

# How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads



## Introduction

At *Baha'i Prayer Beads* we make a wide range of Baha'i prayer bead sets, from simple and relatively inexpensive glass sets, to sets made out of special materials such as semi-precious stones, pearls, and silver and gold parts.

We also want to make it possible for anyone to have a set of Baha'i prayer beads, so we are providing these instructions, which you can use with materials you obtain yourself, or for assembling one of our Baha'i Prayer Beads kits. Making prayer beads is a great craft idea for a children's class or junior youth group.

The instructions given here are for one of several possible methods of assembling a set of Baha'i prayer beads. This approach is simple and doesn't require using a lot of knotting or special metal findings like you will find in our fancier sets. Basically the approach given here is to start at the bottom of the "tail", thread up through the tail and main bead, thread the 95 beads, go back down (second thread thickness) through the main bead and tail, tie the set off at the bottom, and then attach a tassel or other decorations at the bottom of the tail.

These instructions are for a set of 95 beads in the main loop, and some decorative beads in the tail. An alternative approach is to make a smaller set, using only 19 beads in the main loop, and to put 5 distinct counting beads in the tail. For a 19x5 set, you would count 95 by counting the 19 beads 5 times, using the beads in the tail with the other hand to keep track of which set of "19" you are on.

Our kits provide the beads, the thread, a tassel, and a few metal pieces for use in assembling the tail.

Please let us know what you think about these instructions. We enjoy hearing from you.

# How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads

## Materials and Tools You will Need

1. Materials for the prayer bead set. *These material are provided in our kits*

a. **About 100 to 110 beads.**

You will need a minimum of 95 plus how many you want in the tail. Get a few extra, in case you lose a few or find a few with defects. Alternatively, for a 19x5 set, you will need a minimum of 24 beads. Bead diameters of 6 mm, 7 mm, or 8 mm are good choices for the longer 95-bead set. Somewhat larger beads can be considered for the 19x5 sets. See our website for examples of the sizes of bead sets resulting from different sized beads.

*Our kits come with approximately 110 beads.*

b. **Some sort of "main" bead.**

This bead goes at the top of the tail. Its main purpose is to help you know when you've counted off the 95 beads. But it is also the center of beauty in the design.

*Our kits supply one "main" bead, larger and different than the other beads. See the kit descriptions.*

c. **Optional bead caps or spacers**, depending upon the design.

You can make the set a little fancier by adding some bead caps or spacers or small beads around or between the beads in the tail.

*Our kits come with parts appropriate to their particular design.*

d. **Nylon Bead Cord.**

A heavy-duty, non-stretch, nylon bead cord will create a durable set.

We recommend Griffin brand, "NylonPower no stretch BeadCord". You can get it in a 2 meter length with a (temporary) beading needle already installed at one end.

You can use Griffin sizes 6, 7, or 8, with 7 being a very good choice. It comes in many colors. You can purchase Griffin bead cord at [www.griffin.de](http://www.griffin.de) or <http://www.griffin.de/lp/bead-cord>, or at one of Griffin's resellers. Other types of heavy nylon thread could be used, but might stretch or be too weak for a long life. Silk thread is more traditional than nylon and is recommended for use with pearl beads, but it is more expensive than nylon and might not last as long. Use a cotton string or cord only if you have no access to the stronger, longer-lasting nylon. *Our kits typically supply 2 meters of No 6 or No 7 Griffin bead cord with an attached needle for 6 mm bead sets, and No 7 or No 8 cord for 8 mm sets.*

e. **Bead Tip.** Optional.

This is a small metal device that creates a closed ball of metal around the glued knot at the end of the threaded bead strand. Using a bead tip allows you to attach a tassel or other tail ornament(s) using jump rings. Alternatively, you can omit the bead tip and use some of the thread extending beyond the tail to tie additional ornament(s) to the tail.

*Our kits supply one bead tip for use at the bottom of the tail.*

f. **A Tassel or other ornament(s) for the end of the tail.**

If you want to try making your own tassel, we supply some additional information at the end of this document for learning how to make a tassel. It can take a few tries to get a well made tassel.

*Our kits come with a pre-made tassel made of silk thread with a silver jump ring for attaching it to the metal bead tip.*

2. Additional tools and materials you will need and which are **not** supplied in our kits.

a. **Two small needle-nose pliers.** You will need one for closing a bead tip. You will need two to open and close a jump ring. Pliers that have smooth surfaces are best. Pliers with "teeth" can score the metal parts.

b. **A small pair of sharp scissors.** For cutting off the extra cord at the end.

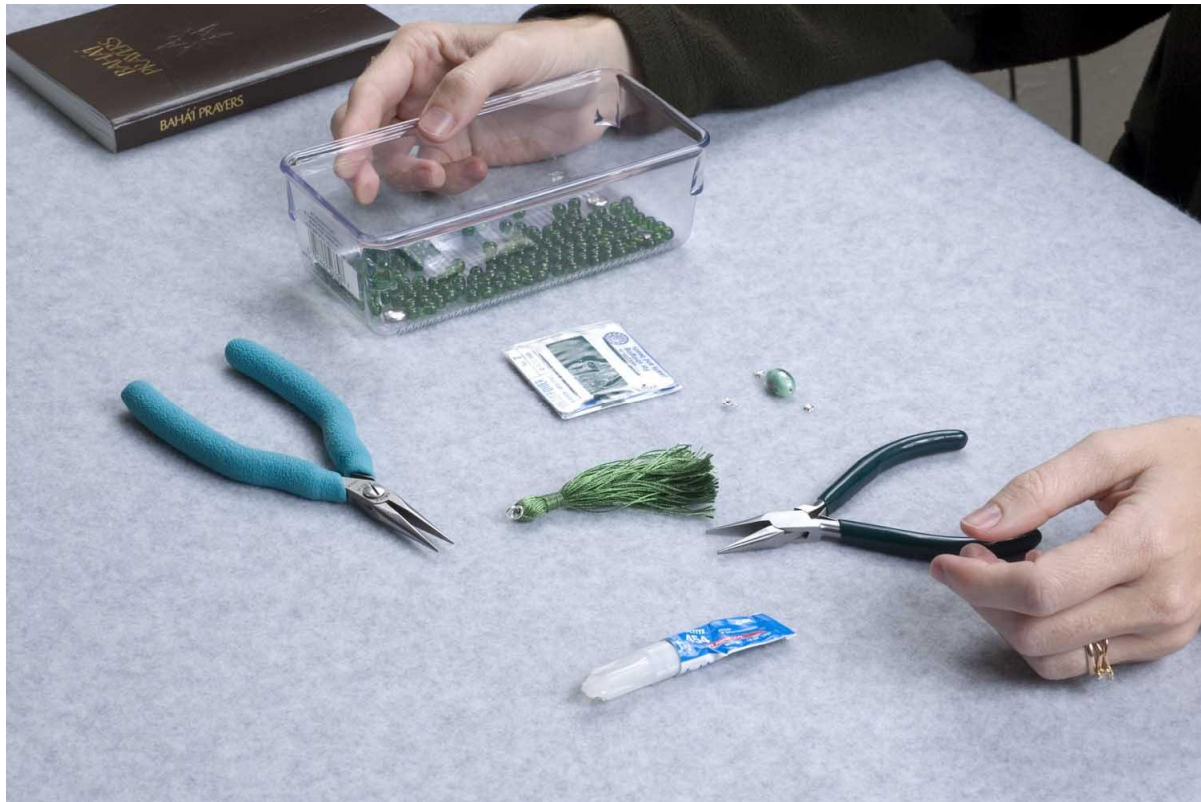
c. **A small amount of Super Glue.** (for making a knot permanent)

# ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

## **Step by Step Instructions**

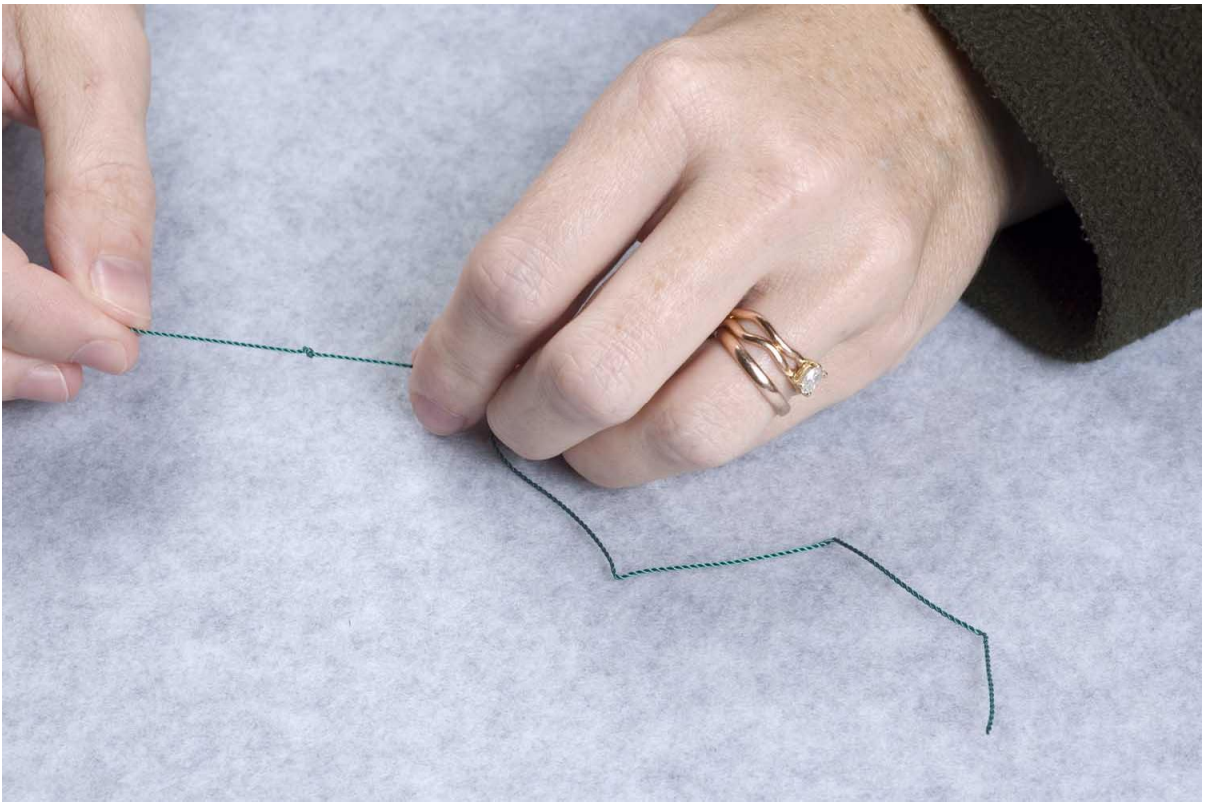
### **1. Preparation**

- a. Find a nice place to work. A good table, a good chair, and some bright lighting are strongly recommended.
- b. Inventory your materials
- c. Get a bowl or plastic box to put your beads into, and in which you can wash them.
- d. Take your beads out of their packaging.
- e. If they are made of a washable material, such as stone or glass, wash them gently in a bowl or tray (don't lose them down a sink drain), and then dry them.
- f. Cut the beads free from any string they may be on
- g. If you are using a bead cord that has a needle attached, straighten out any bend(s) in the needle, and cut it a bit shorter if you prefer.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

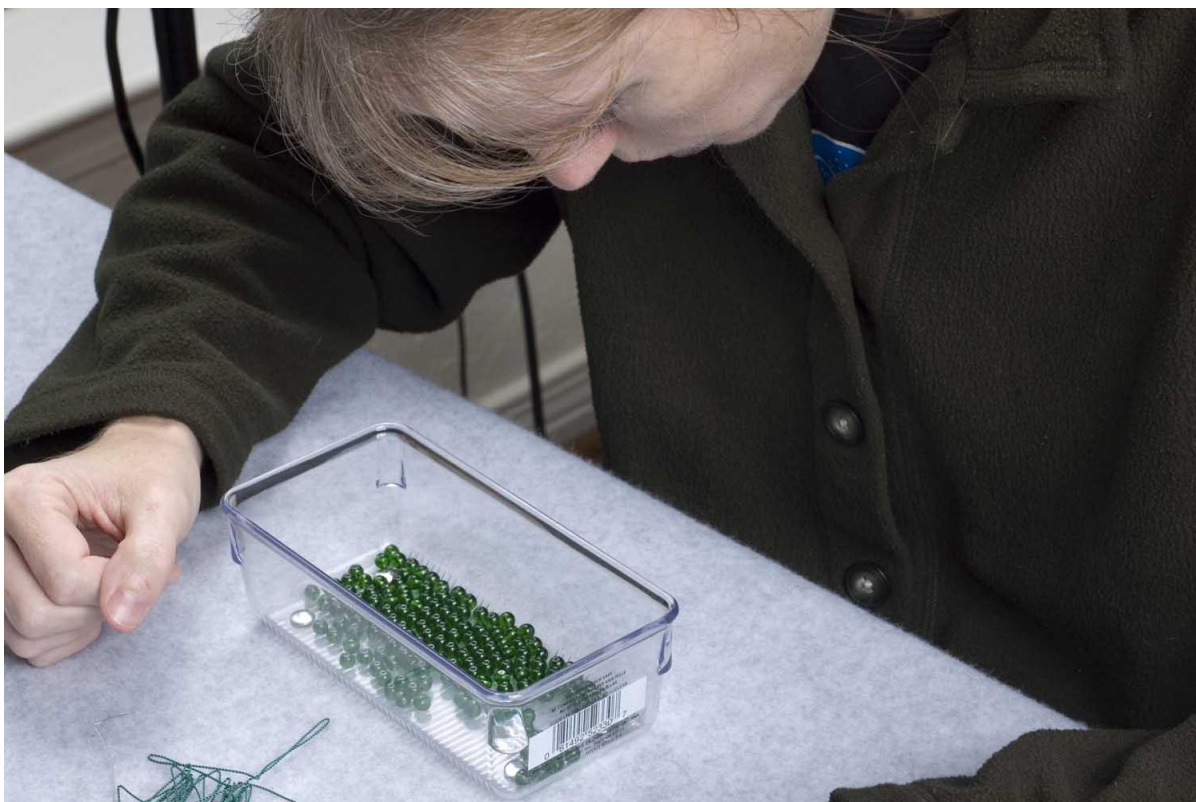
2. Tie a knot in the cord, about 5-6" from the end farthest from the needle, big enough to capture your beads. Don't worry about how the knot looks, because it won't be in the final result.





## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

3. Look carefully through your beads to remove any that have defects such as flat or rough spots, or disfigured holes.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

4. Select 5 beads for the tail that have large enough holes to allow the beading needle and thread to pass through them a second time when there is already another strand of cord in them. If you cannot find 5 beads where this is easy, check the tip in the next step.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

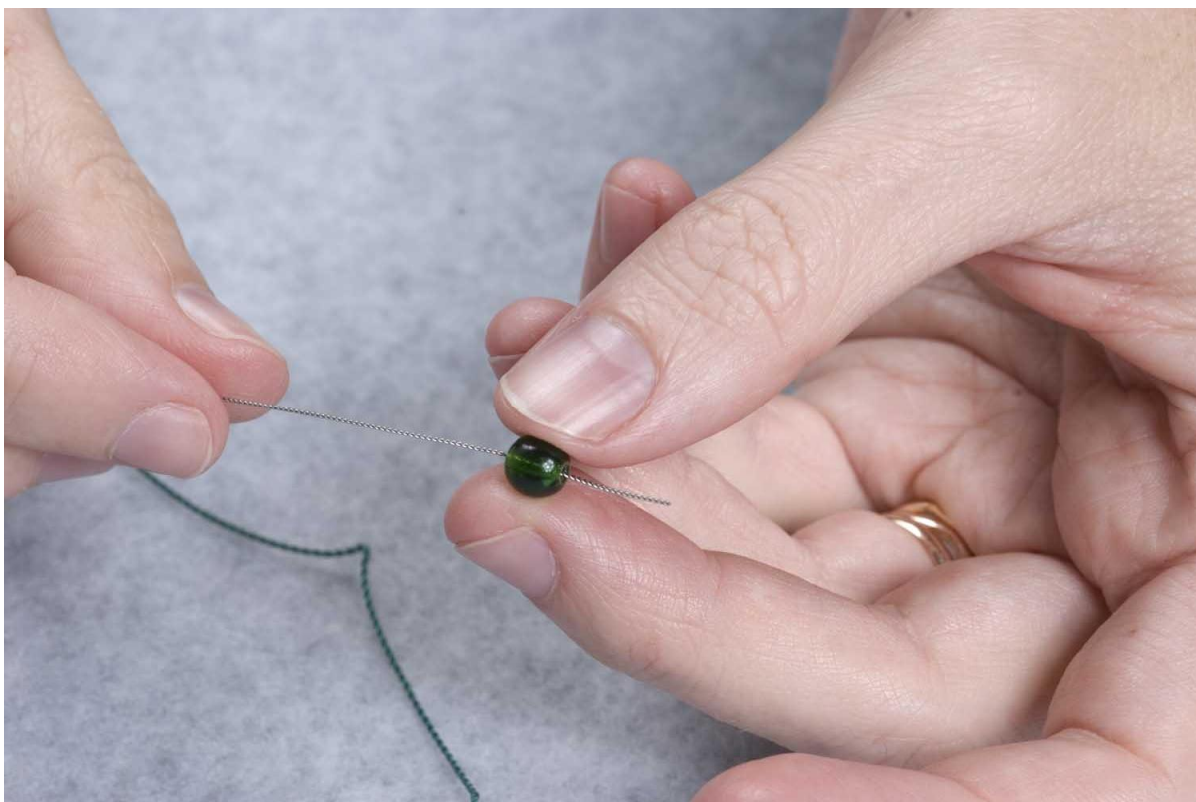
5. TIP: If you have difficulty passing the rear end of the needle, where the cord is attached, through the bead a second time, then carefully and gently use needle-nosed pliers to squeeze and close the wire loop at the cord end of the needle. You might need to hold the needle with the second pair of pliers to keep it from turning while you close the loop. Don't squeeze it so hard as to cut the cord.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

6. Start adding beads.

Start by putting the needle and cord through the bead that will be the last bead of the tail.



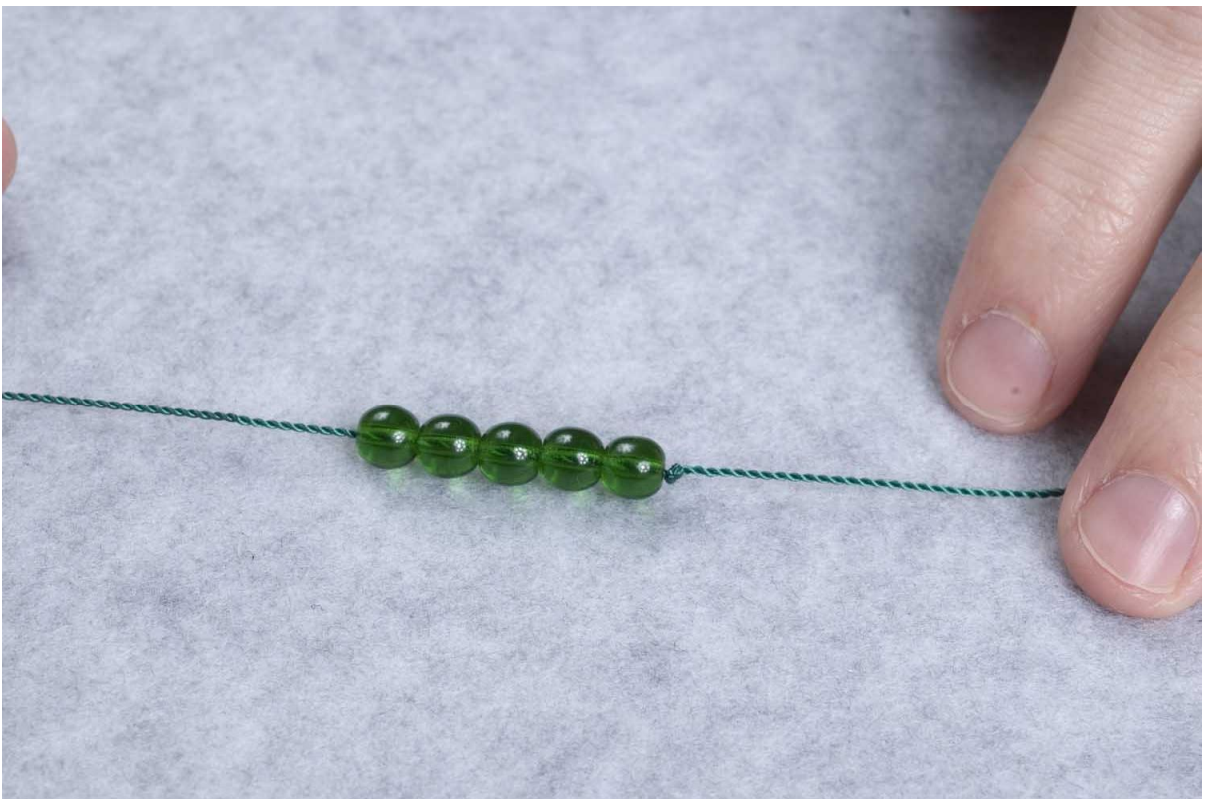


## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

7. Pull the bead all the way down the cord to the knot at the other end



8. Put about 5 beads on the tail, working up. If your kit or design uses metal balls, spacers, or small beads between the tail beads, be sure to include them all in the right places.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

9. Now thread the “main” bead onto the “top” of the tail, and included any spacers or bead caps called for in the design. If using curved *bead caps*, make sure they are oriented to “cup around” the bead. For example, start with inserting the needle through the convex side of one bead cap, then through the main bead bottom to top, and then insert the needle through the concave side of other bead cap.

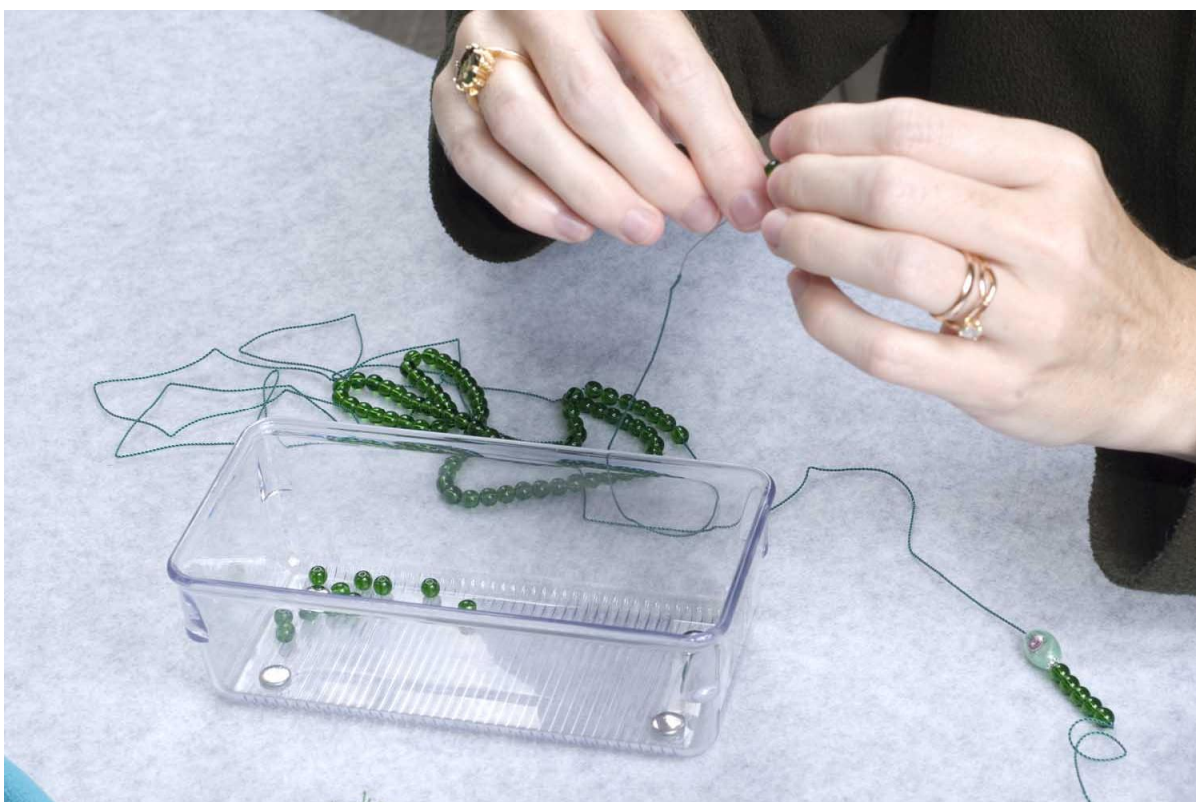


## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

10. DOUBLE CHECK that you have the tail the way you want it before you to string the other 95 beads.



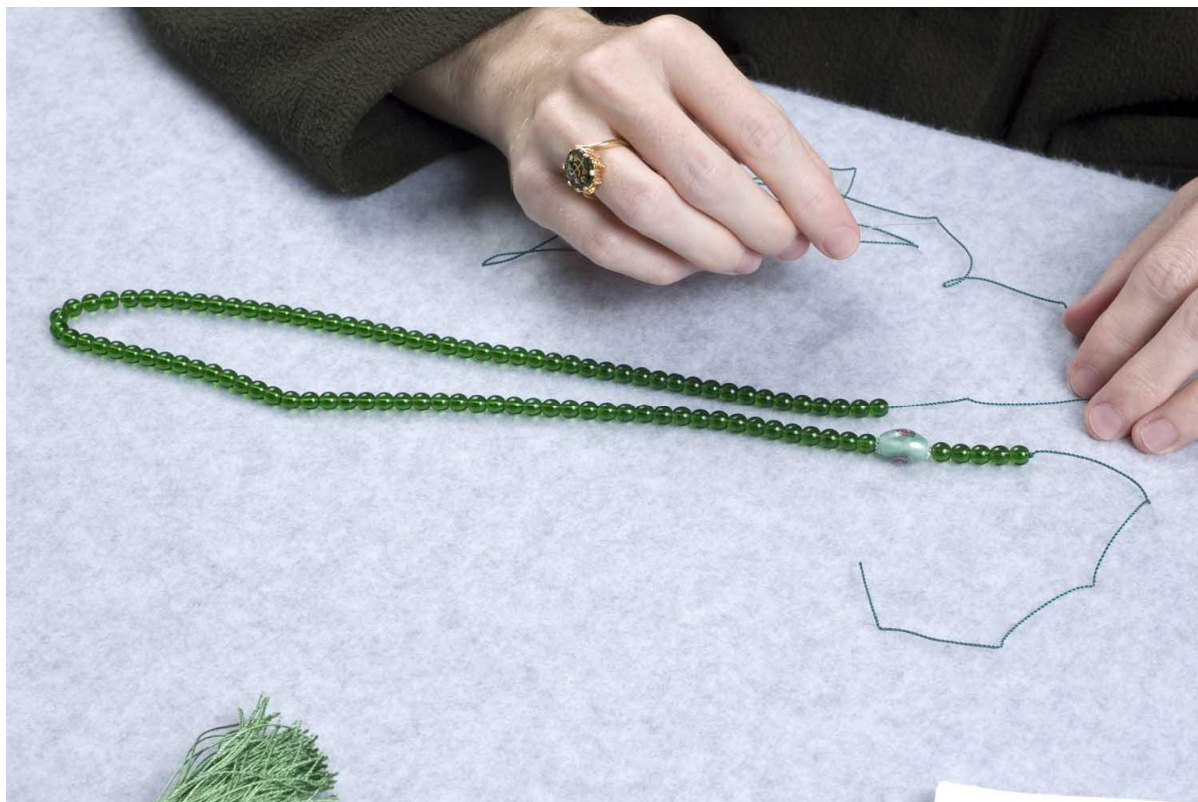
11. Proceed to string exactly 95 more beads onto the strand after the main bead.





## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

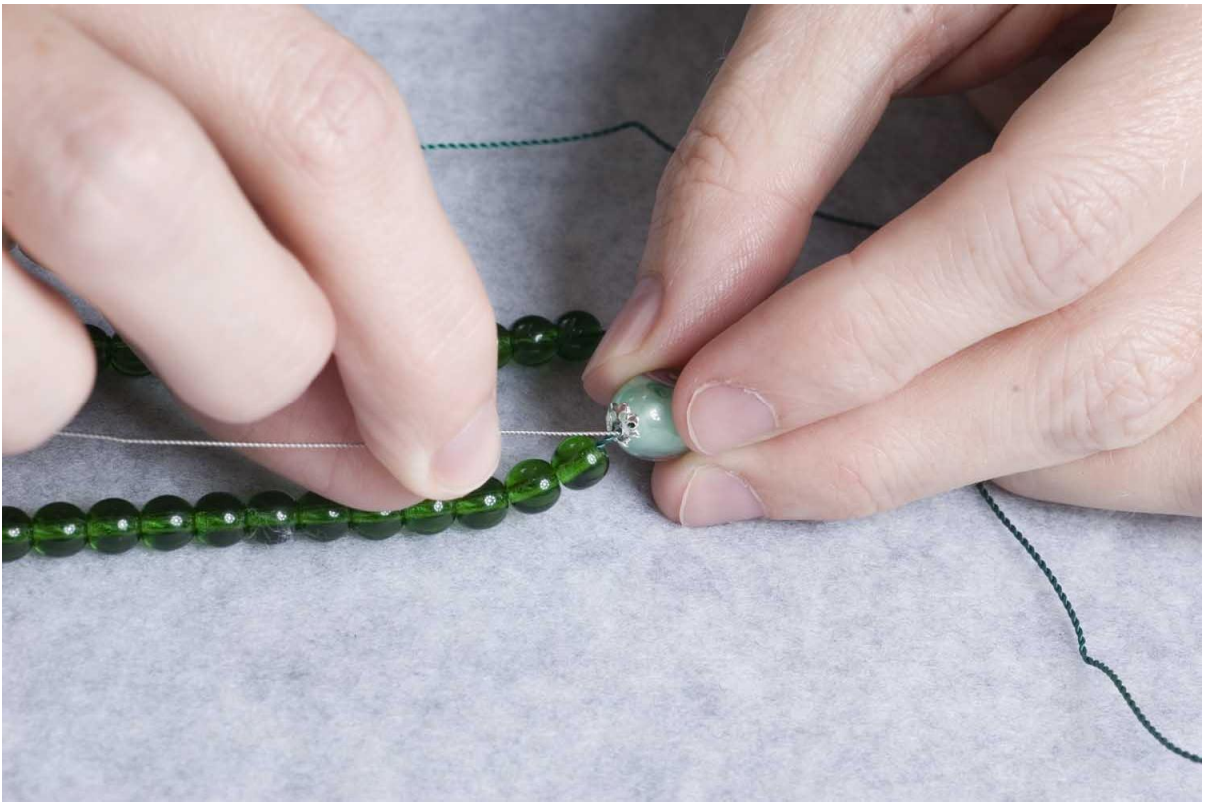
12. Count your 95 beads carefully twice before you proceed to the next step.





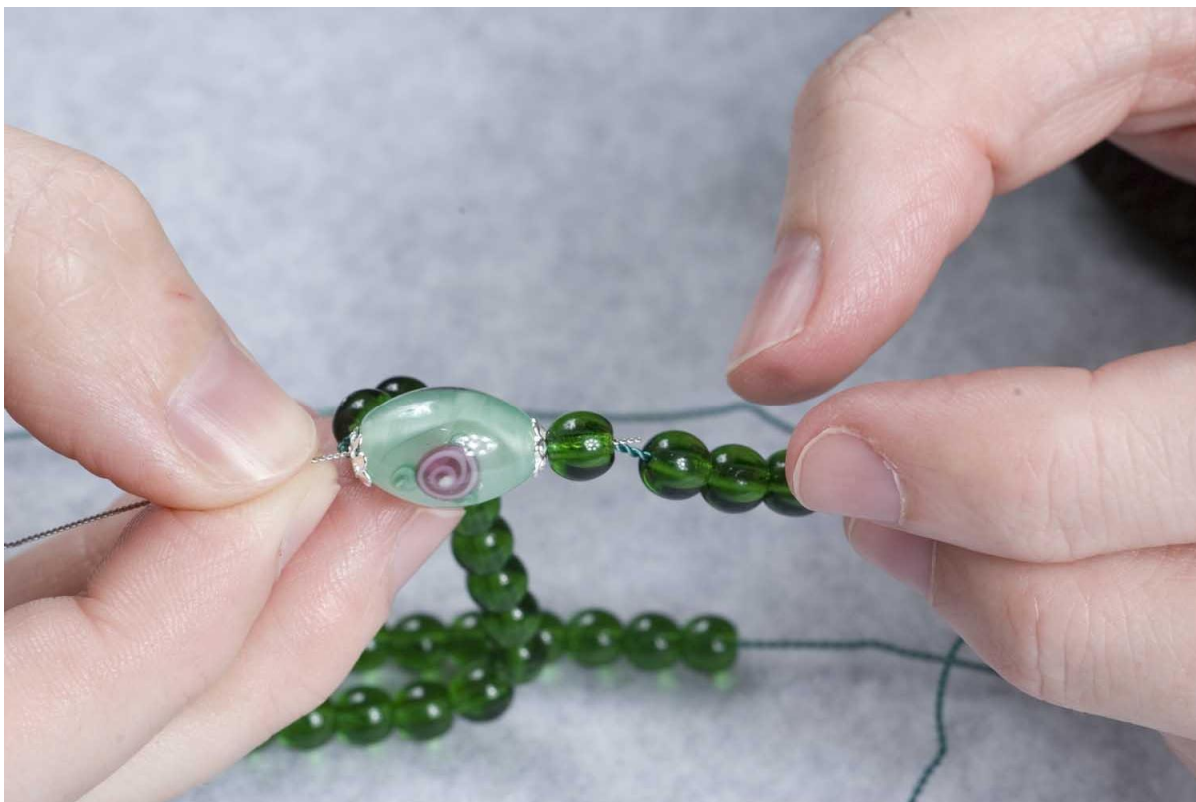
## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

13. When you have strung the 95 beads beyond the main bead, you will thread the needle back down through the tail. To begin this, insert the needle into the top of the main bead (be sure to first go through its upper bead cap or spacer if it has one)



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

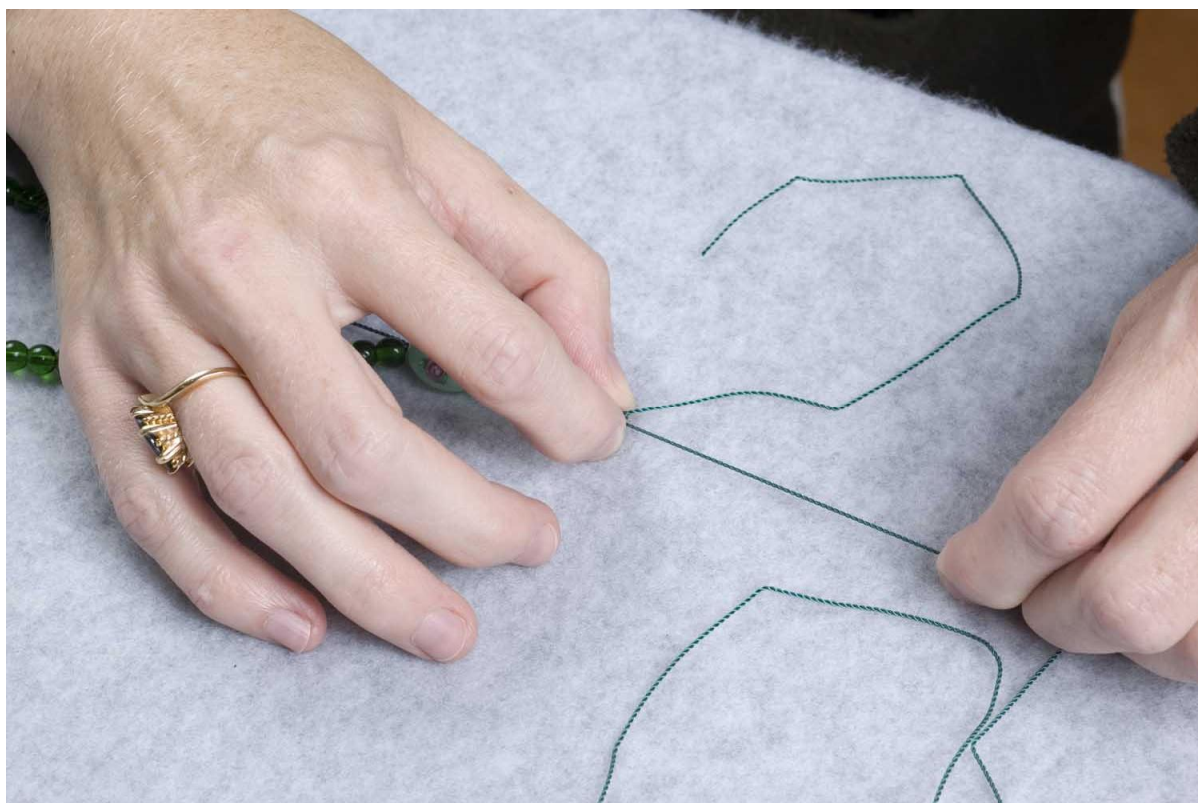
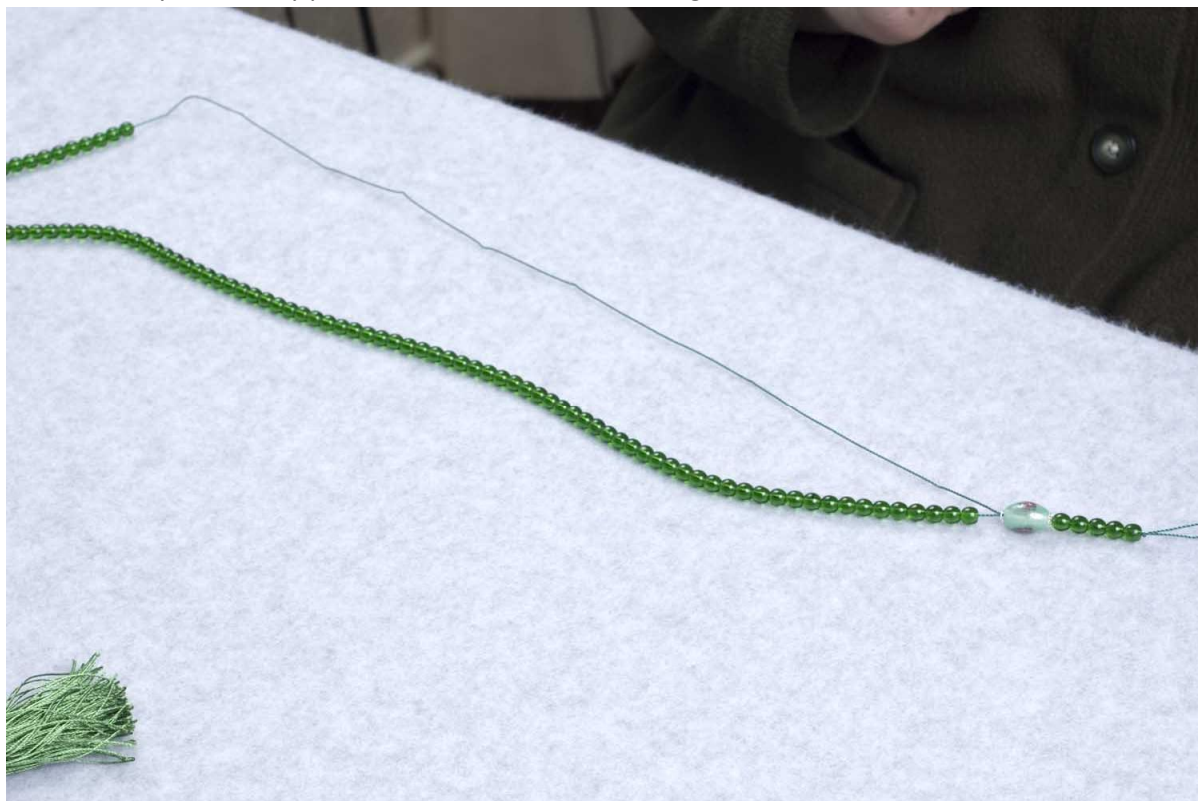
14. Continue stringing the needle and cord down through each and every bead and metal item in the tail.





## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

15. Now carefully and slowly pull the rest of the thread through the tail.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

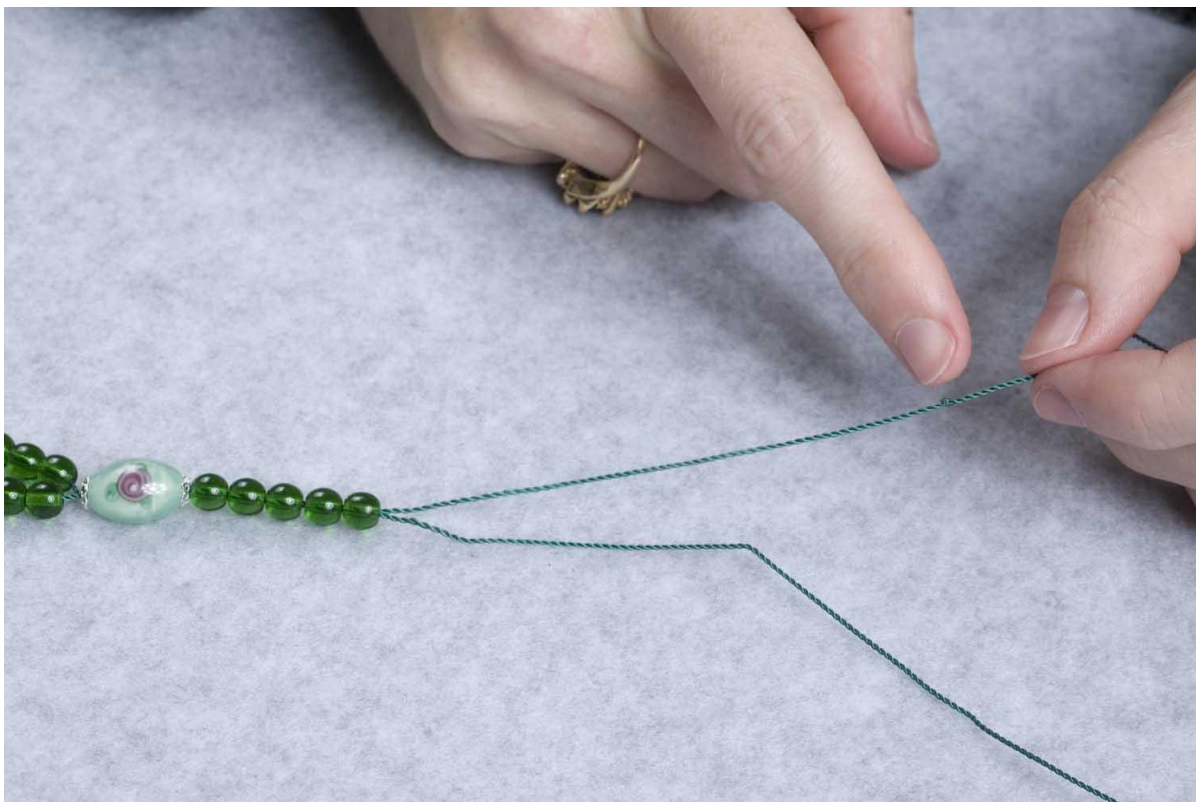
16. Watch carefully to be sure to keep any slack cord from tangling up as you pull it through.





## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

17. Be sure that you have the original knot several inches away from the tip of the tail.



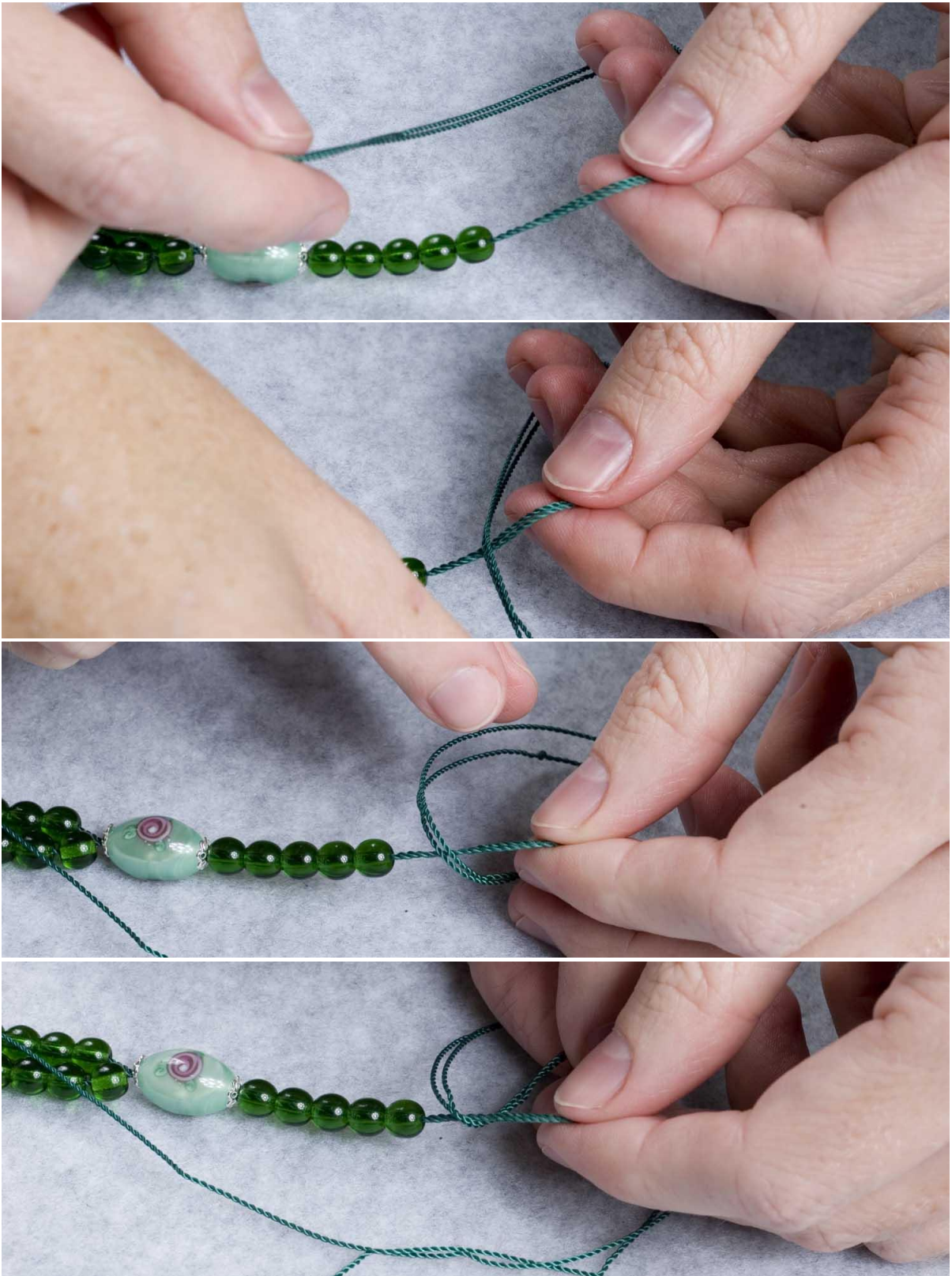
## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

18. Pull out ALMOST all of the extra cord slack in the whole set. You will want to leave a little bit of slack so that the strand can flex easily. Experiment a bit with the feel of gathering up the 95 beads in your hand, adjusting the slack until you have it just right. You will probably want to leave about 1-1/2 bead widths of slack in the whole set, which you can judge by leaving about 3/4 of a bead of slack on each side at this step. If anything, the cord will tend to stretch a little over time.



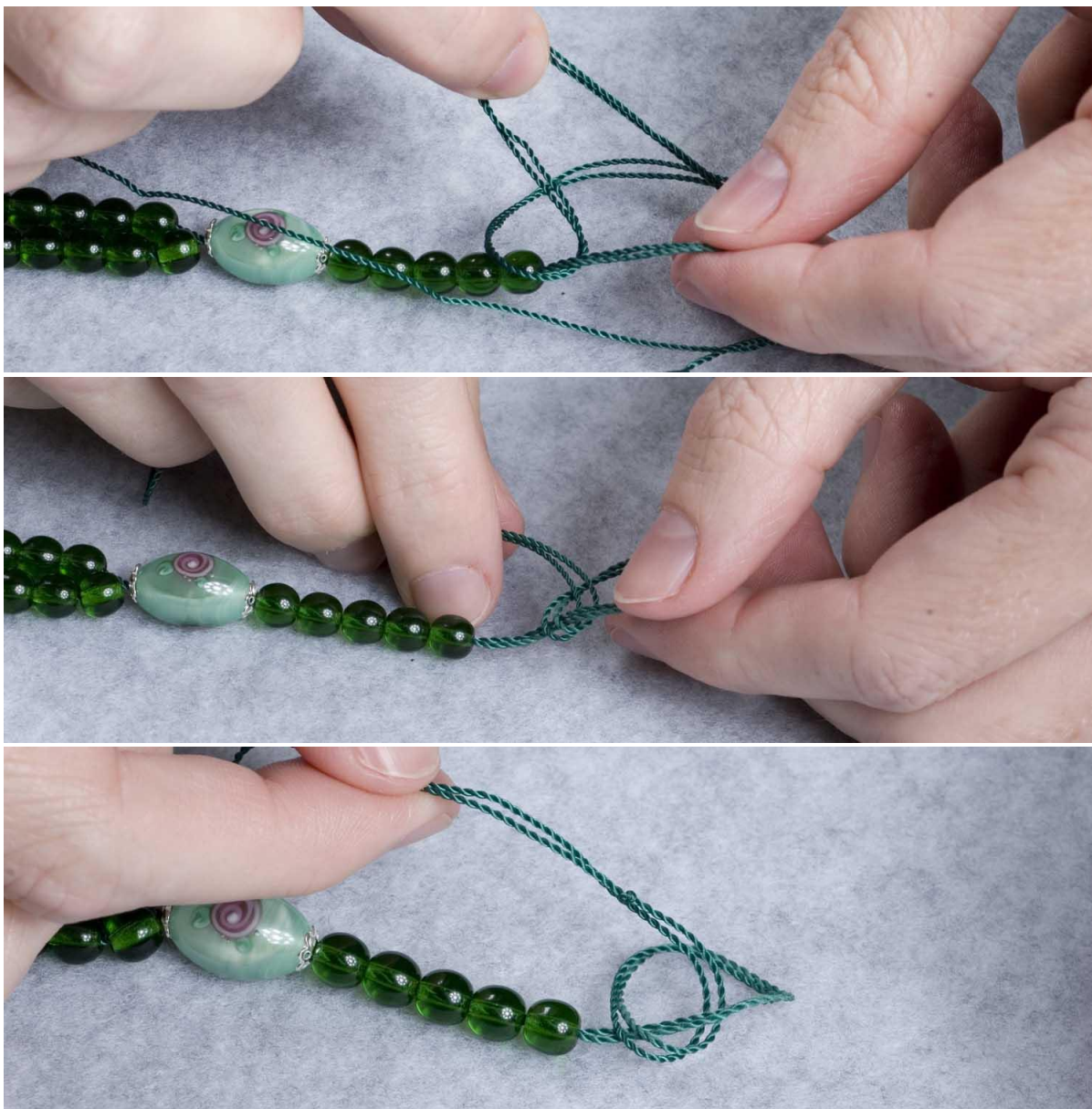
## *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*

19. Holding both strands of the cord combined parallel together beyond the tip of the tail, begin to tie them in a combined “overhand” knot, **but don't pull them tight yet**





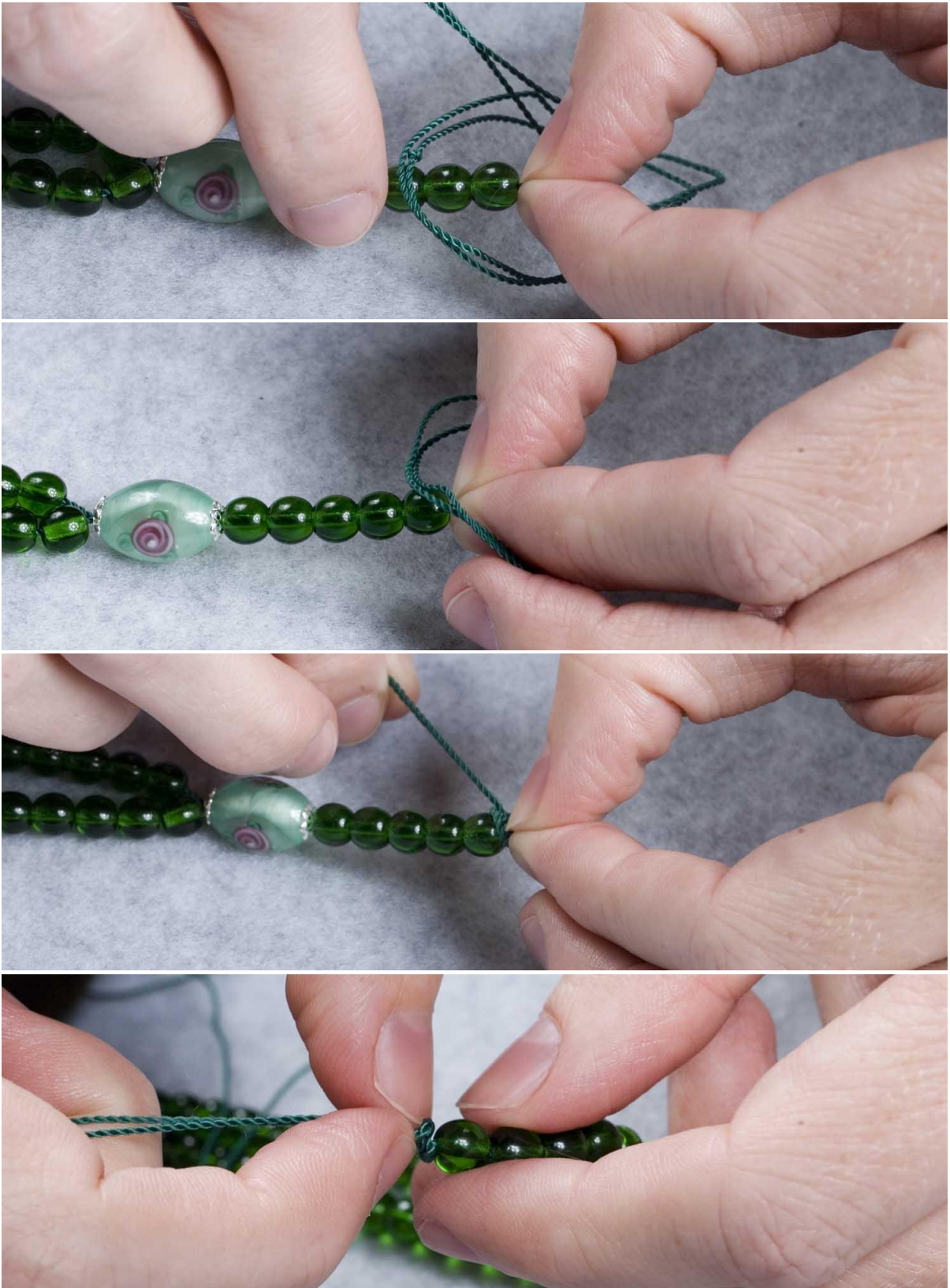
## *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*





## *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*

20. Before tightening of the knot, check once more for the amount of slack in the whole strand, and then use your fingernails to make sure it is right against the last bead or ball in the tail.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

21. Tighten the knot well. Note the slack above the main bead



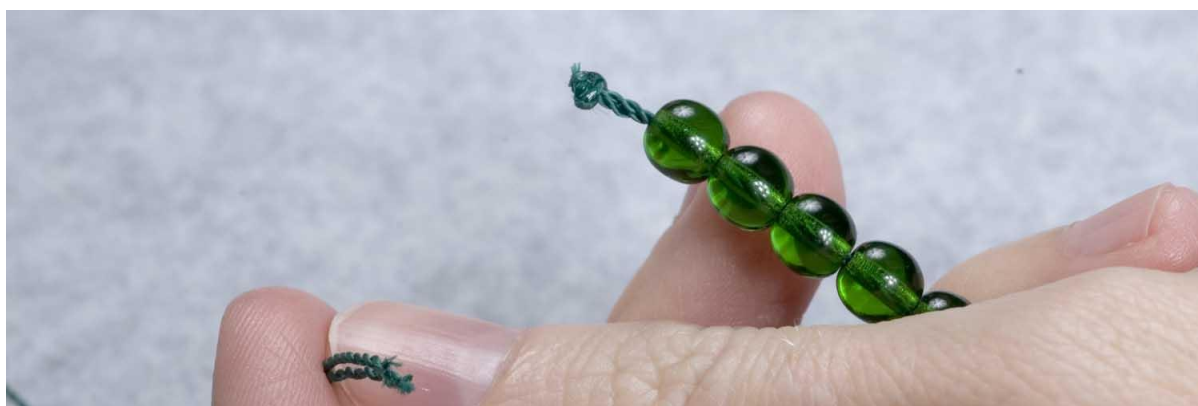
22. Temporarily pull the slack back through the tail to move the tail beads away from the knot a bit. Use a tiny amount of superglue to glue the knot permanently. *Don't get superglue on your beads or ornaments or even your fingers (which can get glued together or can then get glue onto the beads).*



***Proceed to the next steps before the glue hardens***

## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

23. Cut off the extra cored leaving only about 1-2 mm of extra cord.





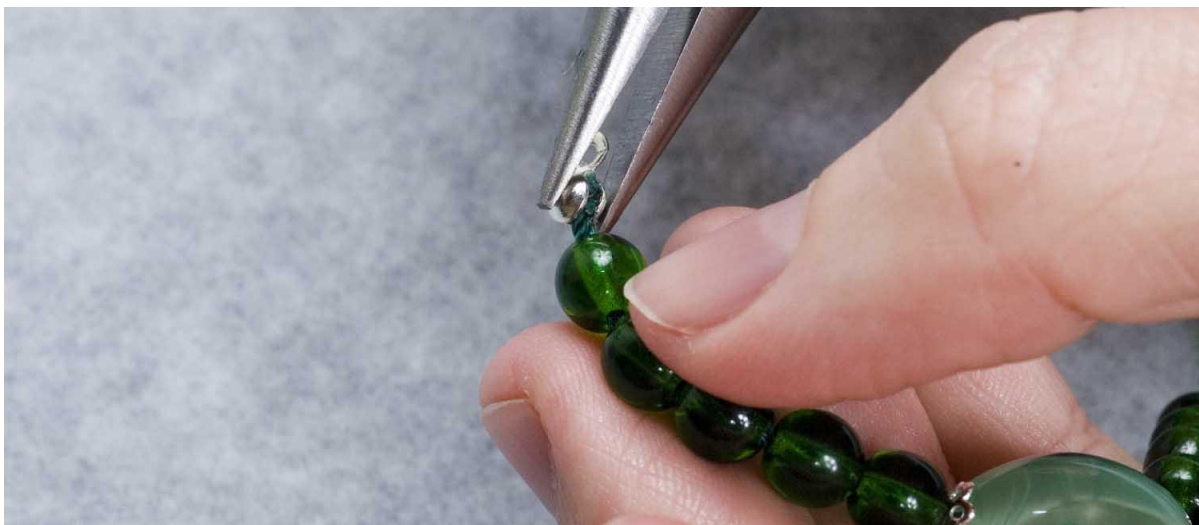
## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

24. Preferably while the glue has not yet completely hardened, clamp the small metal “bead tip” over the knot, with your fingers or if necessary VERY GENTLY with a pair of needle-nosed pliers. The bead tip provides a small closed ring onto which a tassel can be attached with a jump ring.





## *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*

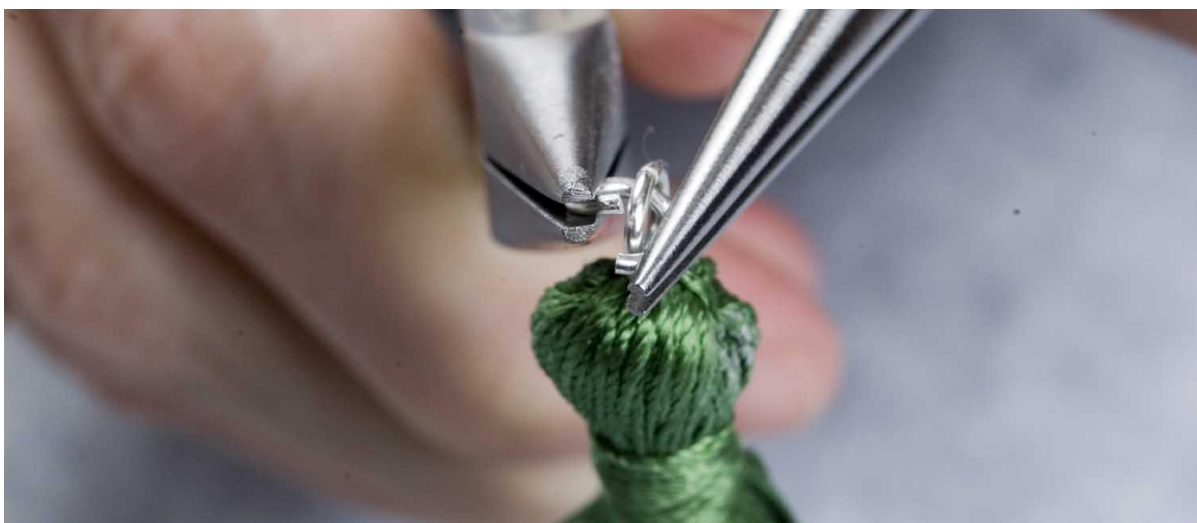
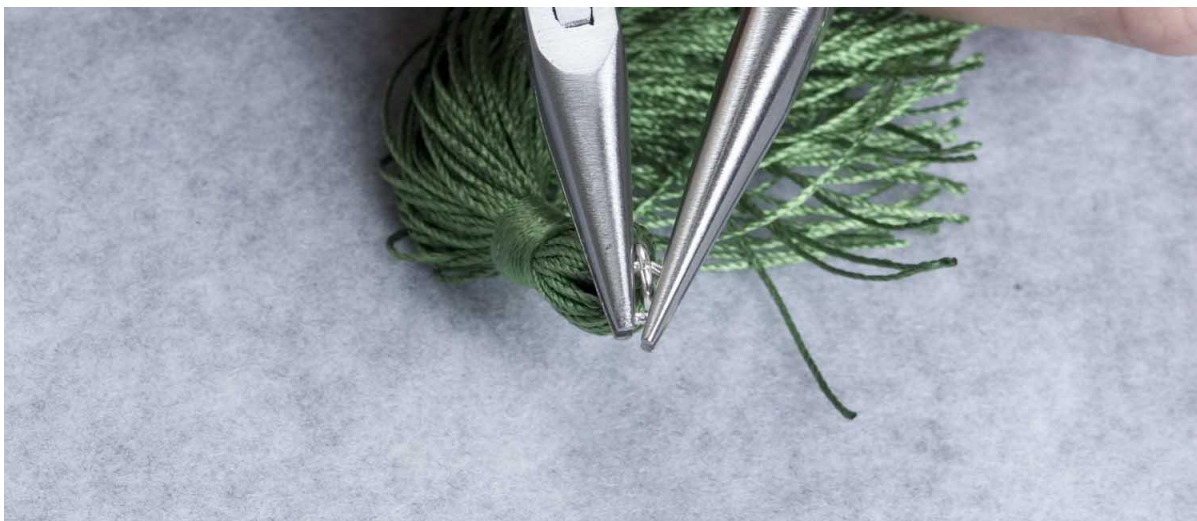


## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

25. If your kit has a tassel with a jump ring already installed, open that jump ring (twisting the ends of the ring sideways away from each other, NOT by pulling the ring diameter larger. You will probably need two needle nosed pliers to do this. Be gentle, don't score the metal.



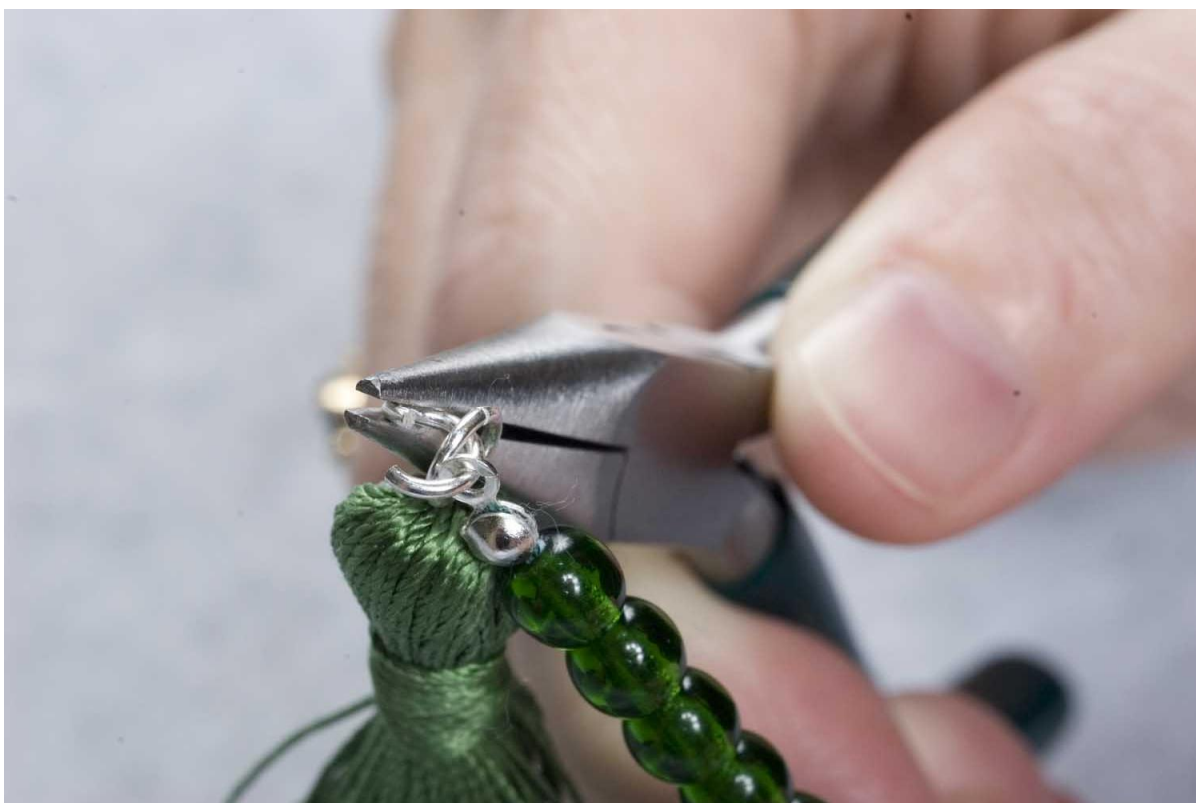
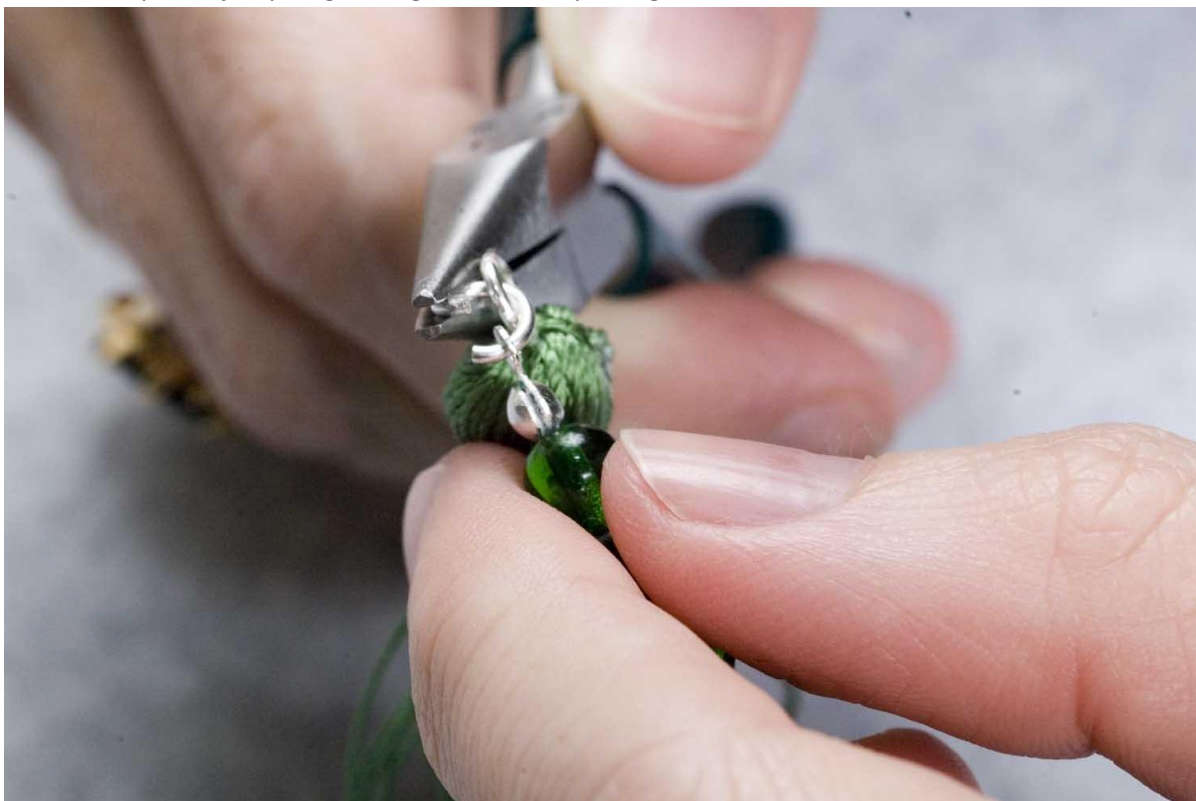
## *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*





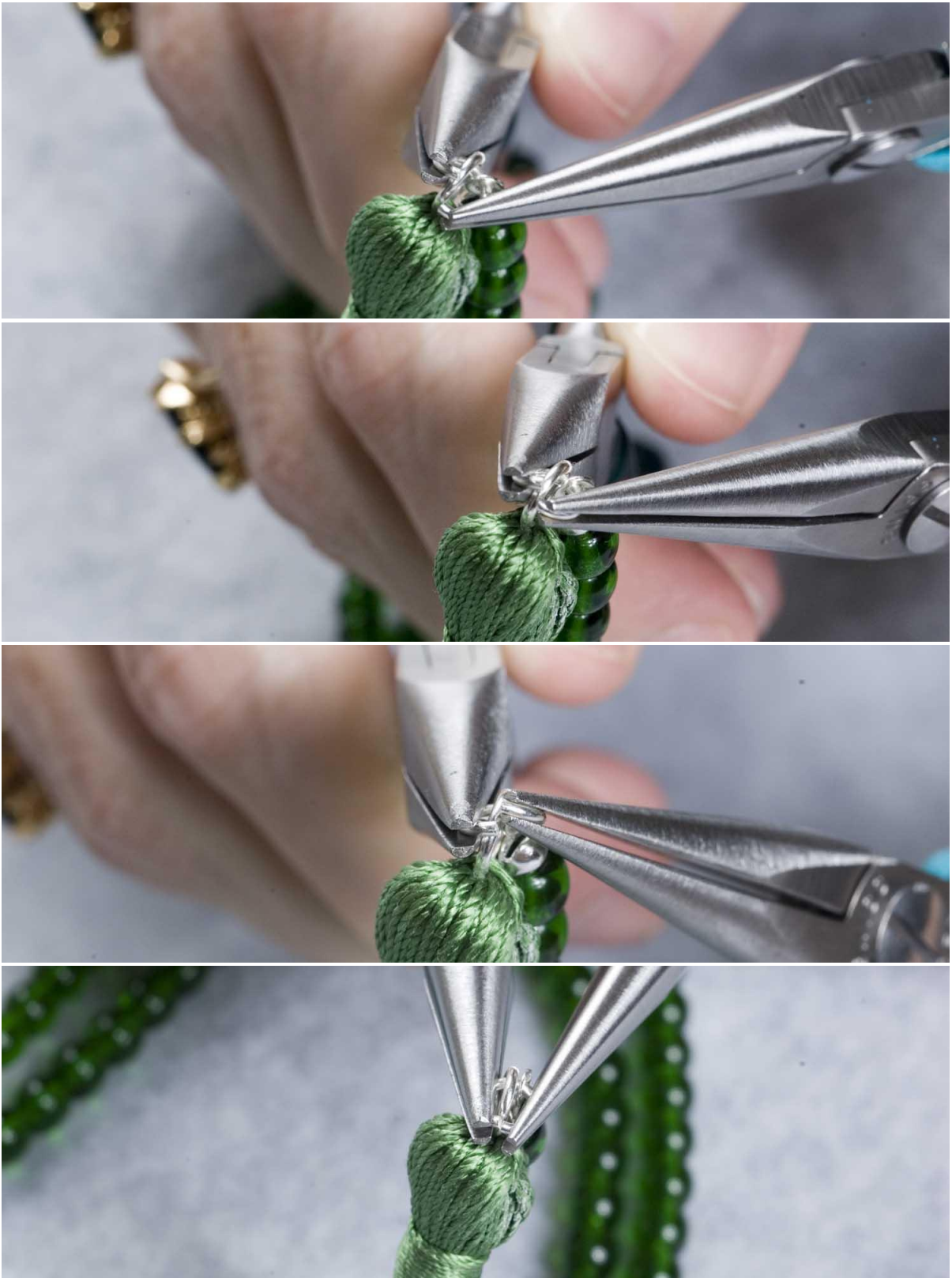
## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

26. Insert the opened jump ring through the bead tip's ring



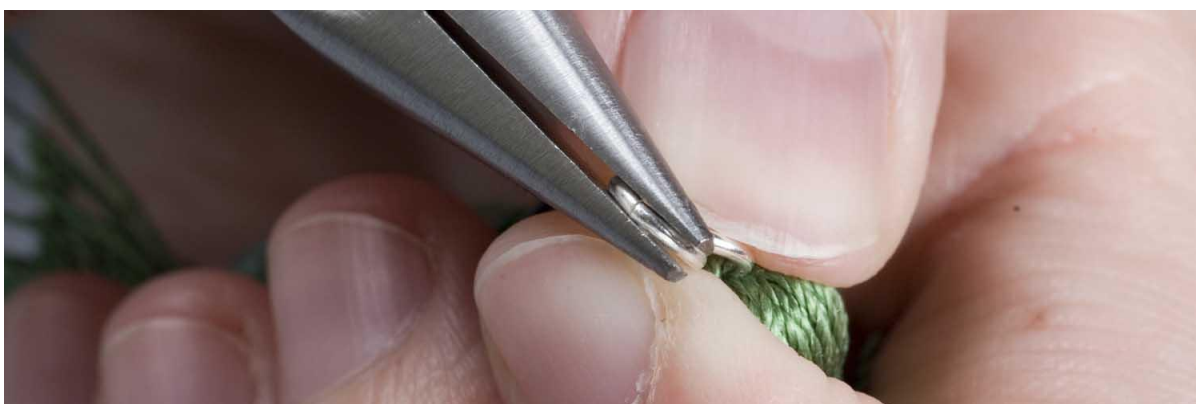
## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

27. Close the jump ring, making sure that the jump ring ends meet as exactly as possible. Overshoot a tiny bit and then come back to closed.



## ***How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads***

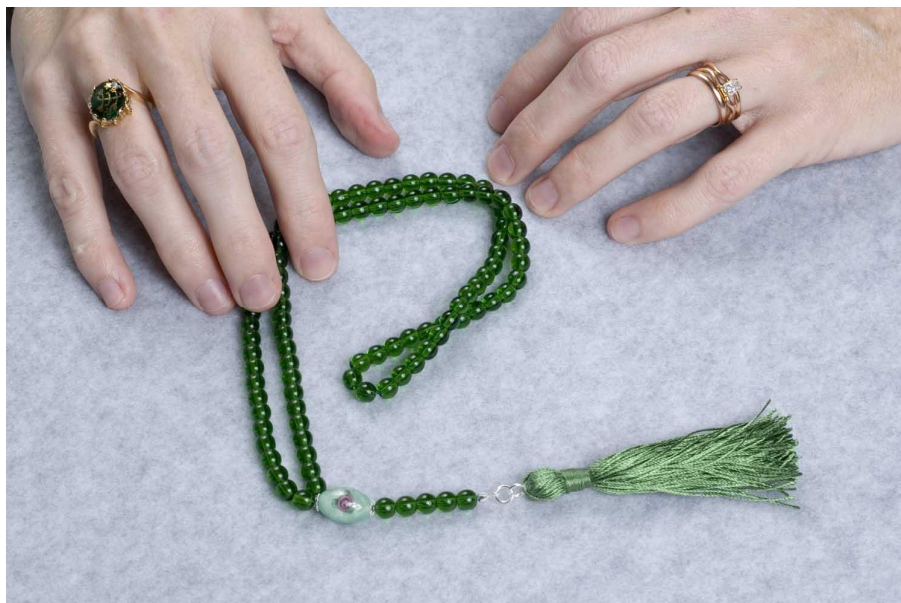
28. Make the alignment of the ends of the jump ring “perfectly match” by using one pair of needle-nose pliers to gently squeeze across the gap.





## *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*

29. You have finished!



# *How To Make Baha'i Prayer Beads*

## About Tassels

If you are not using one of our kits with tassels, and wish to try making your own tassel, we recommend using a high-quality *silk* thread, because it makes a softer tassel than nylon. Use a color that matches or complements your beads and the nylon cord. Different threads fray or unravel differently. Expect that your tassel will unravel over time. Eventually it may completely unravel. It is often even more soft and wonderful when that has happened, so don't worry.

Here is a link to one source of silk thread that could make nice tassels:

<http://www.store.jewelsinfiber.com/silktc.html>

You can find many articles and videos about making tassels online, search for "How to make a tassel".

## Using Your Baha'i Prayer Beads

Members of the Baha'i Faith recite the Greatest Name of God, "Allah-u-Abha", 95 times each day. This is a teaching that was given to us by Baha'u'llah in the Most Holy Book, the Kitab-i-Aqdas. To assist in this practice, many Baha'is use prayer beads to keep count.

*"It hath been ordained that every believer in God, the Lord of Judgement, shall, each day, having washed his hands and then his face, seat himself and, turning unto God, repeat "Alláh-u-Abhá" ninety-five times. Such was the decree of the Maker of the Heavens when, with majesty and power, He established Himself upon the thrones of His Names."*

*– Baha'u'llah, Kitab-i-Aqdas, Paragraph 18*

You can find out more about the Baha'i Faith at [www.bahai.org](http://www.bahai.org).

## Copyright Notice

These instructions are © Baha'i Prayer Beads / Applied Talent LLC.

You are hereby granted permission to duplicate this document for free, non-commercial uses, such as but not limited to:

- For use when making your own Baha'i Prayer Beads
- To give someone as a gift
- For use in a craft group, club, family project, or junior youth group
- Providing copies in a craft store, for just the cost of duplicating it
- To post it unchanged on any web site or forum

If you wish to use these materials in a modified form or for commercial purposes, please contact us for permission.

Rev 11/02/2010