

Introduction to Chainmaille

Adorn Jewellery Tools & Supply

What Is Chainmaille?

- The act of weaving rings together to make a metal fabric
- Traditionally used for making armour
- Modern functional uses include protective clothing/gloves for uses such as shark hunting or butchering
- Non-functional uses include jewellery/artistic design

Parts of the Ring

- OD – Outer Diameter
- ID – Inner Diameter
- Aspect Ratio
- Kerf
- Gauge

Types of Chainmaille Weaves

European

- The European family consists of the weaves that were traditionally used for armor and jewelry across Europe and the Middle East. European weaves typically have a flow that expands and contracts in one direction but not the other with two sets of ring "planes" that lie in opposite planes.

Japanese

- The Japanese family consists of the weaves that were used traditionally in Japan for armor and decoration. Japanese weaves are characterized by the use of 90° ring connections, with horizontal rings joined by vertical "connector" rings where the horizontal rings are usually much larger than the connector rings.

Persian

- The Persian family is based on a "stacked" ring orientation. The name is misleading since there is no historical evidence to support the use of these weaves in Persia at any time. Most of these weaves are modern creations. The construction of Persian weaves is similar to European weaves except that the rings become stacked and form pairs of rings, resulting in a different flow and a thicker, much tighter weave.

This excerpt is from The Ring Lord
www.theringlord.com

Types of Chainmaille Weaves

Hybrid

- The Hybrid category contains weaves that don't fit into any of the other categories. Weaves that combine techniques from more than one categories or can't be classified easily fall under Hybrid.

Orbital/Captive

- Orbital/Captive weaves are defined by the use of rings that "orbit" other rings or are trapped within them.

Spiral

- The Spiral category is composed of weaves where the rings are linked in a helical fashion. Spiral weaves were used historically in various parts of the world as jewelry. All spiral weaves have left and right handed versions.

Tools To Make Chainmaille

- Flat Nose or Chain nose pliers
 - May be any combination of 2
- Fine Needle File
- Polishing Cloth
- Flush Cutters or Shears
- Dowels
- Flex Shaft or Jeweller's Saw
- Tumbler

Quick Tips

- For fast assembly, have a number of jump rings opened, and a number of jump rings neatly closed before starting
- Be sure to use jeweller's pliers and if necessary, protect tips with masking tape or tool dip to prevent marking the rings
- Double check that all your rings for each step are neatly closed to ensure that they won't scratch skin or snag on clothes
- Use a file to remove any burrs (or trim neatly with flush cutters)
- To quickly clean your piece, put it in a jar filled $\frac{1}{4}$ of water and add some dish soap. Put the lid on tightly and shake.

Open & Close Rings

- Rings should always be opened in a back and forth direction, never by spreading wide
- A properly opened ring will take the appearance of an “S” shape.
- A poorly opened ring will take the appearance of a “w” shape
- There should never be a gap between the edges of a ring. Rings should be tightly closed to ensure that the piece does not fall apart
- To ensure that you are going to close the gap, you should hear a slight clicking sound of both ends of the ring as they are moved together and actually are forced against each other.