one end. Make the loop large enough to add to the jump ring and allow a little "play." If the loop is too tight the earring will not hang properly.

I always trim the wire blunt with my wire cutters, then using my crimping pliers, I gently tighten the loop so that the blunt cut sits just up against the wire.

Using the largest side of bail making pliers, wrap the ear wires around the bail to make an open loop.



Step 7: File the end of the wire flush. Use the flat nose pliers to make a bend in the wire at the end for the finishing touch. Use the Wubbers Classic Chain Nose Pliers to open the ring and hang the earring.

Step 8: Add your wire-wrapped focal bead, then tumble the earrings to work harden and polish them.



Your beautiful earrings are ready to wear!



Review Questions

- 1) True/False. To “draw a bead” means to grab a pen and paper and make a drawing of a round bead.
 - a) True
 - b) False

- 2) How can firescale be removed from metal?
 - a) Wire brush
 - b) Pickle
 - c) Sandpaper
 - d) All of the above

- 3) True/False. You can “work harden” metal by tumbling it with stainless steel shot in a tumbler.
 - a) True
 - b) False

- 4) True/False. The only way to add ear wires to your earrings is to make them yourself.
 - a) True
 - b) False

- 5) When flattening the hoops after hammering to create a texture, what type of hammer is best?
 - a) Rawhide hammer
 - b) Ball peen hammer
 - c) Framing hammer