

# PICTURE YOURSELF

Making  
**Jewelry and Beading**



Step-by-Step Instructions and Inspiration for Creating  
Unique, Handmade Jewelry

Denise Etchison and Sandy Doell

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ISBN-10: 1-59863-450-X

ISBN-13: 978-1-59863-450-1

eISBN-10: 1-59863-660-X

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2007938241

Printed in the United States of America

08 09 10 11 12 BU 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Thomson Course Technology PTR:**

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Thomson Course Technology PTR,  
a division of Thomson Learning Inc.  
25 Thomson Place  
Boston, MA 02210  
<http://www.courseptr.com>

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**Sandy:** *For my son, Bruce Boshears.*

*You see the art in everything.*

**Denise:** *For my daughter, Calee Etchison.*

*I love you more than all the points on all the stars.*

# Acknowledgments

**DENISE WOULD LIKE TO THANK** her many friends and family for their patience, encouragement, support, and love. Rex, Dianna, Dan, Michele, Brandon, Dustin, Lucas, and Calee, thank you for all the extras.

I feel blessed to have been given this opportunity to work with such a wonderful, hardworking group: Sandy Doell, Diane Howard, and Mitzi Koontz, and all the others responsible for the publishing of this book.

## **A very special thanks to the following talented instructors, mentors, and friends:**

Sally J. Phillips, my kidnapped gypsy friend

Kim Kniest of Nimblerods.com for your friendship and artistic talent

Kendra Roberts of MYKSJ.com for sharing your extraordinary talent

My “1979” people

Thank you to the following: Laura Villanyi of LAURA-WORLD.com beads, BeadforLife.org, and Art in Hand Co-op Gallery

## **Thanks to everyone at the Indianapolis Art Center, and special thanks to:**

Melanie Reckas of Basile Studio Gift Shop

Annie Minnich-Beck, Associate Director of Education

T.H. Blevins Photography

Diane Howard Photography

Rachael Schatko and Ingrid Craft of raku beads coalcreekclay@sbcglobal.com

Heidi Hale of Heidi J. Hale jewelry.com

Sonya Rhivera

Thanks to everyone who was able to participate in the studio workshops and everyone who answered my questionnaires as I did research for this book. And thank you to my many friends and mentors, who are too many in number to mention individually, but I express my heartfelt thanks to you all.

**SANDY WOULD LIKE TO THANK** Mitzi Koontz for inspiring her to undertake just one more project and for bringing together a great team of enthusiastic professionals; Heather Kaufman Urschel for her excellent copy editing, Photoshop suggestions, and enthusiastic cheerleading; Shawn Morningstar for once again rallying to do the impossible and to do it on deadline; Mike Tanamachi for working his cover art magic to bring together the art forms represented here (jewelry design, photography, writing, and book design) to create a cover that is a snapshot of all that is inside the book; Jordan Casey, who has a way with words and people (a rare combination); Melba Hopper, who inspires the best in us all with her generosity of spirit, unflagging energy, and love for her fellow human beings, as well as her talent with the English language (and border collie language); Kevin Broccoli and Broccoli Information Management for a job cheerfully well done; and finally, thank you to Denise Etchison, who actually is the sole author of this book. I was just her interpreter.

Thank you, once again, to my patient family and friends, who graciously postponed many things while I became obsessed with my work yet again.

# About the Authors

**DENISE ETCHISON** was raised on a farm in central Indiana, where she always felt an urge to make art. She spent many hours walking the corn rows searching for what some might call ordinary rocks, but she called her “treasures.” With a little care and polish, she knew their beauty could be brought out. Early attempts at artwork were created from old fence wire and barn roofing found on the farm.

Until 1996, Denise spent most of her professional life working in retail and merchandising while raising her daughter Calee. Then, by chance, she drove past the Indianapolis Art Center and saw a sign that said “Register Now for Classes.” Over the next few years, she embarked on an artistic exploration that took her from ceramics and steel sculpture and finally to her true passion—jewelry design. She was fortunate enough to find encouraging teachers to mentor her in wire wrapping, glass fusing, metalsmithing, and stone inlay, all of these forming the foundation of her training in jewelry fabrication. Lapidary work (the cutting and shaping of stones) and the creation of silver settings (*bezels*) to place stones in has become her favorite form of design. It allows her to return to the earlier joy she found in collecting rocks and fossils, letting their naturally occurring patterns and geometry inspire her creations.

In 2000, Denise began to give back to the community that encouraged her skills by becoming a jewelry instructor at the Indianapolis Art Center. She built her own home studio in 2003, where she teaches private lessons and workshops. She began to sell her artwork through retail venues and at art fairs. Through teaching and participation in art fairs, Denise has been able to add the element of human interaction so important to inspiring a creative life. Denise loves seeing her students' eyes light up when they master a new skill or when speaking to someone who has found inspiration and joy in wearing her jewelry designs.

**SANDY DOELL** has worked in the publishing industry as an editor and writer for over 15 years. She has edited hundreds of books and is the author of *Picture Yourself Planning Your Perfect Wedding* and the co-author of *Picture Yourself Decorating Cakes*, both published by Thomson/Course Technology PTR. Her first book, *Mom's Field Guide: What You Need to Know to Make It Through Your Loved One's Military Deployment*, published in 2006 by Warrior Angel Press, is based on her experiences when her son, David, was deployed to Iraq with the U.S. Army in 2004.

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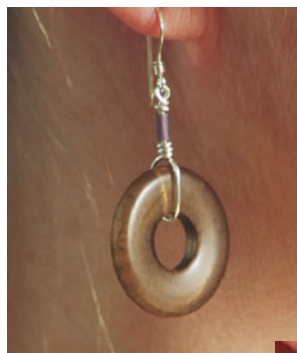
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# Introduction

**TODAY'S TREND TO MAKE IT YOURSELF**, the awakening of the pioneer spirit, the desire to make something yourself and then wear it with pride is never more evident than in the artistic community. Handmade jewelry is a favorite at art fairs and galleries, and here you will learn the skills and techniques necessary to DIY (do it yourself) for fun, pleasure, profit, and pride in your own abilities. You'll love to wear the jewelry you learn to make on the following pages, and giving these pieces as gifts, knowing that a part of you went into making them, is one of the more rewarding experiences you'll have in life. You do not have to be a professional with a dedicated studio of your own and lots of money invested to make the jewelry we teach you to make here.

After you've done a couple of these projects, though, you may just find yourself setting aside a room, a work table, or some space in your home dedicated to your creations and searching for beads and metal of all types and colors to add to your cache of materials. Everyone is creative; sometimes we just need a little advice and experience to express that creativity. You'll find the advice you need to gain some useful jewelry design experience in *Picture Yourself Making Jewelry and Beading*.





# What You'll Find in This Book

**WITH MORE THAN A DOZEN** different projects, and variations on many of them, you'll find much here to pique your interest and inspire your creativity. Hundreds of photographs illustrate every step necessary to create these one-of-a-kind works of art so that you can learn every technique and skill required to create your own jewelry. All you need is inspiration, and you'll find lots of that here too—from the unique and beautiful handmade beads used in Chapter 1, “Working with Wire and Beads,” to the BeadforLife beads used in Chapter 3, “Modern Chandelier Earrings,” right through to Hippie Queen Necklace, the last project in Chapter 12, “Fun Variations—Combining Components.” Along the way, you will learn the basics of creating your own jewelry, including how to work with jump rings, why you should always wear safety glasses, where to find inexpensive “practice” materials, and more.

Simple detailed step-by-step instructions from an experienced instructor, enable you to jump in at any point in the book and complete a project. You can start at the beginning and work your way through as the projects go from very simple to more elaborate, or depending on your level of expertise, you can jump in at any point.

Mostly, what you'll find here is inspiration to have fun and indulge your creative side. Your goal as a jewelry artist, above all, should be to have fun and enjoy making these projects and many more that you will design yourself.

*Picture Yourself Making Jewelry and Beading* includes projects that require limited tools and encourage the use of inexpensive alternative materials. You are encouraged to improvise with what you have on hand or what is easily obtained. You will learn to think outside the box and see many uses for ordinary items and to check out your garage or workroom before you go shopping for expensive tools.

The materials we use in the book are inexpensive. Ordering them is simple and easy, and we point you toward some of our favorites in the Resources Appendix. Using the techniques demonstrated in this book, you will be able to create many very different types of jewelry from just a few simple materials.

Neither will the projects featured in *Picture Yourself Making Jewelry and Beading* require a lot of expensive tools. Most of the tools used are readily available at your local hardware or home improvement stores. The projects you learn in this book will give you the skills and ideas you need to go on and create your own personal designs.



# Who This Book Is For

**THE JEWELRY PROJECTS FEATURED** in this book are meant to inspire students at every level of expertise. Beginning jewelry artists will be able to expand on the basics. They will find useful tips and information about the basic tools required for jewelry making and instruction in the basic techniques that are to be mastered as they move through the stages of learning.

Experienced artists will find new design ideas that will, in turn, inspire them to create their own even more unique designs. Experienced jewelry designers will find ideas and techniques that they can incorporate into their own designs along with new ideas for combining various components. The options here will spark your imagination to create endless variations on the designs we present. You may also learn some new techniques to incorporate into your current designs.

We encourage you to experiment and to go beyond the projects we present here. If you have an idea, get to work on it. If it doesn't work, well, mistakes are part of the learning process, and often, a mistake leads to a new idea for a completely new design. There is no such thing as wasted time doing art of any kind. As you work on these pieces, you will gain the confidence to experiment. There is no wrong. The more you experiment, the more options you will have with your designs. At the very least, as you experiment you will learn what doesn't work!

There is always something new to learn. Jewelry making is a constant learning process with no end in sight!



# Tools You Will Need

**IN THE LISTS OF TOOLS** required for the projects in this book, you will often find a choice of tools or instructions on how to “make do” with what’s available. Don’t have a rawhide mallet? A piece of scrap leather and a regular hammer will easily do the same job without the need to invest in an expensive specialized tool.

Jewelry projects can require many, often expensive, tools. Before you decide to invest in expensive specialty tools, which you may only occasionally use, raid the garage workbench, toolbox, junk drawers, local hardware stores, auctions, garage sales, antique shops, and flea markets. Learn to adapt and make do with what’s available.

Jewelry supply catalogs are always full of great tips and suggestions on the items and products that they carry. Subscribe to as many as possible and study them often. Look for items that serve multiple purposes:

- ❑ Wooden dowel rods, PVC pipe, or old wooden baseball bats can be used to shape wire and sheet silver.
- ❑ Pencils, pens, markers, or bamboo skewers can be used to make jump rings and coil beads.
- ❑ Use a concrete block or garden pavers to texture sheet silver.
- ❑ A regular inexpensive hammer, used carefully, can be used to texture sheet silver.
- ❑ Screwdrivers and nail set punches can be used to stamp sheet silver.
- ❑ Inexpensive wire from your local hardware store or home improvement center can be used to experiment with designs before committing to more expensive sterling silver or gold.
- ❑ Cover metal with a thick piece of scrap leather on a hard flat surface and gently hammer it to flatten the metal.

Always think “outside the box” when you are looking for tools. They do not have to be expensive and you can accumulate them over time as you find yourself needing something specific to a certain job.

Here’s a list of things you’ll find a need for as you work through the projects in this book. Most are fairly inexpensive.

- ❑ **Pliers:** Many specialty pliers are available through jewelry supply companies. Before you invest in more costly specialty pliers, start with just the basic necessities: two pairs of chain nose pliers, two pairs of round nose pliers, and a good pair of cutters. You can start out with low cost pliers, decide what you use most and start to upgrade your pliers as needed. Always keep a good pair close at hand to use for many tasks.
- ❑ **Round nose pliers:** Round smooth tapered jaws. Used to make loops and curved bends in wire and metal. Can purchase at local arts and crafts store or through a jewelry supply company.





- ❑ **Chain nose pliers:** Flat, smooth, tapered jaws. Used to grip small components and to bend and shape wire and metal. It's good to have at least two pairs available. Can purchase at local arts and crafts store or through a jewelry supply company.
- ❑ **Black Permanent Marker:** Black...yes; blue...no. Use a permanent black marker as a guide for cutting and measuring. Blue permanent marker will stain some stones and beads and will not come off. Marks from a black permanent marker can be removed from a metal surface using fine steel wool. Both fine and ultra fine markers are good to have. Buy them by the boxful from office supply stores.
- ❑ **Ruler:** Metal is best; the measurements are more accurate. You can find good ones at any jewelry supply company or office supply store.
- ❑ **Hard flat surface:** This is a smooth steel surface. Check your local hardware store, metal machine shops, and recycling center for a suitable surface. You can also find this item through jewelry supply companies.
- ❑ **File:** You will use files a lot. Some are quite costly but worth the investment if you need them for specific purposes; you can also pick up less expensive ones at the hardware store. Many great files are available through jewelry supply companies. They come in many varieties of coarseness. You may want to purchase an inexpensive set of files and use them until you determine what coarseness will best suit the materials that works best for your needs.
- ❑ **Safety glasses:** Not very stylish but absolutely necessary! Make it a habit to wear safety glasses. Unexpected flying metal when you are cutting and long wire flipping around when you're bending it can lead to serious eye injuries. Don't risk it.
- ❑ **Sanding pads:** Sanding paper and sanding pads are useful to remove rough edges. Super fine grit is great to use after you've filed metal to smooth the edges and remove file marks. Sanding pads and paper can be cut into any desired size. They are flexible and will fit into small areas. Sanding paper can be used to eliminate small surface scratches on some metal surfaces. Available in wide assortment of grits. Can be used wet or dry.
- ❑ **Hammer:** Many specialty hammers are available through jewelry supply companies. Before you invest in costly hammers, start with the basics. A simple ball-peen hammer, flat on one end and rounded on the other purchased from the hardware store, is all you will need to begin. Buy a couple of inexpensive ones and use them until you determine whether you need to invest in a better, more expensive hammer. Once you have a hammer, designate it for jewelry only, taking care that it doesn't find its way in to your garage!
- ❑ **Tin snips:** The preferred method to cut sheet silver is to use a jeweler's saw (available through jewelry supply companies), but if you are just starting out and don't want to make that kind of purchase just yet, you can use tin snips. They are great for cutting thick materials. They have a slightly serrated blade, which will leave marks on the cut material. You can eliminate the serrated marks by filing the cut edges of the metal and then sanding them smooth.
- ❑ **Masking tape:** Great for many uses. Use masking tape to hold small items in place, to mark items, and to wrap the jaws of your pliers to prevent marring the metal. Use the best quality masking tape you can find. The back of less expensive, lower quality, masking tape is a little too goopy, and it leaves a residue on surfaces.

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