

Egyptian Chain



Project & Sample by Emily Miller

A 4,000 year old wire coiling technique that is timeless but modern at the same time. Use this simple design for bracelets and earrings, creating with just wire and tools.



Single link chain produces a lacy open design, spirals are totally visible and clearly defined.

Double link chain produces a denser, more snake-like result.

To begin, straighten a piece of 20g wire about 3-4 feet long. Longer than this is hard to manage. Cut into 6-inch pieces. Measure carefully, and trim each end flush. Cut a few extras in case of mistakes and for practice!

Approximate quantities needed for each style

(You may need more or fewer depending on your overall bracelet/earring length)

Single link bracelet: 18-21 6" pieces

Double link bracelet: 54 6" pieces

Earrings: 2 each of 3", 4.5", and 6" pieces. coil to 1in, 1.5in, 1 3/4in

Both single and double link chains begin the same way, it is easiest and most productive to use an assembly line technique, repeating the same step one at a time. This also helps to keep each link consistent in size and shape.

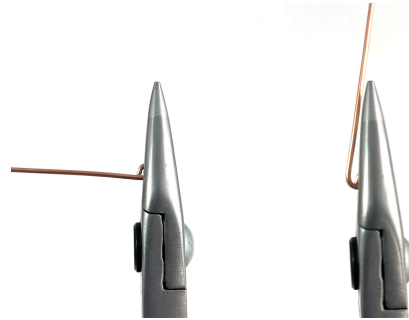
Step 1

Using round nose pliers make small 'p' loops on both ends of each piece of wire. The loops should curve in towards the center of the wire. If needed, mark the spot on your pliers where you are wrapping the loop, so all the loops are the same size.



Step 2

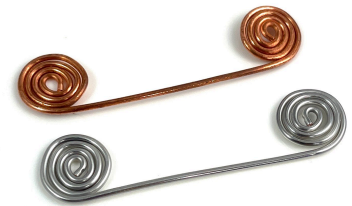
With the loop just inside the edges of your chain nose pliers, grip firmly and push the wire to the tip of your pliers. Open the jaws of the pliers, reposition the wire to the starting position, and repeat several times. Reverse ends of the wire and repeat on the other end.



Step 3

Continuing to spiral, alternating ends, until the spiraled wire is 1 3/8" long.

Repeat steps 2 and 3 with several wires, matching them to your original piece.



Step 4

Gently grip a coiled link in the center with round nose pliers and bend the spiral ends together.

Repeat with all the coiled links.



Step 5

Use chain nose pliers to grip across the top of the two spirals. Bend the wire over the top of the pliers to slightly more than a 90° angle. Repeat with all coiled links. Gently bend the links nearly closed, and we'll move onto connecting the links.



Connecting links!

Single link chain.

Remember, this produces a more open design. The spirals are totally visible and clearly defined. Looks great for earrings!

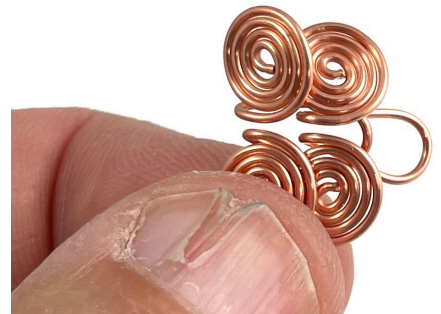
Take one link, insert a second link in the loop, pulling the links slightly apart. Bend closed the first link. Continue to add links and close them until the desired length is reached.



Double link chain

The result is a more dense look, very snake-like. Bend it tightly together with the 'spine' slightly higher than the edges.

Take one link and insert a second into the loop. Push the second coils under the first and add a third link into BOTH loops. Continue to add links, passing through TWO links previous with each new link. Begin to bend the links closed, and due to the amount of overlap, the links will bend up a bit in the center, forming a spine.



Add clasps and ear wires by inserting heavy jump rings into the links at either end. Depending on the loop of the clasp, two jump rings may be needed.

Add a charm to make a statement at the clasp, or hang briolettes to add extra dangle!

