



Split Loom Necklace

with Emily Miller

Join Emily for a two-part broadcast to learn how to set up and weave on the Ojibwa Loom. Emily will create a split loom necklace with us, walking you through the process to create a pattern, pick beads, and warp the loom for weaving. This is a showstopper of a project: big, but easy to break down into manageable bites. You'll be surprised how fast looming can create a fabric of beads. You are limited only by your imagination and your bead stash!



Split loom necklaces are a long-standing tradition in many Indigenous American cultures that inspired 1920s Flapper fashions and is seeing a resurgence today. Incorporating a pendant with an integral strap, a little bit of planning and they can be easily loom woven in one piece, leaving just a single join of the neck strap. Using a larger loom like the Ojibwa is really perfect for this project, but a smaller loom could be used to make this design in separate units to be joined together.

A few books I like for inspiration:

Here Be Wyverns- by Nancy Spies, a huge source for patterns, many based on ancient tapestries, mosaics, quite a few alphabets are included.

Quilting with a Modern Slant-by Rachel May, color and shapes perfect pairings that can be graphed into beads.

Colors used in this sample:

Matte Terracotta 11-1236

Duracoat Galv. Eggplant 11-4220

Matte OP Chocolate 11-409f

Duracoat OP Banana 11-4452

Matte Trans Orange AB 11-138FR

Duracoat S/L Dyed Topaz Gold 11-4243

Duracoat Galv. Sea Green 11-4215

Opaque Green 11-411

Matte OP Light Rose 11-2024

Light Cornflower Blue 11-159L

Matte OP Cobalt Luster 11-2075

Duracoat S/L Dyed Aqua 11-4242

Frosted OP Glazed Rainbow Soft Blue 11-4704

Semi Frosted Cranberry Gold Luster 11-313f

Opaque Red 11-408

The basic steps to this project will be covered in two broadcasts.

These are:

1. Create a Pattern and Choose your Beads.
2. Warp your Loom.
3. Weave Pendant.
4. Weave Straps.
5. Remove Weaving from the Loom.
6. Weave in Warp Threads for Pendant.



1. Create a Pattern and Choose your Beads

Loom weaving is a way to produce beaded fabric quickly, especially if you have worked out the design plan ahead of time! There are many sources of inspiration...patterns from quilting, cross stitch, even knitting will translate perfectly into patterns for bead looming. Graph your own design using graph paper and fine tip pens or a spreadsheet on a computer, columns and rows can stand in for beads.

Choose a pattern and beads you LOVE! Since this is a longer term project, make the pattern interesting and detailed. It's also a benefit that if you make an error of a bead or two it isn't as noticeable. The pattern Emily made is based on a quilt pattern called Log Cabin, blocks of colors surround a 'roof' in the center, Emily's are all red. To continue the pattern up the straps she divided the pattern in half and dropped out the center row. As she wove the straps Emily alternated repeats of the pattern, and even changed a few colors just to see how different beads looked together. Feel free to alter this pattern any way you'd like! It might be fun in shades gray, black, and white!

For her necklace Emily chose to use the row width from a vintage split loom necklace that she already had, the pendant is 15 beads wide and the strap 7 beads wide on each side. If you plan to have a larger gap between the straps, you'll have to do a bit of planning so you end up with the correct number of threads on each side to continue weaving. Any extra threads can be woven into the pendant while finishing. Emily chose size 11/0 round or rocaille beads, but Delica cylinder beads would be beautiful too! Size 8/0 will change the number of rows you'd need and spread the pattern out.

2. Warp your Loom

Warp the loom at its longest length, position the ends at the very end of the dowels. To minimize catching your weaving thread on the ends of the dowels, position them just inside the boards. Secure the thread to the eye loop on the bottom of the loom and wind the thread around the warp boards, around and around until the number of threads needed is reached. **One more warp than the number of beads!** Secure the end of the warp thread to the eye loop at the same end as the beginning. Tension the the thread by loosening the eyes on one end and press the board away so that the threads are taut, but not too tight.

Before weaving, place one warp thread in each groove on the top of the boards, a small crochet hook is invaluable for this task. It's normal and expected to have the warp grooves be a bit wider or narrower than your beads. The first row may pull the warps together or spread them apart.

3. Weave Pendant

Weaving this split loom design is the same as any other loom weaving, attach a thread to the leftmost warp, pick up the beads, slide them down behind the warps. Then press them up, in between the threads. Pass the needle back to the left but across the top of the warp threads. Repeat moving up, or away from the first row. Lefties, tie onto the rightmost warp and weave from left to right.

As you weave you'll get intimately acquainted with your beads! You'll notice the differences in size and shape, discard any irregular beads. Try to choose the most even beads in the tube, check the beads on the needle before weaving. Find a bead with a hole that is tight on the needle? Discard it!

Emily starts with 1½ yards of thread, and ties it with a loose knot to the leftmost warp thread, then weave with it until it's about 10 inches long. A good rule of thumb is if it's hard to reach your beads, it's time to change thread! Leave the old thread hanging and tie on a fresh thread. After a few rows, weave the old thread into the new weaving, and the new thread into the old work. This overlap of threads will secure the join and make the join seamless. Weave back and forth a few rows, making about 3 changes of direction. Exit the weaving somewhere in the center, not the edge, this will prevent a pesky little end peeking out of the edge.

4. Weave Straps

When the pendant is completely woven, start the straps. Emily likes to start on the left strap, weaving as she did with the pendant, until the strap is about 13 inches long. Repeat by starting a new thread on the right side just above the pendant. Most adults will need a length of about 26 inches to slip over the head. If you desire a shorter necklace, add a button and loop clasp at the ends of the strap.

5. Removing Weaving from the Loom

Take a breath and cut the threads in the center on the back of the loom, leaving the threads as long as possible. Yay! It's the home stretch!

6. Weaving in Warp Threads for Pendant

Weaving in the warp threads is a bit of a tedious process, but how beautiful and finished your necklace will look! Alternating sides, thread each warp thread on a needle and weave it into the body of the pendant. Make about 3 direction changes, and exit the weaving NOT at the edge. Emily alternates a short path and a longer path when weaving in warp threads.

7. Weave in Warp Threads to Join Ends of Strap

On each end of the straps weave in half of the threads back into the strap. Then take the remaining threads and weave across the ends, pulling the ends of the strap together. Pay attention to the path used for weaving in these warps, and pick as many different paths as possible. Since this is a narrower width of weaving, putting too many threads through the same beads may cause the thread to show more.

Last step of all, wear your new piece of art, enjoy and bask in the compliments!

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