



## Tips For

# An Off-Loom Weaving Supply List

## bead IN HAND

145 Harrison Street  
Oak Park, Illinois 60304  
708.848.1761  
[www.beadinhand.com](http://www.beadinhand.com)  
[info@beadinhand.com](mailto:info@beadinhand.com)  
mon, tue, thu, fri: 11-6  
wed: 1-6  
sat: 10-5 | sun: closed

There are some basic supplies you need when you're working with small beads and stitching them together using needle and thread. Other items are extremely useful, and still others are just nice to have. Here is a brief overview of some of these items.

### NEEDLES

Beading needles are sized like seed beads: the larger the number, the thinner the needle. The largest size needle is size 10 and the smallest is size 15. Size 15 needles are *very* delicate—you'll only use them if you absolutely cannot get your needle through a bead otherwise—but don't be surprised if it breaks.



**Sharps** are the same as beading needles but shorter. Some people are just more comfortable with a shorter needle, but they also come in handy when you end up with a short length of thread that needs to be woven into your work.

**Tulip** needles are a fairly new brand of needle, promoted as "unbreakable." They are very high quality and while it's not impossible to break one, they are indeed extremely durable. They are much more expensive, but they do last, and for die-hard seed beaders they can be worth the investment.

### THREAD

There are a lot of choices for thread and most seed beaders have their favorite. There are no right or wrong choices—it's mostly personal preference. At Bead In Hand we carry three types of thread:

- **Nymo** A twisted nylon thread that has been around for a long time and is available in many colors. It is economical and fairly durable. Its main drawback is the tendency for a needle to split the thread, and the only way to correct this is to un-thread the needle and pull the thread back out of the split.
- **Fireline** This is actually a nylon fishing line but has become very popular with many seed beaders. It is very durable and, unlike Nymo, will not get split by the needle. It is stiffer than Nymo, which can be a benefit for some patterns but may detract from others. It is available only in smoke and clear colors. Threading tip: squish the end of the fireline by pulling it between your thumbnail and finger (or between pliers) to flatten it.
- **KO** This nylon thread is similar to Nymo but a little higher quality and less likely to split and is also very durable. It is also available in several colors.



## WORKING SURFACE

Most seed beaders use a **bead mat** for easy access to their materials. Bead mats allow you to have many seed beads arranged in front of you without fear that they will roll away.



## Scoops

When it's time to put your materials away, no one wants to be putting their beads back into tubes using their fingers. **Triangle** and **shovel scoops** make it easy to pour your beads back into their containers.



## SCISSORS

You'll obviously need something that leaves a nice clean edge when cutting your thread, because threading a beading needle with a frayed edge is no fun. There are many good quality **thread snips** available—choose one that is comfortable for you.



A **Thread Zap** tool is also very useful for nylon threads. This tool has a small heating element that melts nylon thread at a very precise point and leaves a small melted "ball" at the edge, preventing further fraying.



**Bobbins** are great for keeping your thread from tangling when you take a project on the road. Wind your thread around the center and flip the plastic down over it and your project is safe and secure.



**Thread Conditioners** such as **beeswax** or **Thread Heaven®** are a matter of personal preference. Beeswax leaves a slight tackiness to the thread—some people like it, some don't. Thread Heaven helps eliminate static that can occur with any thread.

