# loop-d-loop
## wire bezel

*By Angela Bailey*

I used Kaska Firor's technique as inspiration to create a freeform wire bezel back plate, which made the back of this pendant as pretty as the front. I used a 40mm×30mm howlite cabochon, but this design can be adapted to any shaped cabochon or pendant bead.

## tools and supplies

- ☐ 40mm × 30mm cabochon
- ☐ 16-gauge round copper wire, 9-10"
- ☐ 18-gauge round copper wire, 16"
- ☐ 20-gauge round copper wire, 16"
- ☐ 26-gauge round copper wire, 5'
- ☐ Flush cutters
- ☐ Chain-nose pliers
- ☐ Round-nose pliers
- ☐ Bail-making pliers
- ☐ Nylon hammer
- ☐ Ball peen or chasing hammer
- ☐ Bezel pusher
- ☐ 4" steel block or jewelry anvil
- ☐ Painter's tape
- ☐ Measuring tape
- ☐ Steel ruler
- ☐ Fine point permanent marker
- ☐ Liver of sulfur (optional)
- ☐ 0000 steel wool (optional)
- ☐ Tumbler with mixed stainless steel shot (optional)

*RESOURCES: Wire, painter's tape, and 0000 steel wool: Murray Supply, Co, Inc., murraysupplyco.com. Pliers, hammers, bezel pusher, ruler, steel block, liver of sulfur, and jewelry tumbler: Fire Mountain Gems and Beads, firemountaingems.com. Mixed stainless steel shot: Kingsley North, kingsleynorth.com.*
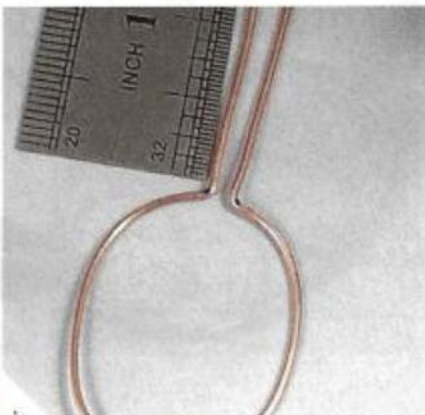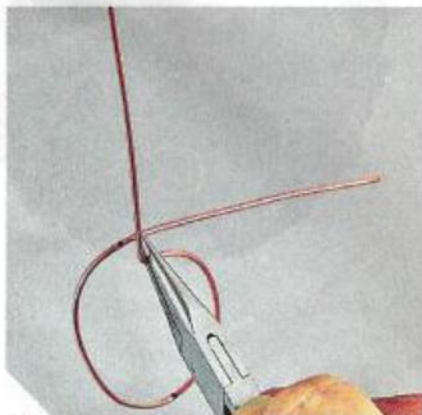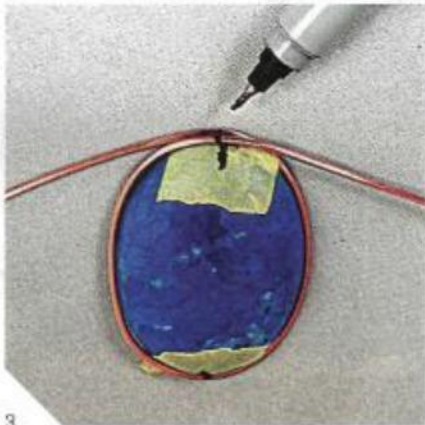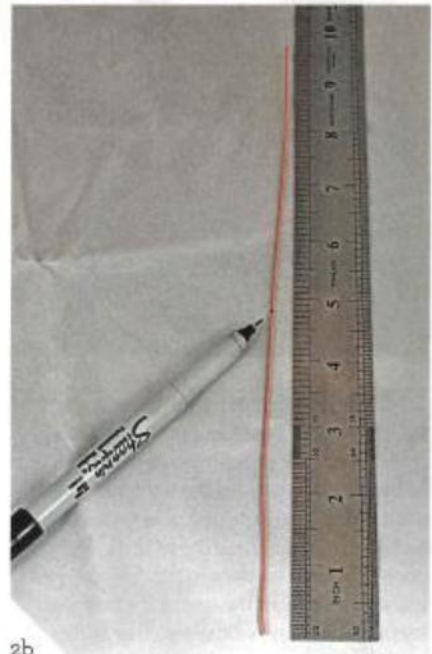


1



2a



2b



3

*1.* Place a small piece of painter's tape on the top and bottom edges of the cabochon. Mark the center top and center bottom with a fine point permanent marker.

*2.* Measure the circumference of the cabochon with the measuring tape. Add 5" to this measurement. Use this number to measure and cut the 16g wire with the flush cutters. Mark the center of the wire. This is your frame wire.
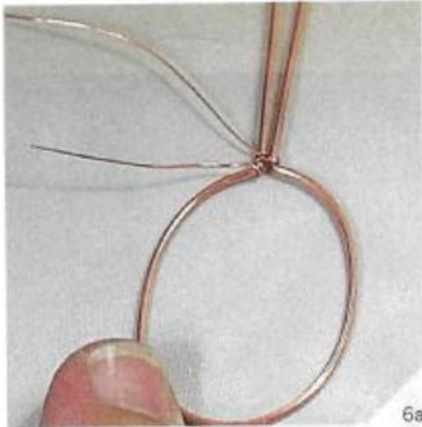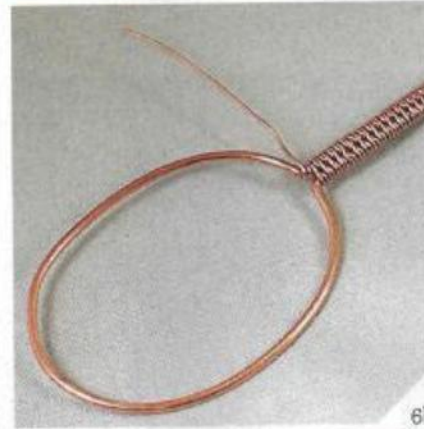
*3.* Align the center mark on the 16g frame wire with the center mark on the lower edge of the cabochon. Wrap the wire around the edges of the cabochon, crossing the wires at the upper edge. Mark where they meet the cabochon's upper edge center mark.

*4.* With the frame wire facing you, place the chain-nose pliers just to the right of the center mark on the right side of the frame. Bend this wire straight up. Repeat on the left side, placing the pliers just to the left of the center mark. These are the bail wires. Straighten the bail wires and trim to 2¼".
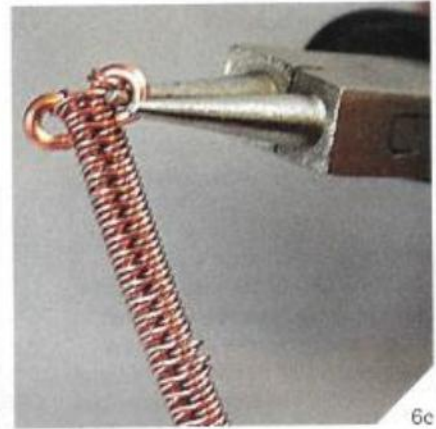
5a



5b

**5.** To help the wire frame to keep its shape, work-harden it by tapping it flat with a nylon hammer on a steel block or anvil. Re-check for fit around the cabochon. There should be a slight gap around the edges.
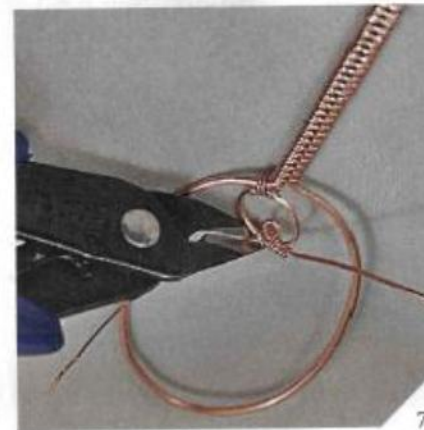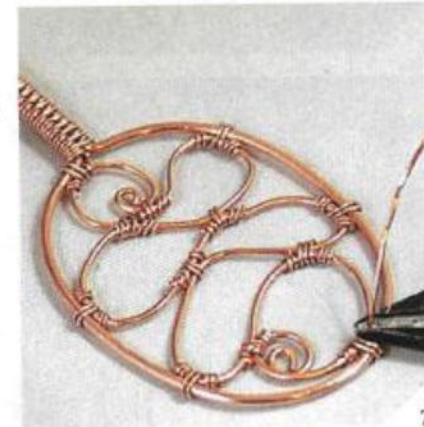


6a



6b



6c

**6.** Cut about 3' of 26g wire. Leave a short tail, and wrap 2 times around the left bail wire. Extend the wrapping wire over both bail wires, wrap around the right bail wire once. Extend the wrapping wire under both bail wires, wrap around the left bail wire once. Continue weaving in this fashion until you reach ¼" from the end of the bail wires, keeping the weaves close together without gaps. To finish, wrap twice around the right bail wire. Trim both wrapping wire ends with flush cutters, and tuck them in with chain-nose pliers. Use round-nose pliers to make small loops turned outward on each bail wire.

**7.** Cut 12"–16" of 20g wire. Loosely spiral one end. Place the spiral inside the bezel frame. Working from the top inside, wrap the spiral to the frame using 26g wire. Work with small 3–4" lengths of wire, beginning and ending your wraps on the front side of the frame. Trim the ends closely, and tuck them in. There should be no exposed wire ends while the pendant is worn, because they will be covered by the cabochon. Making loops and spirals, continue with a free form design, wrapping where the wire touches the frame and where the loops touch each other.
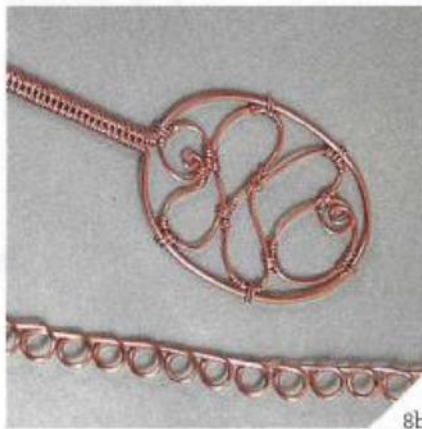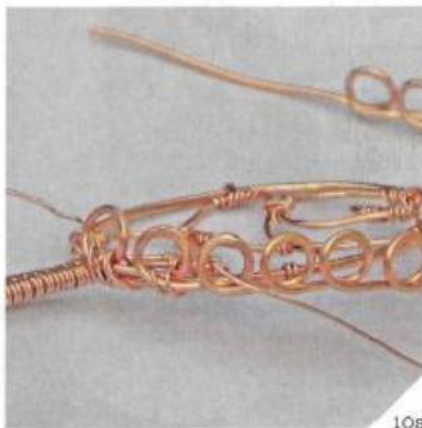


7a



7b

8a


8b


9


10a

*8.* Cut approximately 16" of 18g wire. Make a small closed loop on one end with chain-nose pliers. Using the thicker part of the jaws of the round-nose pliers, make a large loop next to the small loop. Make a second large loop next to the first, leaving a small gap in between loops. Continue making consistently-sized large loops until you have enough of a bezel edge strip to measure the circumference of the cabochon. Leave a straight wire tail a few inches long.

TIP: The flatter the cabochon, the more space should be left between the loops on the bezel edging.

*9.* Flatten the outer edge of the bail edging loops on the steel block with a ball peen or chasing hammer, keeping the other edge even and straight.
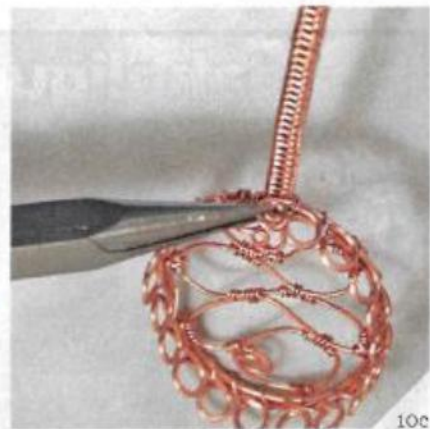
*10.* With the front of the bezel facing you, wrap the bezel edging onto the top of the frame below the bail, using 26g wire. Wrap 2–3 times to secure the end, hiding the small loop on the inside. If necessary, create a hole for the wrapping wire with a sewing needle or pin. Continue to wrap the edging onto the frame securely until the loops meet at the top of the frame. Wrap the end 2–3 times, trim and tuck in the end of the 26g wire. Cut the excess bezel edging wire to 1". Make a small tight spiral, and press it flat to hide where the bezel edging meets.
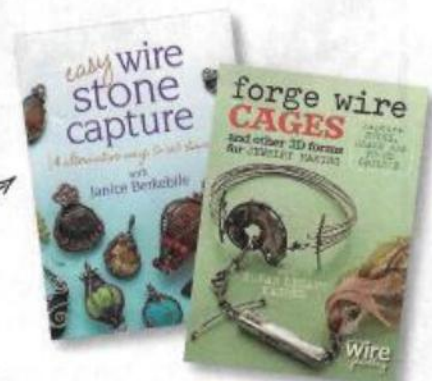

10b


10c

## Build Beautiful Bezels!

☐ **Easy Wire Stone Capture video by Janice Berkebile**
shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com/EasyWireStoneCapture

☐ **Forge Wire Cages and Other 3D Forms for Jewelry Making video by Susan Lenart Kazmer**
shop.jewelrymakingdaily.com/ForgeWireCages

11



12a



12b

*11.* To shape the bail, bend the woven bail wires over the fine point marker, or use bail-making pliers to form a loop.

*12.* Insert the cabochon into the bezel. Gently press the loops in place with the bezel pusher. Go all the way around the bezel edge, pressing in until the cabochon is firmly seated.

*13.* Optional: Oxidize the pendant in a hot water and liver of sulfur solution. Bring out the highlights with 0000 steel wool, and tumble in a jewelry tumbler with stainless steel shot. If your chosen cabochon is low on the Mohs scale, oxidize and tumble the bezel, and add the cabochon after. Hang the pendant on a chain or cord. ⭕