

## STORING YOUR BEADS

Here is a list of things to think about when choosing a storage solution. Some will be more important factors than others when determining what is best for you. Also consider whether your choice of system will be suitable if you “grow your stash” of beads and findings.

1. You probably want to be able to see quickly what you have therefore clear or see through containers are better than opaque even if you use labels.
2. Consider the categories and sub-categories of things you want to store: gemstone beads, pearls, seed beads, findings. For seed beads the sub categories may be by size (15/0, 11/0, 10/0, 8/0 etc) or manufacturer (Czech, Toho, Miyuki). For findings, they may be round accent beads, clasps, rings, crimp beads, earring findings etc. or by type of metal.
3. What size and quantity of beads and supplies do you need to organize?
4. Where are you going to store them at home? Are there any limiting factors such as size of room, depth of shelves, and size of drawers? Can they be stored close to where you do your beading? Would it be helpful to have something on wheels?
5. Do you need to take beading projects away from home? Do you tend to take your entire stash with you? If you are an instructor or participate in workshops or take your beads on vacation, then you will need to consider how you are going to transport them? If you are thinking of transporting a large quantity of beads and supplies, something with wheels might help!
6. When you buy beads and findings, how are they packaged? Is it important to keep them in the original packaging? For instance, tubes of seed beads tell the size, the type, and the colour which might be important for some of your projects if you have to buy more to finish a project.
7. Are you concerned with the look of your storage containers?
8. How many containers or compartments do you need and what is the cost? Often people organise beads by colour and findings by metal and type to minimize search time but the cost and space may be considerable if each has a separate compartment.
9. If you are selling finished products or are interested in determining the cost of your effort, you may need to keep track of your cost prices.
10. If you are looking at a storage unit that has compartments, check whether the dividers are secure. You don't want to deal with a bead soup if the dividers lift up or fall out. Also check how easy it is to get beads out of the compartments. For instance, if the storage container has 12 compartments and one lid and you need to use the beads that are right in the middle, how will you get them onto your beading surface easily and fast?

We hope that the above ideas will help you make a storage system decision that is the BEST for you.