

# Working With Chain and Linking With Chain

Chain is supplied in one of two ways - finished lengths with a clasp (normally 16", 18", 20" etc) and continuous chain measured from a spool. The finished chain tends to be finer than the continuous chain and indeed fine curb chain is much less expensive to buy as a finished length than as a continuous length - this is due to the plating problems encountered when spooling fine chain through a plating bath.

Chain is made in many different link patterns - the most common are

Trace Chain - Oval links which sit at 90° to one another (think about the type of chain used for ships' anchors) so you see alternate links face on. Thicker trace style chains are known as belcher pattern. An excellent pattern for linking onto and making more intricate linked meshes.

Curb Chain - Twisted round links that sit flat against one another so you see all of the links face on. This type of chain always flexes beautifully and hangs in smooth curves or makes soft tassels.

Rope Chain - A double or triple linked chain made from oval rings which gives the impression of a twisted rope. Ideal for using as a blank length to support a pendant but not suitable for linking onto either at the end or anywhere along the length.

Snake Chain - Intricately linked series of very fine plates of shaped metal which produces a strong cylindrical rope - always supplied as a finished length as the ends need to be soldered onto the connector for the clasp. Fern chain is the flat version of snake chain. Neither chain will take a link along the length.

Serpentine Chain - A series of flattened S-shaped closed links usually supplied as a finished length only. Although the end of the chain shows a small hole which can be used for linking onto, the main length does not offer this opportunity.

## Chains for Linking

There are two main types of chain suitable for making linked jewellery and linked patterns - trace chain and curb chain. In general you will get a more flexible result if you use a jump ring of a similar size to the links in the chain to make all of the joins. If you are dangling looped pins from the chain you can make the link straight onto the chain (which will tend to give a more bunched look) or use a jump ring (which will give a more open finish).

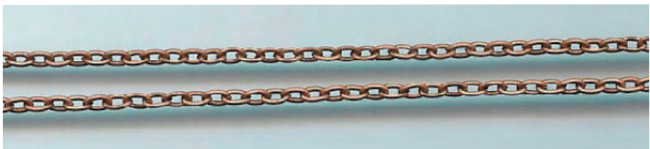
## Chains Supplied By Spellbound Bead Co



Finished lengths of fine curb chain (FN165 - FN168) and trace chain (FN160-FN163) in SP and GP. Use with 4mm jump rings (FN141) for linking purposes. Use for necklaces to carry pendants, chain tassels, fine safety chains and chain earrings



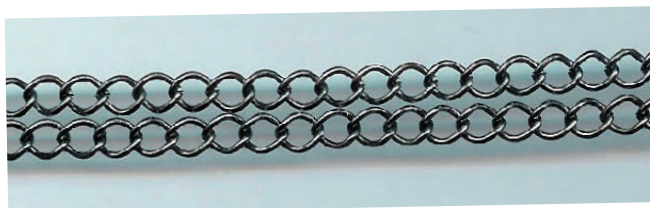
FN130 Plated continuous trace chain with 2.4mm links available in SP, GP, antique copper and gunmetal black. Use 4mm jump rings (FN141) for linking purposes. Use for neck chains, tassels, swags and linked chain mesh designs.



FN131 Plated continuous trace chain with 4mm links available in SP, GP, antique copper and gunmetal black. Use 4mm jump rings (FN141) for linking purposes. Use for neck chains, bracelet chains, tassels, swags and linked chain mesh designs.



FN132 Plated continuous curb chain with 6mm medium weight links available in SP, GP, antique copper and gunmetal black. Use 4mm (FN141) or 5mm jump rings (FN064) for linking purposes. Use for neck chains, bracelet chains, tassels, extension chains, fringed necklace designs and lightweight charm bracelets.



FN133 Plated continuous curb chain with 7mm heavier weight links available in SP, GP, antique copper and gunmetal black. Use 6mm jump rings (FN142) for linking purposes. Use for neck chains, bracelet chains, fringed necklace designs and charm bracelets.

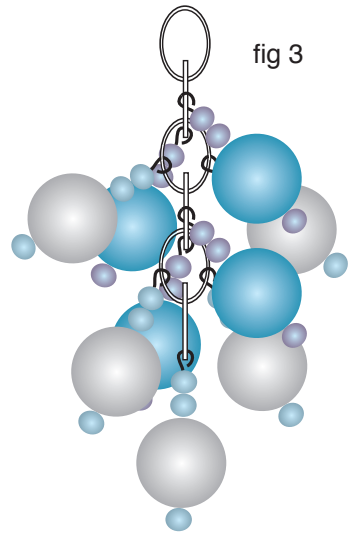
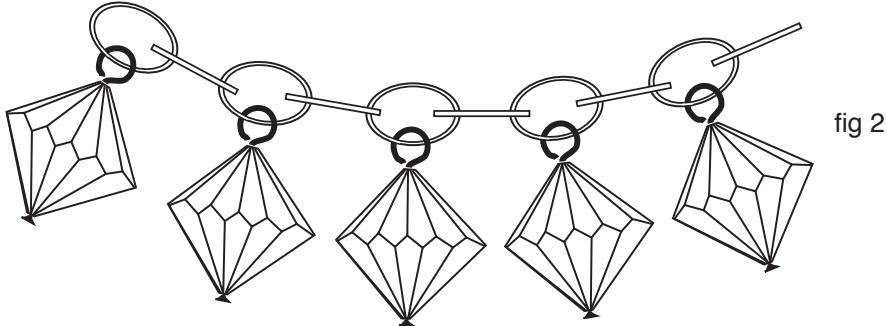
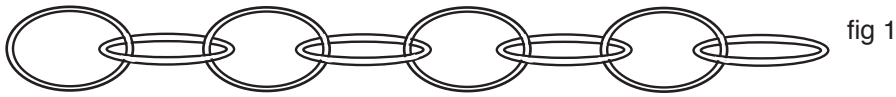
## Preparing Chain for Use

Cut the chain with wire cutters through the side of the link and make sure that you remove all of the cut link - it can easily get left behind only to fall off once you have linked onto it.

Cutting multiple lengths - if you need lots of lengths all the same, cut the first length against your measure. Push a pin through the end link of the cut chain and hold up in front of you. Slip the end link of the uncut length onto the pin. With the chains hanging side by side you can then see exactly which link to cut to match up with the first length.

## Using Trace Chain

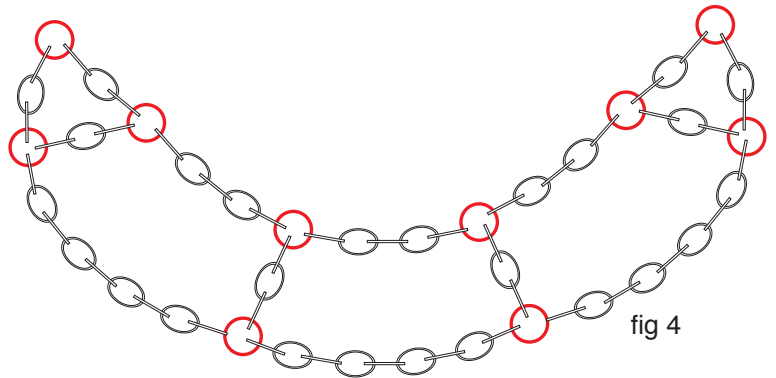
The oval links of trace chain sit at 90° to one another (fig 1) - this means that alternate links face in one direction and the links inbetween face in the opposite direction. If you use alternate links to support beaded pins you will get a fringe effect (fig 2). Note that the pins are all joined to the same side of the chain - if you alternate which side of the chain you use you will get a fuller looking fringe but it will not all lie true and can look a little messy. If you use each link of the chain (fig 3)(especially if you link onto each side of each link) you will get a bunched effect and if you hang the chain vertically the effect will be very much like a bunch of grapes.



When linking together short lengths of trace chain make sure that you use an odd number of links along the length of each piece of chain - in that way the jump rings that you need to link the pieces together will all lie in the same plane (fig 4).

### IDEAL USES FOR TRACE CHAIN

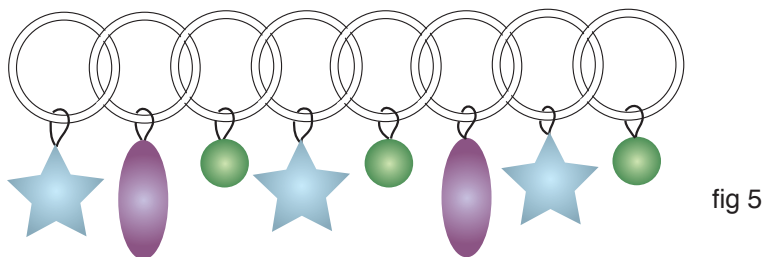
Chain link mesh designs (like fig 4); bag charms and chain tassels.



## Using Curb Chain

The twisted links of curb chain line up side by side making a chain that lies flat against the skin. Fine curb chain makes excellent neck chain for simple pendants and chain tassels for delicate earrings. Fine curb chain is best bought as a finished chain with a clasp - the clasp can be cut off and used for another project- try to buy the longest neckchain you can if you are going to do this as you will pay less per cm of chain.

As the links of curb chain lie flat against the skin it is best used for fringing designs where the danglers are attached to one side of the chain only (fig 5). If you attach danglers to both sides of the chain the weight of the danglers will distort the lie of the chain and it will tend to twist and be uncomfortable to wear.



### IDEAL USES FOR CURB CHAIN

Charm bracelets, fringed necklace centres, extension chains and safety chains.

If you want to learn more about chain try one of the chain projects on the website or look out for our range of kits using swagged chain and dangling pendants available from Autumn 2008.