

Instructions For Making Gourd Seed Necklaces

By *Jim Story*

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STEP 1 Remove all chaff from gourd seeds by winnowing or whatever method you use for this procedure.

STEP 2 Wash seeds in a hot, soap-sudsy solution of water, then rinse.

STEP 3 Immediately after step 2, soak seeds in a strong solution of household bleach (Clorox), 1/3 bleach and 2/3 water for 8-12 hours, then rinse thoroughly.

STEP 4 After bleaching, dry seeds and wait a week or longer before coloring.

STEP 5 Use a fabric dye (Rit or Tintex) to color seeds. Mix dye in hot water before immersing seeds. Leave seeds in dye solution for 8-12 hours then rinse in cold water.

STEP 6 String seeds while wet using a medium-sized sewing needle and six pound test nylon fishing line. It is easy to push a needle through wet seeds. Job's tears make excellent spacers for gourd seed necklaces because of their beauty and natural hole, no hole drilling is necessary. I usually string seeds in units of ten then add spacer(s). I've used Chins Berry tree seeds, acorn cups, and other kinds of natural materials as spacers. Necklaces may be made without using spacers.

STEP 7 I make necklaces long enough to fit over a head so fasteners are not needed. Eighteen inches is a popular length.

STEP 8 Do not tie necklace ends together until seeds are dry. Reason: Seeds shrink during the drying process. After seeds are dry, join ends of nylon fishing (monofilament) line together by first tying two over and under loops then cinch tightly. Complete the tie with two tight square knots.

STEP 9 What follows is the sandwich method of making a gourd seed necklace: Glue similar size gourd seeds together with a nylon (monofilament) line in the middle. Tacky glue works well for this procedure. Sand seeds to improve fit and gluing surfaces.

NECKLACE TIPS

- Use small mesh nylon bags to wash, bleach and dye gourd seeds. Agitate (stir) seeds several times during the bleaching and drying procedures.
- Dyed, wet gourd seeds can be stored in plastic bags under refrigeration for several months.
- Use dry seeds for the sandwich method.