

# An Elegant Seed Bead Chain

Chevrons you'll salute



**Ages 10 to adult. Weave about six inches per hour.**

by *Diane Fitzgerald*

**I**'m always on the lookout for bead chains — some of the old stand-bys like the daisy chain of the 1960s as well as special and unusual variations that I've never seen before, like this one. I usually just do enough to make a bracelet, but I got carried away with this one and made a necklace.

Chains like this have unlimited uses. They are very supple and flexible, so they can be sewn onto all kinds of clothing and accessories. In this particular chain the thread takes some wicked turns around the edges of beads, so avoid too much rubbing.

Bead chains make particularly good carry-along projects. The materials hardly take any space in a purse or pocket, and they provide hours of entertainment during boring drives (not when *I'm* driving, of course), airplane flights, and waits in doctors' offices. A fringe benefit is the conversations that working on

a bead chain in public can start for you. Try it and you'll see. Another advantage is the meditative relaxation that repetitive bead chain weaving offers. I often lose all track of time and my daily worries as the chain grows in my hands.

Here's one suggestion to help prevent the frustration of knots. They'll happen if your thread develops extra twist, which is inevitable when you pull it in and out through beads. Just twirl your needle between your fingers in the other direction periodically to uncurl the thread. It's easy, and it provides a nice break for your hands and eyes when you feel yourself becoming too obsessive.

Special thanks to LEEANNE STREMCHEA of Northfield, MN, who gave me this technique in trade for another.

*Above: Sew a delicate chevron chain with bugle and seed beads. Mono- or multi-color design will produce completely different looks.*

*Diane is a contributing editor of BEAD & Button.*



## Step by step

### Materials

#### Beads

Size 2 (7mm) bugle beads and size 11 seed beads. (Note: the diameter of the seed beads should be equal to or greater than that of the bugles.) Size 3 (9mm) bugles also work with more seed beads.

#### Needles

Size 12 or 13 English beading needle

#### Thread

Nymo beading thread, size B or D. (Note: since the thread never goes through a bead more than twice, use thread as thick as possible to minimize breakage. But allow a little space to begin and end threads – 3 passes.) Pull the thread over a piece of beeswax to strengthen it and avoid abrasion.

To start, hold the beads between your thumb and index finger, positioned as shown. You may have to adjust the number of seed beads to fit the bugles. Pull the thread snug after each step.

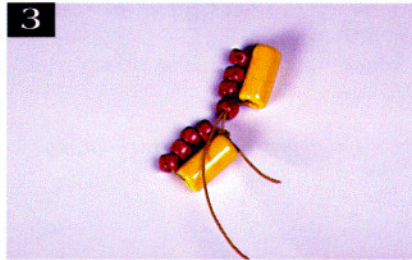
**Photo 1.** String 4 seed beads (SB) and 1 bugle (BB) and tie into a loop.



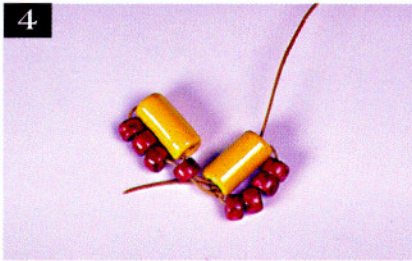
**Photo 2.** String 4 SBs and 1 BB. Go back through the fourth SB from the needle in the direction shown



**Photo 3.** Pull the thread to align the SBs alongside the second BB. String through the previous BB toward the first SB.

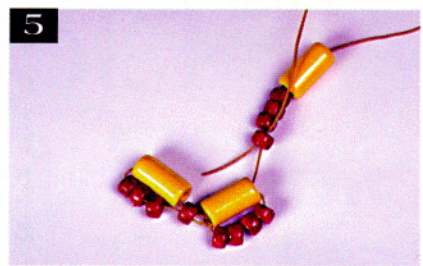


**Photo 4.** Position the BBs to form a slightly off-center V in your hand with the SBs to the outside.



**Photos 5 and 6.** String 4 SBs and 1 BB. Go back through the fourth SB and position the beads as before.

**Photo 7.** Jump across to the BB on the opposite side and go forward



through it. Turn the work over so the beads are positioned as before. Repeat steps 5 through 7 for the desired length.

## A French twist haircomb

After I'd made a bunch of these nifty chains, I started looking for things to do with them.

This starts as an inexpensive plastic French twist haircomb. By itself, the comb isn't very pretty, but wrapped in chevrons it looks great. Here's how I did it. (It's the simplest project around and takes less than five minutes.)

1. Tie the end of a 26-30 in. long chevron chain to the next-to-the-last tooth of the comb. (Gluing it works fine as well.)

2. Wrap the chain between the last two teeth, over the top of the

comb crossbar, and under the crossbar outside the last tooth.

3. Then wrap it around the crossbar, one turn per tooth, until you reach the other end. Wrap one turn outside the last tooth.

4. Double back, wrapping as before, crossing the prior wraps at an opposing angle.

5. One turn before the end, tie or glue the chevron end behind the crossbar where it won't show.

If you have extra chain left, seal the end with glue and cut off the extra, weave it into the back of the comb where it won't show, or stitch it flat against the back of the comb.