

# Beadalon®

With so many stringing options available, we hope that this information helps you make the best decision.

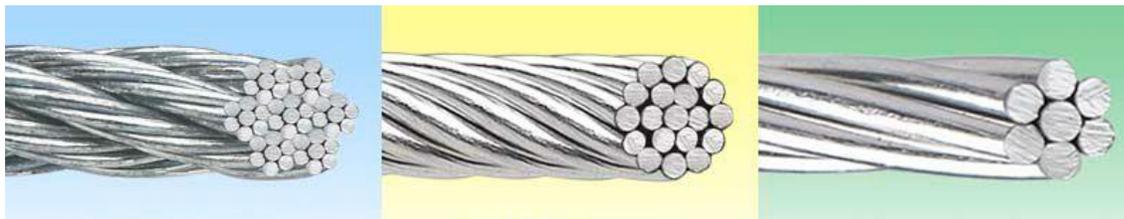
Over the years, we have had some interesting conversations with customers about Beadalon. Several in recent weeks suggested to us that this could be an interesting and useful topic for a newsletter. When people have a problem with Beadalon, it is usually because they don't understand the quality differences, the important relationship between the size of the wire and the beads being used and /or the proper crimping technique.

## THREE QUALITY GROUPS:

Many people confuse the three quality descriptions of 7 strand, 19 strand and 49 strand with the thickness of the wire. Each of the quality groups are manufactured in several different diameters so you have to make two basic decisions when buying Beadalon wire: what quality you want (see the colour band at the top of the spool) and what diameter (indicated in inches and mm in the middle of the spool label) you need for the components of your design. After that, you might want to explore colour options although for most projects the basic colour works perfectly.

Here is an image which might help some understand the quality groupings.

49 strands (blue label) 19 strands (yellow label) 7 strands (green label)



All products are made with thin strands of wire coated in nylon. Most of the wire used is stainless steel but sterling silver and gold plated wire is used in some sizes and qualities. The best quality is the 49 strand group. These wires are very flexible and won't kink when bent. This attribute is frequently referred to as having "no memory". You can appreciate that the technology to get 49 strands of wire into a small diameter is much more sophisticated than getting 19 strands or 7 strands into the same diameter. Thus you pay more for 49 strand stringing wire.

The 19 strand group is a good product for many but if the finished item does get bent, there is some memory left in the wire. The 7 strand wires do have a "bend" memory.

We find that people choose the quality of the wire based on the market they are in, if they are selling, or by how careful they know they are when storing their jewellery. Some customers who prefer 19 strand or 49 strand wires will still invest in some 7 strand wire to use when they are developing designs for

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themselves or clients. It is much less expensive in case they change their minds about stringing method but they can still assess balance, length and wearability of their design.

### **CHOOSING DIAMETER**

As with other stringing material, you will want to use the thickest wire that will go through the drill hole. You must also remember that where the strung beads join the clasp, the wire will have to loop back through several beads adjacent to the clasp. This means that you will have to ensure that your wire can go through several beads (usually 4 or 6 beads) two times. Most people are not aware that on a strand of beads, there is some slight variation in the size of the drill holes. So check before you start stringing your piece and set aside those 4 or 6 beads where the stringing wire will go through the drill hole twice. Then use these when you begin and end your design so that they are adjacent to the clasp.

Remember: beads have different size drill holes and the Beadalon manufacturers make different diameters knowing that offering one diameter just doesn't work with everything. Some people think they can just need to buy one size and it will do everything. It won't and it usually means that you have problems with the design and/ or the jewellery piece breaking too often.

### **A WORD TO THE WISE**

If your design has several different types and sizes of beads, use the diameter of wire appropriate for the bead with the smallest diameter drill hole. Ideally you want the stringing material to fill the drill hole as this means that the beads won't wobble. Wobbly beads can distort your design but over time the movement of the beads, especially gemstone beads, will also wear through the nylon tubing and eventually the wire stringing material. When the tubing becomes worn, this can expose the strands of wire to salts in the air and water if the jewellery is worn while swimming or showering and eventually they will break.

Beadalon products are excellent, easy to use and very durable but in some circumstances they will break. A picturesque statement by one of our beading teachers was: "You don't want to use a stringing material that will never break because you would rather the necklace break than your neck!" So: don't wear your jewellery in the shower or when swimming and check your jewellery from time to time to see if there is any evidence of wear. A good rule of thumb is to restring your jewellery every two or three years especially if it is worn frequently.

### **CRIMPING TECHNIQUE:**

Here is a refresher on how to crimp, courtesy of Beadalon. **Always** check that the wires are held by the crimp by tugging gently in the area of the crimp **before** you lift the design off the work surface and before you do the final rounding of the crimp. Does this seem like the voice of experience speaking?

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## CRIMPING INSTRUCTIONS



1 Feed one Crimp Bead onto the Beadalon wire, then loop it through a Clasp and back through the Crimp. Be sure wires are side by side, not crossed.



2 Place the crimp in the OUTER jaw of the Crimp Tool, make one firm compression. This will shape the Crimp into an oval, keep the wires parallel.



3 Place the Crimp Bead into the crescent-shaped groove (inner jaw) of the Crimp Tool. Make one firm compression.



4 Place the Crimp into the tool's semi-circle groove (outer jaw), turn it 90° and make another compression until the Crimp Bead is nicely rounded.



5 String the first bead, then cut the excess wire with the Beadalon Flush Cutter.



6 String the remaining beads and repeat steps 1, 2, and 3 on the opposite end to attach the other side of the clasp to complete the design.

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