



Bubble Wrap Necklace

Designed by Steven James

Steven is an enthusiastic artist and teacher who uses a variety of recycled materials in his work. On his choice to use bubble wrap for this project, he comments: "I've always been fascinated with the idea of manipulating materials and the science behind creativity. The process of fusing the bubble wrap takes it from one material to something incredibly different, while just slightly retaining some of its original form." This necklace makes the most of bubble wrap's close resemblance to mother-of-pearl. By simply cutting circles of bubble wrap one achieves an elegant yet sophisticated design.

The technique of heat fusing layers of plastic used in this project is versatile and can be used with a variety of plastic materials (including various colors of bubble wrap and plastic shopping bags) to create projects. Creative designs ranging from bracelets to earrings are possible using pieces of fused plastic.

Supplies

- Bubble wrap (*small bubble type; five to seven strips, approximately 8–9 inches long and 2 inches wide*)
- Scissors
- Iron
- Parchment paper
- Circle template
- Pen
- Small hole punch
- Chain nose pliers
- Jump rings
- Small piece of chain (*about 3 inches long*)
- Chain segments for necklace
- Pearls
- 28-gauge wire for each wire-wrapped pearl segment
- Clasp





1. Use the scissors to cut the strips of bubble wrap and release the trapped air by snipping individual bubbles, or leave bubbles intact. Turn on the iron to the wool/no steam setting. Layer two sheets of bubble wrap.
2. Place the two pieces of wrap inside a piece of parchment paper and fold to close.

3. Iron the entire surface, front and back, for approximately 30 seconds.
4. Allow to cool, then repeat the process, layering additional pieces of bubble wrap on top of one another. Continue until you reached the desired thickness, usually 5–7 pieces.

5. Allow the plastic to cool before cutting the circles. Use a circle template with a pen to mark small circles of various sizes onto the plastic. Make about 10–15 in a range of sizes. These will be attached in a cluster to form the focal design of the necklace.
6. Cut out each circle with sharp pointed scissors.
7. Punch a small hole at the top of each circle.

8. Use chain nose pliers to attach some circles along a small piece of chain using jump rings. Punch holes in the bottom of a few of these circles to link smaller circles to them with jump rings for added dimension and fullness. The design will resemble a cluster of grapes with fullness at the top, tapering off with smaller circles at the bottom of the chain. To form the necklace, make wire-wrapped segments using 28-gauge wire and pearls. Before wrapping at the end of each pearl, add a chain segment to each side to form the length of the necklace. When your desired length is achieved, attach a clasp and then attach the bubble cluster to the necklace using chain nose pliers and jump rings.