

A Simple Wire Ring

by [totemic](#) on November 3, 2007

Table of Contents

License: Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike (by-nc-sa)	2
Intro: A Simple Wire Ring	2
step 1: Initial Wrap	2
step 2: Creating the Swirl	3
step 3: Completing the Swirl	3
step 4: Adjusting the Ring	3
step 5: Removing Excess Wire	4
step 6: Tucking in the Ends	4
Related Instructables	5
Advertisements	5
Comments	5

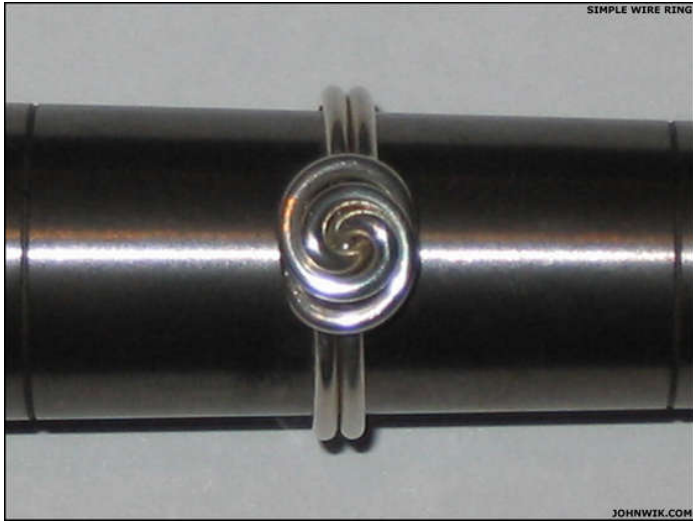
Intro: A Simple Wire Ring

An easy to create and inexpensive wire ring!

I posted this a few years ago on a jewelry forum and people seemed to enjoy it, so I thought it would make a great instructable. I sold a lot of these when I started making jewelry - I called them "Bellybutton Rings" and it was one of my very first designs.

I usually made them out of 20 and 18 gauge soft wire (half-hard is too brittle and the "bellybutton" isn't as tight because the wire springs out a little).

- You'll need a ring mandrel (or suitable equivalent), a flat-nosed jewelry pliers, a wire cutter, a small metal file, and a length of wire (the example is made with 14 gauge soft sterling silver).



step 1: Initial Wrap

Wrap some wire around a ring mandrel twice so the ends shoot out in opposite directions.

- Before I had a ring mandrel I used socket bits from a ratchet set - being metal they worked pretty well and it was easy to hold the ends of the bit while twisting wire to make the bellybutton. I tried a wooden dowel too but it would get all hacked over time.



step 2: Creating the Swirl

This is the only real tricky part because the tightness of the center dictates how smooth the "bellybutton" looks. The best way I've found to get a tight center is to use your thumb and forefinger in a twisting motion - almost in the same way you use a screwdriver only you're making a little twirl of wire where the screwdriver usually is. It also helps to have the wires wrapped around the mandrel in a direction that allows you turn the imaginary screwdriver clockwise (or counter-clockwise for left-handers). You'll figure out what I mean the first time you wrap one the other way - it's clumsy...



step 3: Completing the Swirl

Then you just wrap a nice smooth arc around the initial center - sometimes it helps to press down on the center with the thumb of one hand and wrap the wire with the other hand (between your thumb and the mandrel). The nice thing about soft wire is it's pretty easy to get a nice smooth arc once you've done it a few times - you get the feel of how the wire will bend.

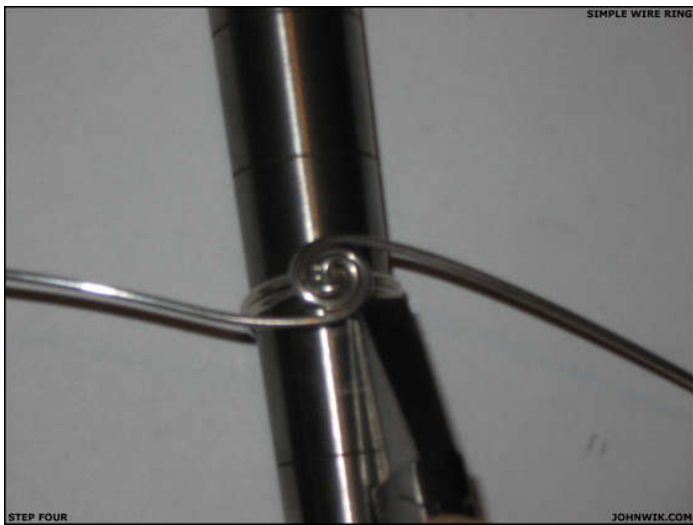
- You can make your swirl a little wider by going around the ring again if you like - I like two wraps because it matches the double-wire band.



step 4: Adjusting the Ring

The ring will most likely appear crooked at this point - I've found that a good way to even it out is to slide the tip of my flat-nosed pliers under the "bellybutton" while the ring is on the mandrel nice and snug. The pressure will straighten out the ring a bit - you should do this on the opposite side as well.

- Watch your fingers! If your plier slips you will get gouged unless you position your hands out of the way - it may also help to hold your thumb over the tip of your pliers and the "bellybutton" while you apply pressure.



step 5: Removing Excess Wire

Now you can cut the excess wire off - you want to leave a little bit that extends past the center of the "bellybutton" as you'll need some to curl under. You should also file the ends at this point - remember to file away from the ring rather than towards it or you run the risk of slipping and cutting into your lovely ring.

- Both cutting and filing are best done off the mandrel - I just put it there for easy display.



step 6: Tucking in the Ends

Finish off your ring by tucking under the filed ends - you can use the flat-nosed pliers like you did in step 4 to do this. You can also use your pliers to tighten the "bellybutton" by lightly squeezing any arcs that need it - be careful not to scratch up the wire though... (and don't forget to mind your fingers around that pliers - especially with thicker wire because it will take more pressure to straighten the ring and curl under your wire ends)

The two wire loops of your ring may be slightly misaligned when you first take it off the mandrel - to fix this just pull slightly out on the appropriate sides of the two loops using your fingernails until the wires line up.

Well that's it - this is a great little ring and I couldn't make 'em fast enough back when I was actively selling in stores and art/craft shows. Please tweak and embellish the design at will and I don't mind if you sell what you make, just please don't sell the instructions as they've always been free.

Hope you like the instructable!

- You can also start your ring with only one wrap around the mandrel rather than two. I like two because it's more interesting and it allows slightly more room for the wire ends as they curl under the "bellybutton." You can also pull them out and flatten your completed ring to make a bracelet by linking them together. You should use a minimum wire size of 18 gauge for the bracelet though - the 20 is a little too yankable.



Related Instructables



Make a silver ring for 25 cents
by target022



Resin Jewelry Tutorial with John W. Golden Part 3 (video)
by johnwgolden



How to solder (for Jewelry purposes)
by soundinnovation



Resin Jewelry Tutorial with John W. Golden Part 2 (video)
by johnwgolden



Bezel-Setting Tutorial
by MaggieJs



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by edAg



Build a furnace, create custom molds, cast a piece of jewelry, then mount a custom cut stone
by kraker89

Comments

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rickick says:
why not use solder and then melt some to make a design

Nov 26, 2007. 4:41 PM [REPLY](#)



RoosterSocks says:
solder is very weak. i think it would bend and scratch like crazy

Nov 5, 2009. 9:48 AM [REPLY](#)



tyeo098 says:
Some solder has lead in it?
Lead+Human=BAD

Dec 3, 2007. 7:44 PM [REPLY](#)



twenglish1 says:
the lead in soldler isn't bad for you unless you like eat it or something

Mar 15, 2008. 1:36 PM [REPLY](#)



HAL 9000 says:
You can get solder without lead. In fact, most doesn't.

Dec 7, 2007. 11:05 PM [REPLY](#)



Notbob says:
solder without lead does not flow as easy as solder with lead

Feb 26, 2008. 10:19 AM [REPLY](#)



Grey_Wolfe says:

Silver solder would be an excellent choice. Since it would be jewellery quality, and still maintain the workability of solder.

Feb 7, 2008. 6:50 PM [REPLY](#)



erie94550 says:

it hurts when it splatters right in between your eyes...

Mar 24, 2008. 11:20 AM [REPLY](#)



bug on fire says:

i got it on my check

Jan 12, 2009. 11:28 PM [REPLY](#)



Grey_Wolfe says:

I'm pretty sure that's true of all solders. I could be wrong though.

Still between your eyes is better than in them. Maybe you should get some safety glasses, just in case.

May 27, 2008. 12:30 AM [REPLY](#)



cowscankill says:

????

How did that happen...

Apr 13, 2008. 12:03 PM [REPLY](#)



MattandJora says:

where did you get the silver wire?

Sep 23, 2009. 5:58 PM [REPLY](#)



jdogsbart says:

a little bit of extra fancyness is that instead of just tucking the ends under you wrap them around the double band a few times

Jul 31, 2009. 6:10 PM [REPLY](#)



basketballstarz says:

so was their soldering involved in this?
also - how/what did you make your mandrel out of?

Apr 28, 2008. 10:26 PM [REPLY](#)



totemic says:

No soldering - just wire wrapping. I used a store bought mandrel, but you can use anything that's round and has an end the same size as the place you're wrapping the wire (so the ring will slide off when completed).

Jun 22, 2008. 8:47 AM [REPLY](#)



Shut Up Now says:

solder would be no good for you if it wasn't lead free...you should never have lead touching your skin for long periods of time..

May 13, 2009. 7:21 PM [REPLY](#)



casey321b says:

no soldering i think I read a while ago but id have to check again...
im to lazy tho but im pretty sure no soldering

May 5, 2008. 5:21 PM [REPLY](#)



1up says:

I made a paperclip ring with a "twist"! (No pun intended) :P
Sorry about the image quality, it was taken with my webcam. ;D

Jan 5, 2008. 11:46 AM [REPLY](#)





dustfingersilvertounge says:
did you use a long paper clip beacuae i tried a short one butt it did not werk

Apr 29, 2009. 3:42 PM [REPLY](#)



dustfingersilvertounge says:
make one 4 your girlfriend

Apr 29, 2009. 3:39 PM [REPLY](#)



kontrasstas says:
And here we go, a pic of my simplified copper one. There might still be some noticeable smudges on it, but hell, i'm still practicing :)

Dec 26, 2007. 12:12 PM [REPLY](#)



dustfingersilvertounge says:
i luv u

Apr 29, 2009. 3:39 PM [REPLY](#)



John Smith says:
Nice.
I'm assuming that you own or have permission from *johnwik.com* ?
Just curious, as the pictures have that at the bottom.

Nov 3, 2007. 10:19 AM [REPLY](#)



totemic says:
I'm John Wik and that's my website. I've had others try to publish the instructions in the past so I appreciate the thought.

Nov 3, 2007. 10:26 AM [REPLY](#)



dustfingersilvertounge says:
you should publish it .im dustfingersilvertouge on instructables.reply to me sometimes.I lov you.

Apr 29, 2009. 3:38 PM [REPLY](#)



John Smith says:
Good, I wouldn't want others to publish my work either (without permission, of course), so that's why I asked.

Nov 3, 2007. 11:34 AM [REPLY](#)



dustfingersilvertounge says:
COOLO

Apr 29, 2009. 3:34 PM [REPLY](#)



Box_Full_Of_Sharp_Objects says:
I made one for my girlfriend but I made the swirl into a heart. its more complicated but she loved it!

Jan 11, 2008. 5:12 PM [REPLY](#)



masterochicken says:
how do you make it heart shaped?

Jan 15, 2008. 4:52 PM [REPLY](#)



Box_Full_Of_Sharp_Objects says:
Instead of twisting it, make the first swirl into a tiny, tiny heart with a plier, then go around it like two more times

Jan 16, 2008. 2:51 PM [REPLY](#)



masterochicken says:
post a pictur because I don't understand.

Jan 17, 2008. 12:11 PM [REPLY](#)



Box_Full_Of_Sharp_Objects says:
She is out of town for like two weeks so as soon as i make another one, i'll take a picture.(i'm not the best so it might take like two days or less.)

Jan 17, 2008. 6:13 PM [REPLY](#)



mg0930mg says:
Could you post a picture soon, please?

Apr 21, 2009. 7:04 PM [REPLY](#)



masterochicken says:
I just ordered silver wire and I am planning to make this for valentines day

Jan 18, 2008. 11:43 AM [REPLY](#)



SchBells says:
Hi, I am just starting to practice using wire to make rings, where do you order your wire, if you don't mind me asking.

May 9, 2009. 2:36 PM [REPLY](#)



totemic says:
Hi SchBells,

May 9, 2009. 6:46 PM [REPLY](#)

I get silver wire from Rio Grande albuquerque - silver is what I use most often. Copper or brass wire is easy to get at any hardware store.

You might also try sellers on Etsy - search the supplies section for aluminum wire and you should get all sorts of colors. Stick to the thicker gauges with aluminum (like 16-12) because the wire is fairly soft.



C chord says:
Cool easy fun

Mar 9, 2009. 9:01 PM [REPLY](#)



PyroMaster007 says:
I have made so many fo these since i last commented. i use sockets from my socket wrench for the size. i sell them at school for \$1.50. i use crappy wire from walmart though so it's very thrifty. i made on for my girlfriend when i was at her house (she is into jewelry making, so she had all i needed) and she still wears, like all the time. i love her. well, thanks for your instructable, i love it.

Feb 11, 2009. 1:30 PM [REPLY](#)



bug on fire says:
love it
any by the way could this be made as a bracelet
haveing two round things

Jan 12, 2009. 11:33 PM [REPLY](#)



nintendocrazy says:
i made this and it did not look as good as yours

Nov 13, 2008. 6:17 PM [REPLY](#)



freakinslop says:
could you use 16 gauge wire aswell?

Sep 28, 2008. 5:33 PM [REPLY](#)



gloriapatri says:
Hi, I love this ring and I'm using 14 gauge wire but I'm having trouble tucking the ends in. Exactly where do you put the pliers? This is my first try. Thanks!

Sep 24, 2008. 8:58 AM [REPLY](#)



beatrizmuniz says:
Thanks, I love this tutorial!!! I have already made 2 rings, beautiful and easy!!

Aug 22, 2008. 4:27 PM [REPLY](#)



CheesySnackMAN says:
DUDE!! this is sexxyy what kind of wire is it ?

Jul 7, 2008. 10:21 AM [REPLY](#)



CheesySnackMAN says:
*** nvm ha i didnt read it

Jul 7, 2008. 10:22 AM [REPLY](#)



rejalP says:
Can you make an Instructable on how to make a mandrel?

Jun 16, 2008. 7:01 AM [REPLY](#)



totemic says:
Anything that's shaped like a bar and is the right size will work - I even used pencil once to make links in a bracelet. Metal items work best (like socket bits from a socket set), but wooden dowels will work reasonably well unless you're making tons of rings with a thicker wire.

Jun 22, 2008. 8:54 AM [REPLY](#)

If you don't want to buy a mandrel just go to the local hardware store and see what they have - copper tubing would be a good choice as they have a few different sizes. You don't even have to buy the tube - just the connecting components ("elbows" or "T's").

:)



Rishnai says:
My finger happens to be the same outside diameter (roughly) as 1/2 inch pvc pipe, so I use spare bits of that.

May 3, 2008. 11:22 PM [REPLY](#)



casey321b says:
any jewelery store will have wire. so it wont be hard to find.

Apr 17, 2008. 7:56 PM [REPLY](#)

This looks like a good thing to make a bajillion of and sell for a quarter.



ItsTheHobbs says:
what kind of wire is it?
and where do you get it?

Nov 3, 2007. 10:35 AM [REPLY](#)

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