

Mastering the Bead Spinner

The bead spinner is an essential tool for loading beads on warp cords when making kumihimo beaded braids. A bead spinner is especially important for the long bead strands used for making continuous beaded braids.



Choosing a Bead Spinner

1 Size - The smaller the bowl the fewer beads necessary to make it work effectively. One tube of beads usually is not be enough for a large spinner to work well. Hardwood bowls are smooth and pretty but I don't think they are worth the price. The size of the mouth of the bowl does not seem to affect performance. I don't like a tall center rod as it gets in way when you are emptying the bowl.

2 Manual vs. Battery Operated - I prefer a manual spinner as it gives me more control. Most other spinners have a set speed, which may be too slow, or too fast. The age of the batteries can also affect changes in speed. Many of these spinners are loud or make an irritating noise.

4 Brand - Bead spinners are easy to find. The best values for under \$20 are the Beadalon Spin-N-Bead™ Junior and the Beadsmith Bead Spinner Mini.

Needles are as Important as the Spinner

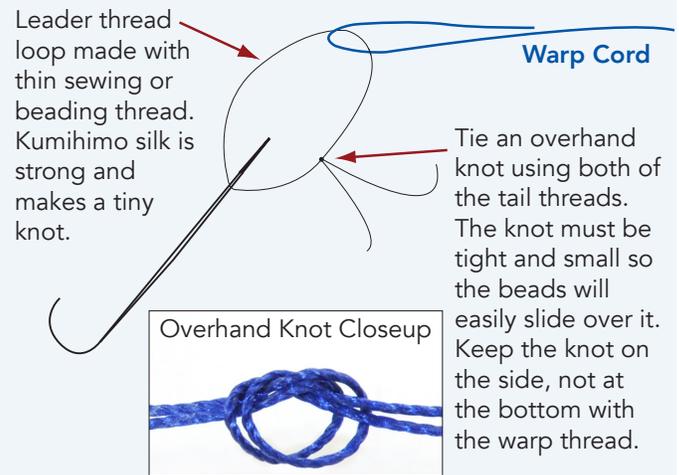
Different types and sizes of spinner needles have their own benefits and disadvantages. There is not one right needle for all purposes.

Long Needles - Use with large seed beads, 8° & 6°. I like the Beadsmith long Spin & String needles, \$9.50 for a pack of 5. Use with a leader thread.

Big Eye Needles - Use with 15°, 11°, & small beads. The best are the Beadalon Curved Big Eye spinner needles, \$3.75 for two needles. When using CLon or SLon Bead Cord or Tex 135 use a leader thread. For Micro cord, a leader is not always necessary.

Twisted Needle - Use with beads too small for other needles. This needle not good for heavy beads. Some come with the J-Hook at the end, or you can make a hook can by shaping a curve at the end with your fingers. These needles are flimsy and less stable than the other needles.

How to Make a Leader Thread



How to Use the Bead Spinner

1 Fill the spinner bowl about 1/3 - 1/2 full of beads.

2 Thread the end of the warp cord through the eye of the needle or the leader thread.

3 Hold the needle with your dominant hand and use your non-dominant hand to twist the center rod to make the bowl spin. You will need to spin fast enough so that centrifugal force will cause the beads to move from the bottom of the bowl up the sides. Some beads will probably fly out of the bowl but you can spin inside of a tray or on a bead mat to keep them from flying too far.

4 Hold the needle at an angle, almost horizontal with the tip facing the outside of the bowl, just under the surface of the beads. Make sure it is not touching the spinner. Hold the needle firmly so it does not turn or twist while spinning.

5 Once the needle is full of beads, or no more beads will go on, turn the tip of the needle upward to keep the beads from sliding off. Bring the needle out of the bowl while turning the needle so the beads can slide down and onto the warp cord. It is helpful to keep some beads on the doubled section of warp cord to keep the warp cord from slipping out of the leader thread.

HELPFUL TIP: Keep the majority of the warp cord on top of your work surface while spinning. If it is hanging lower than the spinner as the beads spin, gravity may pull the warp out of the needle or leader. The beads will go all over the floor.

Bead spinners and bead spinner needles available at www.KumihimoResource.com