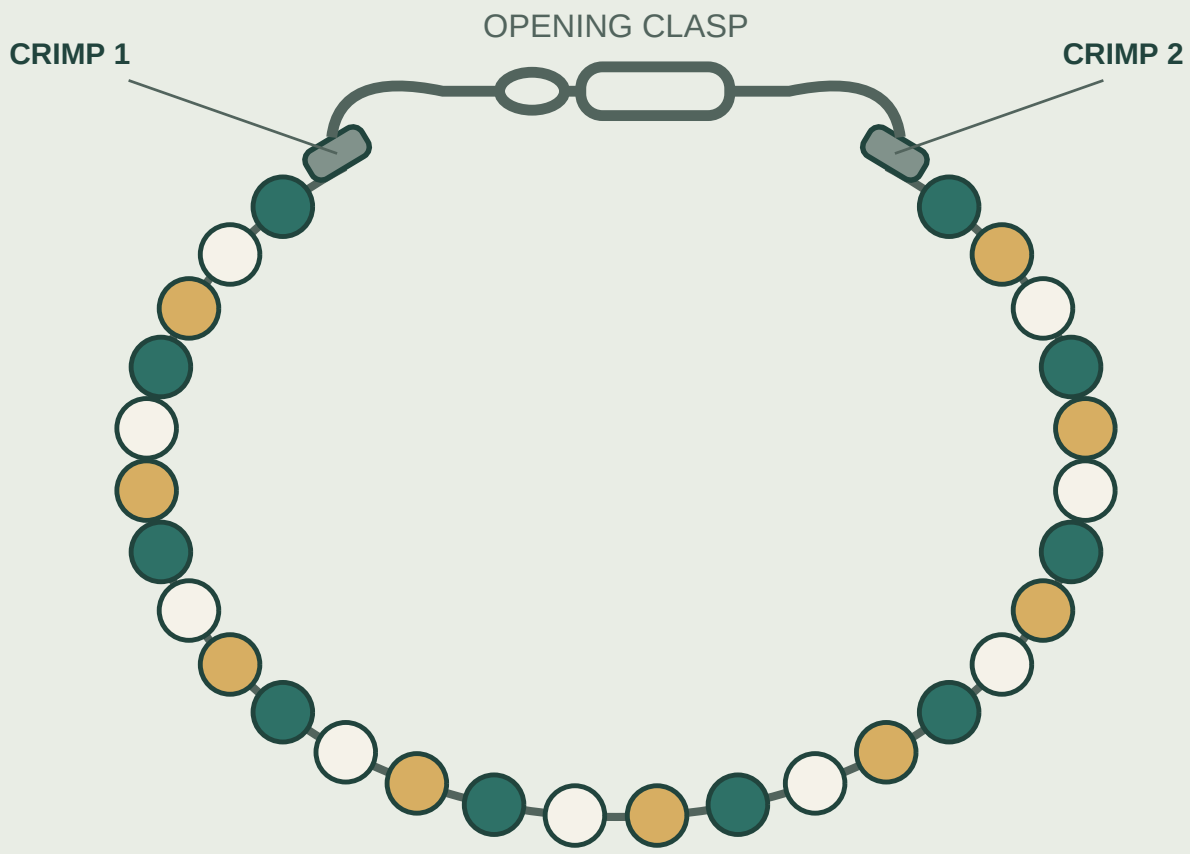
STEADLEAF PRESS

MAKE / BEADS & WEARABLE KEEPSAKES

Use Crimp Beads on a Simple Necklace



Original schematic · not a physical sample

14 practical steps · Form, turn and fold

Component match, return path and two maker records

Before you start

A crimp is a small metal finding that grips a wire after it has been formed with a suitable tool. It is not simply an extra decorative bead. This project makes a lightweight, single-strand necklace with an opening clasp. At each end, a short section of wire returns through a compatible crimp and forms a loop around a smooth, closed clasp attachment. The exercise uses a conventional two-stage crimping tool and a compatible crimp tube (the tubular member of the crimp-bead family). Round crimp beads, screw crimps, single-step tools, elastic and fibre cords require their own instructions. Learn the method on separate scrap wire before assembling the necklace. This is an adult decorative accessory, not a restraint, safety device, children's item or load-bearing attachment.

Materials: labelled flexible nylon-coated stranded jewellery wire, compatible metal crimp tubes (two for the necklace plus several fresh practice tubes), the maker-specified two-stage crimping pliers, appropriate wire cutters, smooth lightweight beads, an opening necklace clasp with smooth closed attachment eyes and a compatible closed receiving ring if required, bead tray, ruler and paper. Use an approved wire protector if required by the selected system; do not add one by guesswork. Keep sharp wire ends pointed away from your face and hands, wear eye protection when cutting and forming metal findings, and contain offcuts in the tray. Keep small parts away from children and pets. Do not use ordinary craft scissors on metal wire or straighten a permanently kinked strand for reuse.

Plan the wire, crimp and finished length

A crimp tube's outside size, internal opening and maker's size designation are not interchangeable. A nominal #2 tube in one brand is not necessarily equivalent to another brand's #2. The Beadalon size guide, for example, lists its 0.018 inch (approximately 0.46 mm) wire with a #2 crimp tube and Standard crimp tool. This guide's worked example uses that combination only if the current labels and directions for the actual products agree. A same-brand #1 round crimp bead is a different part; do not substitute its size number for the tube size. A different wire diameter, construction, tube or jaw shape may require a different combination. Choose wire for the bead material, intended use and smallest usable hole as well as the termination system. A two-pass crimp must accept the actual wire twice without shaving or forcing it. Never calculate a crimp size from twice the wire diameter alone: metal wall thickness, geometry and tool compatibility matter.

For a planning example, aim for about 450 mm of overall closed necklace length measured along the relaxed strand, including the clasp and end connections. If the measured combined axial contribution of both end assemblies and the clasp is about 30 mm, the beaded portion is about 420 mm. Seventy equal nominal 6 mm beads occupy 420 mm in a straight touching row before any gaps. The example is an estimate, not a fit prescription; the intended relaxed drape and measured actual components govern. Allow additional working wire for both return loops and handling tails. A 600 mm cut is an illustrative generous starting length for this example, not a guaranteed sufficient length. Make a paper layout with the actual components, check the closure length and revise before cutting. Reserve extra space for the return tails where the component maker requires them; a bead at an end may need to accommodate two wire sections, not just one.

Steps 01–02

1. Identify the exact wire and closure system

Read the labels and current component instructions before opening the supplies. Record the wire's material, strand count, diameter and intended jewellery use. Confirm that both crimp tubes and the specific tool are listed for that wire and that the maker describes a two-stage formation method. Select a purpose-made opening clasp whose two ends provide suitable closed, smooth attachment eyes; use a compatible closed receiving ring where the clasp system requires one. A split or open jump ring can allow fine wire to escape. If the selected clasp requires a wire protector, use the matching protector and its own routing instructions. This exercise does not teach soldering or modifying hardware.

2. Inspect the beads and prepare a contained work area

Lay the components on a lined tray in good light. Separate unused practice tubes from finished findings. Reject sharp, cracked, flattened, corroded or distorted parts; inspect bead entrances for damage. Ensure that the wire and any returned tail can pass through the relevant beads without forcing. Protect your eyes during cutting and crimping, keep cutters and pliers in good condition, and keep fingertips outside the jaws. Catch all cut wire ends in the tray and dispose of them in a suitable closed container. A damaged component should be replaced, not reshaped or concealed by a cover.

Steps 03–04

3. Match the crimp and both tool stations

Use Pattern 1 to record the maker's compatibility guidance. Distinguish the inner forming station, near the hinge, from the outer rounding station, nearer the tip. On the conventional two-stage tool used here, the inner shaped cavity creates an indentation between the two parallel wire sections; the outer cavity folds the formed crimp around the wires. Inspect the actual tool markings and instructions rather than relying on appearance alone. Some specialized tools reverse, combine or replace these stages. Do not apply this sequence to them. The worked #2 tube and Standard tool designation belongs to the Beadalon example only.

4. Lay out the necklace and estimate its length

Measure the beads along their threading axis and arrange them in a straight row on the tray. Add the actual axial contribution of the clasp and completed end assemblies to the planned bead row, without counting overlapping parts twice. For the 450 mm example, 420 mm of nominal beads plus 30 mm of closure and termination gives 450 mm. Decide whether the desired length and drape suit the intended adult wearer using a flexible tape or paper strip, without tightening a temporary wire loop around the neck. Include the opening clasp and its ability to release normally. If fit is uncertain, adjust the layout before making any permanent crimp.

Steps 05–06

5. Prepare a practice return loop

Cut a spare piece of the actual selected wire using the correct cutter; hold or contain the cut end so it cannot fly. Use a fresh compatible crimp and a spare matching smooth closed eye. Pass the wire through the crimp, around the eye and back through the same crimp, leaving generous working tail. If using a required protector, follow its exact channel and clasp-eye route; the return still passes through the crimp. With the parts supported, bring the two sections side by side inside the tube, not crossing one over the other. Check that the loop has room for ordinary clasp movement without an excessive exposed loop or sharp bend. Do not squeeze yet.

6. Form the crimp in the inner station

Position the tube at the maker-specified distance from the eye or protector. Keep the two wire sections parallel on the two sides of the intended indentation, and centre the tube in the inner forming cavity. Close the tool as directed by its maker, keeping fingers and the wire ends out of the jaws. Release and look at the newly formed tube: the indentation should create two separate rounded channels, often described as a crescent or bean-like profile. If the wires crossed, the tube cracked, a wire was nicked or the shape is not the maker's expected result, cut away and discard the affected tube and wire section. Do not try to rescue a failed crimp by flattening it repeatedly.

Steps 07–08

7. Turn the crimp and close it in the outer station

Follow Pattern 2. Turn the formed tube about a quarter turn (90 degrees) relative to the tool so the two formed lobes are aligned for folding in the outer rounding cavity. Do not twist the wire itself into a kink. Centre the crimp in the cavity and close according to the actual tool instructions. The two lobes fold together into the finished rounded shape. Inspect the surface, ends and both wire exits. Avoid excessive force and do not use a crimp cover to conceal a split, exposed sharp edge or failed formation. If a result is uncertain, start again with a fresh tube and undamaged wire.

8. Record the practice result before proceeding

Keep the practice piece and all hardware supported over the tray. Compare the two stages with the manufacturer's illustrations. Inspect the wire where it exits the tube and the loop where it contacts the eye. If the maker specifies a routine non-destructive acceptance check, follow the exact procedure on the practice piece with appropriate protection; do not invent a force or hang weights. Record observed movement, sharpness, deformation, or NOT CHECKED. This worksheet records practice, not a measured load or durability result. If a manufacturer-required check has not been completed, or the crimp slips or is otherwise uncertain, stop before using the method on a wearable strand. Ask a qualified jewellery maker for help when necessary.

Steps 09–10

9. Make the first actual end connection

Cut the final working wire only after the actual layout and practice route have been accepted. Thread a new tube, then the first smooth closed attachment eye (and the specified protector if required), and return the short end through the tube. Leave the tail required by the system, with enough extra for handling. Keep the two sections side by side and the loop sized for free clasp movement. Apply the inner forming stage and outer rounding stage using the verified tool. Inspect and complete the maker's required checks before proceeding. A damaged crimp or kinked wire must be cut away and replaced; if the remaining length is too short, start with new wire rather than splice it.

10. Thread the planned bead row

If the selected maker directs the tail to pass into adjacent beads, feed the required length of tail through the first compatible beads as you thread the row. Ensure those beads admit the actual two sections without scraping or pressure. Trim the tail only at the stage and length specified by the maker; never cut the main strand or leave a sharp protruding end. Add the remaining beads in order. Keep the strand supported on the tray, with room for natural movement and bending. If the wire kinks or a bead catches, stop and replace the damaged part. Do not use a hard bend to make the necklace seem shorter.

Steps 11–12

11. Prepare the opposite end before permanent crimping

Add the second fresh crimp and the corresponding clasp or closed receiving-ring eye, with its approved protector if needed. Pass the remaining end back through the crimp. If the system calls for the tail to enter adjacent beads, check this route before closing the crimp. Lay the necklace in a relaxed curved shape on the tray, with both ends supported. Bring the bead row close to the ends while retaining enough play for its natural drape; the clasp should move without being trapped against a bead or a rigid wire bend. Recheck the overall length. Do not pull the wire tight merely to remove every visible gap or to reach the numerical example.

12. Form, fold and finish the second crimp

Keep the two wire sections parallel and the second loop clear of the moving clasp. Use the matching inner station to form the tube and the outer station after the quarter turn to fold it, as practised. Inspect both crimps and complete any manufacturer-required non-destructive acceptance check before trimming. Follow the exact system's tail-routing and trimming directions, protecting the standing strand from the cutters. If using a compatible crimp cover, fit it only after the underlying crimp has been accepted and trimmed as required. A cover is decorative, not a mechanical replacement for the crimp. If the finish fails, remake the termination with fresh compatible components; do not glue over a defective connection.

Steps 13–14

13. Inspect the completed necklace and verify ordinary fit

Inspect the two terminations, wire exits, bead rims and clasp mechanism over the lined tray. No crimp should have a split, sharp lip, exposed damaged wire or visibly shifting tail. Check that the clasp opens and closes normally without trapping the wire. Only after all instructions and required checks are complete, consider ordinary adult wear; do not use an unverified or slipping closure. Choose a comfortable length and materials suitable for the actual wearer. Stop use for discomfort, irritation, snagging or visible damage. Never put an unfinished wire strand around the neck, test a necklace by pulling against the body, or treat it as a child-safe or breakaway device. A visual inspection is not a strength or wear-life guarantee.

14. Complete the maker record and care for the necklace

Enter the actual components, practice result, length and both end observations in Record 2. Mark HOLD if a required maker check is unknown or not completed, CHANGE/REMAKE if a warning sign appears, or DECORATIVE ONLY if the maker's process and checks have been completed and the item is suitable for ordinary adult decorative use. These labels are not a certification. Remove before sleep, bathing, exercise or work where jewellery may catch. Keep it away from children and pets. Store it loosely without sharp bends or tension. Reinspect periodically and retire or restring if the coating frays, crimps move, beads chip or the clasp becomes unreliable.

Fix, care and preserve

The wire will not return through the crimp. Check the actual wire, tube and tool identification against the same maker's guidance. Change to a compatible set, not merely a larger unverified tube. Never drill, force or strip a coating to create space.

The two wire sections cross or the first stage is misshapen. Stop. Cut away the affected tube and any damaged wire; begin again with new material. Make the indentation between parallel sections and check the actual tool orientation.

The second stage leaves a sharp corner or crack. The tube may be unsuitable, misaligned or damaged. Replace it and follow the two-stage method on spare wire. Never hide the problem with a decorative cover.

The strand is stiff after finishing. The bead row may be compressed or the end loops too tight. Remake the end with sufficient play and a compatible curve. Do not bend a permanently kinked wire back into shape.

A tail moves or the clasp catches. Stop wearing the necklace. Replace the affected termination or restring using compatible fresh components. Consult the actual manufacturer or a qualified jewellery maker when the required acceptance method is uncertain.

Source & evidence boundary

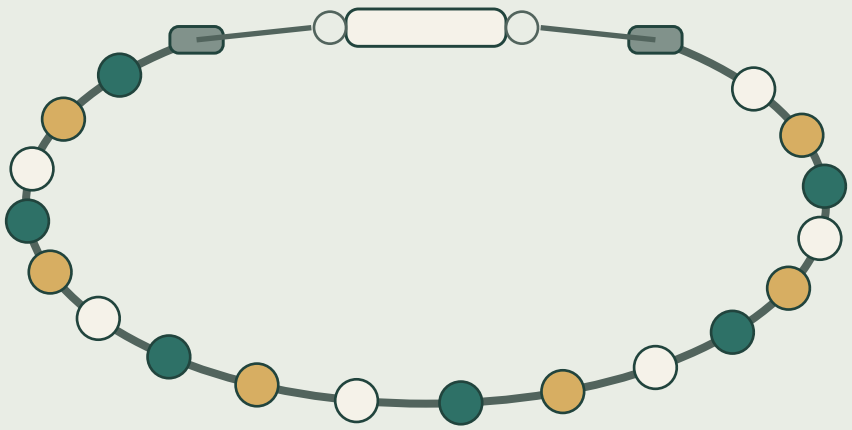
Original Steadleaf English prose, length example, cover, schematic drawings and maker records. Factual context from the Beadalon maker compatibility chart and Fire Mountain Gems' two-stage crimping instruction. Product-specific guidance takes precedence; the sources do not establish the strength of any reader-made necklace.

- Beadalon, Match-Up Proper Wire and Crimp Bead/Tube Diameters: https://www.beadalon.com/content/match_up_proper_wire_crimp_bead_or_tube_diameters.asp - Fire Mountain Gems and Beads, Secrets to Professional Crimping: https://www.firemountaingems.com/learn/categories/essential-resources/how-tos/F89H-video-tutorial-with-instructions.html

No source artwork, template or protected prose is copied. The publisher has not physically measured, made, crimped, cut, tested, fitted, printed or worn the necklace. No retention, load, fatigue, skin compatibility or safety certification is provided. All dimensions are illustrative. Reader practice and maker-required checks are separate from publisher verification.

Component match and length plan

Original schematic, not to scale. Use the current instructions for your actual wire, crimp tube, tool and clasp.



Two independent crimps; one continuous beaded wire.

WORKED MAKER-SPECIFIC COMBINATION

Beadalon wire	**0.018 in / about 0.46 mm**
Crimp finding	**#2 tube (not #1 round bead)**
Matching two-stage tool	**Standard**

ILLUSTRATIVE OVERALL LENGTH

70 nominal 6 mm beads	**420 mm**
Clasp + end assemblies, measured contribution	**30 mm**
Estimated closed length	**450 mm**
Initial working wire (example only)	**600 mm**

Never infer crimp compatibility from wire diameter alone. Verify the two-pass path, actual bead openings, closure contribution and tail allowance.

50 mm calibration — print Actual Size

Return path and two-stage crimp

Enlarged schematic cross-sections, not a drawing of a specific tool. Follow the tool maker’s actual jaw orientation and instructions.

RETURN THROUGH THE SAME TUBE



1 OPEN TUBE



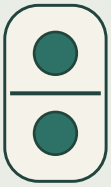
Parallel wires

2 FORM



Inner station

3 FOLD



Outer station; turn 90°

STOP / DISCARD AND START AGAIN



Crossed wire sections



Split or damaged crimp

No force value or strength result is represented. Follow the actual maker’s required acceptance check. Do not reuse a failed crimp or cover a defect.

Components, practice and layout

Enter actual information only. Mark UNKNOWN or NOT CHECKED where appropriate. This is not a strength or safety certificate.

Wire product / strand count / diameter

Crimp tube and two-stage tool identifiers

Maker compatibility source and date

Clasp and closed eyes / protector route

Actual bead widths and count / planned overall length

Working cut length / tail-handling instructions

Practice return path and two-stage observation

Maker-required acceptance check / actual outcome

Decision: PROCEED / CHANGE / HOLD — reason

End connections and final observations

Enter actual information only. Mark UNKNOWN or NOT CHECKED where appropriate. This is not a strength or safety certificate.

First end: formed and folded crimp / wire exits

Second end: formed and folded crimp / wire exits

Retained tail route / trimming condition

Maker-required check and actual observations

Clasp opens and closes normally? YES / NO / NOT CHECKED

Actual relaxed length / fit and drape observation

Sharp edge, kink, slip or coating damage?

Disposition: HOLD / CHANGE-REMAKE / DECORATIVE ONLY

Date / reason / maintenance note
