

Basic Wire Skills by Connie Fox

Coils



Making coils is easy and ever so useful. Choose a mandrel wire that is a heavier gauge than the wrapping wire. For example, wrap 20 gauge wire on a 16 gauge mandrel. Or, you can wrap 22 gauge on a 14 gauge wire. Experiment with different combinations so that you see the effect one gauge has when wrapped on another. Also try wrapping twisted wire onto round wire. And, one more --- wrap half round wire onto round wire (this is easier to accomplish if you have a wire winder.)

What You Need

- Wire cutters
- 8" of 16 gauge copper or silver wire
- 3' of 20 gauge copper or silver wire
- Flat nose pliers

Step 1. Hold the two wires together with your non-wrapping hand as seen in the photo. The heavier wire laying horizontal is the mandrel - the wire that will be wrapped. Let 3" to 6" of the wrapping wire hang below the mandrel wire - this will give you something to hold onto as you wrap.



Step 2. Grasp the wrapping wire (the longer end above the mandrel) leaving about 3" between your grasping hand and the mandrel. Notice how I have created a bend in the wrapping wire close to my wrapping thumb. Rotate your wrapping hand away from your body while creating some tension between your two hands. This tension is required in order to have nice even coils spaced right next to each other.



You do not want the wrapping wire to twist as you coil, thus, you need to allow it to turn freely in your right hand. This is difficult to explain, but you will get a feel for it as you proceed. Hint: It is easier to coil if you wrap closer to the end of your mandrel wire; you can scoot the coil towards the middle as you go along.

Step 3. After you have coiled as much as you want, reverse the direction of the mandrel in your left hand. Unwind the tail that you used previously to hold onto. Straighten it with your flat nose pliers. Proceed to coil the tail. Snip both ends close to the mandrel. Scrunch your coils together if there are any little spaces between wraps.



Please contact me if these instructions aren't clear so adjustments can be made.

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