

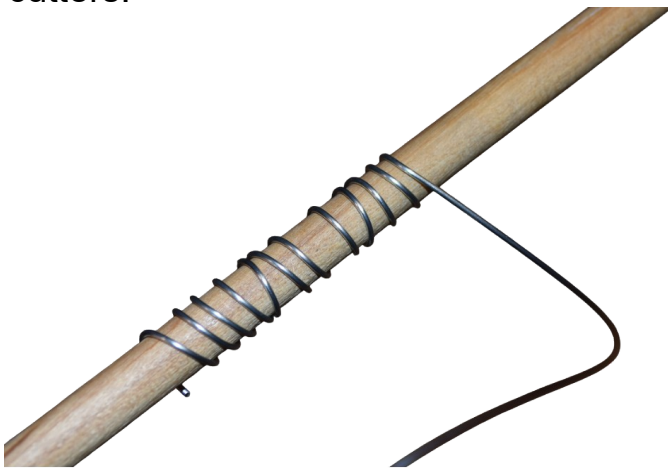
Making Large Jump Rings

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I use quite a few jump rings in my crafting, and though you can buy the rings at pretty much any craft store, it's not always easy to find larger sizes. When I'm making ornaments, I use a 3/8" diameter size that I make myself.

The process is straightforward. You will need sturdy wire (I am using 18-gauge aluminum craft wire), a dowel the diameter you require, and a pair of end-cutters.

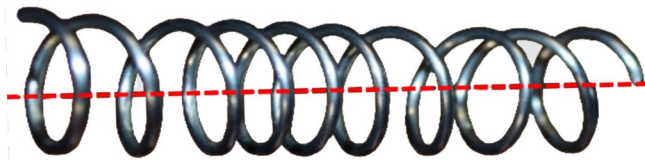


Cut a length of wire about 15" long or so (you can go longer or shorter, depending on how many rings you need) and simply wrap the wire around the dowel. Wrap snugly enough to form neat circles, but not so tightly that you can't slide the coil along. Keep wrapping until all of the wire has been coiled.

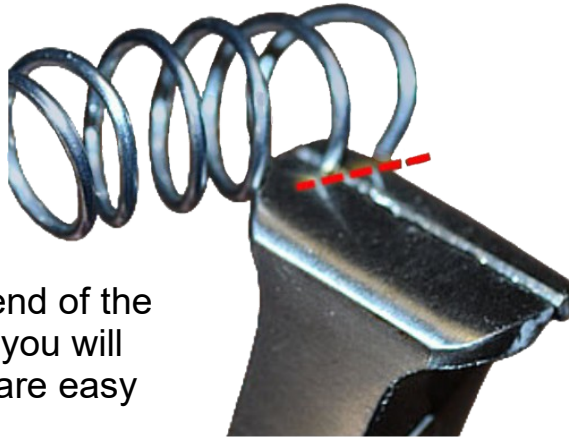
Once you've wrapped all of the wire, slide the coil off the dowel stick. You may need to rotate it to get it to slide off.



Spread the coil out slightly so that the cutters can snip one ring at a time. You want to cut the rings apart along a centre line so that each ring makes a complete circle.



To make each cut, rest the end of the coil against the blades of the cutter, lining up the wire so you can cut the next loop even with the end of the previous loop. This way, you will make uniform rings that are easy to close up.



The jump rings will be open when you cut them from the coil but will easily close up with pliers.

The 18-gauge wire is stiff enough to hold its shape but not so stiff that you can't bend it. It's perfect for this purpose.

This wire is something I picked up at the hardware store. You can purchase gold-tone, copper-tone, and coloured wires at a

craft store, but some of those wires are quite soft and not suitable for making jump rings. Make sure that the wire you've chosen will hold the looped shape and that it will stay closed when in use.

Jump rings are relatively inexpensive, and I probably wouldn't make small ones. But it's nice to be able to make the larger sizes myself, so I can always have a supply on hand for early-morning crafting sessions.