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Pearl-Knotting Instructions

Pearl-knotting tools are easy to use and can do the work of the traditional awl & tweezers method, giving you consistent, tight knots in a fraction of the time.

Use these instructions to get started. With some practice, you'll find your own speed and rhythm, and the hand position most comfortable for you. These instructions demonstrate how to use the knotting tool to string and finish a strand of pearls.



Some Tips Before You Begin

- Keep your work area clean and free of unnecessary tools and materials.
- Silk cord attracts and shows oil and dirt, leaving the cord looking worn and grimy. To minimize this, wash your hands or use hand wipes (do this often) and handle the silk as little as possible.
- Make sure you have the right-size silk or cord; the size used should be determined by the hole size and the material of the pearl or bead (e.g.: metal beads will fray silk cord; consider a different stringing material).
- Be patient and remember: you are just making a knot. Before you begin a "keeper" strand, we recommend that you practice until you feel comfortable using the knotter tool.

supplies:

Pearl-knotting tool	Electric or hand reamer
Work surface or beading board	Bowl of water
French wire (bullion)	Jeweler's Cement
Flush cutters	Carded silk cord with needle
Fine shears	Clasp
	Pearls

Starting the Strand

Before you begin using the pearl-knotter, you will need to start the strand by preparing and stringing the first three pearls.

Reaming

Using a diamond-tipped bead reamer, ream six pearls to make the holes wide enough to allow two passes of the silk cord. Place the six pearls in the bowl of water, which serves as a cooling bath to reduce friction. Ream both ends of the hole so it is consistent along the length of the hole.

If you are using a hand reamer:

1. Dip the reamer tip into the water and push it through the pearl hole.
2. Keeping the reamer tip and the pearl under water, gently twist the reamer until you see about ¼" of the reamer tip extending out the other side of the pearl. Repeat on the other end.

If you are using an electric reamer:

1. Push the reamer tip through the pearl hole, then lower the pearl and the tip into the water. **⚠ Caution:** Do not let any part of the electric reamer touch the water except the tip!
2. Making sure you have a secure grip on the pearl, turn the reamer on at low speed. Keeping the pearl under water, gently bounce it against the tip until you see about ¼" of the reamer tip extending out the other side of the pearl. Repeat on the other end.
3. Set the six reamed pearls aside to dry, and keep them separate from the rest of your pearls.

Pearl Knotting Instructions

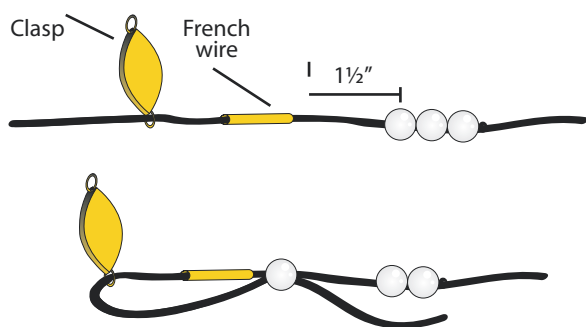
Preparing the Silk

Unwind the silk cord from the card. If the needle is a little bent, straighten it with your fingers (it does not need to be perfectly straight).

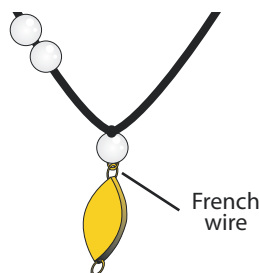
1. Stretch the silk by taking one end of the cord in one hand and a length of silk in the other. With as much force as possible, pull your arms apart; continue down the whole length of the cord. Stretch it enough to straighten the kinks left by the card, being careful not to cut yourself. Stretching the cord will lengthen the life of your strand.

String First Three Pearls, French Wire & Clasp

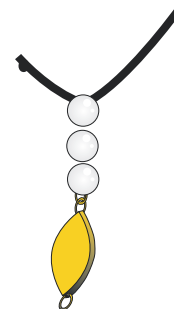
1. Tie a knot on the end of the silk cord opposite the needle.
2. String three of the six reamed pearls onto the silk cord, sliding them down all the way to the knot. Set the other three reamed pearls aside.
3. Using the flush cutters, snip off about ¼" of the French wire.
4. Slide the French wire onto the needle. Hold it snugly between your forefinger and thumb as you slide it past the point where the needle attaches to the cord, then slide it down the cord until it's 1½" above the pearls.
5. Slide the jump ring of the non-hook-side of the clasp onto the cord, all the way to the French wire. Note: Leave the clasp hook closed to prevent losing one of the pieces.



6. Take the needle back through the pearl closest to the clasp, going in the opposite direction. Leave about an inch and a half of space between this pearl and the remaining two.
7. Pull the needle until the French wire forms a small loop up against the pearl.
8. Hand-tie a knot next to the bead, making sure to pull both ends.



9. Pass the needle back through the next pearl and hand-tie another knot. Pass the needle back through the final pearl and stop. Do not tie a knot. This is the place on the strand where you begin using the knotter tool.
10. A short tail of silk will be hanging out of the third bead. Leave it for now; it will be snipped off later.



Using Your Pearl-Knotter

The pearl-knotter works the same for right- or left-handed users. For these instructions, the illustration shows a right-handed user, but your dominant hand should be the hand most comfortable for you.

Begin by stringing on the rest of the pearls, with the exception of the three remaining reamed pearls. Remove the safety cap from the knotter.

Take the end of the strand with the non-reamed pearls in your non-dominant hand and hold onto them with your ring finger and pinky.

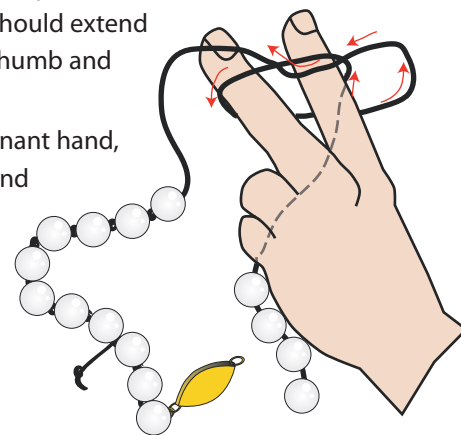
11. With the same hand, make a V with your forefinger and middle finger, palm-side down (8"–10" of the end with the clasp should extend between your thumb and forefinger).

12. With your dominant hand, take the clasp end and loosely wrap it around your index and middle fingers.

13. Drop the clasp between your V'd fingers and between the two strands. Pull the clasp end past your forefinger so that it dangles between your fingers. You now have a loosely tied knot around your fingers.

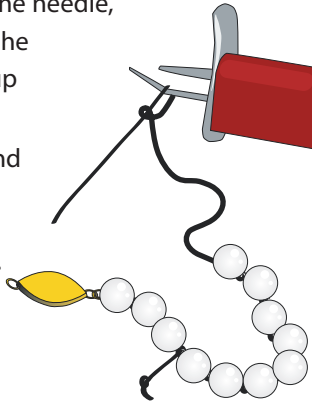
14. In your dominant hand, hold the knotter so your index finger is resting in the notch of the handle, and close to the top so that the thumb lever can extend fully.

15. Working away from your body, capture the cord that's resting on top of your fingers with the knotter needle.
16. Place your index finger on the side of the needle to keep the knot from sliding off prematurely. **⚠ Caution:** Don't place your finger on top of the needle—it's very sharp!
17. Slide your index and middle fingers out of the loose knot, still holding onto the cord with your ring and your pinky.

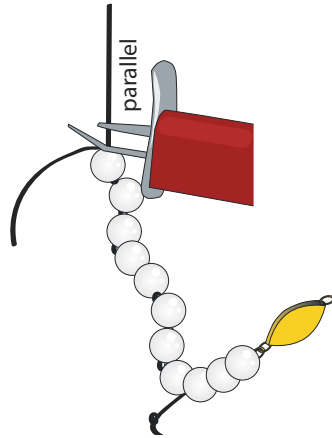


9. Pull the knot tight around the needle, then move the knot along the strand and place it snugly up against the pearl.

10. Place the cord in the fork and pull the knot taut, keeping the cord parallel to the top of the knotter. **Please Note:** Do not angle the cord against the fork—it may damage the cord.



11. Remove your finger from the needle tip and, with your thumb, push the lever up all the way. This tightens the knot against the pearl and pushes the knot off the needle. You now have a perfect knot tight against the pearl! **Please Note:** Let the knotter do the work. Manipulating the knot off the needle with your fingers will prevent it from positioning itself against the pearl.



12. Move the next pearl down into position next to the knot you just made. **Please Note:** Do not forget this very important step. You could end up with two very tight knots next to each other.

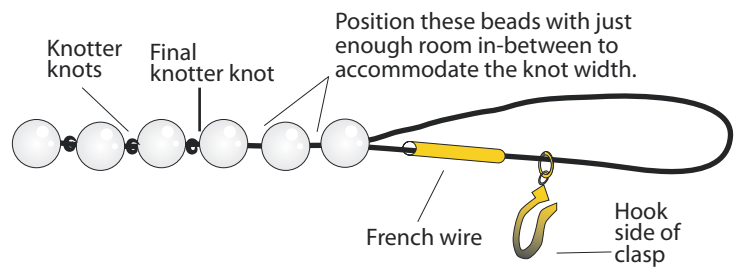
Repeat the above steps until you have made a knot between all the pearls. Once you've made the last knot, you're ready to add the last three reamed pearls and finish the strand.

Finishing the Strand

String Last Three Pearls, French Wire & Clasp

1. String on the three remaining reamed pearls.
2. Use the flush cutters to snip off another ¼"-piece of French wire and slide it onto the cord next to the pearls.

3. Gently bend the French wire with your finger. This helps it position itself into the small loop when you pull the cord back through the pearls.



4. Unhook the hooked end of the clasp and slide it onto the silk cord.

5. Pass the needle back through the pearl that's closest to the French wire. Pull the cord tight so that the wire forms a small U-shape next to the pearl.

Knot Between the Reamed Beads

The last three reamed beads should be close together but with just enough of a gap between them to accommodate the knot you will make. If you are using thin cord, the gaps should be small. If you are using thicker cord, the gaps should be a bit larger. Use your existing knots to estimate how much of a gap to leave.

Tie a knot by hand around the cord in the first gap.

6. Pass the needle through the second reamed bead and tie a knot by hand around the cord in the second gap. This is the last knot you will make.

7. Pass the needle through the last reamed pearl.

Finishing

1. Pull the excess cord at the beginning of the strand taut so that once you clip the cord, it will retract slightly inside the pearl. Using the fine shears, clip off the cord as close to the pearl as possible. Repeat on the other end.

2. Place a very small drop of Jeweler's Cement on the first and last three knots to seal them. You should not have to squeeze the tube.

3. Set the strand aside for at least 10 minutes to allow it to dry completely. The strand is finished!

