
Herringbone Necklace - with Lisa Coris

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview of project and tools

- This is one of my favorite necklaces to make. It's called a herringbone necklace and it's comprised of some plastic herringbone beads paired with some African coconut beads and some vintage brass beads simply strung on leather, whatever kind of cord you have. What I love about this is that the combination of materials are a bit unexpected and makes a statement and, best of all, it's really affordable to make and it's really easy to make.

Chapter 2 - Creating the Necklace

Reviewing materials

- So these, again, are plastic, vintage, Japanese chevron beads, or herring bone beads. I just get a kick out of asking stores where they came from, especially when they're older, because it just adds a little bit more color to the necklace when you have a history behind it. I also have found some black African coconut beads. These disks are made out of old coconuts. I'm going to combine those with the herring bones beads because I like kind of unique combinations. I also have brass vintage beads, also a nice combination or compliment to all these other beads, and they will be strung on cord. I enjoy using leather. It's also totally fine to use string. This is a waxed cord, and besides that all you need is a standard pair of scissors and you're good to go!

Stringing the necklace

- I've grouped my beads as you can see here, brass, the plastic beads, and the coconut beads, and here's my cord. I'm gonna just give a quick measure, I always put this around my neck, I know I wanna make this long, so I just guesstimate. This is my leather cord that I'll start stringing with and truth be told from a color standpoint, sometimes I literally let the colors that were provided to me dictate the necklace, so in the case of these beads, these are the beads that they had. They had one other color, I didn't choose to use it, but for the most part this is what I was given, so I figured, let's just work with these. I also like to graduate a necklace sometimes from skinny to thicker, so I am gonna start with the brass beads. Just feed a few of these onto the leather, that will serve as the anchors for the necklace. I just think brass is a really nice metal as long as it doesn't bother your skin it looks really nice and complements other materials really nicely. So just let that kind of fall down, and we're done! (laughs) Just kidding. And then we're going to lead with the coconut beads. I've found beads that kind of graduated from small to larger, so I kind of put them in two different groupings. I'm gonna start with the skinnier ones. They're not perfect, and I like the fact that they're not perfectly any one size. I just kind of grouped them as best I could, but I like the imperfection of this process a lot. So stringing these little guys, and then I found a group of the coconut beads that are a little bit bigger. Again, they are not uniform or absolutely perfect, but I like that about these natural beads, stringing them on this, and now that I kind of have that anchor foundation of brass to coconut beads I'm gonna start the herringbone, and what I like about when I think through the necklace a little bit is I like big blocks of color with little sporadic other colors intermittently put into the piece, so I've decided to start with some of these orange herringbone beads. Just gonna string that on. These are really easy to string on the leather cord, so we're almost done with this orange block of color, and I will say I have made a lot of these watching TV, it's kind of fun to listen to

music, maybe a book you can listen to, hard to read the book but you can listen to people telling stories. It's a nice activity to do while you're doing other things kind of calm and then you have a little excitement at the end 'cuz you never really know what you're gonna get until you're finished. Now I'm gonna move to the pink beads, and given the color palette I was given, I just thought pink would complement the orange really nicely. And I'm kind of on purpose doing another block of color, but definitely the same length of beads as the other grouping. I like to just mix it up, have it be unpredictable again. And we're done with that grouping. Now we have orange and pink. Next we're gonna move on to the gray, an even smaller clump of colors to kind of graduating down, but again there are absolutely no rules with this, you could do anything and I guarantee you it all looks great, it's just down to personal taste, what you like. We kind of have, we have three colors, then I just like to add a random pink bead to kind of revisit the pink from before, to just give it some continuity, and then because this is what they had we're gonna add some lilac beads, again just kind of a random number, no rules, no rules. Almost done, I like to just clump 'em together, more efficient that way, I think. And then, again, the random color revisiting, the orange, just to be kind of whimsical. Back to the lilac, 'cuz I have a bunch more of those on hand. Why not, I like that color. Almost done. And... Doop. When you get the beads from Africa, if you get these herringbone beads, they tend to be more primary colors, darker colors, richer colors, it just kind of boils down to what you like, taste-wise, and what your neck can handle. And we're done with the lilac, and we have one last bead, being the orange. I just thought it would be nice to start with the orange and end with the orange from a color standpoint, and then much like we began with, I like to have some stuff or an anchor clumping a bead, so I'm gonna revisit the coconut beads, and then some of the smaller beads, again the coconut beads. I think my carpet has more beads than the store that I buy beads from. (laughs) There are a lot of beads all over my house, and I just leave them there, and pick them up when I need a bead, which makes it really easy. We're gonna end with the brass beads we started with, and you can buy things like this anywhere possibly even in the hardware store. I just like the color, the size, or the actual shape, can be what you want them to be. So we've strung all of our beads and this is my favorite part is just holding it up and seeing what we have, and I think that looks pretty cool, then quickly make a knot before you accidentally drop it and the beads go everywhere and you have to start again. Very simple little knot there, and the great thing about using leather is this is the length I happen to like necklaces, and in the case of the leather cord, should you want to make it a very short necklace, you just tie a knot in the back of your neck, and you can make it really any length you want it to be. You have almost two necklaces made out of one necklace. And there you go, my herringbone necklace.

Chapter 3 - Conclusion

Samples of variations

- I love working with these herringbone beads. One of the upsides to beads like this is they're really versatile and as I've said before really easy to work with. Unlike the piece that I just made, here's another variation of playing with colors, doing one big color and then just having a little hint of color in the middle of the necklace, and adding more brass or less beads. You can just play with it, and they're light, they're easy, they're inexpensive, and it's just not that cumbersome to try something and then start again. The other thing that you can do, there are many things you can do I'm sure with these, but another thing I've done is take the same beads, similar brass beads and put them on a chain. It gives it a totally different look, a shorter look, almost a fancier look, but you can just have a lot of fun with these beads again in any way that you see fit, and you can definitely combine them

with anything that you find. Just don't restrict yourself with any rules at all. If you choose to get as excited about this process as me, you may want to simplify your process by compartmentalizing your beads in containers or bags. Bags definitely work, but they do start to get dusty over time, so I've found that using baby food jars is an excellent way to store your beads. I don't have a baby but nor do I have baby food jars in my kitchen, but I used Craigslist, the internet to ask the world if they had any to give and what I will often do is get baby food jars and then reward people with a necklace for providing me with those. I kind of like the whole upcycling process, and to that point too I make a lot of necklaces as gifts and enjoy wrapping them in magazine pages or catalog pages. It just adds color and again I like the whole recycling story behind this process. With that said, I would really encourage you to go to your flea markets, your thrift stores, your garage sales, your drawers, and take apart things, reinvent stuff and really just have a ton of fun with it. Wear it with pride and enjoy the process.