

Beads, the Latest Accessory to Dress

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FROM primitive times until the present day how varied have been and still are the materials that have been strung to adorn my lady's neck!

Claws, teeth, bone, various metals, shells, corns and precious stones and finally pearls have had their period of popularity.

There never was a time when one's purse felt so thin as now, because of the desire to help feed the hungry world, hence any means of brightening up the gown that one is planning to wear another season should be welcomed.

If, however, the gown in question has already sufficient decoration in the form of applique, braid or embroidered yarns, you have not the slightest excuse for a string of beads, unless perchance a birthday is near, or a sale for the relief of hungry children.

Granted that your conscience is clear and your motive worthy, you may read on and motivate!

The first thing to consider is the color scheme for the beads and that depends upon the gown.

Below are a few interesting combinations:

1. Red, orange or henna with black or rich blue.
2. Red, orange and green.
3. Vermillion with blue, gold or green or in combination.
4. Black, white and jade green.
5. Purple, emerald green and a touch of orange.
6. Emerald-green, lavender and blue.
7. Lavender, blue and silver.
8. Red and green or black.
9. Black with bronze and gold.
10. Blue-green, lavender, gold and Nile green.
11. Blue, lavender and green.

After determining upon a pleasing color harmony decide upon the shape of the beads: Long cylindrical or barrel shaped, round beads, wedge shaped or irregular shapes, may be used singly or in pleasing combinations.

If round or barrel shaped beads are chosen, the wooden beads sold for children to string may be used as a foundation. This saves both time and wax.

It may be that you have a string of beads the colors of which are not good with anything you have to wear. These may also be used as a basis for wax.

If long or irregular shaped beads are desired they may be made entirely of wax.

Bankers wax, which is a beautiful henna color, forms a splendid foundation for the more expensive letter wax and can also be used in the combination. If it cannot be procured use letter-wax entirely. Ordinary sealing wax such as is used for sealing fruit cans is too sticky to remove easily from the knitting needles on which beads are made.



Wax Beads Are Easily Shaped

Beads may be made either smooth or rough in texture and colors blended or not, as desired.

With color scheme, shape of beads, and texture in mind provide yourself with the following, which will make at least one string of beads. Bankers wax, one stick, and two or three sticks of letter wax; two Red Cross steel needles (any of sufficient diameter will do but the writer prefers Red Cross needles, since they do have such humanitarian associations and who knows but that the psychology of using Red Cross needles might not cause such fervor that a dozen strings of beads might be sold for some fine purpose.)

An alcohol lamp or plumber's candle is also needed and a working surface that is fire resisting.

An apron will protect the gown which might otherwise become spotted with wax.

Cord or ribbon of black or of a color which repeats one of the colors of the beads will also be required for stringing the finished beads. About one and a quarter yards is necessary if one desires to tie knots to keep the beads from slipping. Cord may be made by twisting embroidery floss of the desired color.

Wax beads may be made in two ways.

1. Heat the end of a wax stick and rub it around the center of the knitting needle, adding more until the proper length and circumference is secured. When cool enough it can be moulded in the fingers, and after the desired shape is secured the final colors may be added.

2. Break off a piece of wax about the length of the bead desired. Heat the center of the knitting needle and press it into the wax which should be

placed upon the table. Reheat the needle and embed it still further into the wax. When wax is sufficiently cool to handle without burning, work the wax around the needle with the fingers and add more wax if necessary by heating the end of the stick of wax and rubbing it around the bead to secure the desired shape. Roll the bead on table if cylindrical shape is desired. Then all the letter wax to the surface. Heat bead sufficiently to allow colors to blend slightly so as not to lose all of original colors which are beautiful in themselves.

A bead blended to too great a degree loses its richness in color as does a bead held too near the candle or in the smoke. Too much heat causes the wax to bubble or to become dull. It is necessary at times to clip the candle wick to keep the flame bright and clean.

To remove a finished bead, heat the needle on each side of the bead sufficiently far away from the ends of the bead to prevent its softening, which would spoil its shape. Push the bead off the needle.

Before stringing the beads match them by twos. Place the cord around your neck, with the two ends in front, and experiment in order to secure good spacing. Unequal spaces make for variety and interest, but both sides of the necklace should balance. Tie knots at the end of each bead or wedge a small amount of warm wax in the beads to keep them from slipping, after they are on the string.

The finish of the end in front is important. Both ends of the cord may be brought thru a large round flat or wedge shaped bead. Heat the end of the needle and insert it in the hole to enlarge it sufficiently if the cord is too large.

The ends may be finished in several ways. Unequal lengths of cord at ends are usually more interesting. Round beads or pendants may be used. Pendants may be made by holding the needle almost vertically and rotating the hot wax. These also form a good finish to the ends of belts and sleeve points on blouses.

In order to acquire a beautiful string of beads some experimentation is necessary and patience and skill are requisites.

A pendant hung on a colored gros-grain ribbon harmonizing with the costume will often add greatly to the appearance of the costume. On the market, one may find countless numbers of novelty ribbons in exquisite colors, and somewhere among these is just the exact hue to add the final bit of brightening color to that go gown of yours. Only be sure to have the gown and pendant along when you select the ribbon because colors cannot be matched from memory. Slip the ribbon thru the pendant and fasten as the cord was fastened, tie in a bow at the back of the neck. A very narrow ribbon, not more than one-quarter of an inch looks best in this way.