

Basic Bead Weaving - Herringbone Stitch for Beginners

Herringbone stitch is a gloriously flexible stitch for seed beads and other small beads. The beads line up in a herringbone / chevron pattern and in simple herringbone technique you add the beads two at a time, so it grows quickly too. Try out the stitch with a small sampler (below) and a length of herringbone rope (following page).

Starting Simply

To begin with it's a good idea to make a small square of herringbone stitch. This will get you used to the way the beads interlock. Each two-bead stitch stacks on top of the previous two-bead stitch forming a V-shaped column - make several of these V shaped columns in a row and you form the herringbone or chevron effect. Making a 10 x 14 bead square, shown in the grid below, will get you started. Learn an easy way to start the stitch, how to work the double stitch technique and to follow a simple pattern. Refer to the Spellbound

Techniques download 'Beadwork Basics' for further information about keeper beads and finishing off thread ends.

Materials Needed

You will need 3g each of two colours of the same sized seed beads - size 8/0 are a good choice for your first project. Call the colour for the pattern A and the background colour B.

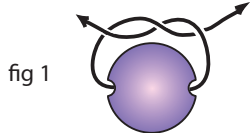
A size 10 beading needle

A reel of Nymo beading thread

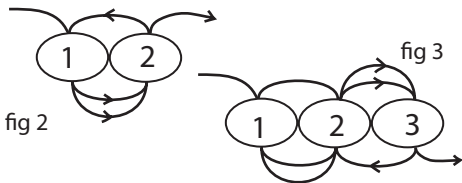
A pair of scissors and a plain rule to help you to follow the pattern sequence across the grid

1 When you are starting to learn a new stitch it is important that the first few rows are easy to hold and feel firm between your fingers. To make this as easy as possible the first row will be made as a row of ladder stitch. This stitch is a little more firm and easier to work than plunging straight into the herringbone proper. You will thus have a rigid first row that will not pull into V shapes.

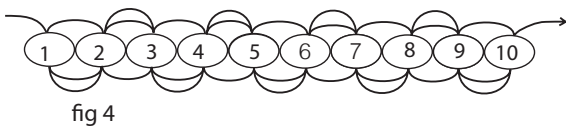
2 Prepare the needle with 1.2m of single thread and tie a keeper bead 15cm from the end with a single overhand knot (fig 1).



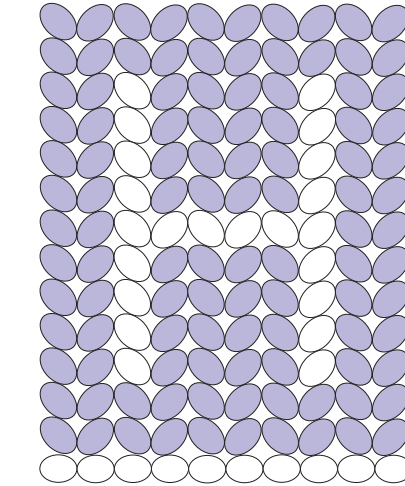
3 Thread on 2A. Pass the needle down through the first bead and back up through the second bead to bring the two beads to sit together with the holes running parallel to one another (fig 2).



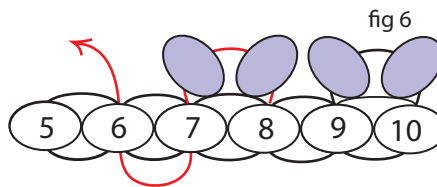
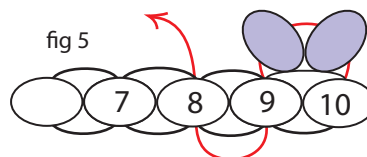
4 Thread on 1A. Pass the needle up through the previous A bead and back down through the new A bead so the holes in the beads lie parallel to one another (fig 3).



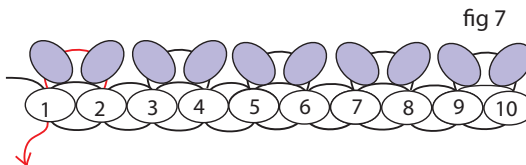
5 Repeat step 4 until you have a row of 10A in total (fig 4). The needle will be emerging from the top of bead number 10.



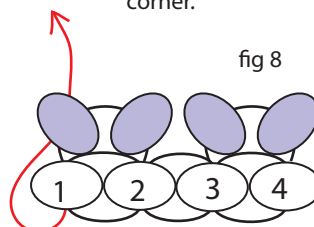
6 Thread on 2B. Pass the needle down the ninth A bead of the previous row and up through the eighth A bead (fig 5).



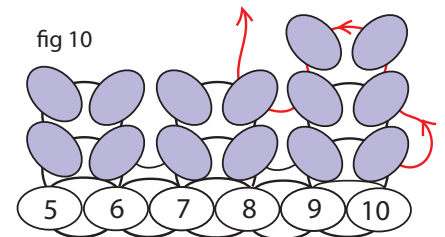
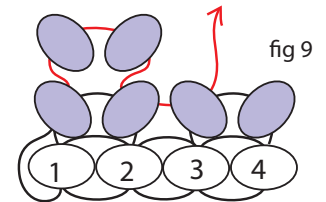
7 Thread on 2B. Pass the needle down the seventh B bead of the first row and up through the sixth (fig 6). Repeat to the end of the row to add three more 2B stitches (fig 7).



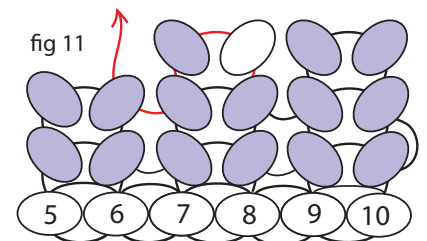
8 Pass the needle back up the last B bead added to leave a small strap of thread showing on the side of the first bead on the previous row (fig 8). This turns the corner.



9 Thread on 2B. Pass the needle down the next B bead along the work and back up through the following B bead (fig 9). Repeat to the end of the row - you should now start to see the beginning of the herringbone arrangement - you have completed the first three rows of the grid.



10 Turn the corner as in fig 8) and start the row with a two bead stitch as in fig 9 (fig 10). If you look at the grid you are working across the fourth row - place your rule across the grid to underscore the row to be worked. The next stitch is 1A and 1B bead. Make the stitch as before (fig 11).



11 Study the grid - you need to make a 2B stitch next. The following stitch is 1B and 1A - note it is important to notice if the change in colour on the grid is the first or second bead of the stitch. The last stitch of the row is 2B.

12 Work to the top of the grid using your rule to help you to follow the pattern carefully. As you work further up the grid your tension will become more even and the flexibility of the panel will improve.

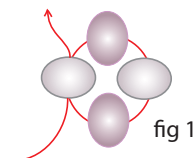
Pass the needle straight through the 10 beads of the top row to link them together before finishing off the thread end. Remove the keeper bead and finish off this end similarly.

Tubular Herringbone Stitch

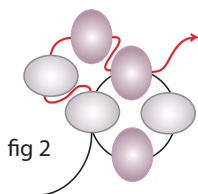
This is a good way to start to design using herringbone stitch. Making a two-stitch rope is quick and the resulting length can be converted into a bracelet, made longer to form a simple necklace or still longer to create a lariat-style necklace to tie at the front and dangle down into a tassel. Refer to the Spellbound [Techniques](#) download 'Beadwork Basics' for further information about keeper beads, calotte crimps, bead and loop clasps and joining on a new thread.

1 Prepare the needle with 1.5m of single thread and tie a keeper bead 15cm from the end.

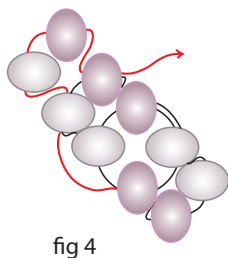
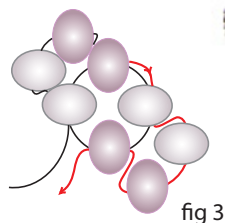
2 First Row - Thread on 1A, 1B, 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the first A bead threaded once more to bring the beads into a ring (fig 1). Run the needle around the beads of the ring once more to firm up the shape bringing the needle through to emerge through the first A bead (as fig 1).



3 Second Row - Thread on 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the next B bead around the previous row (fig 2) to nestle the two new beads into the gap between the two beads on the previous row.



4 Pass the needle through the next A bead around the previous row and thread on 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the next B bead around the previous row (fig 3). This completes the row.



5 Third row - Pass the needle through the first A bead of the previous row and thread on 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the next B bead of the previous row (fig 4). Pull the thread quite hard to bring the beads up together into the start of a tube shape.

Materials Needed

Approximately 4g of each of two colours of size 10/0 or 11/0 seed beads for a bracelet length or up to 15g of each for a long necklace - call the two colours of beads A and B.
Findings to complete the length - eg. a pair of calottes and a clasp or a 6mm bead for a bead and loop closure

A size 10 beading needle
1 reel of Nymo beading thread
A pair of scissors

6 Pass the needle through the next A bead of the previous row and thread on 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the last B bead of the previous row and pull the thread firmly to bring the beads just added into the tube profile. This completes the row.

7 Fourth row - make the step up to this row by passing the needle through the first A bead of the previous row. Thread on 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the first B bead of the previous row and the following A bead of the previous row. Thread on 1A and 1B. Pass the needle through the last B bead of the previous row to complete the new row. Repeating step 7 work until the rope is long enough for your purposes.

8 Adding a clasp means closing up the end of the rope neatly. Pass the needle through the four beads of the last row and pull the thread quite firmly to close up the end of the rope. You can now add a calotte crimp or a bead and loop clasp.

This is the Aquila Necklace Kit - it uses a rope made with this technique for the side strings - the ends of the rope develop into tassel strands at the front.

Below - This rope is made with eight beads on the first row and four pairs of two beads on each of the following rows. Made in size 10/0 beads it is satisfyingly 'squishy'.

Corner - this is a project from Spellbinding Bead Jewellery (BK558) using a herringbone rope which is embellished with a vine of smaller beads.