

Bead Drop Icicles for the Tree

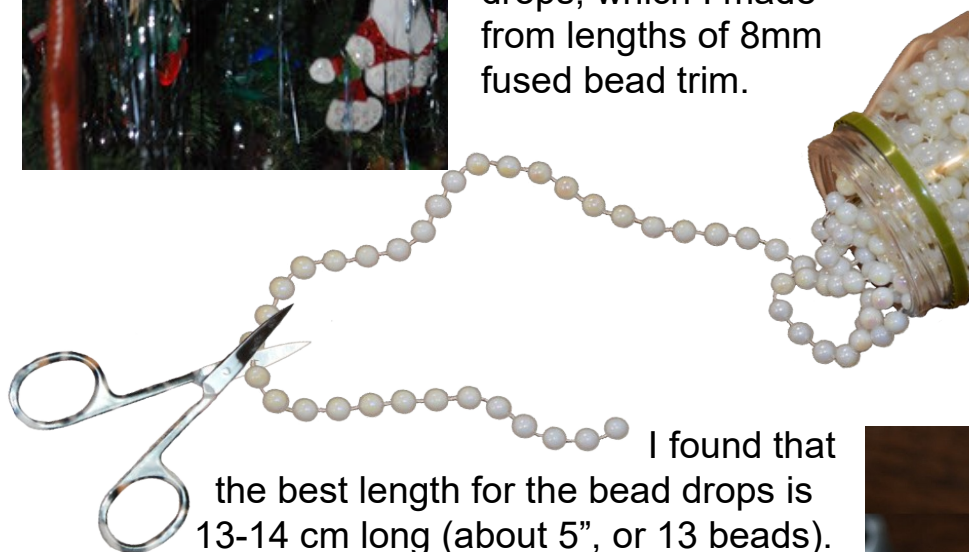
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I love the finished look that tinsel icicles give a Christmas tree – so frosty and festive! It just isn't the same without them. Unfortunately, these icicles are dangerous for cats, and I haven't been able to use them since Scampers joined the household.

I needed a substitute, and decided on these beaded drops, which I made from lengths of 8mm fused bead trim.



I found that the best length for the bead drops is 13-14 cm long (about 5", or 13 beads). I cut the trim into pieces, then added a wire loop to one end, to make an eyelet for hanging the bead drop on the tree.

To attach the wire eye, I drilled a hole in the end bead of each strip, using a very fine drill bit in my rotary tool. Holding the bead trim steady for drilling can be a bit challenging, so you may find it easier to clamp the bead in a wooden clothespin while you drill.



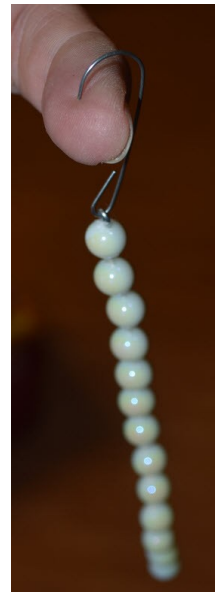
Next, I used my round-nosed pliers to make a wire loop from 18-gauge craft wire, and cut the “tail” to about 1/4” long.



I added a dot of glue to the tail of the eyelet, and with the bead still clamped in the clothespin, I used a flat pliers to push the tail end of the wire into the drilled hole.



Finally, I inserted a hook into the eyelet for hanging the bead drop on the tree.



Although I still really like the look of tinsel icicles, these bead drops make a good pet-safe substitute, and they can be reused for years.

The only drawback is that you need quite a lot of them: there are well over 200 on this tree. (Needless to say, I did not add them all at one sitting!)

Once you get going, they are a fairly fast make: about 2 minutes each, so I'll likely be making more to add to our trees this year.

