

Tools for Working with Findings

by Arthur Anton Skuratowicz

Tools can be modified or fabricated to assist in working with findings. The following are a few tips from Arthur Anton Skuratowicz, owner of The Jewelry Training Center (www.jewelrytrainingcenter.com) in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

For the Perfect Fit, Get Abrasive...

When soldering heads onto a ring, you need to prepare the holes or open-



ings in the ring to match the heads. There are burs specifically designed for this process, but although similar in shape and size to the base of the heads, they are not an exact match. To make a perfectly matching tool, grind a bullet-shaped silicone abra-

sive to match the angle and curvature of the head [1]. This enables you to better match each opening in the ring to the base of each head, resulting in improved solder adhesion and more accurate positioning.

...or Turn, Turn, Turn

Turning is another method for perfectly matching the opening in a ring to the base of the head. The resulting tighter fit will offer better solder contact. You can use a lathe or wooden, or plastic mandrel to turn a metal,



match the angle and shape of the head base [2]. This is a handy tool because you can attach different abrasive films to prepare the opening. Just cut a slit down the center of the mandrel, insert the sandpaper, wrap it around, and secure.

Dimple Your Way to Better Pearl Adhesion

To more securely glue pearls onto pearl posts, dimple the posts with an old pair of cutters. Simply grind away part of the cutting edge on



one side of a pair of damaged or inexpensive cutters [3]. You want to create enough of a gap between the jaws so that they will dimple the wire, not cut it.

Many pearl posts are between 18 and 20 gauge. With some trial and error, you can shape the cutting edge so that you can dimple several gauges of wire [4].

These dimples provide better adhesion when gluing a pearl or bead onto a post.



For a Better Grip, Try a Paper Clip

Many jewelers find their fingers are too large to hold small findings while polishing them on a large buffing wheel. To make the job easier, use a paper clip or a section of wire to hold the findings [5]. The paper clip or wire will provide clearance for your fingers near the spinning wheel and protect them from the heat.

Don't wrap the paper clip or wire tightly around the finding. Just make a loose hook [6]. A tight hook may hold too securely: If the polishing wheel grabs the finding, it could damage it or pull your fingers into the wheel. An open hook will release the finding, which may help to prevent damage or an injury.



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Sessin Durgham

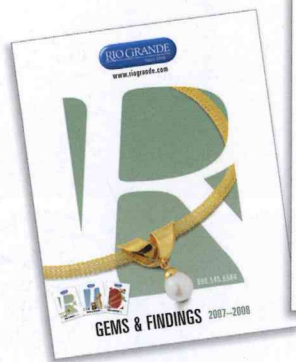
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