



KRAZY STITCHER

Beginner's Guide to Bead Pattern Making **Volume 1: Beginner**

From Your First Bead to Your First Finished Pattern

A complete step-by-step guide for absolute beginners.
No experience needed. No software to install. Just open and create.

krazystitcher.com

Free 60-day trial. Browser-based. No account required.

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Contents

Welcome

This guide takes you from zero beading knowledge to a completed bead pattern. You do not need any experience with beading, pattern software, or design tools.

By the end of this booklet you will:

- Understand what seed beads are, how they are sized, and which types to buy.
- Know the essential supplies you need to start beading.
- Create your first bead pattern in Krazy Stitcher — a free browser-based pattern maker.
- Export a printable PDF pattern with a color legend and bead count.
- Complete three beginner projects from start to finish.

Tip: Every supply mentioned in this guide is available on our Supplies & Resources page with direct links. Visit [KrazyStitcher-Resources.html](https://krazystitcher.com/KrazyStitcher-Resources.html) to find everything you need.

Chapter 1: What Are Seed Beads?

Seed beads are small, uniformly shaped beads used in bead weaving, embroidery, and jewelry making. They get their name from their size — some are as small as a seed. Bead artists use them to create patterns, pictures, and wearable art.

Bead Sizes

Seed beads use a number system to indicate size. The key rule: the larger the number, the smaller the bead. A 6/0 bead is large. An 11/0 bead is small. A 15/0 bead is very small.

Size	Diameter	Best For	Beginner?
6/0	~3.7 mm	Kids' projects, chunky bracelets, decorative work	Yes — easy to handle, good for learning basic stringing
8/0	~3.0 mm	Earrings, bead embroidery, fringe	Yes — a good middle ground
11/0	~2.2 mm	Most bead weaving, patterns, loom work	Recommended — the standard size most patterns use
15/0	~1.5 mm	Detailed work, fine jewelry, advanced projects	Advanced — very small, harder to handle

Tip: Start with 11/0 seed beads. This is the most common size and what most patterns are written for. You will find the widest color selection in this size.

Round Beads vs. Cylinder Beads (Delica)

There are two main shapes of seed beads:

- **Round seed beads:** Slightly rounded, organic feel. Brands include Toho and Preciosa. Good for all-around beading.
- **Cylinder beads (Delica):** Straight-sided, very uniform. Made by Miyuki. They sit tightly together and create a smooth, grid-like surface. Ideal for detailed patterns and loom work.

Note: Krazy Stitcher includes palettes for Miyuki Delica, Toho, and Preciosa — so your pattern colors match real beads you can buy.

Chapter 2: Essential Supplies

You need surprisingly little to start beading. Here is everything a beginner needs, divided into "must have" and "nice to have" categories.

Must Have

Supply	What to Get	Why You Need It
Seed Beads	11/0 in 5-8 colors to start. Miyuki Delica or Toho Round.	Your raw material. Start with contrasting colors so you can see your pattern clearly.
Beading Needles	Size 10 or 12. A pack of 6-10 needles.	Regular sewing needles are too thick. Beading needles fit through seed bead holes.
Thread	FireLine 6 lb (braided) or Nymo D (nylon).	FireLine is strong and does not stretch. Nymo is softer and easier to knot. Either works.
Scissors	Small, sharp thread scissors or snips.	You need clean cuts close to the beadwork.
Bead Mat	Foam, velvet, or rubber mat. Any non-slip surface works.	Keeps beads from rolling off the table. Also makes it easier to pick up beads with the needle.

Nice to Have

- **Task lamp or desk light:** Seed beads are small. Good lighting reduces eye strain and helps you see colors accurately.
- **Magnifier or magnifying lamp:** Especially helpful for 15/0 beads or detailed work.
- **Bead organizer or small containers:** Keep each color separate and labeled while you work.
- **Thread conditioner (beeswax or Thread Heaven):** Reduces tangling and makes the thread easier to manage.
- **Bead loom (optional):** A loom holds warp threads for you. Good for flat bracelets and bands. Not required for off-loom stitches.

Tip: Find all of these supplies with direct links on our Supplies & Resources page at [KrazyStitcher-Resources.html](https://www.krazystitcher.com/Resources.html). We have curated 38 products across 9 categories.

Chapter 3: Understanding Stitch Types

A "stitch type" is the method you use to connect beads together. Different stitches create different patterns and textures. Krazy Stitcher supports 22 stitch types, but as a beginner you only need to know three.

Loom Stitch

Beads sit in a straight grid, like squares on graph paper. You weave the beads onto warp threads stretched across a loom.

- Easiest stitch for beginners.
- Best for: Bracelets, bands, bookmarks, geometric patterns.
- Requires a bead loom (a simple wooden loom costs about \$10-\$20).

Peyote Stitch

Beads sit in a staggered, brick-like pattern. Odd rows are offset from even rows by half a bead width. This is the most popular off-loom stitch.

- Slightly harder than loom — you need to keep track of the stagger.
- Best for: Flat panels, tubes (bracelets, pen covers), sculptural forms.
- No loom required — just needle, thread, and beads.

Brick Stitch

Similar to peyote but rotated 90 degrees. Beads stack vertically in offset columns. Good for shaped pieces.

- Best for: Earrings, small charms, shaped designs (triangles, diamonds).
- Easy to increase and decrease (add or remove beads per row).

Which Stitch Should I Start With?

If you want to...	Start with...	Why
Make bracelets on a loom	Loom stitch	Straight grid is the easiest to follow. The loom holds tension for you.
Bead without a loom	Peyote stitch	Most versatile off-loom stitch. Huge community and many free patterns.
Make earrings or charms	Brick stitch	Easy to shape. Perfect for small, quick projects.

Tip: In Krazy Stitcher, you choose the stitch type when you create a new pattern. The app adjusts the grid layout automatically.

Chapter 4: Meet Krazy Stitcher

Krazy Stitcher Base is a browser-based bead pattern maker, available as a one-time purchase with a free 60-day trial. You do not need to download or install anything. You do not need an account. Go to krazystitcher.com in any modern browser and start creating.

What Krazy Stitcher Does

- Design bead patterns on a grid canvas with point-and-click drawing tools.
- Choose from nine bead color palettes across multiple brands (Miyuki Delica, Toho Round, Preciosa, and more) or create your own.
- Import any photo and convert it to a bead pattern automatically.
- Export printable PDFs with color legends and bead counts.
- Calculate the exact number of beads, grams of thread, and finished size of your project.
- Save unlimited patterns — all stored locally in your browser. Nothing is uploaded anywhere.

System Requirements

- A modern web browser: Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari.
- JavaScript must be enabled (it is by default in all browsers).
- Works on desktop, laptop, or tablet. A mouse is recommended for drawing.

Opening the App

1. Go to krazystitcher.com in your browser.
2. The app loads instantly. You will see the canvas in the center, tools on the left, and the color palette on the right.
3. That is it. You are ready to create your first pattern.

Chapter 5: Your First Pattern — Step by Step

Let us create a simple loom bracelet pattern. This project takes about 10 minutes to design in the app and introduces all the core tools.

Step 1: Create a New Pattern

1. Click the "+ New" button in the Saved Patterns section (right panel).
2. Enter a name: "My First Bracelet".
3. Select stitch type: Loom.
4. Set the size: 20 beads wide, 80 beads tall. This creates a bracelet about 1 inch wide and 6 inches long with 11/0 Delica beads.
5. Click "Create".

The app creates a blank grid. Each cell represents one bead.

Step 2: Choose a Color

1. Look at the Color Palette panel on the right side.
2. The default palette is Miyuki Delica. You will see a grid of color swatches.
3. Click any color swatch to select it. The current color appears in the large square at the top of the palette panel.
4. To find a specific color, type a name (like "blue" or "red") in the search box above the swatches.

Tip: Pick two or three strongly contrasting colors for your first pattern. This makes it easier to see your design as you draw.

Step 3: Draw Your Pattern

1. The Draw tool is active by default (pencil icon, or press D).
2. Click any cell on the grid to paint it with your selected color.
3. Click and drag to paint multiple cells in a row.
4. To erase, press E to switch to the Erase tool, then click cells to clear them.
5. To fill a large area with one color, press F for the Fill tool and click inside the area.

Try a simple stripe pattern: paint rows 1-10 in one color, rows 11-20 in a second color, and repeat. Or try a checkerboard — alternate two colors across the grid.

Step 4: Use Symmetry (Optional)

1. Press M to turn on Symmetric Drawing.
2. Choose "Horizontal" mode — this mirrors your drawing left to right.

3. Now draw on the left half of the grid. The right half fills automatically.
4. Press M again to cycle to Vertical or Both for four-way symmetry.
5. Press M until you return to "None" when you are done.

Step 5: Check Your Bead Count

1. Click the "Counts" button in the toolbar.
2. The Bead Count table shows every color in your pattern, the number of beads needed, the weight in grams, and the percentage of total beads.
3. Use this to create your shopping list before you buy supplies.

Step 6: Export Your Pattern

1. Click "Export PDF" to generate a printable pattern sheet with a grid, color legend, and bead count table.
2. Print the PDF and place it next to your work surface while you bead.
3. You can also click "Export PNG" to save the pattern as an image for sharing online.

Tip: Click "Export Pattern" to save a .ks file as a backup. You can reload it later with "Import Pattern".

Chapter 6: Project 2 — Turn a Photo Into a Pattern

Krazy Stitcher can convert any image into a bead pattern. This is one of the most powerful features for beginners who want to create picture patterns without drawing from scratch.

How Photo Import Works

1. Click "Import Photo" in the toolbar.
2. Select an image file from your computer (JPG, PNG, or any common image format).
3. Set the pattern width in beads. Start with 60–80 beads wide for a medium pattern. The app calculates the height to keep the proportions correct.
4. Set the maximum number of colors. Start with 10–15 colors. Fewer colors make the pattern easier to bead.
5. Choose a quantization method. K-Means gives the best color accuracy. Median Cut is faster.
6. Optional: enable Floyd-Steinberg Dithering. This blends colors for smoother gradients but creates more detail.
7. Adjust brightness, contrast, and saturation with the sliders if the preview does not look right.
8. Click "Create Pattern" when you are happy with the preview.

After Import: Clean It Up

1. Click "Cleanup" to remove confetti beads — isolated single beads surrounded by a different color. These are hard to stitch and look messy.
2. Open "Counts" and look for colors with very low bead counts (highlighted in orange). Consider merging these into similar colors to simplify your pattern.
3. Use "Merge" to combine near-duplicate colors. This reduces the number of bead colors you need to buy.
4. Hand-edit details with the Draw and Erase tools. Zoom in with + or the scroll wheel to work on fine areas.

Tip: The trace overlay keeps your original photo visible behind the pattern. Use the Trace slider to adjust its transparency. This helps you see where the pattern differs from the photo.

Chapter 7: Project 3 — Brick Stitch Earrings

Brick stitch earrings are a popular first project for off-loom beading. They are small, quick, and produce a wearable result. Let us design a simple diamond-shaped earring.

Design the Earring

1. Click "+ New" to create a new pattern.
2. Name it "Diamond Earring".
3. Choose Brick stitch.
4. Set size: 15 wide, 15 tall.
5. For shape, select "Diamond" from the shape options. This creates a diamond mask so you only draw inside the diamond area.
6. Pick 2-3 colors. A simple design: one color for the border, one for the center, one for an accent.
7. Use the Symmetry tool (press M for "Both") to draw in one quadrant and fill all four automatically.

Beading Tips for Brick Stitch

- Start from the widest row (the middle of the diamond) and work outward in both directions.
- Use FireLine thread for earrings — it is stiff enough that the earring holds its shape.
- Leave a 6-inch tail when you start. You will weave this in later.
- Add an earring finding (hook or post) to the top bead when you finish.
- Check the Bead Count table — a small earring uses fewer than 100 beads total.

Export and Print

1. Export as PDF for a printable pattern chart.
2. Export a Text Chart for row-by-row instructions you can read while beading.

Note: The text chart gives you instructions like "Row 1: 1 Blue. Row 2: 2 Blue. Row 3: 1 Blue, 1 Red, 1 Blue." This is the easiest format to follow while you stitch.

Chapter 8: Know Your Tools

Krazy Stitcher has ten drawing and editing tools. Each tool has a keyboard shortcut. Here is what each one does.

Tool	Key	What It Does
Draw	D	Click or drag to paint beads with the selected color.
Erase	E	Click or drag to clear beads.
Fill	F	Click a bead to flood-fill all connected beads of the same color.
Color Pick	I	Click any bead to make its color the active drawing color (eyedropper).
Line	L	Click two points to draw a straight line between them.
Rectangle	R	Click two corners to draw a rectangular outline.
Filled Rect	Shift + R	Click two corners to draw a solid filled rectangle.
Select	S	Click and drag to select a rectangular region. Copy, paste, or move it.
Text	T	Type text and click to place it on the canvas in bead-sized letters.
Pan	Space	Hold and drag to scroll the canvas. Works with any other tool active.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Key	Action
Ctrl+Z	Undo the last action.
Ctrl+Y	Redo.
+ / =	Zoom in.
-	Zoom out.
Home	Zoom to fit the entire pattern on screen.
N	Toggle row and column numbers on the canvas.
M	Cycle symmetry mode (none, horizontal, vertical, both).
Ctrl+C / Ctrl+V	Copy and paste a selection.

Chapter 9: Save and Share Your Work

Automatic Saving

Krazy Stitcher auto-saves your patterns to your browser's local storage (IndexedDB). You do not need to click a save button — your work is preserved automatically.

Note: Your patterns are stored locally in your browser. They do not upload to any server. This means your patterns are private, but they are also tied to that specific browser. If you clear your browser data, your patterns will be lost.

Backup Your Patterns

1. Click "Export Pattern" to save a .ks file to your computer.
2. Store the file in a safe location (cloud drive, USB drive, or a project folder).
3. To restore the pattern later, click "Import Pattern" and select the .ks file.

Share with Others

Krazy Stitcher can package your pattern as a .ksp file — a zip archive that includes the pattern data, a PNG preview, a PDF, a text chart, a bead count CSV, and metadata. The recipient opens krazystitcher.com and clicks "Import Pattern" to load it.

1. Click "Share" in the toolbar.
2. Choose "Download .ksp File" or use your device's share menu.
3. Send the .ksp file to your friend or post it in a beading group.

Export Options

Format	When to Use
PDF	Print the pattern grid and color legend. The best format for beading from paper.
PNG	Share the pattern as an image on social media or in chat.
Text Chart	Row-by-row written instructions. Best for following while you stitch.
.ks	Full pattern backup. Can be reloaded into Krazy Stitcher.
.ksp	Complete sharing package (pattern + preview + PDF + CSV + metadata).

Chapter 10: Common Beginner Mistakes

Every beader makes these mistakes at first. Learn them here so you can avoid them.

Thread Tension

- **Too tight:** The beadwork curls or bends like a banana. Loosen your pull on each stitch. Aim for "snug but relaxed."
- **Too loose:** Beads wobble and gaps appear between them. Pull slightly tighter and keep consistent tension throughout.

Tip: Use FireLine for your first projects. It is stiffer than nylon thread and helps beginners maintain even tension.

Skipping Beads

In peyote and brick stitch, it is easy to skip a bead or pass through the wrong one. This shifts your entire pattern and creates holes.

- Count your beads after every row.
- Use the row numbers in Krazy Stitcher (press N) to track which row you are on.
- If you notice a mistake, undo it immediately. Fixing errors later is much harder.

Wrong Thread for the Job

- **Too thick:** The thread will not pass through the bead hole on the second or third pass. Use size D or thinner.
- **Too thin:** The beads slide around and do not hold position. Size D Nymo or 6 lb FireLine is a good middle ground.

Choosing Too Many Colors

Beginners often start with 20+ colors. This makes the pattern harder to bead and more expensive to supply.

- Start with 3-5 colors for your first pattern.
- Use Krazy Stitcher's "Merge" tool to combine similar colors if your photo import creates too many.

Not Checking Finished Size

A pattern that looks small on screen may be large in real life, or the opposite.

- Click "Size" in Krazy Stitcher to see the actual finished dimensions in inches and millimeters.
- A 20×80 loom pattern in 11/0 Delica beads is about 1.1" × 5.1" — a standard bracelet width.

Mixing Bead Brands

Different brands have slightly different sizes and shapes. Miyuki Delicas are cylinder-shaped. Toho Treasures are similar but not identical. Mixing them in the same pattern creates uneven rows.

- Stick to one brand per pattern, especially for loom and peyote work.
- Use Krazy Stitcher's palette remap feature to convert all colors to the same brand.

Forgetting to Back Up

Browser data can be lost if you clear your cache, update your browser, or switch computers.

- Always export your pattern as a .ks or .ksp file after each session.
- Keep a copy on a USB drive, in a cloud folder, or emailed to yourself.
- The .ksp file is the best backup — it includes the pattern, preview image, and PDF in one package.

Tip: Make it a habit: every time you finish a session, hit "Export Pattern" and save the file. Five seconds of effort can save hours of rework.

Starting Too Big

A 200×200 bead pattern contains 40,000 beads. That is months of work for a beginner. Start small and build your skills.

- First project: 20 × 80 beads (a simple bracelet). About 1,600 beads.
- Second project: 20 × 20 beads (a pair of earrings). About 400 beads per earring.
- Third project: 50 × 50 beads (a small coaster or patch). About 2,500 beads.
- Build up gradually. You will know when you are ready for a large piece.

Chapter 11: Glossary

Key terms you will encounter in beading and in Krazy Stitcher.

Term	Definition
Seed bead	A small, uniformly shaped bead. The basic building block of bead weaving.
11/0 (eleven-oh)	The most common seed bead size. About 2.2 mm in diameter.
Delica	A cylinder-shaped seed bead made by Miyuki. Very uniform, ideal for detailed patterns.
Stitch type	The method used to connect beads together (loom, peyote, brick, etc.).
Peyote stitch	An off-loom stitch where beads sit in a staggered, brick-like pattern.
Brick stitch	An off-loom stitch where beads stack in offset columns. Good for shaped pieces.
Loom stitch	Beads woven onto warp threads stretched across a bead loom. Straight grid.
Warp thread	The threads stretched across a loom that hold the beads in place.
Weft thread	The thread you weave through the beads on a loom, going over and under the warps.
Off-loom	Any beading stitch that does not require a loom (peyote, brick, herringbone, etc.).
Tension	How tightly you pull the thread as you stitch. Even tension creates uniform beadwork.
Confetti bead	An isolated single bead surrounded by a different color. Usually unwanted.
Palette	A set of bead colors available for your pattern. Krazy Stitcher has nine built-in palettes.
Remap	Convert all colors in a pattern to the nearest match in a different bead brand.
Bead count	The total number of beads needed for a pattern, broken down by color.
.ks file	Krazy Stitcher's pattern save format. A JSON file containing grid data and color info.
.ksp file	Krazy Stitcher Package. A zip file containing the pattern, preview, PDF, and metadata.
Findings	Metal components used to finish jewelry: clasps, earring hooks, jump rings, etc.
Fringe	Decorative bead strands that hang from the bottom edge of a pattern.
FireLine	A braided polyethylene thread. Strong, thin, and does not stretch. Popular for bead weaving.
Nymo	A nylon beading thread. Comes in sizes 00 (thinnest) through D (thickest). Affordable and widely available.

Stop bead	A temporary bead placed at the end of the thread to prevent other beads from falling off. Removed later.
Tail thread	The short end of thread left after starting a project. Used later for weaving in and finishing.
Increase	Adding an extra bead in a row to make the beadwork wider. Used for shaping.
Decrease	Skipping a position in a row to make the beadwork narrower. Used for shaping.
Herringbone stitch	An off-loom stitch where pairs of beads stack at angles, creating a V pattern.
Right-angle weave	A stitch where four beads form a square unit. Flexible and drapes well.
Beading needle	A very thin, flexible needle with a narrow eye. Sizes 10-13 are common for seed beads.
Jump ring	A small metal ring used to connect jewelry components. Opened with pliers, not pulled apart.
Clasp	A fastener that holds the two ends of a bracelet or necklace together.
Selvage	The finished edge of a piece of beadwork. Should be neat and even.

Chapter 12: Color Theory for Beaders

Color choices can make or break a bead pattern. You do not need an art degree to pick good colors. A few simple principles will help your patterns look professional.

The Color Wheel

The color wheel organizes colors in a circle. Primary colors (red, blue, yellow) sit equally spaced. Secondary colors (orange, green, purple) sit between them. Understanding these relationships helps you choose colors that work together.

Three Reliable Color Schemes

Complementary (Opposite Colors)

Colors that sit across from each other on the wheel — like blue and orange, or red and green. These combinations create strong contrast and visual energy. Good for borders, accents, and patterns that need to "pop."

Tip: Start with a complementary pair for your first geometric pattern. The contrast makes the design easy to see while beading.

Analogous (Neighboring Colors)

Colors that sit next to each other on the wheel — like blue, blue-green, and green. These create a harmonious, calming look. Good for gradients, nature themes, and subtle designs.

Monochromatic (One Color, Many Shades)

Different shades and tints of a single color — like light blue, medium blue, and navy. Simple and elegant. Good for beginners because you cannot make a "wrong" color combination.

Contrast Matters

Two colors may look different on screen but nearly identical in beads. This happens when they have similar value (lightness/darkness). To test contrast:

- Squint at your pattern on screen. If two colors blend together when you squint, they do not have enough contrast.
- Use the Symbols overlay in Krazy Stitcher. If you cannot tell colors apart without the symbols, neither will the viewer of the finished piece.
- Print a black-and-white test page. Colors that look the same in grayscale will be hard to distinguish in beads.

How Many Colors?

Colors	Best For	Difficulty
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2-3	Geometric patterns, stripes, bold graphic designs	Easiest. Fewer thread changes, faster beading.
4-8	Most bracelet and earring designs, letters, simple images	Moderate. Good balance of detail and simplicity.
9-15	Detailed photo patterns, landscapes, portraits	Harder. Many color changes per row. More supplies to buy.
16+	Photo-realistic patterns, fine art reproductions	Advanced. Use Merge and Cleanup tools after import.

Bead Finish Affects Color

The same pigment looks different depending on the bead finish:

- **Opaque:** Solid, saturated color. The most predictable and what beginners should start with.
- **Transparent:** Light passes through. Colors appear lighter and more luminous. Influenced by thread color.
- **Matte:** Frosted surface. Colors appear softer and more muted.
- **Metallic:** Shiny, reflective surface. Adds sparkle but can overpower other colors.
- **Luster:** Subtle surface sheen. A middle ground between opaque and metallic.

Note: Krazy Stitcher lets you tag each color with a finish type. This shows up in your bead count table and CSV export, so you order the right finish when shopping.

Chapter 13: Set Up Your Beading Workspace

A comfortable, well-organized workspace makes beading more enjoyable and reduces fatigue. You do not need a dedicated craft room — a corner of a table works fine.

Lighting

Seed beads are small. Good lighting is not optional — it is essential. Poor lighting leads to eye strain, headaches, and color mistakes.

- Use a daylight-spectrum desk lamp (5000K–6500K). This shows bead colors accurately.
- Position the light to the side opposite your dominant hand to avoid shadows.
- A magnifying lamp combines magnification and lighting in one tool. Highly recommended for detailed work.

Tip: If beads look "different at home than in the store," the problem is almost always lighting. Daylight bulbs solve this.

Work Surface

- Use a bead mat. Foam, velvet, or rubber mats prevent beads from rolling. A piece of felt or microfiber cloth also works.
- Work on a flat, stable surface at elbow height. Kitchen tables and desks work well.
- Keep your bead mat clean. Small fibers and dust stick to thread and jam bead holes.

Organize Your Beads

- Use small containers, pill cases, or bead organizer trays. Sort beads by color before you start.
- Label each container with the bead brand and color code (e.g., "DB0010 Black").
- Pour only a small amount of each color onto the mat at a time. This prevents spills and makes cleanup easier.
- Store unused beads in sealed bags or containers. Seed beads can last for decades if kept dry.

Ergonomics

Beading involves repetitive fine motor work. Protect your body:

- Take a 5-minute break every 30 minutes. Look at something far away to rest your eyes.
- Sit with your back supported. Avoid hunching over your work.
- Keep your elbows at 90 degrees and your wrists straight.

- Stretch your fingers and wrists between sessions.

Note: If you experience persistent hand pain or numbness, stop and consult a doctor. Repetitive strain injuries are preventable if caught early.

Safety Around Small Children and Pets

Seed beads are a choking hazard. They are tiny, colorful, and roll everywhere.

- Never leave beads unattended where small children or pets can reach them.
- Work on a bead mat with raised edges to contain stray beads.
- Sweep your work area after each session. A dropped bead on a hard floor is nearly invisible.
- Store all beads in sealed containers when not in use.
- Keep beading needles in a pincushion or needle case — never loose on the table.

Chapter 14: Read a Bead Pattern

A bead pattern is a map that tells you where to place each bead. Understanding how to read a pattern is a fundamental skill. Krazy Stitcher exports patterns in three formats: PDF grid, PNG image, and text chart. Here is how to read each one.

The Grid Pattern (PDF)

The PDF export shows a colored grid. Each cell represents one bead. The grid includes:

- Colored cells — each color represents a specific bead color.
- Row and column numbers — use these to track your position while beading.
- A color legend — a table that maps each color to its bead brand, product ID, and name.
- A bead count table — the number of beads needed for each color.

How to Follow a Grid Pattern

1. Print the PDF at actual size. Do not scale to fit.
2. Gather all bead colors listed in the color legend.
3. Start from the bottom-left corner (Row 1, Column 1) unless the stitch type specifies otherwise.
4. Work one row at a time, left to right. Match each cell color to the corresponding bead.
5. Use a ruler or sticky note to mark your current row. Move it up as you complete each row.
6. Check your work every 5-10 rows by comparing it to the printed pattern.

Tip: Turn on row numbers in Krazy Stitcher (press N) before exporting. The numbers print on the PDF and make tracking much easier.

The Text Chart

The text chart is a plain-text file with row-by-row written instructions. Each line describes one row:

"Row 1: 3 Black, 5 Red, 2 White, 5 Red, 3 Black"

This format is ideal for beaders who prefer reading instructions over looking at a grid. Print it and follow along line by line.

Pattern Symbols

When you turn on the Symbols overlay (click "Symbols" in the toolbar), each color gets a unique symbol drawn on top of the bead cell. This helps distinguish similar colors when you print in black and white or when two colors look alike under certain lighting.

Chapter 15: Your Next Steps

You have learned the fundamentals. You know how beads work, which tools to buy, and how to use Krazy Stitcher to create patterns. Here is how to keep growing.

Practice the Three Starter Projects

If you have not yet completed the three projects in Chapters 7, 8, and 9, start there. Each project teaches a different stitch type and workflow. By the time you finish all three, you will be comfortable with the full design-to-beadwork pipeline.

Experiment with Photos

Import a photo you love — a pet, a flower, a landscape. Use the cleanup tools (Merge Similar, Remove Confetti Beads) to simplify it. Reduce the palette to 8-12 colors. You will be surprised how recognizable an image can be with just a handful of bead colors.

Tip: Start with high-contrast photos (bright subject, simple background). These convert to bead patterns much better than low-contrast or busy images.

Try Symmetric Drawing

Open a blank canvas and turn on 4-Way symmetry (press M twice). Start drawing from the center. In minutes you can create mandala-style patterns that look complex but are simple to make. This is one of the most satisfying features in Krazy Stitcher.

Build Your Custom Palette

After a few projects, you will know which bead colors you own. Create a custom palette in Krazy Stitcher that contains only those colors. This way, every pattern you design will use beads you already have on hand — no shopping required.

Join the Community

Beading communities are welcoming and full of people who love to share tips and patterns:

- Search social media for groups like "Seed Bead Patterns" or "Bead Weaving."
- Share your finished pieces. Feedback from other beaders helps you improve.
- Browse other beaders' patterns for inspiration before starting your next project.

Challenge Yourself

Once you are comfortable with the basics, push your skills:

- Try a shaped piece (a pendant, an ornament cover, a beaded bead).
- Use brick stitch increases and decreases to create non-rectangular shapes.

- Design a pattern with 12+ colors from a photo.
- Bead a matching set: bracelet, earrings, and a pendant using the same pattern elements.

Note: Krazy Stitcher offers a free 60-day trial, and Pro and Studio are one-time purchases with no subscription. Visit [KrazyStitcher-Resources.html](https://www.krazystitcher.com/KrazyStitcher-Resources.html) for supply recommendations, tutorials, and community links.

Appendix A: Frequently Asked Questions

About the Software

Does Krazy Stitcher cost anything?

Krazy Stitcher Base is a one-time purchase — there is no subscription and no ads. You can try it free for 60 days before buying, and Pro and Studio are separate paid editions you can upgrade to anytime.

Do I need to create an account?

No. The app runs entirely in your browser. Your patterns are stored on your computer, not on a server.

Will I lose my patterns if I clear my browser data?

Yes. Patterns are stored in your browser's IndexedDB. If you clear all site data, your patterns will be erased. Always use "Export Pattern" to back up important work.

Can I use Krazy Stitcher on my phone?

The app works on mobile browsers, but a desktop or laptop with a mouse is recommended. Drawing beads with a finger on a small screen is difficult.

Can I share patterns with someone who does not have Krazy Stitcher?

Yes. Export a PDF or PNG and send that. They do not need the app to view or print a pattern. If they want to edit the pattern, send them the .ksp file along with a link to krazystitcher.com.

About Beading

How much do supplies cost to get started?

A basic starter kit costs \$15-\$30 and includes beads, needles, thread, and a mat. A bead loom adds another \$10-\$20. Visit our Supplies & Resources page for specific product recommendations.

How long does a project take?

A small earring (15×15 beads) takes 1-2 hours to stitch. A standard bracelet (20×80 beads) takes 4-8 hours. A large photo pattern (100×100+ beads) can take 20-40 hours or more.

What if I make a mistake while beading?

If you catch the mistake within a few beads, carefully remove the most recent beads by passing the needle back through them in reverse. If the mistake is many rows back, you can either live with it (most small errors are invisible in the finished piece) or carefully un-weave back to the error.

Which thread should I use?

For beginners, FireLine 6 lb is recommended. It is strong, thin, does not stretch, and holds its shape. Nymo D is softer and easier to knot, which some beaders prefer. Both work well.

Do I need a loom?

Only for loom stitch. Peyote, brick, herringbone, and all other stitches are "off-loom" — you work with just needle, thread, and beads. Many beaders never use a loom.

What size beads should I buy?

Start with 11/0 (eleven-oh). This is the most common size for bead weaving. Miyuki Delica 11/0 beads are the gold standard for detailed patterns because of their uniform cylinder shape.

My pattern has too many colors after importing a photo. What do I do?

Use Krazy Stitcher's Merge Similar Colors tool. Set a threshold (start with 10–15%) and click Merge. Then use Remove Confetti Beads to clean up isolated single beads. Repeat until the color count is manageable — 8 to 15 colors works well for most photo patterns.

Can I sell items I make from Krazy Stitcher patterns?

Yes. Patterns you create in Krazy Stitcher are yours. You can sell finished beadwork made from your patterns at craft fairs, online shops, or anywhere else. You can also sell the pattern files themselves.

Bead Size Reference

This table shows common seed bead sizes and their approximate dimensions:

Size	Diameter	Beads per Inch	Common Uses
15/0	~1.3 mm	~24	Fine detail work, edging, embellishment
11/0	~2.2 mm	~18	Most common. Bracelets, earrings, all stitch types
8/0	~3.0 mm	~13	Larger patterns, faster projects, children's crafts
6/0	~4.0 mm	~10	Quick projects, stringing, macramé

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Tip: The sizing system is counterintuitive: larger numbers mean smaller beads. 15/0 beads are tiny; 6/0 beads are relatively large.

Appendix B: Quick Reference Card

Tear out or print this page and keep it next to your workspace.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Key	Action	Key	Action
D	Draw	Ctrl+Z	Undo
E	Erase	Ctrl+Y	Redo
F	Fill	+	Zoom in
I	Color pick	-	Zoom out
L	Line	Home	Zoom to fit
R	Rectangle	N	Row/col numbers
S	Select	M	Cycle symmetry
T	Text	Space	Pan (hold)

Bead Size Quick Reference

Size	mm	Beads/inch	Beads/gram	Needle
6/0	3.7	~7	~10	Size 10
8/0	3.0	~8	~38	Size 10
11/0	2.2	~12	~110	Size 12
15/0	1.5	~17	~290	Size 15

Your First Pattern Checklist

- Open krazystitcher.com in your browser.
- Click "+ New" and choose Loom stitch, 20×80 beads.
- Pick 2–3 contrasting colors from the palette.
- Draw a simple stripe or checkerboard pattern.
- Click "Counts" to see your bead shopping list.
- Click "Export PDF" and print it.
- Gather supplies, follow the printed pattern, and bead!

Appendix C: Recommended Supplies

We have curated a complete list of recommended beading supplies, organized by category. Visit the Krazy Stitcher Supplies & Resources page for detailed descriptions and purchase links:

[KrazyStitcher-Resources.html](#)

You can also access the resource page from inside the Krazy Stitcher app. Click the "Supplies & Resources" link in the toolbar.

Starter Kit Checklist

If you are starting from scratch, here is what to buy first. These are the essentials — nothing more.

Item	Recommended	Notes
Seed beads	Miyuki Delica 11/0	Start with 5–8 colors. 5-gram tubes are enough for a bracelet.
Thread	FireLine 6 lb (smoke)	Braided. Does not stretch. Good for all stitch types.
Needles	Size 11 or 12 beading needles	Buy a pack of 25. They bend and break — you will need extras.
Bead mat	Any velour or foam bead mat	Prevents rolling. A piece of felt works in a pinch.
Scissors	Small, sharp embroidery scissors	Must cut thread cleanly. Dull scissors fray thread ends.
Storage	Small flip-top containers or pill box	One compartment per color. Label with color codes.
Lighting	Daylight desk lamp (5000K–6500K)	Shows true bead colors. Prevents eye strain.
Loom (optional)	Any adjustable bead loom	Only needed for loom stitch. Skip if starting with peyote or brick.

Tip: Total cost for a starter kit: approximately \$30–\$50 depending on whether you include a loom. See [KrazyStitcher-Resources.html](#) for specific product links.

Thank you for choosing Krazy Stitcher.
Happy beading!

Explore the Full Krazy Stitcher Lineup

Curious what Pro and Studio add on top of Base? The Complete User Guide (Base) has a full feature-by-feature comparison table in its "Thinking About Upgrading?" section. No pricing here or there — visit krazystitcher.com to compare editions and see current pricing.

Krazy Stitcher Base — one-time purchase

Design bead patterns from any photo or from scratch — offline, no subscription.

- 22 stitch types, dark mode, configurable PDF export (cell size, paper size, orientation, custom branding, and saved presets)
- Built-in Thread & Bead Estimator
- Row/Round Progress Counter
- Keyboard shortcuts overlay (press "?")
- One-time purchase, works fully offline

Krazy Stitcher Pro — one-time purchase

Everything in Base, plus 3 additional stitch types (25 total, including Ladder Stitch and Albion Stitch), rotatable 3D preview, live symmetric drawing, brand remapping, a difficulty score, bead inventory tracking, a cost estimator, gradient fill, custom bead palettes, built-in Color Reduction (Median Cut + Bayer Matrix dithering), 300 DPI hi-res export, Enhanced Backup with automatic per-pattern version history, real SVG/CSV export, and the 66-design Starter Pattern Library.

Krazy Stitcher Studio — one-time purchase

Everything in Pro (including the same 66-design Starter Pattern Library), plus multi-layer editing, a Multi-Pattern Workspace (tab between and compare up to 4 patterns), a 6-type Color Harmony Engine, and Studio-exclusive Batch Export (bulk-export multiple saved patterns to PDF/PNG bundled as one .zip). Studio also adds the exclusive right to bulk/wholesale distribution and publishing pattern collections or books.

Photo-to-Pattern Converter — standalone add-on, works with any edition

Turn any photo into a ready-to-stitch bead pattern. 9-brand, 1,814-color database, Median Cut/K-Means/Bayer Matrix dithering choice, full brightness/contrast/saturation control, WCAG AA audited.

Color Palette Tool — Free

Build a bead-accurate color palette before you open a pattern. 6 harmony types, Delta-E/Lab matching across 5 brands/1,269 colors. One-click "Send to Krazy Stitcher."

PatternFolio — Coming Soon

In development — details to come.

Bead Conversion Chart Bundles

Cross-brand conversion charts — currently 47 charts covering Miyuki, Toho, DMC, Perler, Hama, Artkal, Nabbi, and more — for matching colors when you switch bead or craft brands.

Keep Learning: The Written Guide Series

Volume 2: Interactive Intermediate Beading Guide — free download

Ready to build real confidence with your stitches, transforms, and everyday exports? Volume 2 picks up right where this guide leaves off with hands-on projects and practical workflows — and it is completely free, just like this one. Download it at krazystitcher.com.

Volume 3: Advanced Techniques — \$19.95

For Pro and Studio beaders ready to go beyond the basics: brand remapping, reading and fixing your difficulty score, dithering strategy, gradient fills, shaped canvases, and a full advanced-workflow walkthrough. Delivered as a downloadable PDF, not a printed copy — order it at krazystitcher.com. Schools and other institutions: contact us for multi-copy pricing.

Find them all at krazystitcher.com