



# Seed Beads and Off-Loom Bead Weaving Stitches

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## SEED BEADS

Seed beads are small glass beads sized by number. The larger the number, the smaller the bead. The most commonly used seed bead sizes are 6/0, 8/0, 11/0 and 15/0, with size 15/0 being the smallest. They come in other sizes and shapes as well.

Seed beads on hanks (strands that are bundled together), are generally made in the Czech Republic. They tend to be rounder, more donut shaped, with smaller holes.



Seed beads in tubes are generally made in Japan. They tend to be more tubular or cylindrical in shape, though variations are the norm rather than the exception.



**Delica** is a brand name for **cylinder beads**. Other brands are Aikos, Magnificas, Toho and Treasures. They are very uniform and cylindrical in shape with narrow walls and wide holes. This uniformity makes them a popular choice for many seed bead designs as they create very even and uniform patterns.



**Bugle beads** are long and tubular. They can be sized by number (Size #1, #2, #3, etc), or by millimeter—6mm being the most common. Bugle beads are more likely to have rough edges that can cut your thread. Be sure to check them as you use them.



Seed beads are also available in **triangular** shapes, **hexagons**, and **cubes**. Unlike the others, cubes are sized by millimeter, e.g., 1.5mm, 3mm and 4mm.



Triangles (top left), cubes (right) and hex beads (bottom)

**Shaped Seed Beads** – New shapes of seed beads are constantly being created and it's hard to keep up with them. They include many two-hole beads such as **tila**, **super duo**, **twins**, **brick**, etc.



Left to right: Tilas, super duos, and peanuts

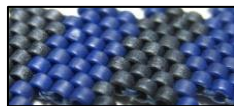
## Off-Loom Stitches

Off-loom weaving techniques have originated from around the world and have been passed down from ancient times and tribes. Here are some of the most commonly used stitches.

**Brick** This stitch is found in Native American traditions, notably Comanche and Cheyenne, as well as African Zulu tribes. It creates off-set rows with the beads arranged in a brick-like pattern. It creates the same look as peyote, but is stitched very differently.



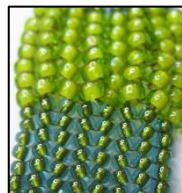
**Peyote** Peyote stitch is found in Native American and West African beadwork. It is a very strong stitch that produces, like brick stitch, off-set rows arranged like brick paving. It can also be made in flat tubular, spiral or flat circular pieces.



**Right Angle Weave** The origin is unknown for this beading technique but it is found in beaded pieces from Africa, Europe, Russia and Asia. It creates a very open weave, similar to a netting stitch, by going in a figure 8 pattern. It is often embellished with additional beads or crystals and can also be made in tubular and dimensional patterns.



**Ndebele (or Herringbone)** pronounced *en-de-belly* This stitch originated in South African and is the traditional stitch for the Ndebele tribe. Also called herringbone stitch because of the angled pattern it creates. It is a very flexible stitch and can create flat ropes, tubular ropes and twisted or flat ribbon ropes.



**Square Stitch** Square stitch is a very tight stitch that gives the same appearance as beadwork created on a loom. The rows sit parallel, and it works well for geometric designs. The stitch uses a lot of thread, which passes through each bead many times, and therefore creates a very strong piece.



**Netting** This is a beading technique found in pieces from Africa, Europe, Russia and Asia. It creates an open weave and is popular for chokers and collars that lay close to the neck.



**Spirals** These are stitches that create a swirling rope pattern, which will look different depending upon the size and shape of beads used. Single Spiral Rope, Double Spiral Rope, Dutch Spiral, Russian Spiral and Cellini Spiral are just a few of the more common spiral techniques.

