

## Gem Knotting 1.5

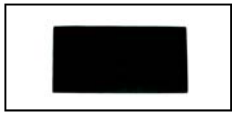
By Janice Parsons



Skill Level: Intermediate  
Project Time: 3 hours

In Gem Knotting 1.5, you will create a gorgeous, one-of-a-kind necklace that will truly be heirloom quality. Knotting gemstones can sometimes be frustrating, but the finished results are well worth the challenges. I hope you also enjoy a design technique I call stringing "randomly symmetrical". It is a style I have applied many times in my 25+ years of jewelry making.

Let's begin today with our list of supplies. These are the tools and materials you will need:



Velvet pad



Assorted gemstones to desired length. The more sizes and shapes, the better!



Straight-channel design board



French Bullion in small or medium



Extra-fine wire cutter



1 Clasp



Fine-point tweezers



6 Beads which will fit your thread stringing up and back through.



Thread scissors or snips & tape measure



1 pkg. Extra fine (#8) flexible eye needle



Hypo-tube cement



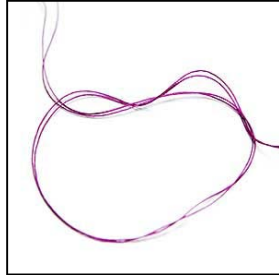
Thread: Nymo size D, Gudebrod Silk Size D or E

**Step-by-Step Instructions**



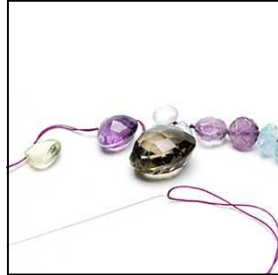
**Step 1-a:**  
Selecting Thread

Before we even settle on our design, we need to find a thread that will fit the holes of our beads and make a knot that looks proportional. So, let's begin by testing some thread.



**Step 1-b:**

Cut a piece of thread 20" long and thread one of your needles. Double your thread and tie a double overhand knot at the end. Try stringing on some of your beads.



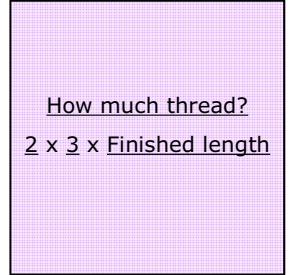
**Step 2:**  
Try out Some Knots:

Select beads randomly from all of your assortment to make sure you are picking a thread that will fit the various hole sizes. Knot them to see if you like the proportion of the knot to the various beads. Keep doing this until you find a thread that works...this can take time!



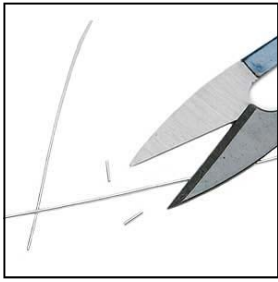
**Step 3:**  
6 Beads with Big Holes:

You will need 3 beads at each end next to the clasp. These beads must have larger holes so you can string through them twice. Perhaps, while testing your thread, you found some beads with much larger holes than the rest. These would be good for "bullion" duty. If you don't have gemstones which will work, small Swarovski Crystals or even glass work well.



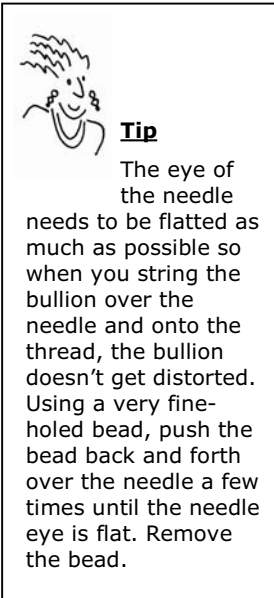
**Step 4:**  
Deciding on Length

After you decide how long you want your necklace to be, this is the formula for figuring thread length. This formula is the length if you are doubling your thread.  
  
Now that you have chosen your thread and cut it the desired length, it is time to begin! After you thread your needle, take the two ends and tie a double overhand knot, like we did with the practice thread. This knot will eventually be cut off.

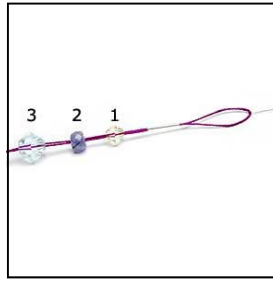


**Step 5:**  
Cutting the Bullion

Using thread scissors, cut several pieces of bullion approx. 3/8" each. Make sure the bullion has no curly burrs on the ends and it isn't damaged in any way. If it isn't perfect now, it is not going to improve over time.

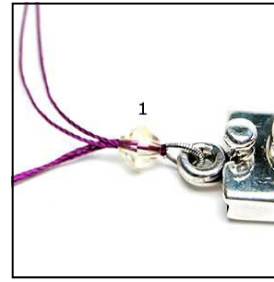


**Tip**  
The eye of the needle needs to be flattened as much as possible so when you string the bullion over the needle and onto the thread, the bullion doesn't get distorted. Using a very fine-holed bead, push the bead back and forth over the needle a few times until the needle eye is flat. Remove the bead.



**Step 6:**  
Starting to Knot

String on the 3 beads with the large holes and then very carefully string on a piece of the cut bullion. If the bullion unravels or gets tangled on the thread, you have to start with a fresh piece. Bring these 3 beads and the piece of bullion all the way down the thread 4" from the overhand knot.



**Step 7:**  
Attach the Clasp

String your needle through the loop of your clasp and then go back through Bead 1. Do not attempt to string your needle back through the bullion twice!



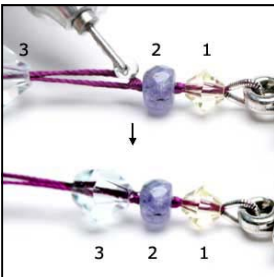
**Step 8:**  
Over the River and Through the Woods

Take your needle and thread and make a loop over the thread that has the other 2 beads on it. I call this "over the river". Then loop under the main thread and up through the loop. This part is called "through the woods." Tighten that knot now up against Bead 1.



**Step 9:**  
Securing Bead 2

Now take you needle through Bead 2 and repeat the "Over the River and through the woods" after Bead 2. Tighten the second knot down.



**Step 10:**  
Securing Bead 3

Take your needle and thread through Bead 3 but do not push the bead up against the knot just yet. Hold the threads evenly and take some hypo-tube cement and put a dab or two on the thread itself close to the second knot. Now slide Bead 3 up over the gluey thread and, let it dry for 5 minutes.



**Step 11:**  
Bye, Bye Little Tail!

We are now going to lose the original overhand knot and the few inches of thread. Using the wire cutters, cut the tail off and do a traditional knot underneath Bead 3.



**Step 12-a:**  
Knotting Randomly Symmetrical

Now, for the really fun part! Instead of pondering a lifetime on your design, I want you to dive in and just enjoy your gemstone adventure. Put your gemstones in piles by type and as you string one on, take a match for it and lay it



**Step 12-b:**

in the trough of the design board. Laying out the second side now insures you have a mate for the other side. Because gemstones vary so much in size and volume, even from bead to bead on the same strand, try to find partner beads similar in size.



**Step 13:**  
Continue Knotting

Enjoy the pleasures of knotting. Add whatever bead suits your fancy... the more variety you add, the more interesting your necklace will be. Check for length as you get closer to the halfway point. When you are knotting small gemstones, you will be surprised at how much length your knots will add to the finished length. You don't want to overshoot the center. When you are ready to finish the second side, put a knot after the last gemstone before you string on the 3 beads with large holes.

**Step 14:**  
Adding the Last 3 Beads

String on the 3 large holed beads and slide them right up against your knotted gemstones. Carefully string on a piece of bullion. Thread through the loop on your clasp. You are going to repeat Steps 7-9 except the Over the River Knot must be done between beads that are very close to each other.

When you are ready to string through the last of the 3 large holed beads, put some cement on the thread that will live inside Bead 3. Pull the thread through the bead. Let it dry for at least 5 minutes. Cut the excess thread and needle off. You're now done!

I hope you enjoyed Gem Knotting 1.5. I am happy to answer any questions or help you solve a knotting challenge. Please contact me by either email or telephone.

Happy Knotting!

Janice

Design Ideas

