

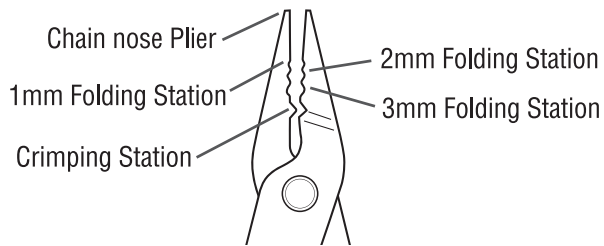
# Skill Builder: Using Crimps, Guardians and Covers



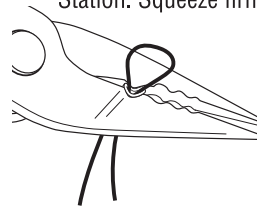
## Materials Needed:

- An assorted pack of crimp tubes
- A package of Wire Guardians
- A package of Crimp Covers
- A Spool of Soft Flex
- A Xuron 4-in-1 Crimping Plier
- Maxi Sheer Xuron Wire Cutters

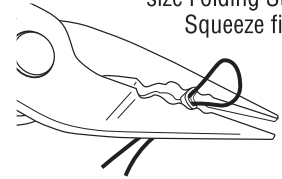
## How to use the 4 in 1 Crimper



**Step #1:** Place crimp in the Crimping Station. Squeeze firmly.



**Step #2:** Turn crimp on its side. "<"  
Place in the appropriate  
size Folding Station.  
Squeeze firmly.



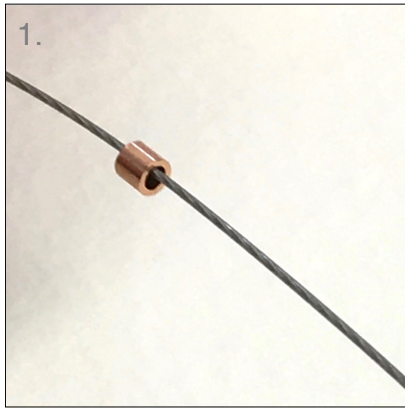
**Step #3:** Use the chain nose tip of the plier for  
any additional squeezing or bending.

Image courtesy of Xuron Corp

Before you begin crimping, start by familiarizing yourself with the Pliers you'll be using: the Xuron 4-in-1 Crimping Pliers. We've found that these are an excellent choice for crimping because they have separate slots, or "stations," for different sized crimps. This ensures you'll get the best and strongest crimp possible.

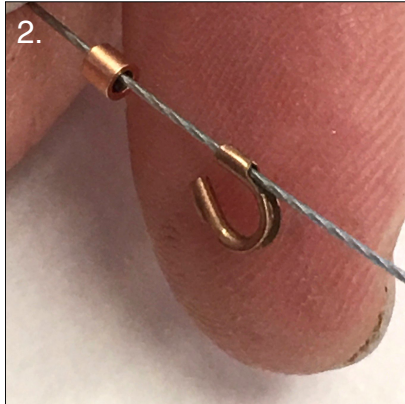
Refer back to the above diagram for help with which slot or "station" is used for which crimp. The diagram is a quick reference chart, but continue reading for our in-depth instructions for crimping.



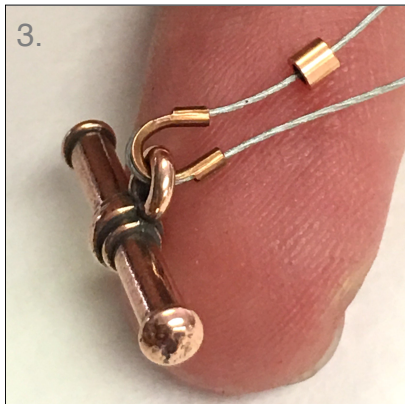


1. Begin by stringing your crimp tube onto a length of Soft Flex. Your Soft Flex should be about 6 inches longer than the finished length needed.

In this tutorial we are using .014 Soft Flex with our 2x2 Copper Crimp Tubes. Be sure to keep your Soft Flex free of kinks or bends; a bend can cause the coating on the wire to crack and that will reduce the strength of the Soft Flex.



2. A great way to protect the Soft Flex used in your jewelry from bends is to use a [Wire Guardian](#). Simply string the end of your Soft Flex up through one tube/ end of the Guardian, follow the curve of the Guardian, and string the Soft Flex back through the other tube/ end.



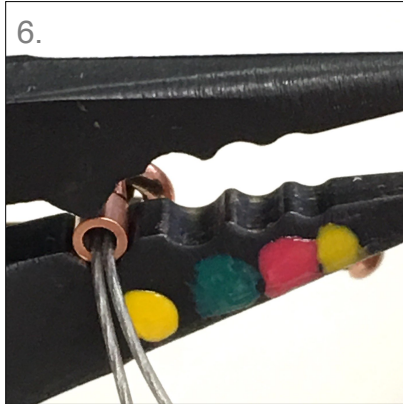
3. Loop the Wire Guardian and short end of Soft Flex through your clasp.



4. Use your chain nose pliers or the tips of your 4-in-1 Crimping Plier to gently squeeze the horseshoe ends of the Wire Guardian together.



5. Thread the second leg of Soft Flex through the crimp tube. Slide your crimp tube up *pretty* close to the Wire Guardian, leaving just a little bit of space (which will later be filled with the Crimp Cover).



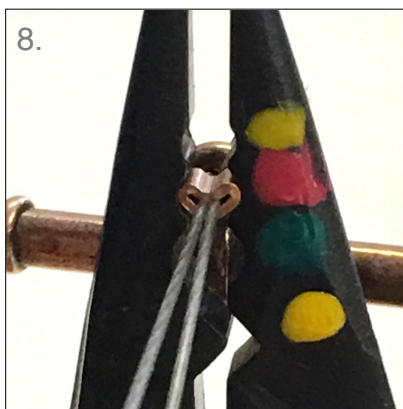
6. Now you're ready to crimp!

Place your crimp tube in the jaws of your Crimping Pliers, in the last groove (the one closest to the handle), in this picture it's the one with the big yellow dot.

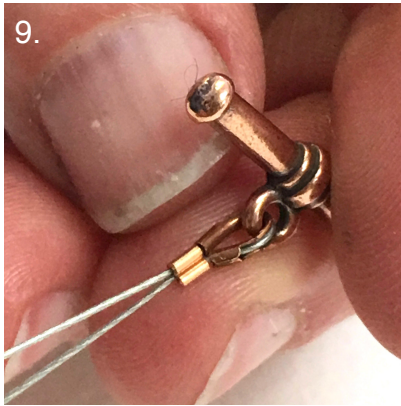
Make sure your two strands of Soft Flex are not twisted but are comfortably laying side-by-side.



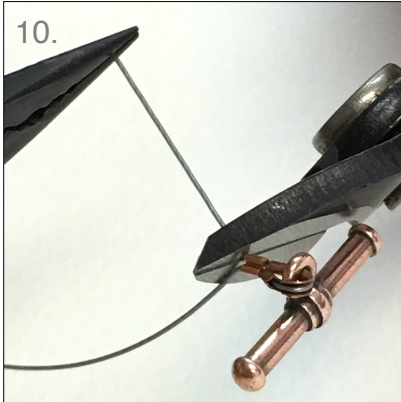
7. Very gently, press the jaws of your Crimping Pliers closed to form a curve, or as Kate calls it, a "taco."



8. Reposition your crimp tube into the appropriate slot in the pliers (in this example, because we are using a 2x2 crimp, we are using the middle slot—where the red dot is). Now, gently squeeze the plier handles so that your crimp folds once more. (See Step 9)



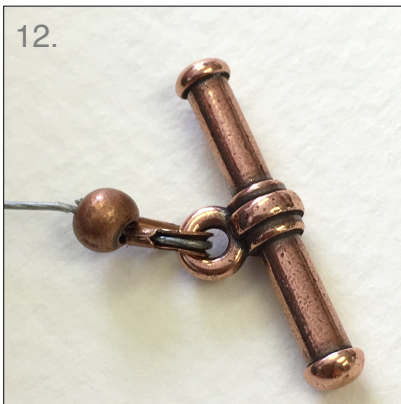
9. Your finished crimp, once folded, will look like this. If you find that the crimp has not been folded completely, you can use the tips of the pliers to gently press the fold completely...Just don't overdo it!



10. The next step is to cut away the excess Soft Flex. Use the tips of your pliers to pull the strand you want to cut away from the crimp. With your [flush cutters](#), get as close as you can to the crimp and then snip!



11. Position your [crimp cover](#) in the jaws of your crimping pliers and settle the folded crimp tube into the opening of the crimp cover. Again, gently squeeze the plier handles to close the cover. You can also rotate the cover a few times, squeezing the pliers with each rotation to coax the cover closed from all angles.



12. The finished results are so clean! We hope you've enjoyed this Skill Builder. If you'd like to see any of the above steps in action, please watch our [Facebook Live Episode Soft Flex 101](#) on 5.10.17