

PAYING RESPECT TO THE BEAD!

From the Roman empress Cleopatra to the celebrated actress Audrey Hepburn, beaded jewellery has always maintained its unvarying desirability. Anybody scavenging ancient history books would find that beads were even found buried in Roman graves & Egyptian tombs.



It is believed that beaded jewellery can even be traced back to the Stone Age, when humans just barely learned to use basic tools for secure living. In the early ages men and women both have used many different types of materials as beaded jewellery to adorn themselves. The list includes items like bones from wild animals, sea-shells, gemstones, metal, glass, wood and even animal teeth. Today, bead-crafters use an amazing assortment of beads in many sizes, shapes and forms to make impressive jewellery that is primarily worn by women. To unearth the magic of beads we need to be acquainted with the different types that exist. The most common ones are:
Pearl beads – These beads are actual pearls with holes drilled into them.

These can be very expensive since original pearls are a rare item. Jewellers in any part of the world make it a point to keep at least few designs in stock due to the immense popularity of this special type of ornament. Fake pearls or plastic beads in the shape of pearls are available everywhere and are accessible at much more affordable prices. The easiest way to recognise an authentic pearl from a fake one is to compare every single bead in an embellishment. If there's a fine resemblance between all the beads and they look all the same, there is a high chance that the pearls are fake. Real pearls will look slightly dissimilar. Pearl jewellery can be paired off with any kind of formalwear helping to enhance the outfit with a sophisticated edge.
Plastic beads – Beads of this type are fairly cheap and give out a very amateurish look when worn by adults. These are well-suited for young children. Plastic beads are lightweight and are easily available in many different colours, sizes and shapes.
Metal beads – These kinds of beads are usually plated with gold or silver, having intricate design details engraved into

them. Made famous by Mughal Empresses, these ornaments give out a vintage feel.
Wooden beads – Wooden beads can be painted, stained or waxed. This sort of lightweight beaded jewellery gives out a very natural & rustic look and can be easily donned at casual parties.
Glass beads – The most versatile form of beaded jewellery is formed with glass beads. They are available in many different colours and levels of transparency. Glass beads give out a shine and sparkle similar to more expensive beads like the crystal ones. These affordable pieces are a jewel junkie's haven and a bead-crafter's answer to prayers. Glass beads can be worn with any formal attire be it the sensuous sari or a classy gown.
Semi-precious stone beads – The cheap form of these beads are actually made of plastic or glass that almost accurately resembles gemstones. The original ornaments however, actually comprise of the semi-precious stones. In modern times, experts consider only four categories of stones as precious: diamonds, emeralds, rubies and sapphires. The rest of the gemstones available are regarded as semi-precious, such

as malachite, hematite, jasper, rose quartz, lapis lazuli, tigers-eye etc. These semi-precious beaded ornaments look great when worn in combination with solid coloured cotton saris. The main idea is to highlight the jewellery and that can be done by keeping the dress as simplistic as possible.
Charm beads – Beads that are carved or painted are called charm beads. Most of these beads are carved into shapes that are considered lucky by many for e.g. owls. Since a lot of carving has to be done these beads are usually made of metal and are larger than regular beads in size. Sometimes charm beads are often the focal point of jewellery like the center piece of a necklace. Charm bead jewellery looks with Western outfits like jeans and t-shirts.
Seed beads – These are typical spherical glass beads that can be opaque, translucent, transparent, multicoloured, lustre perfect, matte or iridescent. There are many other shapes for seed beads like the cylindrical shapes which are very popular in Japan. The Russians, have developed their own cuts for seed beads called the Charlotte-cut beads which has become quite popular all over the world.
 Whatever form it may take, beaded jewellery is still one of the most popular types of jewellery which is also endlessly customisable. The main idea behind beaded jewellery is to be able to highlight them in every way. Some of these jewellerys directly take all the attention from the crowd while others demand that the wearer pay respect and tie-off their style in accordance with what goes with the ornament.
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