



Crystal Drops

Simple loops make elegant earrings.

KAREN KEEGAN

Photo by Jim Lawson.

These are the fastest earrings ever!

Hang your beautiful crystals from simple wire-wrapped loops, attach ear wires, and you're ready to go.



WHAT YOU NEED

- Large sterling silver ear wires
- Small sterling silver ear wires
- Large cubic zirconia (CZ) crystals
- Swarovski briolettes, 6.5x13mm
- 24-gauge sterling silver wire
- 20-gauge 5mm jump rings
- Round-nose pliers
- Chain-nose pliers
- Wire cutters

Large earrings

The large CZ crystals have very tiny holes, so it's a good idea to take a sample of your wire with you when you shop to make sure you have the right gauge.

- 1 Cut 3" of 24-gauge sterling silver wire. Using chain-nose pliers, grasp the wire 1/2" from the end and bend it to a 45° angle. Thread the briolette onto the wire, then bend it into a triangle over the top of the briolette. One leg will be longer than the other.



2 Using chain-nose pliers, grasp the base of the longer wire and bend it back down a bit, so it is almost parallel with the briolette. Using round-nose pliers, grasp the long wire next to the bend and create a loop by bringing the wire up and over the top of the pliers.



3 Grasp the loop with chain-nose pliers and wrap the wire around the base 3 times. Trim the excess wire with flush cutters.



4 Open the loop on the ear wire and place the wire-wrapped loop on the ear wire. Before you close the loop, check to be sure your crystal is hanging the way you want it to (sometimes one side looks better facing out than the other).

Small earrings

5 The Swarovski briolettes can accommodate a 20-gauge 5mm jump ring. Open the jump ring and thread it through the briolette hole. Before closing the jump ring, attach it to the loop on your ear wire. Close the jump ring, making sure the ends meet.

RESOURCES: Large sterling silver ear wires: Saki Silver www.sakisilver.com. Small sterling silver ear wires: MultiCreations NJ Inc., www.multicreationsnj.com. Large crystals: Beadabead, www.beadabead.com. Small Swarovski crystals: Auntie's Beads, www.auntiesbeads.com. 24-gauge sterling silver wire: T. B. Hagstoz & Sons Inc., www.hagstoz.com. 5mm jump rings: Rio Grande, www.riogrande.com.



KAREN KEEGAN has been making custom jewelry creations for five years through her business, Karen Keegan Designs, and has been a decorative painter for over fifteen years. Currently, she is the Event Manager for Bead Fest and Bead Expo.