

IN

with the old

by Candace Silber

A stash of vintage buttons and a recent acquisition of jump rings stirred my creative juices. I set out to design a bracelet that blends old and new materials yet preserves the buttons' integrity by not removing the shanks. Since the antique buttons are honored, this project appeals to seasoned button collectors as well as beaders. You can easily complete a bracelet in an hour – great for beginner and intermediate jewelry makers.

stepbystep

Construct the bracelet by threading pairs of seed beads on jump rings, then add alternating crow roller beads and buttons. I don't recommend glass crow rollers from India because of inconsistencies. Pressed glass beads are best. This pattern makes a 7½-inch (19cm) bracelet, but you can increase or decrease the material counts to vary the length: Add or subtract groups of 1 button, 2 jump rings, 8 seed beads, and 1 crow roller bead. If you use larger bead than I did, incorporate larger jump rings as well.

I like to flatten the button shanks slightly so the buttons lie flat against my wrist. This optional step (**photo a**) can be done by inserting chainnose pliers into a shank and squeezing until it becomes flat. Repeat with all buttons. Most of the bracelet's materials are readily available at local craft and bead stores, or you can purchase kits directly from me.

❶ Open one jump ring with chainnose pliers (see "Basics," p. 180).

❷ Slide the following onto the jump ring: 2 seed beads, lobster claw clasp, 2 seeds, and 1 crow roller bead. Close the jump ring as shown in "Basics." To close a jump ring securely, pull and push the ends back into the plane and continue a little past closed. Then jiggle them back to meet exactly. This helps harden the metal so the ring is less likely to pull open.

❸ Slip a second jump ring through the first crow roller. Add 2 seeds on each side of the open ring. Keep the ring open (**photo b**).

❹ Grip one end of the open ring with chainnose pliers. Slip a button onto the other end of the open ring, so that the button faces up and the clasp faces down. Close the ring with another pair of chainnose pliers or the tip of roundnose pliers held with your other hand (**photo c**).

❺ Open another jump ring. Slip it through the first button shank. Add 2 seeds on each side of the ring (**photo d**) then a crow roller. Hold the ends of the ring with both pliers and close it.

❻ Repeat steps 3-5 until you've attached the last roller bead. Close the ring.

❼ Slip the final jump ring through the last roller bead and close it. Use this ring as the other clasp end. •

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a

Combine antique buttons with modern beads for a retro bracelet



b



c



d

materials

- 9 Antique or new metal buttons, approx. ½-in. (1.3 cm) diameter with thin wire shanks
 - 20 9mm Jump rings, 19-gauge
 - 76 Japanese seed beads, size 6°
 - 10 6mm Crow roller beads
 - 1 Lobster claw clasp, medium
- Tools:** round- and chainnose pliers or two chainnose pliers