

Wirework - Torques

A torque is a rigid wire that passes straight around the wrist or neck. They are, by necessity, quite short sitting across the collar bones on the neck or tightly fitted to the wrist or upper arm. You can buy torques readymade or make your own to fit your particular requirements.

There are two basic ways to make a torque - a single length of wire that passes around the neck with a clasp at the back or an articulated torque that takes into account the way your body moves as you turn your head, lift your arms or carry a shoulder bag.

First a note about anatomy!

Necks and wrists are not round.

Necks are flat at the back; flat at the sides and the collarbones frame a gentle point at the front.

wrists are rectangular

Get the shape of your wire right and the torque will be comfortable to wear

You need to use a clasp with a handmade torque as, if the wire is thin enough for you to bend into shape, it will not be strong enough to hold the large shape/curves of the torque. You need to bring it into a 'closed shape' by adding a closure at the back.

A Single Wire Torque

You need to use the thickest wire available that you can bend to make this style of torque. The best wire to use is 1.5mm half-hard but many people find that too difficult to bend at the ends - try 1.2mm half-hard for your first torque.

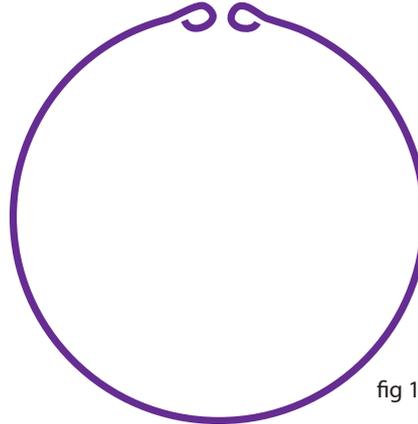


fig 1

1 Cut the wire to the correct length for the neck.

2 Make a loop at each end in the SAME PLANE as the circle of the torque itself (fig 1).

3 Use jump rings to attach a clasp to the back of the torque and gently shape the wire to fit the necklace comfortably.

An Articulated Torque

This is a much better way to fit a wire to the neck or wrist. When you move your head and arms your collar bones and the muscles around them move in synchronicity and that can make a single wire torque lie awkwardly.

An articulated torque is made in three lengths -

The **centre front** length fits the space between the collar bones - this piece can be plain with looped ends; plain with scrolled ends (fig 2), have a central loop for a pendant (fig 3) or fancy shapes (fig 4).

The **two side arms** reach around to the back and need to be shaped correctly to fit the flat sides of the neck and the corner that bends around to the flat back of the neck (see fig 2). The ends of these wire can be plain loops or scrolls (as fig 2).

To make the scroll ends see the [Filigrees & Chandeliers](#) Download on the Techniques Tab

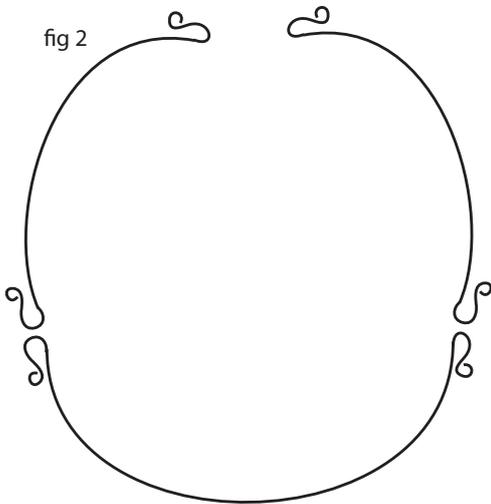


fig 2

To Make an Articulated Torque

1 Using 1.2mm half-hard wire cut the centre front length - make sure it is long enough if you want to add a central loop or scrolls.

2 Make any central loops/fancy shapes you want to make on the centre front wire. Fit the wire to the collar bones - allow 8mm either side for plain loops and 20mm if you are making scrolled ends. Make the looped ends / scrolled ends in the SAME PLANE as the curve of the centre front wire.

3 Cut the wires for the side arms. Make loops or scrolls at the front end of the wires in the SAME PLANE as the curve of the wire. Link the side arms to the centre front wire with 6mm jump rings.

4 Trim the centre back to length allowing for the loops/scrolls that you want to make. Make the loops/scrolls in the SAME PLANE as the curves in the wire. Add the clasp with jump rings.

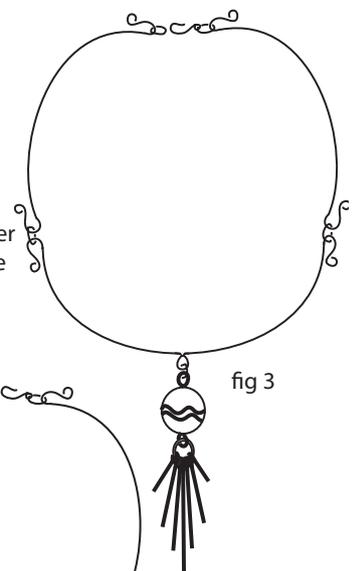


fig 3

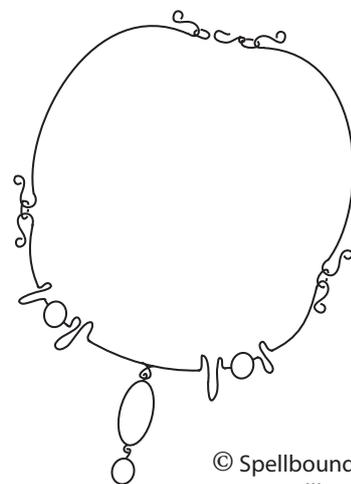


fig 4