

African Sunset Cuff



Ever yearn to go on safari? With their exotic stripes and spots, these beads feature patterns that mimic those of the cheetah, giraffe, and zebra. Two rows of beading elastic are threaded through the tapered, cylindrical-shaped beads, making the cuff easy to slip on and off.

What You Need

12 oval Merino beads, 1.3 to 1.5 grams of wool per bead, (4 white, 8 black)*

24 black round beads, 6mm

Black beading elastic

2 grams blended fuchsia and red Merino wool (for embellishing)

1 gram black Merino wool (for embellishing)

* The four white beads and four of the eight black beads must be only partially felted to allow for needle-felted embellishment. Finished oval bead size is 1/2" x 2" to 2 1/2" in the middle.

Make It

FELT PATTERNS ON THE BEADS

1 Set the four finished black oval beads aside. Needle felt simple patterns such as polka dots, stripes, and zigzags onto the remaining felt beads. Be sure to really work the design into the bead with the felting needle so it will stay in place when wet felting.

2 Continue by wet felting the beads until the needle-felted pattern is level with the base bead. You'll quickly notice why it's so important to thoroughly needle felt the pattern into the oval bead. The fibers will pull a little, dulling some of your crisp lines. If you notice that the pattern is blurring badly, stop felting and let the beads dry. Then you can go back and needle felt again. Rinse the beads in cool water, and leave them to dry.

STRING IT TOGETHER

3 String one round black bead onto the beading elastic. Thread a large needle with beading elastic. Find the center of one of the oval beads and then move outward approximately 1/4 inch. Put the needle through the center (widthwise) of the bead. These measurements are merely a guide. Depending on your spacer beads, you may want to space your two strands of elastic closer or farther apart. I found that when I spaced my elastic strands farther apart, the elastic showed in between the beads due to their tapered shape.

4 Continue this pattern using the remainder of the felt beads, resulting in one-half of the cuff being strung. Leave a 3-inch tail of elastic, and trim.

5 Work the second half of the cuff exactly as the first half, except this time string the elastic through the left side of center (see figure 1).

6 Now's the time to check the size and length of the cuff to your wrist. Adjustments in length can be made by either adding or subtracting black spacer or felt beads. Please note that it's normal for the beads not to be perfectly aligned due to the wonderful handmade nature of the piece.

7 Tie the two corresponding ends of elastic in a snug knot, and trim the ends.

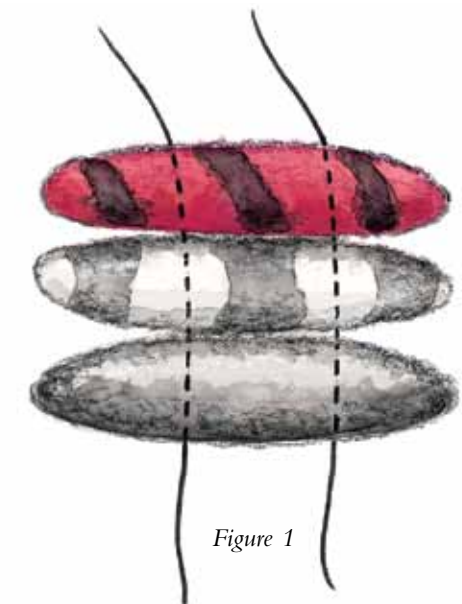


Figure 1