

# Needle Tat a Bridal Necklace and Bracelet with Beads

ESTHER TRUSLER

**N**eedle tatting is a gentle art that can be traced as far back as the 1850s. Some believe that tatting developed from netting and decorative ropework created by sailors and fishermen. If you are new to needle tatting with beads, see the sidebar below. For another bead needle tatted project, see the April/May 2004 issue of *PieceWork's* sister magazine *Beadwork*.



Esther Trusler's tatted necklace and bracelet with beads.

*Photograph by Joe Coca.*

## MATERIALS

Mastex bonded #18, 100% nylon cord, 167 yards (153 m)/spool, #722 Natural, 1 spool  
Nymo beading thread, 100% nylon size D, 128 yards (117 m)/bobbin, light tan, 1 bobbin  
Czech seed beads, size 6°, eggshell pearl, 100  
Czech raindrop beads, size 5°, eggshell pearl, 175  
Japanese seed beads, size 11°, eggshell pearl, 25  
Handy Hands tatting needle, size 5  
John James Needle, beading size 10  
Twisted wire needle  
Buttons, 5/8 inches (1.6 cm) in diameter, cream, 2

*Materials are available at bead, needlework, and craft stores or from mail-order or online resources.*

Finished size: Necklace, 20 inches (50.8 cm) long;  
bracelet, 6½ inches (16.5 cm) long

## ABBREVIATIONS

ds—double stitch  
b—slide bead down

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Notes:* See Technique: Needle Tatting with Beads How-To. If the cord becomes twisted and/or tangled, straighten it by removing the needle, running the cord between your fingers to force all the twists out, and rethreading the needle before continuing work. Unless otherwise noted, use the tatting needle. The first beads strung are the last beads worked.

### Necklace

Use the twisted wire needle and cord to prestring 13 size 6° seed beads, 1 raindrop, \*10 size 6° seed beads, and 1 raindrop; repeat from \* 34 more times. String 7 size 6° seed beads. Pull at least 3 yards (7.6 m) of cord through the eye of the tatting needle for the core cord (the cord tail that will be covered in stitches). Begin the necklace by making a ring. After that, you will make chains.

*Ring:* Cast on 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, and 2ds (6 beads total). Pull the needle through

the stitches and loop to form a ring (Figure 1), and then tie an overhand knot around the spool cord (Figure 2).

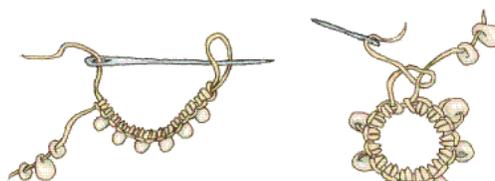


Figure 1

Figure 2

*Chain 1:* Cast on 2ds, 1b, 2ds (6 beads total). Pull the needle through the stitches to form a chain. Pass the needle from back to front under the cord that is securing the second bead over on the previous ring. Pull the cord tight to form an arch and hold it in place as you pass the needle back down at that same spot and up through the loop forming a slipknot (Figure 3).

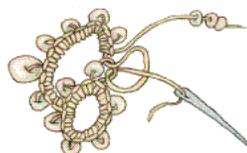


Figure 3

Pull tight and tie an overhand knot around the spool cord. There will be 6 beads on the outside and 2 beads on the inside of the chain.

*Chain 2:* Cast on 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds (5 beads total). Pull into a chain and join to the previous chain at the outside cord of the third bead from the start of the current chain (Figure 4). Pull into a tight arch and make a slipknot, then an overhand knot as before.



Figure 4

Notice that the bead chain with the drop bead has 6 beads, including the drop. You will always join this chain at the outside cord of the second bead over on the previous chain. The second chain has 5 beads, and you will always join it at the outside cord of the third bead over on the previous chain. The extra bead in every other chain becomes the bottom edge and causes the necklace to gently curve. Pull each chain tight so that the necklace will hold its shape.

Repeat Chain 1 and Chain 2 for a total of 35 pairs of chains. You should have 9 beads left on the spool cord. For the final chain, which is your clasp-loop that will connect over the button, cast on 2ds, the remaining beads with 2ds between the beads, 2ds. Pull into a chain. To center the loop, join this chain at the outside cord of the third bead over on the previous chain. After joining the final chain, tie multiple overhand knots and cut both cords, leaving a 1/4-inch (6-mm) tail. Melt the ends so that the cord balls up close to the knot (if the cord becomes dark, file the dark spot with an emery board or paint a bit of cream-colored nail polish on the dark spot).

To attach the button, thread the beading needle with about 1 yard (1 m) of Nymo thread; double the thread, knot the ends together, and trim the tails. Pass down onto the top side of the inner part of the initial ring. Pass back up at the same place and string 1 size 6° seed bead and the button so that the button face is pointing upward. String 4 size 11° seed beads and pass the needle down the second hole on the button and down through the size 6° seed bead into the tatting. Come back up and attach 4 more size 11° seed beads. Do this a total of three times to tightly connect the buttonholes. When going down for the third and final time, weave the needle away from the button into the tatting stitches and to the edge of the chain. Tie a half-hitch knot and weave back into the tatting to the other side. Tie two more half-hitch knots and weave into the center before cutting the thread.

### Bracelet

Prestring 135 raindrop beads on the cord; add more for a longer bracelet. Pull 1 yard (.9 m) of cord through the needle eye to become the core cord. As with the necklace, begin the bracelet by making a ring. After that, you will make chains, but the bracelet has only one chain pattern repeated.

*Ring:* Cast on 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds (6 beads total). Pull into a ring, and tie an overhand knot.

*Chain:* Cast on 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds, 1b, 2ds (5 beads total). Pull into a chain, and join to the previous ring counting two beads over from the base of this chain. Tie an overhand knot around the spool cord. Repeat 22 times for a 6 1/2-inch (16.5-cm) long bracelet; the bracelet will stretch a bit after setting the stitches in hot water. Always count two beads over for each join. For the final chain, which is your clasp-loop, cast on 2ds, the remaining 9 beads with 2ds between the beads, 2ds. Pull into a chain. To center the loop, join the last chain at the outside cord of the third bead over on the previous chain.

Finish the ends and add one button as for the necklace.

To set the stitches, soak both pieces in very hot water for a few minutes, arrange the necklace in a curved shape, spread them out on a flat surface, and allow to dry completely. The heat causes the stitches to tighten up and position the beads.

*ABOUT THE DESIGNER.* *Esther Trusler has been playing with beads for the past five or so years. She teaches classes at the local bead store in her town; visit the store's website [www.ezknit.com](http://www.ezknit.com). Trusler's beadwork may be seen at [www.picturetrail.com/gardengirl44](http://www.picturetrail.com/gardengirl44).*

All illustrations by Dustin Wedekind.

*Editor's note:* Please see the next page for our Needle Tatting with Beads How-To.

# Needle Tatting with Beads How-To

## Double Stitch

Without cutting the cord from the spool, pass about 24 inches (61 cm) through the eye of the needle. Hold the needle in your right hand and use a finger to hold the cord against the shaft. Place the spool cord over your left thumb and pass the point of the needle on the outside and then under the cord moving from left to right (Figure A).

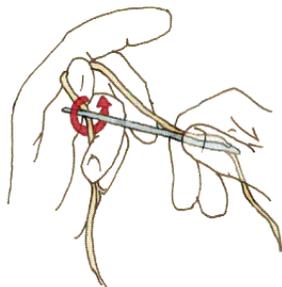


Figure A

Slide the cord onto the needle up to your right finger. Place the cord over your left index finger from back to front, and pass the point of the needle from right to left under the cord behind your finger (Figure B).

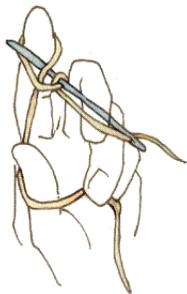


Figure B

Slide the cord onto the needle. This is one double stitch (ds). To place a bead (prestrung on the spool), slide it up

close to the work under the needle between double stitches (Figure C).



Figure C

## Rings

Cast on a series of double stitches. Loosen the needle cord so that the tail is shorter than the loop. Pull the needle through the stitches and pass it through the loop (see Figure 1 in the project instructions). Pull the cord the rest of the way through the stitches to form a ring, tightening the loop around the core cord at the base of the stitches. Use the needle cord to tie an overhand knot around the spool cord close to the closed ring (see Figure 2 in the project instructions).

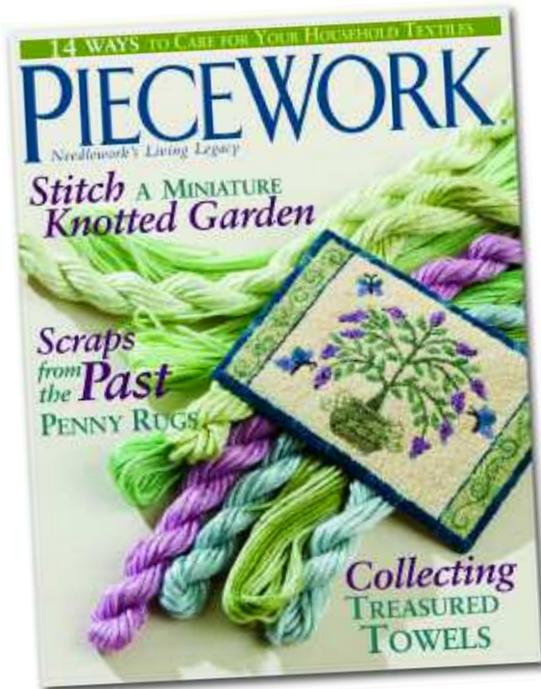
## Chains

Hold the spool cord in your left hand. With your right hand, place the needle under the spool cord next to the ring and hold it with your right finger, letting the ring hang loose below. Cast on another set of double stitches with your first double stitches close to the ring. Pull the needle through the stitches—you do not need to pass through a loop (as you did for the ring) because the stitches will just stack up next to the ring. Pull the chain tight. To join to the ring, pass the needle from the back to front under the cord holding the second bead over from the last connection. Pull tight and hold. Pass the needle back down at that same spot and up through the loop (see Figure 4 in the project instructions). Pull tight and tie the cords together as before.

*Notes:* Keep your work moderately tight: if it's too loose it will look sloppy; if it's too tight you will have difficulty pulling your needle through. Be patient. Your technique will improve with practice.

—E.T.

*Adapted with permission from Beadwork magazine, April/May 2004.*



# RISK-FREE TRIAL OFFER

Discover projects and articles sure to inspire and expand your creative horizons.

From cover to cover, *PieceWork* magazine gives you gorgeous photography, amazing needlework objects, contemporary projects with a historical perspective, and the personal stories of needleworkers from around the globe.

*PieceWork* magazine also brings you articles on beautiful heirloom-quality projects, and the personal stories and memories behind timeless pieces of handwork. Don't miss out on another issue. Take advantage of this special **risk-free** offer today!

Call (800) 340-7496 code JPDP6, or go to [www.interweave.com/go/pwkJPDP6](http://www.interweave.com/go/pwkJPDP6)