

Spiral Wire for Jewelry

By Sharilyn Miller

Spirals have been used in jewelry and other art forms for so many centuries, it's impossible to say who invented them first. The spiral as a symbol is universal and rich with meaning; as a design motif, it's beautifully balanced. Spirals obviously lead the eye to the center, so it's really important for a jewelry artist to make spirals with tight "belly buttons" (as I call them). Some spirals are finished tight, others loose and open; most are round, but some spirals become oblong, oval-shaped, or take on other shapes. Nevertheless, beautiful spirals all start with a tight, tiny bud in the center. What you do with your spiral from there is up to you, and I think you'll agree that the possibilities are practically without limit.

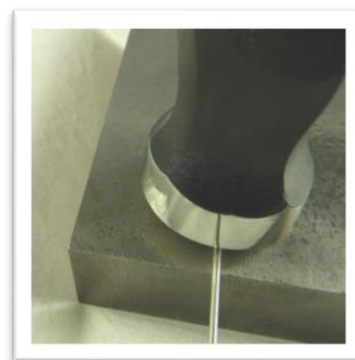


Tools and Materials List

- Wire
- Round nose Pliers (Recommended pliers: Wubbers Classic Round Nose Pliers)
- Chain nose Pliers (Recommended pliers: Wubbers Classic Chain Nose Pliers)
- Flat-nose Pliers (optional, Recommended pliers: Wubbers Classic Narrow Nose Pliers)
- Chasing or planishing hammer (optional)

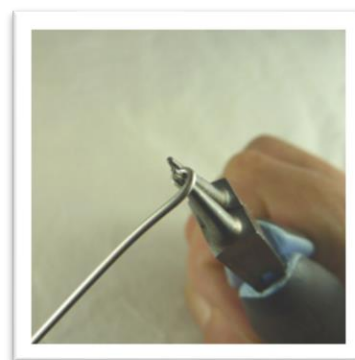
Step 1

After carefully cleaning your wire, flush-cut a length of about six inches.



Step 2

Grasp the hammered wire end near the tips of the small round-nose pliers, and bend a very tiny loop in the wire. If the loop is still too big, gently close it in the tips of chain-nose pliers.



Step 3

To spiral the wire, place it in the back of either chain-nose or flat-nose pliers with the beginning spiral facing away from you. Place your thumb against the spiral and bend the wire using the tool. Bending tiny amounts at a time will render a tight spiral.



Step 4

To turn your spiral into a headpin, simply bend the remaining wire straight up out of it as shown, so that it resembles a lollipop.



I hope you enjoyed this course.

