

1404-1

Marlene Blessing demonstrates how to blend vintage costume jewelry pieces in a necklace by using color.

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Please see page 2 for project instructions.

Guest:



Marlene Blessing

Beads, Baubles, & Jewels: Series 1400



MARLENE BLESSING:

Enameled Vintage Components

Vintage pins, charms, and earrings can be easily turned into customized links and charms for your jewelry projects. Just remove existing hardware (for example, pin backs) and paint them with colorful nail enamels to add fashion hues. It couldn't be simpler or more fun!

TIPS FOR COLLECTING VINTAGE JEWELRY:

Flea markets, garage sales, second-hand and thrift stores, even antique stores are all great sources for finding terrific vintage pieces to remix in your jewelry.

- Costume jewelry with missing stones, brooches without pinbacks, a single earring with no partner are all inexpensive buys with remix possibilities.
- Avoid buying pieces with scratches and dings. They won't look any lovelier when painted.
- Don't overlook your own jewelry box: you might have some great costume-jewelry items that will be perfect.
- Collect pieces with a related theme: i.e., floral, geometric, lacy, starbursts, birds, nautical, etc. That way, you'll have options for combining several pieces in a necklace or bracelet.
- Seek pieces that have cut-outs, loops, filigree, or other design elements to which you can attach jump rings or wire. For example, leaves and stems on a floral brooch offer good attachment options.

TECHNIQUES: Sanding, filing, painting

TOOLS & MATERIALS

Selected vintage pins, charms, and/or earrings
Assorted nail polish colors, plus clear topcoat
Fine-point paintbrush
#0000 (extra fine) steel wool
Metal file, fine
Hardware-store wire cutter

1. Select vintage pieces for a specific jewelry project: Decide which

combination of pieces will be used in your jewelry design. (Here's where collecting with a theme in mind comes into play.) Though you will likely be assembling several vintage pieces that were not created to go together, if you can match them with a theme, choose a pleasing scale for the grouping, and color them with the same nail polishes, they'll look like they all belong together.

2. Clean your pieces: Gently rub your vintage pieces with extra-fine steel wool to remove dirt and any oil residues. Wipe with a clean cloth.

3. Remove unnecessary hardware: Use hardware-store wire cutters to cut off such things as pinbacks, clip-ons, and screwback earring findings. After you've done so, be sure to file any remaining rough edges with a metal file.

4. Paint with selected colors: Here's where your painterly instincts come into play. Choose your colors well, and apply to metal surfaces, drying between coats. You may, however, want to create a more antiqued, weathered look, in which case you'll rub some of the polish off while still wet. Nail polish brushes will be fine for most applications. However, you may have some very fine detail you want to paint, so use a standard art brush with a fine point for those details. When you've achieved the surface color look you want, apply a clear topcoat to seal; dry.

5. Attach altered vintage components: Chain is one of the strongest things to which you can attach your newly painted components. Simply use wire in a strong enough gauge (anything smaller than 24-gauge is too weak) to attach securely by wrapping multiple times.