

Vintage Beaded Necktie Necklace

Pattern written by Michelle Gregersen (@ m.d.g.designs)

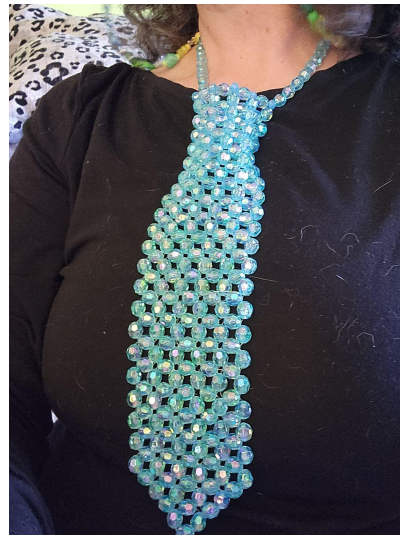
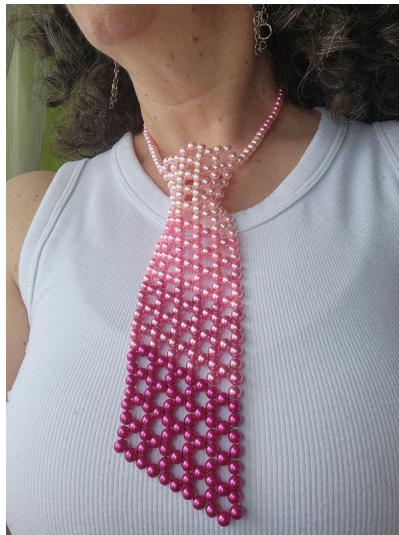
Free pattern for IBW 2026: Emblems

Anyone can use this pattern, adapt and change it as necessary, sell or share your own creations. I was unable to find any pre-existing pattern other than the inspiration for this particular design in the film “After Hours” 1985 and at least one Etsy site (Retro Kandy Vintage) advertising similar original vintage ties for sale (but not patterns).

The necktie is a symbol of power, professionalism and style which (according to Wikipedia) has its origins in the 1600s on the battlefield during the Thirty Years War. Croatian mercenaries wore a knotted tie with a double end as part of their uniforms to absorb sweat (perhaps also blood), to cool when doused with water or to keep the neck warm as conditions demanded. This necktie caught the attention of the French, who had fought alongside the Croats at that time. Reportedly, this functional fashion statement was so appealing that Louis the XIV wore one when he was seven! The necktie was soon after adopted by aristocratic members of the French court leading to a fashion trend that spread throughout Europe. The necktie was worn by men and women of status, and labelled “cravat” (partially after the French term for Croats, Hrvati). This fashionable accessory has evolved over the centuries into the twenty-first century to become the “long tie” commonly worn by men and often women in uniforms and business attire. [This information was found on Wikipedia under a search for “necktie”. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Necktie>]

The significance of the beaded necktie necklace from the 1950s to the 1970s was to challenge or subvert the idea of “boardroom power dressing” and gender role stereotypes through whimsical, playful, kitschy jewelry designs using inexpensive and lightweight materials such as acrylic beads. In the 1980s, my friends and I enjoyed blending many “retro” or “vintage” styles with the 80s fashion designs. Hence, when I saw Teri Garr in the film “After Hours” (1985) wearing a sleek yellow dress accessorized with a black beaded necktie, I was obsessed and came up with this moderately easy pattern to replicate the sleek, slightly sparkly, necklace.

I have not found any tutorials or patterns for making these ties using 6 beads. There are tutorials for using a 4-bead RAW technique which can be found by searching You Tube. Four-bead RAW is more amenable to experimenting with other types of beads like larger acrylic faceted rounds, 6 mm bicones or even glass rice beads. In the photo on the left, I am wearing an ombre pink tie made with glass pearls in the 6-bead RAW technique. On the right, I used larger 8 mm acrylic faceted round beads in the more customary 4-bead RAW technique and finishing with a central point.



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Have fun with this pattern! It's satisfying and eye catching once it's done.

DISCLAIMER: this is the first time I am writing a pattern with diagrams. Please share any feedback, questions, advice, ideas with me via mdgdesigns23@gmail.com. I would be very happy to learn how I can improve my pattern writing skills! And I would LOVE to see photos of ties you make, too.

Materials:

Approx. 200 acrylic or glass 6 mm pearls, druks, or faceted rounds (your choice)

(Glass is heavier and needs more reinforcing plus a stronger necklace and clasp, acrylic is lighter.)

8/o beads, approx. 1 g in a complementary colour, gold or silver (your choice)

Strong beading thread like Fireline 6 lb (for dark beads use smoke or black, for lighter colour use crystal or white)

Beading needles (10 and 12, just in case)

Large toggle clasp

Optional materials: approximately 25-30 inches of nylon coated beading wire (like SoftFlex or similar), two or four 1 or 2 mm Crimp beads, crimping or flat nose pliers, two Wire guardians.

- You will be working from the bottom of the tie to the top, looping through each 6-bead unit in a typical RAW technique that looks more circular than square
- The direction of your thread path can alternate between clockwise and anti or counter clockwise as you work depending on your style and what feels most comfortable for you
- The bottom line of this tie will be diagonal versus chevron/pointed as a nod to the 1950s design and will require one final step to give the tie a sleek look, so watch for that step
- The length of the tie can be from 18 to 20 to 25 rows depending on your preference
- The width of the tie needs to be 4 or 5 units wide depending on the effect you want; thinner tie references 1980s 😊 wider tie references 1950s/1960s
- The necklace portion needs to be adjusted to your needs, what you will wear it with, what size you prefer
- How you complete the necklace portion is open to your desire and skill level; some may wish to create an elaborate beadwoven neck band, some may want the more straightforward strung style, and some may simply want to attach chain and call it a day

ROW 1: Begin with about a wingspan and a half of thread on your needle.

Pick up six beads, go through twice and tie a knot to secure the first unit. Check that you are moving your needle clockwise for this unit.

Sew through three beads and pick up five new beads, sew back through the bead you came out of (counter clockwise). Repeat this step, alternating the direction between clockwise and counter clockwise until you have 5 units.

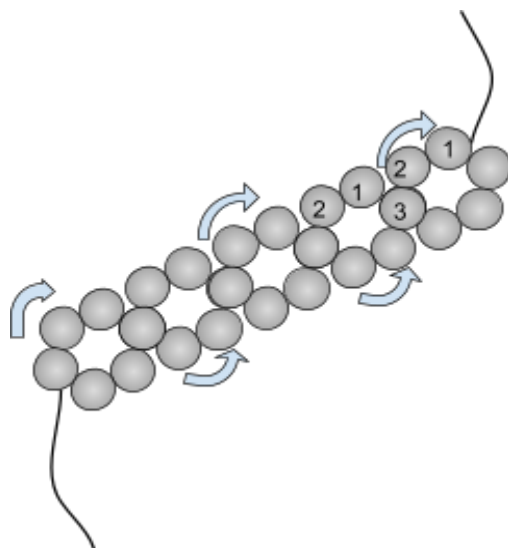
Each unit has six beads with some beads being shared between units. I have labelled the beads in the first few diagrams as 3, 2 and 1; this will change to a star once we get the first two rows done. This is important for how the next two rows are constructed.

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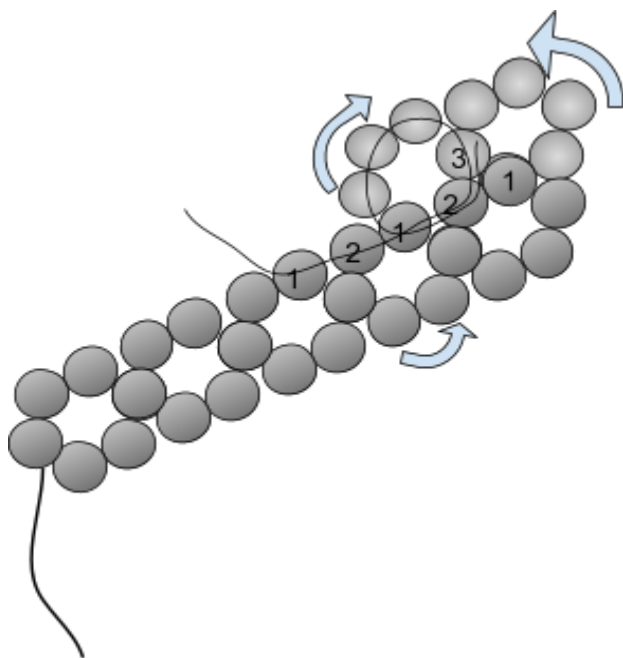
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Your thread needs to be coming out of bead 1 in the last unit of row 1 to begin the next row. Remember to check your tension and keep it as snug as you can.



ROW 2: Pick up 5 beads and sew back into bead 1, the you're coming out of and the next 5 beads to secure the unit. Continue sewing through bead 3 of this unit, 2 of the unit below and bead 1 of the next unit in Row 1.



Pick up 3 beads and sew back into beads 3, 2 and 1. You are forming units of six beads with three of the beads shared with other units. This will become clearer as you work through the pattern.

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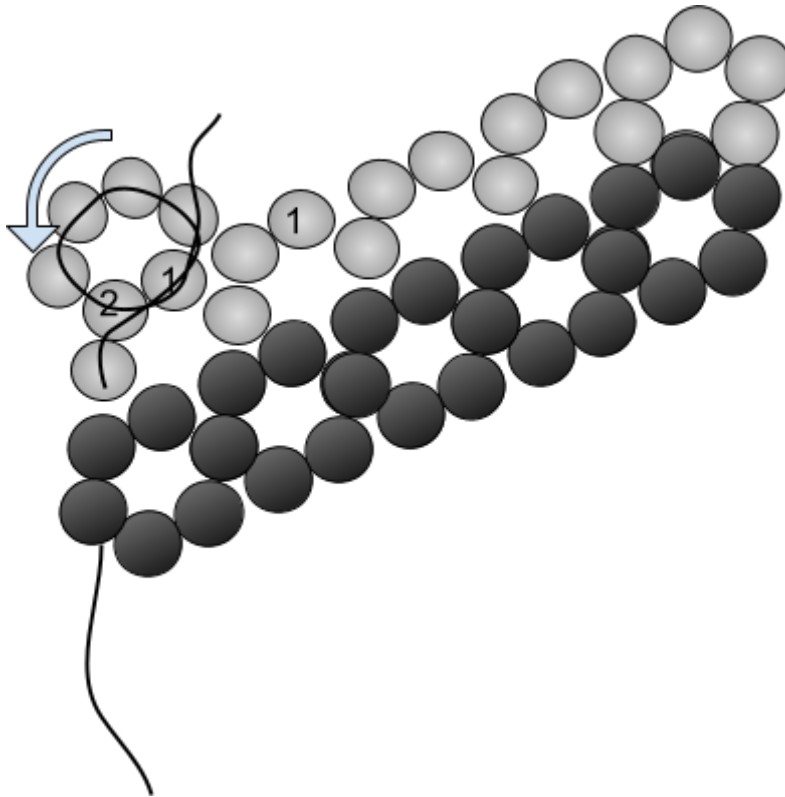
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Continue sewing through the next beads 2 and 1 in the units below coming out of bead 1 (of the third unit in row 1).

Repeat previous step of adding 3 beads, moving clockwise and through the next beads 2 and 1 of the units in the first row.

ROW 3: Sew through beads 2 and 1 of this unit moving counter clockwise, pick up 4 beads and go back through beads 2 and 1 and come out of the next bead (bead "6") in this unit.

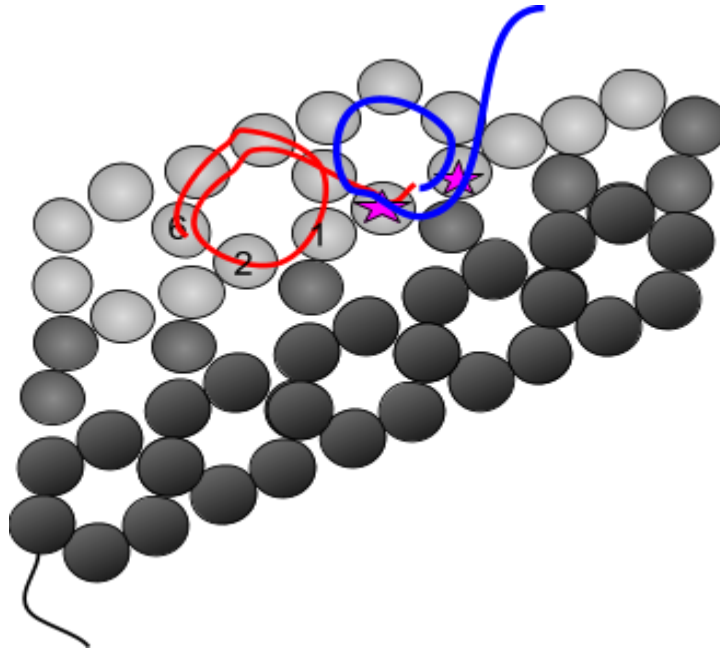


We are going to move a bit quicker now. Red thread: Pick up 3 beads, sew into bead 1, 2 and the bead you're coming out of (bead 6) and the 3 just added, and sew down into the next two beads (starred) of the previous row's units . Blue thread: Add 3 new beads, continue following the thread path through the starred beads and come out of the first bead added. See next page.

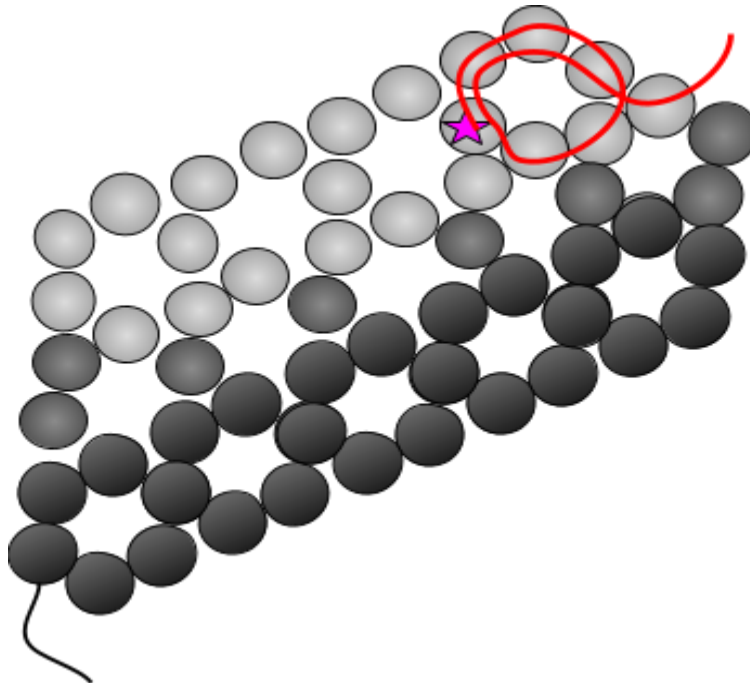
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Pick up 3 beads, go counter clockwise back into the starred bead from the previous unit, and the starred beads (see above) and come out of the first bead added (of the 3 new beads).



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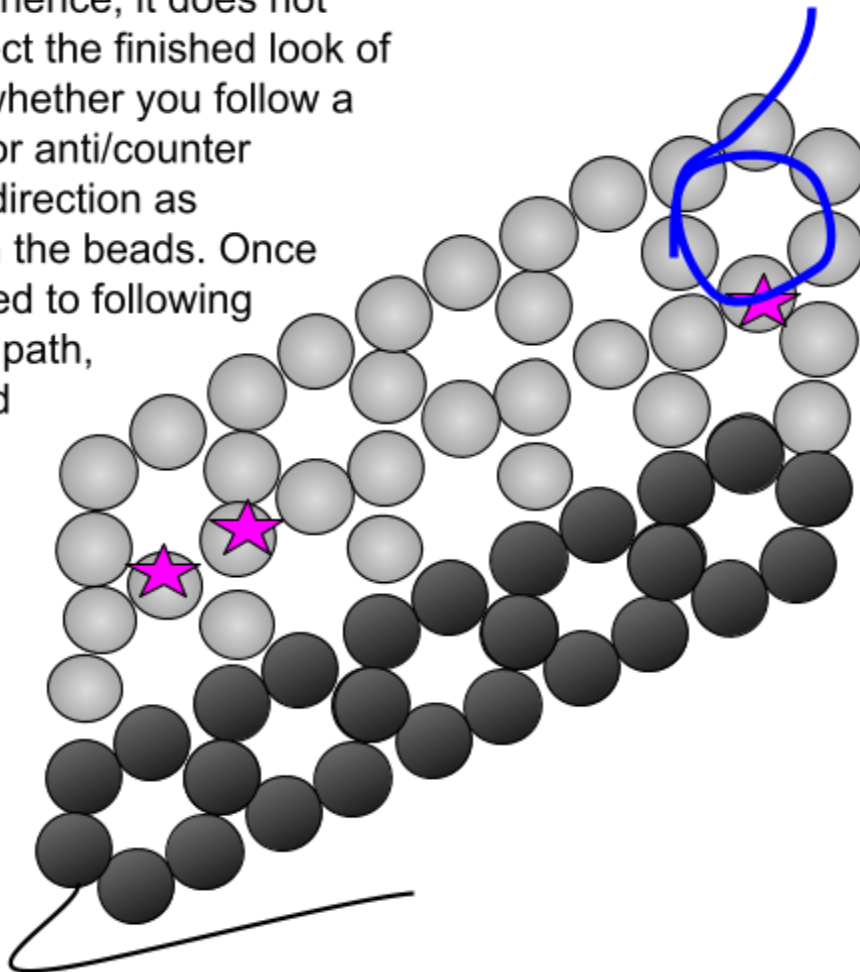
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For the last unit in Row 3: Pick up 4 beads, sew into the starred (shared) bead from the previous row. Continue sewing up through the bead you came out of and the next two beads just added. You are now in position to begin the next row.

ROWS 4 - 25: This pattern continues following the same steps for Rows 2 and 3 until you have the desired number of rows (between 20 and 25). Be mindful of the direction of your thread as you need to maintain the circular direction of the thread path and keep your tension snug.

In my experience, it does not greatly affect the finished look of the piece whether you follow a clockwise or anti/counter clockwise direction as you add on the beads. Once you get used to following this thread path, you will find your own style or rhythm.



SOME OBSERVATIONS AND ADVICE: Notice in the diagram above that the design looks slanted or on a diagonal. At the higher end of each row you will add 5 beads starting the new row because you are coming out of the bead that is shared (star).

At the lower end, you will add 4 beads because you are sharing two beads from previous units (starred).

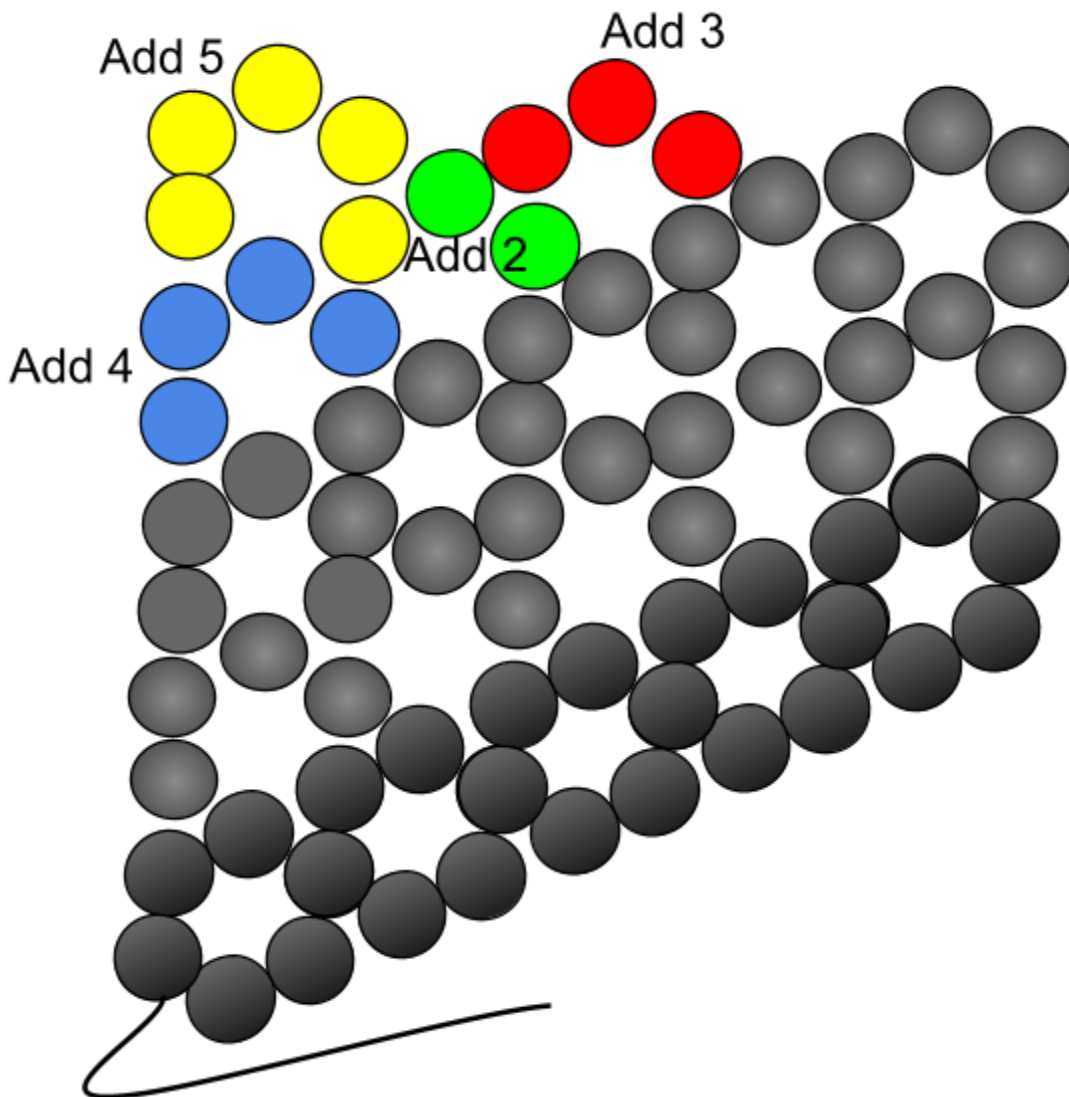
Notice also that there are two distinct vertical patterns in the columns; odd columns (1, 3, 5...) have two beads each row, and even columns (2, 4...) have single beads with a gap. Watch for these as they indicate you are weaving correctly.

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TOP OF THE TIE: Fill in the last three partial rows. You need to even up the units so that the top of the tie is symmetrical. Depending on where you come out on your final row, you will follow the thread path in the same circular direction to add in beads. If you are coming out on the low side, you need to start with the beads indicated in blue, then yellow, then green, then red. If you are coming out of the high side, you need to add in red, then green, then blue and yellow. The goal is to have a scalloped top edge. Sew through to end your thread, tie two or three half hitch knots hidden within the units. See colour coded diagram below.



FINAL TOUCH AT THE BOTTOM: Go back to where your tail thread is coming out of the design. This step is optional but it does make the tie look more sleek. [In my pink tie photo, you will notice that I did not do this last step.] Once you have completed the tie, use the tail thread to sew on one bead at the lowest tip (where we started) to create a sharp point and sew through to reinforce. Tie off with a couple of half hitch knots to secure.

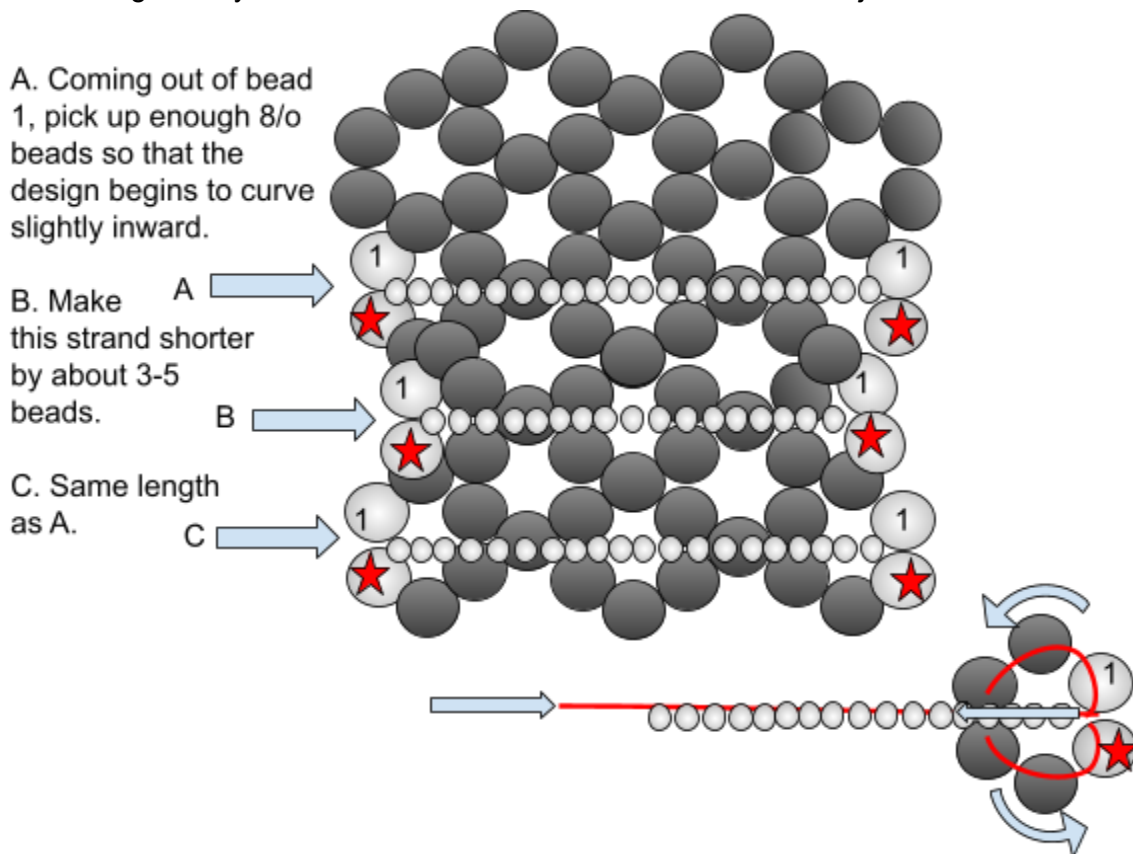
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MIMICKING THE KNOT: Read through this next section, examine the diagram, and explore. If you are starting a new thread, begin somewhere in the middle, sew into a few beads leaving a very short tail thread, tie a half hitch knot and continue following the thread path until you are in position to begin this next step. Usually about the fourth row from the top. Think about the way the units of 6 beads sit with one top bead, two beads on each 'side' and one bottom bead. You need to come out in between two edge beads that make up a side of a 6-bead unit. (See arrows pointing to this spot in the diagram below)

A. Pick up anywhere from 13-20 8/o seed beads (this number depends on your number of columns and size of pearl/druk/round bead); make sure you have **slightly less length** than your tie. Skip all the beads and sew through the opposite bead 1 on the other edge. Follow the thread path around to the starred bead sitting directly below bead 1 and then sew back into the 8/os just added.



B. Coming out of bead 1 string on 3 to 5 less beads than the number used for A; this strand needs to pull in the tie to mimic the cinch in the knot. Keep your tension snug as you skip over the RAW section to sew into bead 1 on the opposite side. Repeat the same steps as for A to reinforce B and follow the thread path to set up for C.

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C. Repeat what you did for A, reinforcing the strand of 8/os, following the thread path around each unit and keeping your tension snug but not too tight to maintain the soft flow of the design while also stiffening slightly the fake knot section.

Use up the rest of your thread by following the thread path, making two or three half hitch knots hidden in the units and securing this end of the thread.

ADDING THE NECK BAND AND CLASP: There are a few options for doing this part.

Option #1—I have seen a tie that has head pins with a simple loop coming out of the two outermost beads that attaches to two strung lengths of the same main bead used with the clasp attached at the ends. This requires softflex or a similar nylon coated beading wire, 2 wire guardians, 2 crimp beads, and 2 jump rings along with your clasp of choice.

Option #2—I have sewn my beads into two 9-inch strands and secured a loop of seed beads to attach my clasp to, making sure to reinforce well. This method is only as effective as the beadworker's skill at sewing the loops. It is possible to use a wire guardian in place of the beaded loop; sew through the wire guardian and back into all the beads strung and continuing on through the beads in the top edge of the tie to the other side to repeat the same steps for attaching the wire guardian. Only one side needs to be secured by pulling the thread snug but not too tight before tying off the thread two or three times, making sure to hide the knots inside the beads. Attach the clasp to the wire guardian using jump rings.

Option #3—Use softflex or other coated wire still on the spool, thread it through the top row of beads just along the top beads, not through each unit, making sure to have about 10 inches coming out one side. String on the pearls or beads, add a crimp and wire guardian, and thread through the wire guardian and crimp as well as three to five beads, pulling the wire so that it is snug but not overly tight before crimping. Measure the wire about 10 inches coming out of the other side of the tie and snip the wire. Repeat the stringing on this side, adding the crimp, wire guardian and going back into the wire guardian and crimp as well as three to five beads before pulling it snug and crimping the crimp bead. Add the clasp of your choice; toggle clasps are quite good for this piece as the weight of the tie holds the toggle in place.

If you are unfamiliar with any of these options, you can search You Tube for tutorials on how to attach a clasp to a beaded necklace using beading wire, crimp beads, wire guardians and jump rings. Pinterest can be a good place to search for images of different versions of ties, beaded, embellished, upcycled, etc.

Thank you for beading along with me.

Michelle