



Tips For

Working with Elastic

bead
IN HAND

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ELASTIC

Elastic is great for stringing simple bracelets or rings that are easy to put on and don't need a clasp. But keep in mind that it lacks durability. Elastic gets stressed over time and will wear out, break or lose its elasticity. Avoid beads with sharp edges that can cut the elastic, or very heavy beads that add extra stress.

The diameter of the elastic you select will need to fit through the smallest hole of the beads you are using. Cut enough elastic so you'll have 6 to 8 inches on each end for tying the knot. If the length is too short you'll spend more time trying to finish it than you spent putting it together.

TYPES OF ELASTIC

Here is a quick look at the types of elastic most common in jewelry making, and their pros and cons.

Polyester covered elastic is a woven cord that is very strong and holds a knot well. It tends to be thicker than other elastics and, in beading, is used with large-hole beads.

Round elastic such as Stretch Magic is popular for beading and especially for children's projects because it is stiff enough that it does not require a needle to go through beads. It is available in several thicknesses. We carry .5mm, .7mm and 1mm in clear and black. Round elastic does not hold a knot as well as other types, so it is important to tie the knot securely and always put clear glue on the knot.

Gossamer Floss™ is a multi-filament, "flat" elastic that is very durable with a lot of stretch. The "flatness" makes it less stiff and requires a needle in order to pass through beads. It also holds a knot better than other elastics, although we still recommend putting glue on the knot. Avoid using Gossamer Floss if your beads have sharp edges that cause it to snag. If the filaments snag or begin to break it will weaken the entire piece.

FINISHING ELASTIC

Elastic is finished by knotting it. Do not use crimp beads—they can easily cut through the elastic. Keep in mind that the heavier the elastic, the bigger the knot. If possible, tie the knot next to a bead with a larger hole that the knot can be pushed into.

To get the best hold, tie an overhand knot holding both strands together. Use an awl (or anything that comes to a point) to help guide the knot close to the beads and pull tight. Put a clear glue (G.S. Hypo Cement, 527 or E6000) on the knot and let dry before cutting the elastic close to the knot. Water soluble glue will not adhere well to elastic, and because the elastic needs to stretch, super glue is not recommended because it is very stiff and brittle when it dries.

