

Viking Knitting Tutorial

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Setup Without Wire Guides

Choose the number of loops per row. Find a spare credit or gift card (or similar shaped and sized object). Choose a scrap piece of wire (I prefer to use 26 gauge steel wire since it is thin and strong enough as a base) and wrap it around the card the number of times corresponding to the number of loops for your chain. Leave a couple of inches at each end of the wire at the top of the card and cut the end of the wire.

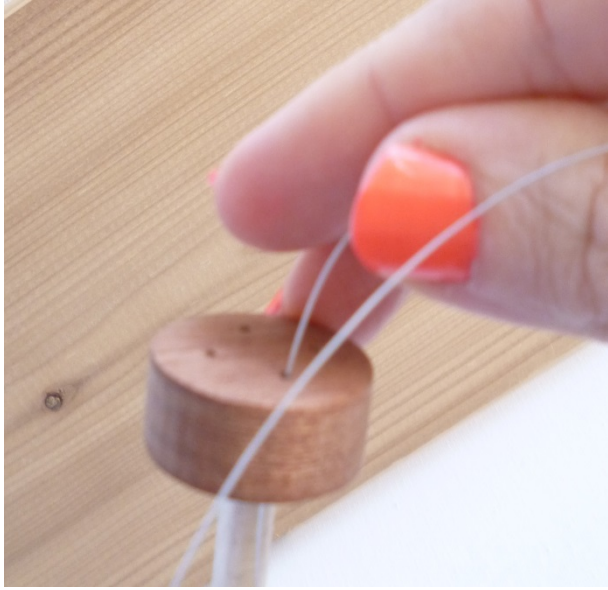
Wrap the 2 ends of the wire together at the top of the card and remove the wrapped bundle of wires from the card. Place the bundle of wires on top of your dowel, with the wrapped end of wires on top. Separate out the loops evenly around the dowel. Take a piece of elastic and wrap it around the dowel above the separated wires. You are now ready for the first row.

Using Wire Guides

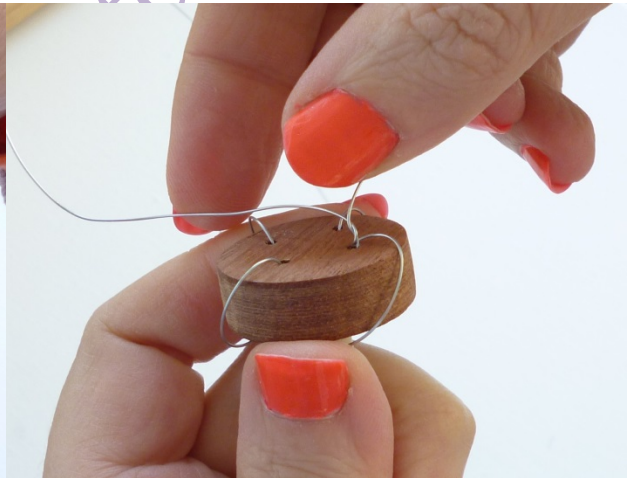
Choose the number of loops per row and dowel size, and pick out the corresponding wooden wire guide. Place the wire guide securely on the top of the dowel so that the dowel fits inside the hole on the guide. Cut a scrap piece of wire long enough to wrap through each of the holes in the guide plus additional for each loop and securing at the top. I prefer to use 26 gauge steel wire since it is thin and strong enough as a base.



Thread the scrap wire from the top of the wire guide through the first hole, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch tail at the top. Press the tail down at the top, hold down while threading from the top through the second hole (to the right of the first hole) in the wire guide. Pull through, leaving a bit of space at the bottom of the loop that is formed. Repeat for all the holes in the wire guide.



When the circle is completed, wrap the remaining wire around the top tail, cut off any extra and push down. You are now ready for the first row.



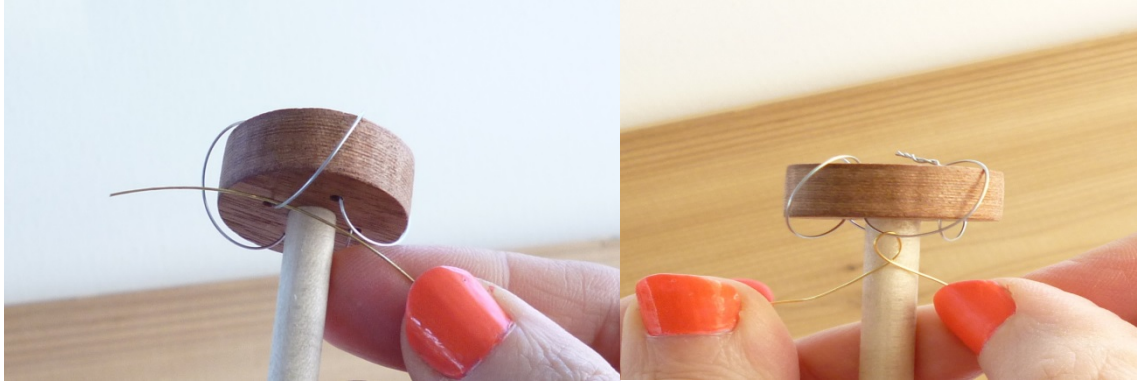


First Row

Cut a 4'-5' length of wire that you will be using for the chain. For someone just starting out, I recommend using 26 gauge wire made from copper or jeweler's bronze. Thread this wire through the bottom of the first loop made from the scrap wire from right to left. Pull through until about a 1 to 1 ½ inch tail is left.

(When pulling through, be careful not to have the wire tangle, causing small loops and kinks in the wire. If any loops or kinks in the wire are made, then it will be difficult (if not impossible) to pull the wire through the next loop, as well as leaving an uneven result in the chain. Start out very slowly when first learning. After a while, you will become faster and develop your own techniques to keep wire straight while pulling through the loops.)

Create a loop by holding the tail wire down onto the dowel while pulling the other end of the wire over the tail from left to right.



Holding this loop down onto the dowel, insert the end of the wire through the bottom of the next loop (to the right of the first loop) of scrap wire from right to left. Pull through and place the pulled wire over the end of the bridging wire from left to right. The second loop is made. Continue doing this around the dowel moving from left to right until the first loop is reached.



Second and Third Row

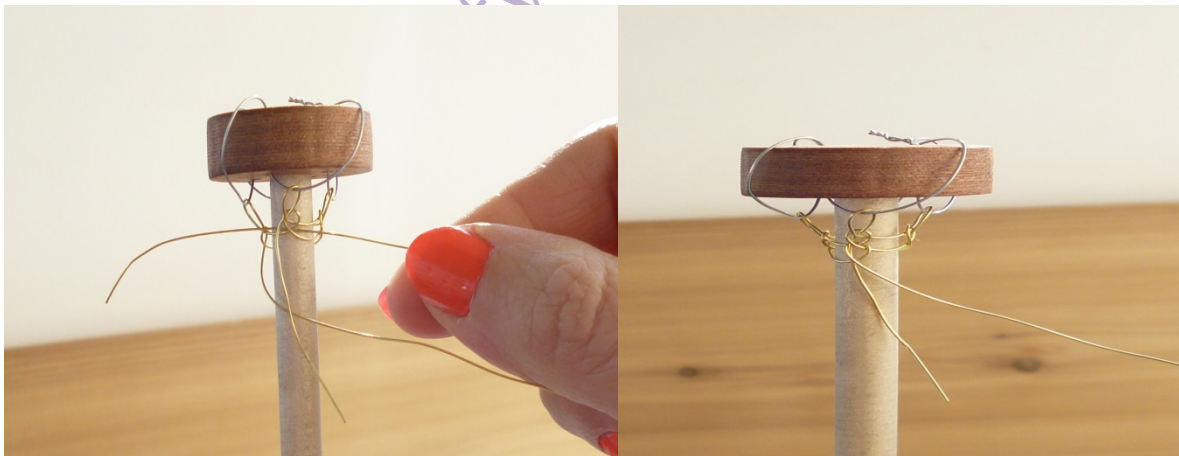
To begin the second row, insert the wire behind the first true loop made from right to left. Pull through, then down towards the right, forming a new loop below the first loop. This is the beginning of the second row. Repeat this around the dowel until the first loop is reached again.



Pull the wire under the hanging tail of wire under the first loop of the row. Insert the wire behind the first loop of the second row from right to left and pull through. Form the first loop of the third row by pulling it over the scrap wire and bridge loop from left to right.

By doing this, you will be wrapping the beginning wire tail into the chain to secure and hide it. I have found that also forming the very end of the wire into a loop will prevent it from working its way out of the chain, keeping the end result smooth to the touch.

Work your way around by inserting the wire from right to left behind the loop made in the previous row.



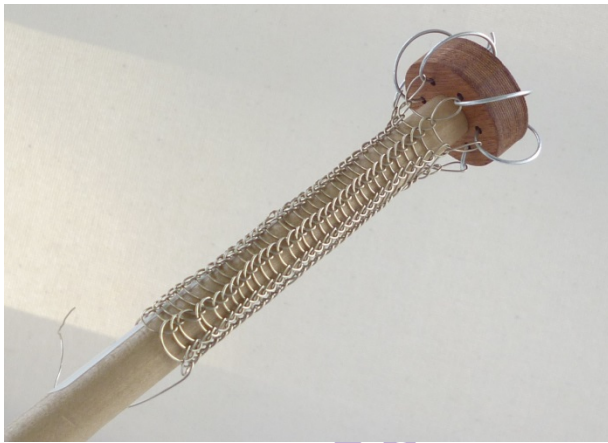
Adding More Wire

When it becomes difficult to pull through due to not enough wire to work with, but the piece needs to be longer, you will need to add more wire. I use the following process to add wire. Cut a new length of wire. Insert the new wire behind the next working loop and pull through, leaving a 1" to 1 ½" tail of

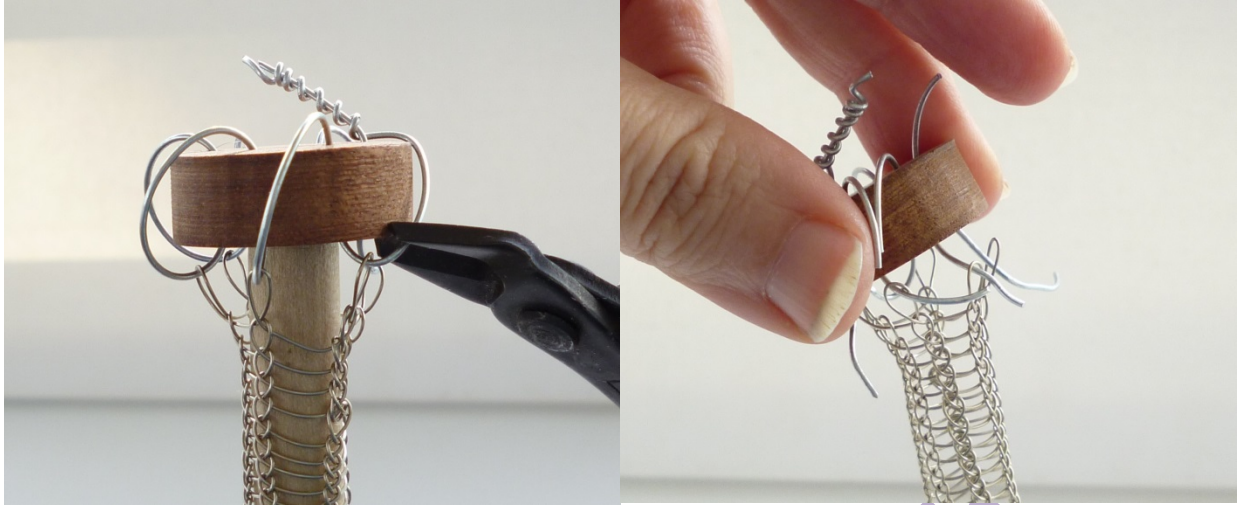
new wire. Wrap this tail and the leftover previous working wire together beneath the new loop just formed and press against the dowel. This forms the bridge between the loops as well as binding the two wires together. Keep working your way around the dowel with the new wire. Use the same technique of binding the new tail of joined wire as described earlier when beginning the chain.

Completing

When finished with the weaving, leave the tail of unused wire at the end, cutting the length to about 1-2 inches. Pull both the wire guide and the woven chain off the dowel together. This usually involves a bit of effort, depending on how tightly the chain was woven. Twisting the chain around the dowel while directing it up will help complete this process. Once the chain and wire guide are off the dowel, make loops out of the wire tail and tuck into the opening at the end.

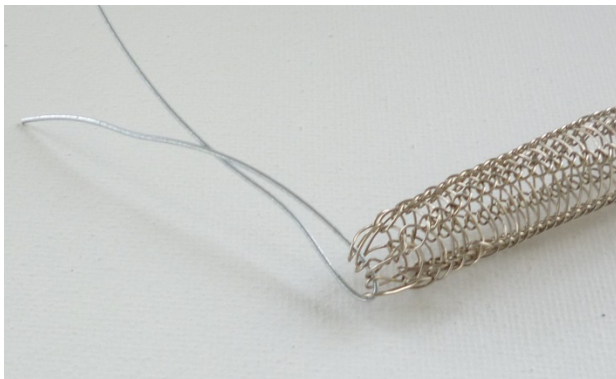
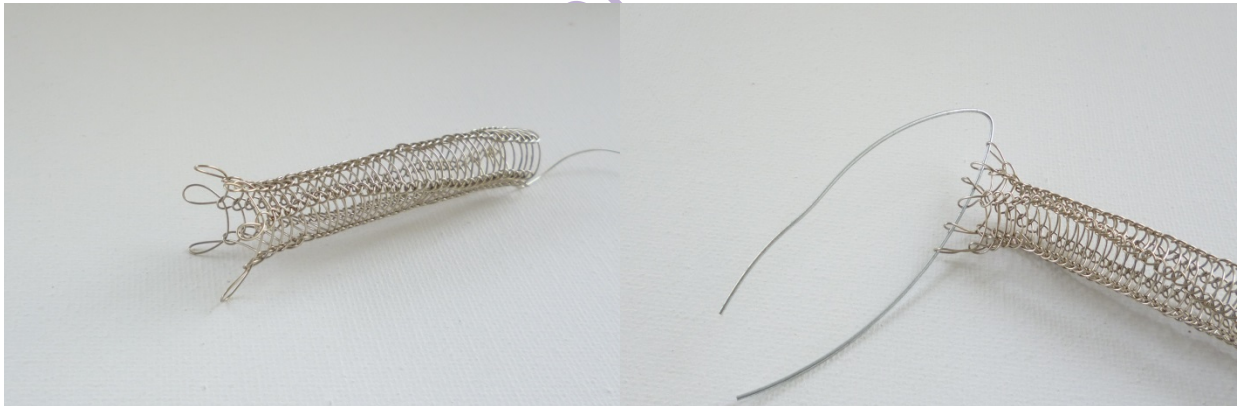


Cut the scrap wire pieces near the loops and remove the chain from the wire guide.

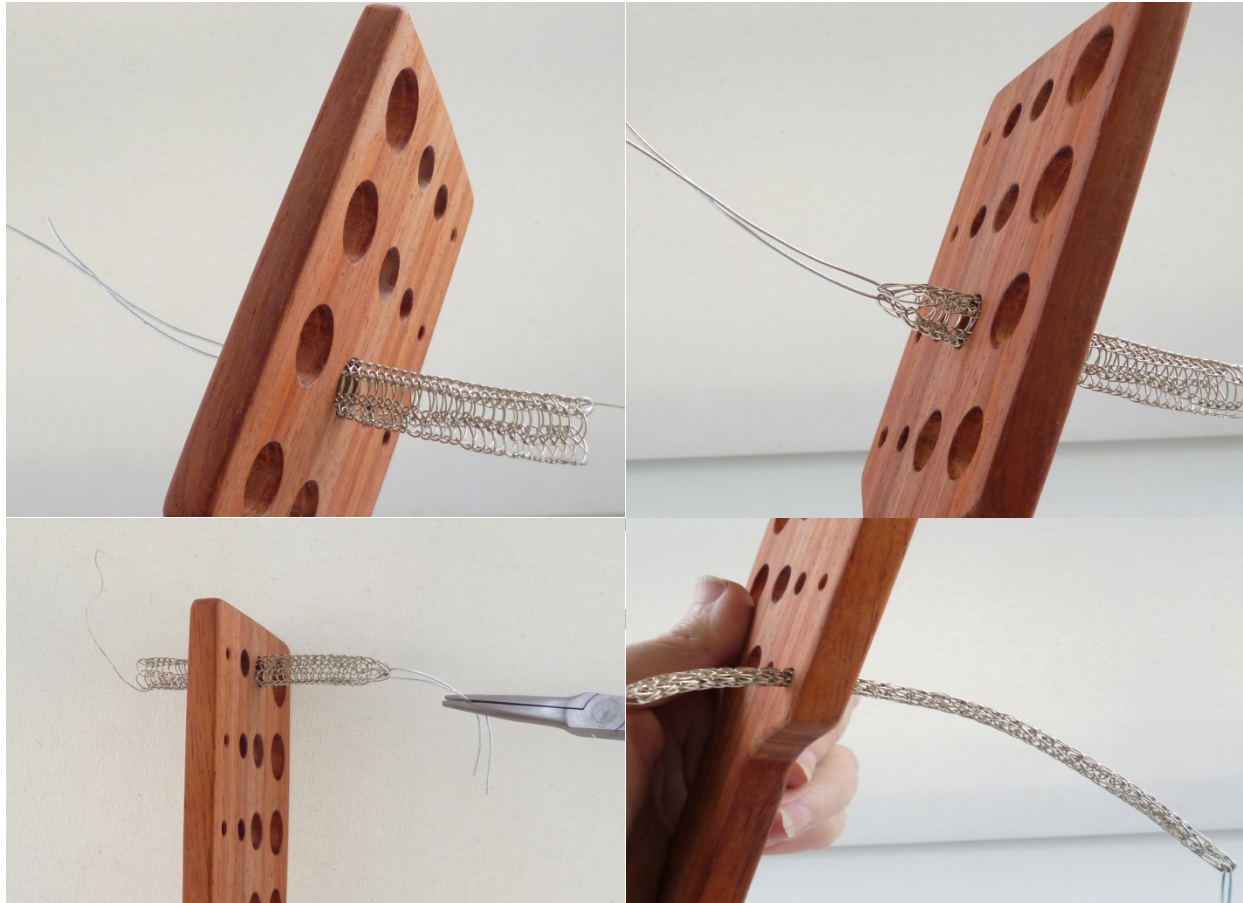


Using Drawplate

Take the loops at the beginning of your chain and bend them so they form a straight line through the loops. Cut a 6 inch piece of strong scrap wire (I prefer 20-22 gauge stainless steel wire) and bend it in half. Thread this scrap wire through the loops at the beginning of your chain. Push the loops together at the bend of the pulling wire. Your chain is now ready for drawing through the drawplate.



Find the largest hole that will give a little bit of resistance for the size of your chain and pull through the drawplate. Repeat drawing through until there is no more resistance, about 3 times usually. Go to the next smaller hole and draw through at least 3 times until there is no more resistance. Repeat this process with successively smaller holes until the desired chain size and flexibility is achieved.



Some notes on this process. I use fingerless gloves (leather weightlifting gloves) to ease the pressure of the wire on my hands while keeping my fingertips free for detail work. The wire chain will extend in length by about 75%-100%, depending on the size of the wire, number of loops used, type of wire used, and if using double knitting instead of single knitting construction. To pull through the smaller holes, wrap pliers around the scrap wire to enable pulling. The chain will soften and become flexible using this process, but only to a certain point. If the chain is pulled through too small of a hole, it can become rigid again because of the density of wire within the chain. It takes some practice and experimentation to find what works for you. That is what makes this process fun and each piece individual.





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Thank you,

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