



Tip of the Month—December 2016



Using Beads

There are several techniques you can use to add beads to your work – whether you are crocheting, knitting or tatting. The easiest by far is to thread the beads onto your yarn before you begin your work and pull up the bead as you need it. If you are making a pattern with your beads, you will need to put the beads on in reverse order! Threading beads onto your yarn can be done in several ways

Big eye needle – These are thin, but have a large eye for the yarn that goes nearly the whole length of the needle so can cater for any thickness of yarn. Thread the yarn through the eye and use like a normal needle, picking up the beads with the point.

Beading needle – These look like a normal sewing needle but are thinner and have a smaller eye. Thread thin sewing cotton through the eye, cut it and tie the ends together to form a loop. Feed your yarn through this loop and continue as with the big eye needle.

Floss threader – Feed your yarn through the loop at the end of the threader, and pick up the beads with the pointy end of the floss threader.

Crochet Hook – Slide the beads onto a shaft of a fine crochet hook - .4mm or .5mm work best. Hook your yarn and then drop the beads onto the yarn.

If you don't like to thread the beads onto your yarn/thread before hand, you can use the 'bead-as-you-go' technique. This will require you to have a crochet hook at hand that will go through your bead in order to pull the yarn through at the point in which you wish to add a bead.

Rub beeswax onto your thread before threading beads – this keeps your thread from fraying, protects it from moisture and decay, allows your beads to slide easily and keeps your stitches tight.

The colour of the thread influences the colour of the beads—if using a mix of colours, match the thread colour to the lightest bead in the design.

The beads should have holes that are large enough to easily slide over the yarn that you choose. You shouldn't choose very heavy beads for very thin thread/yarn (even though they would fit). Choose smaller beads for thread crochet, mid-sized beads for mid-weight yarn and reserve heavy, big beads for bulky weight projects. If you want to work with smaller beads but thicker yarn: String your beads on to thread that matches your chosen yarn in color. Then hold both the yarn and the threaded beads together, working them as a double-strand crochet project.