

Loops and Linking

These worksheets will show you how to make a loop, open and close a loop and link a series of loops together. Please see the 'Pliers and Other Tools' download for information about the pliers mentioned here.

Making A Loop

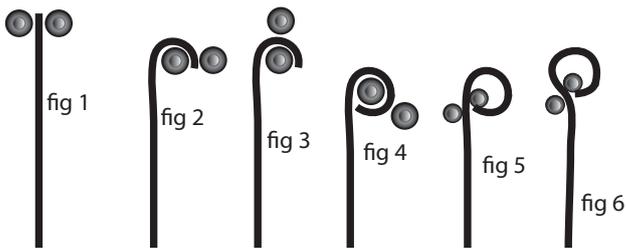
Once you can make a loop you can make earrings and pendants; linked necklaces and simple filigrees. Making a neatly rounded and closed loop takes a little practice but once perfected will ensure that your jewellery will lie properly and will not come apart accidentally.

There are two basic ways of making a loop - try out both on the end of an empty headpin or length of 0.6mm wire. You may prefer one method or the other - then try making a loop up closely to a bead. With the bead in place you may find that a combination of the two techniques will give you a more satisfactory result.

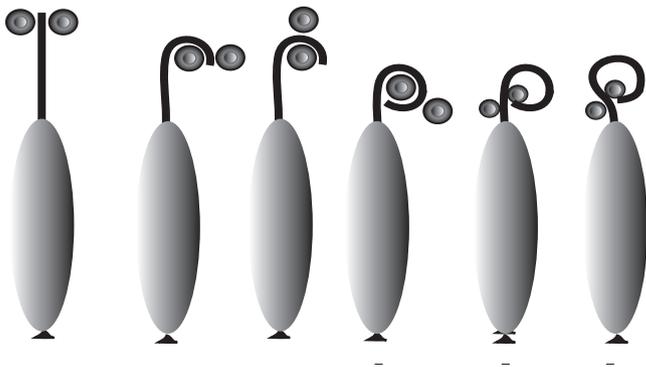
Tools - Round nosed pliers and wire cutters

Materials - A few spare headpins or 15cm of 0.6mm wire

METHOD ONE



Hold the very top of the pin in the pliers about 3mm from the tips of the pliers (fig 1). Place your thumb and index finger of the other hand 6mm below the pliers and hold firmly. Roll your plier hand away from you to begin the bend (fig 2). Move the pliers to grip the top of the bend making sure that the other hand is still gripping up close to the bend (fig 3) and continue the roll until the wire touches back on itself (fig 4). Using the very tips of the pliers grip the very bottom of the loop - look at fig 5 one side of the nose is inside the loop at the very bottom of the circle and the other side of the pliers is on the outside of the circle and as far down the main stem as it can grip. Fold the loop back over the plier nose outside the circle (fig 6) to centralise the loop on the top of the wire like a lollypop.



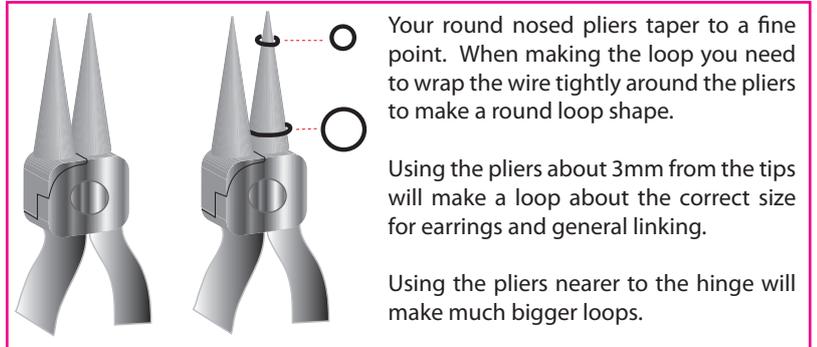
Practice a few times and then try with a bead. Trim the wire to 6mm above the bead and make the loop as before. When you get to fig 6 get the outer nose of the pliers as close to the bead as you can and the loop will be easier to centralise.

Common Mistakes

The loop opens up when you tip it back (as fig 6) - the pliers are not far enough down the outside of the circle.

The bead gets in the way of the loop rolling completely shut. Use the technique in fig 11 to tip the wire back at the top of the bead - this will give you more room to roll the loop.

The wire spins in the bead and it is difficult to control - rest the bottom end of the pin on your middle finger as you hold the top bead in your thumb and index finger - this holds the pin firmly.

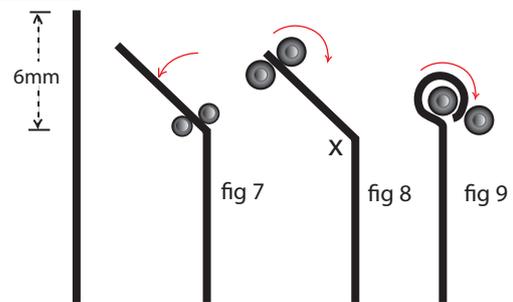


Your round nosed pliers taper to a fine point. When making the loop you need to wrap the wire tightly around the pliers to make a round loop shape.

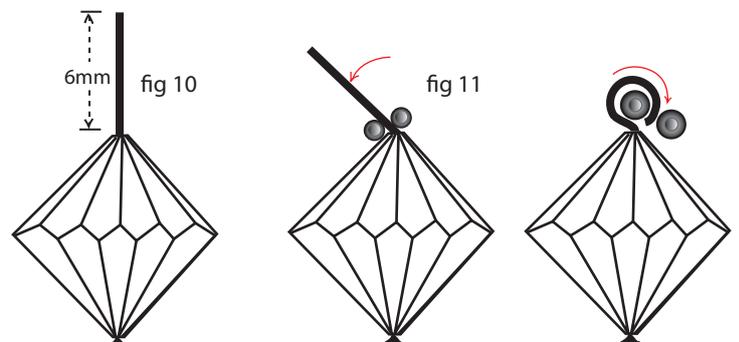
Using the pliers about 3mm from the tips will make a loop about the correct size for earrings and general linking.

Using the pliers nearer to the hinge will make much bigger loops.

METHOD TWO



With the very tips of the pliers grip the pin approximately 6mm from the end. Hold the pin in the index finger and thumb of the other hand as closely as you can to the plier tips and make a bend to 45° (fig 7). Turn the pin so the cut end of the bent wire points towards your chin; place the pliers at the very end of the wire approximately 3mm from the end of the tips of the nose and place the thumb of your other hand on the inside of the bend (at X on fig 8). Grip the other side of the pin with your index finger and roll the pliers away from you down the top edge of the 45° slope (fig 8 and 9) to close up the loop. You should have a round loop on the top of a straight pin with the loop sitting up on top like a lollypop.

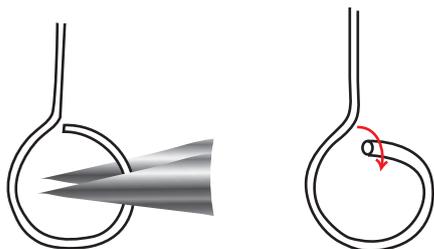


Practice a few times and then try with a bead. Trim the wire to 6 - 7mm from the top of the bead. Grip the pin immediately above the bead and tip back to 45°. Hold the bead so that the cut end of the wire points towards your chin and roll the loop down the top of the slope. If you have everything just right the loop will close up exactly on the top of the bead.

If you would like to make lots of earrings try our [Earring Kit Starter Packs GBOX030 -GBOX043](#) which make 25 pairs of earrings.

Opening and Closing a Loop

Once you have completed your loop you may want to link it onto another loop. You NEVER go back to the loop that you have just completed and force it open again (it can become brittle and break if you continue to bend it) - you always move onto the next loop along the sequence and open that one instead. The loop that you open may be on the bottom of an eyepin or on an earfitting.

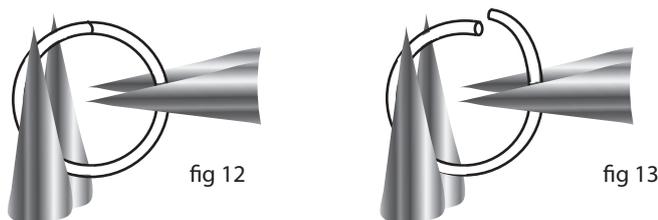


Examine the eyepin to see which side of the loop will open. Place the tips of your round or snipe nosed pliers at 90° to the stem on the side of the loop that will open. Hold the stem of the pin as closely as you can to the top of the loop with your other hand. Roll the pliers away from you just enough to twist the loop open. This twisting action puts as little stress as possible onto the wire of the pin.

Thread on the prepared loop from the previous pin and return the pliers to the 90° position. Make sure that the other hand is supporting the pin as closely to the open loop as you can and twist the loop shut. The loop should be closed and as round as when you started.

Opening and Closing a Jump Ring

Jump rings are simple circles of wire that are used to link two or more loops together or to attach a clasp to the end of a design. They must be opened and closed properly to maintain their shape and strength.



For right handers - With the gap in the jump ring at the top pointing to noon grip your first pair of pliers onto the jump ring at 3 O'clock. Use your other pair of pliers to come up from the 6 O'clock direction and grip the ring to cover 7 O'clock to 11 O'clock as fig 12. Hold the left hand pliers still and roll the right hand pair away from you to twist the ring open (fig 13). Pop onto the ring the components that you need to link together and place the pliers back on the ring as before. Roll the wrist back to close the ring.

For left handers - Reverse the diagram and hold the first pair at 9 O'clock and the second pair to cover 5 O'clock to 1 O'clock. Roll the left wrist to open and close the ring.

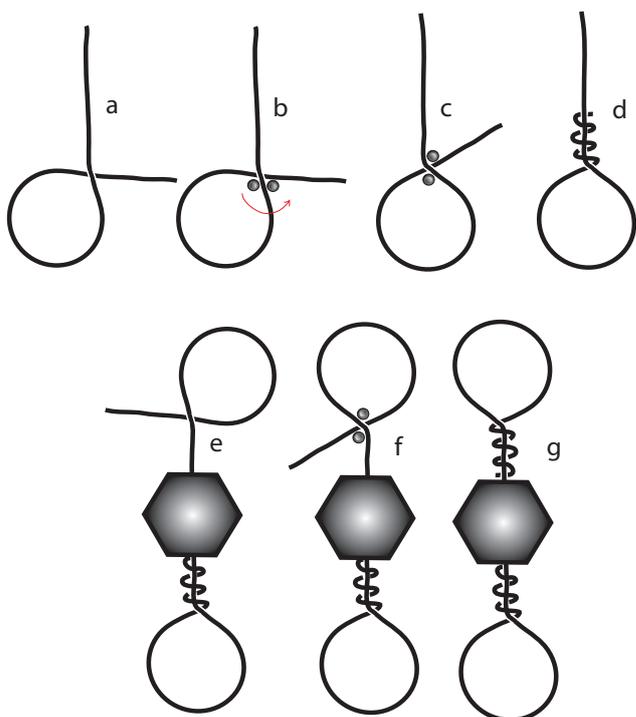
Attaching a Fishhook Earwire



The fishhook earwire is just a modified eyepin. Grip the front of the loop with the plier tips at 90° to the spring above the bead. Support the earwire by holding the bead and the spring firmly in your other hand. Rotate the pliers away from you just a tiny amount to twist the loop open. Do not twist too far or the loop will break - the wire on the loop has been put through a bending machine and is thus quite hard and can be brittle if you bend it too far. Place the pliers back on the loop in the SAME position to twist the loop shut.

Making a Wrapped Loop

A wrapped loop is made a little distance in from the end of the wire with the short tail of the wire wrapping around the stem of the wire to close off the end of the loop shape.



- a, Wrap the wire around the pliers about 2cm from the end of the wire
- b, Grip the wire on the long side of the cross over point and rotate the wrist
- c, This centres to loop on the end of the longer length
- d, Grip flat across the loop with flat or snipe nosed pliers whilst you wrap the shorter tail of the wire neatly around the long stem making closely fitting wraps which start adjacent to the edge of the loop. Trim any excess length not needed for further twists.

Thread on the bead or beads.

- e, A matching distance from the top of the bead wrap the wire around the pliers to make a loop the correct distance from the top of the bead.
- f, Use the tips of the pliers to kink the neck of the loop so that it sits up on top of the wire like a lollypop.
- g, Twist the excess wire around the straight wire starting adjacent to the loop and finishing up tightly to the top of the bead. Trim any excess wire length.

Make sure that the cut edges of wire are tucked in tightly using your snipe nosed pliers if necessary to squeeze them gently into place.

These links will have to be joined to one another with jump rings

If you want to try more linking and wrapped loops try the Twilight Necklace (KT2511 - 2514), Twilight Earrings (KT2518 - 2521), Galileo Simples (SKT033), Phoebe Simples (KT034), Cymbelline Simples (SKT031), Cancelli Necklace Kit (KT2325 - 2328), Portia Earrings (KT1560 - KT1563), Portia Necklace Kit (KT1564 - KT1567), Lydia Necklace Kit (KT1280 - KT1283)