



Tutorial: Beaded Spiral Post Earrings

Created by Donna Spadafore

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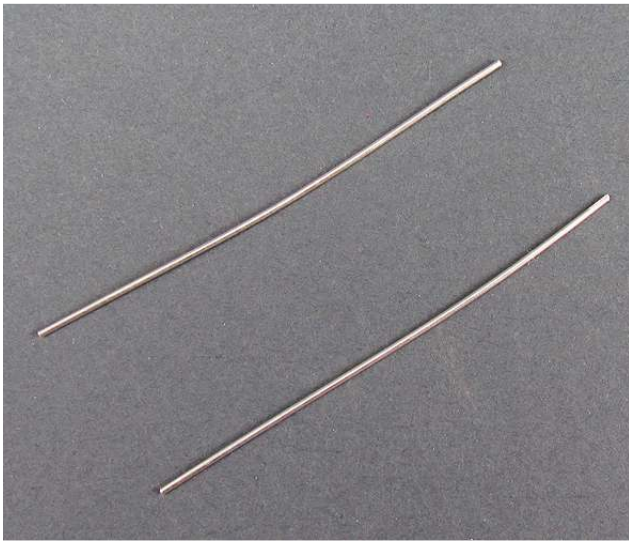
This lesson teaches you to make a pair of dainty earrings that can be worn for almost any occasion.

Materials:

- 5" dead soft or half hard round 20g wire
- 36" dead soft round 28g wire
- 2 4mm round beads
- 16-20 2mm beads (seed beads work well for this. The beads can be smaller than 2mm. If you use smaller beads you will need more of them)

Tools:

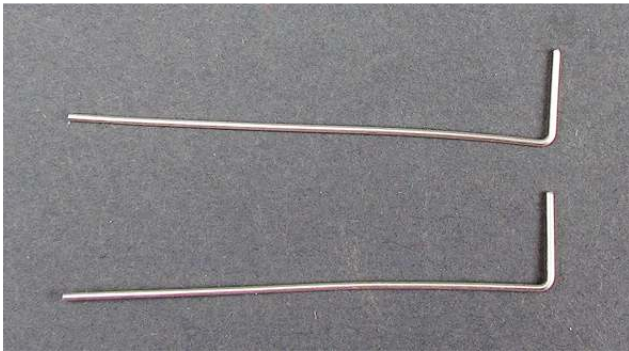
- Chain nose pliers
- Round nose pliers
- Wire cutters
- Flat nose pliers
- Ruler
- Needle file or cup bur (wire rounder)



Step 1:

Cut 2 pieces of 20g wire, each 2 1/2" long.

File 1 end of each of them so that they are smooth. These ends will be the post ends, so they have to be as smooth as you can get them.



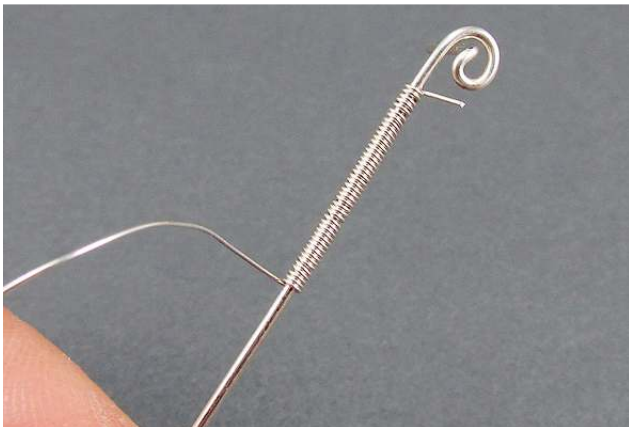
Step 2:

Bend the wires, on the same end that you filed in the previous step, about 3/8" from the end at a 90° angle. The bent section of the wire will be the post.



Step 3:

This part can be a little bit tricky. You'll be making the smaller top spirals so that they surround the posts. Hold the post in the tips of your round nose pliers so that it is parallel with the barrels (going downward). On one wire, make a spiral going clockwise. On the other wire, make a spiral going counter-clockwise. Keep the spirals small, and open just a little bit.



Step 4:

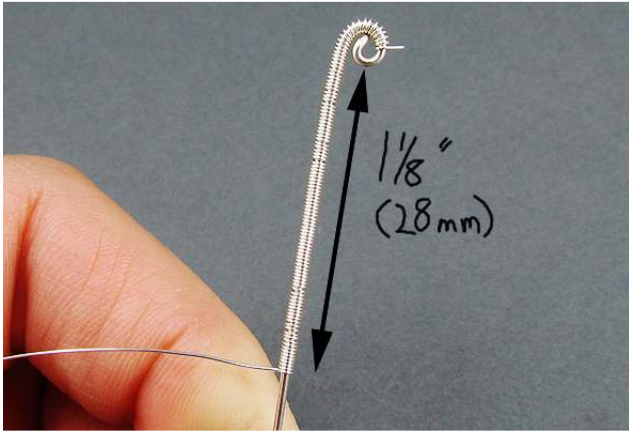
Cut an 18" piece of 28g wire. Begin coiling the wire onto the 20g wire. Leave a tail at the beginning that is about 1/4" long. You won't be cutting the tail until the last step.

Don't worry about coiling all of the wire yet. You only need about 1/2" before starting the next step.



Step 5:

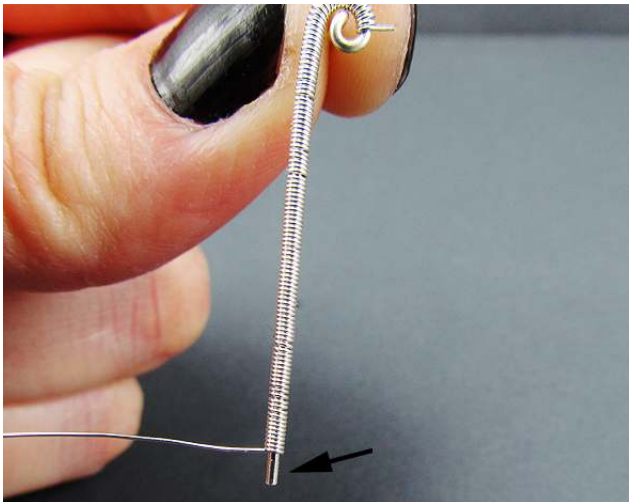
Slide the coiled wire up over the spiral. You can go all the way around the spiral if you want, but I prefer to leave the center plain. To me, this makes the earrings a little more comfortable when wearing.



Step 6:

Continue coiling the wire until you have a section that is 1 1/8" long, measuring from the bottom of the top spiral.

Do NOT cut the coiling wire yet.



Step 7:

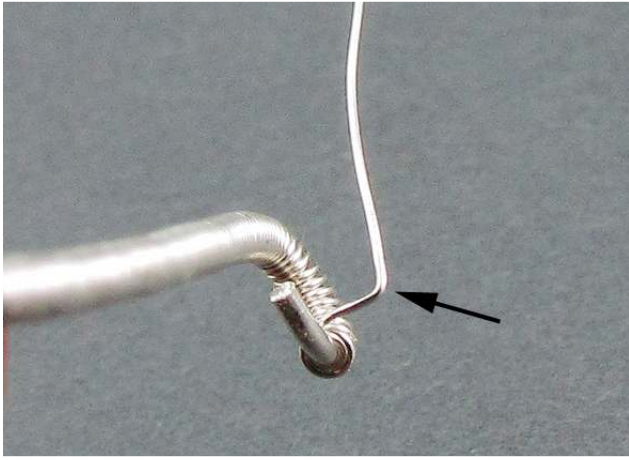
Cut the 20g wire so that it is about 1/8" from the end of the coil. File it smooth.



Step 8:

Using your round nose pliers, make a loop at the end of the 20g wire going in the opposite direction of the top spiral. The loop should be just big enough for the bead to rest on top of, without falling too far into it. Leave a small gap instead of closing the loop.

I'm not giving an exact measurement for the loop because there is always some variation in the sizes of beads, even when they are sold as a specific size. You'll have to adjust the size of the loop until it looks right to you.



Step 9:

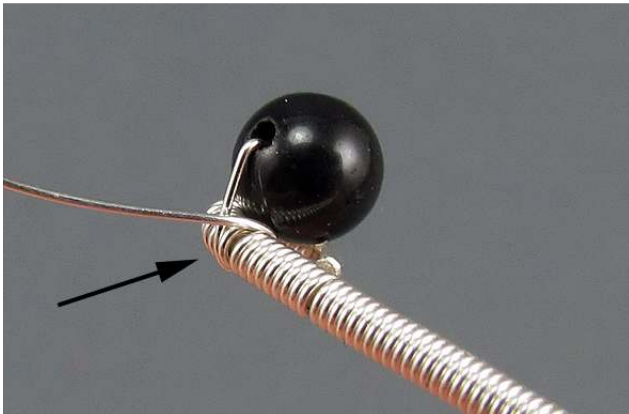
Bring the coiling wire up to the front of the earring and bend it about 2mm above the 20g wire.

In this photo you see the wire coming from inside the loop. Depending on which earring you are doing first, and which direction you coil the wire in, yours may look like it is coming from the outside of the loop. That will be fine. This next part works either way.



Step 10:

Add your 4mm bead to the coiling wire and lay it across the opening of the loop. Push the wire coming out of the bead back toward the 20g wire.



Step 11:

Wrap the coiling wire around the 20g wire at the base of the bead.



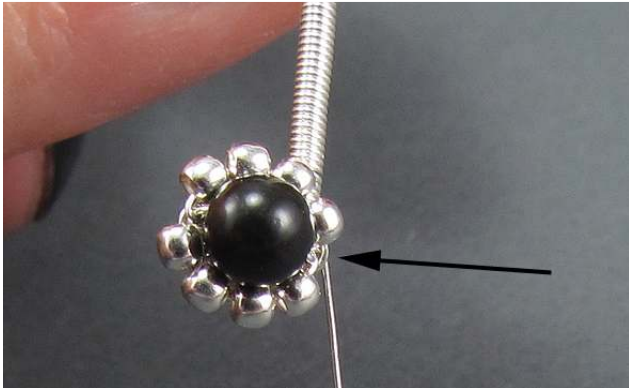
Step 12:

Add the 2mm beads to the coiling wire. For mine I ended up needing 4 beads to go half way around the 4mm bead. You may need more or less. Just add beads to the wire as you shape the wire around the larger bead until you have enough.



Step 13:

Wrap the coiling wire 1 time around the portion of the wire that is holding the 4mm bead to the frame.



Step 14:

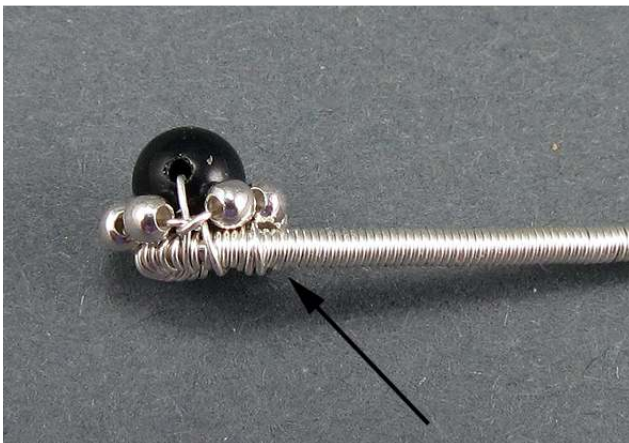
Repeat steps 12 and 13, attaching the coiling wire to the other side of the bead.



Step 15:

Wrap the coiling wire around the 20g wire 5-6 times.

If you look closely at the picture you'll notice that you can't really see that many wraps around the frame wire. That's because a few of them ended up wedged between the wraps in the first layer of coils. If you can do that for all the wraps it will look much better, but it's not always possible.



Step 16:

Cut the 28g wire close to the 20g wire and press it tightly against the coils.



Step 17:

Using your fingers, shape the rest of the coiled section of the 20g wire into a spiral around the beads.



Step 18:

At this point you can go ahead and cut the beginning tail wire. For most items I would cut it so that the end is in the back to make it less noticeable. However, since this will be pressed against the skin on the ear, which can be very sensitive, I prefer to clip it so that the end of the wire is in the front.

After cutting the wire, press it tightly against the 20g wire using your needle nose pliers.



Step 19:

Repeat 4-18 on the second earring.

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