

Tension Tips

I am frequently asked how I keep such tight tension in my beaded boxes and vessels. By studying my process closely I discovered that the key is not to pull the thread extra tight, but rather to keep constant tension on the thread. Grab the thread as close to the beadwork as possible whenever you pull. Never pull with the needle.

The following method is what works for me:

1. Pinch the beadwork between the thumb and forefinger of your non-dominant hand [fig A]. Slide the thread so that it's trapped between your finger or thumb and the beadwork. The trapped thread should be taut and the previous bead should be firmly in place.

2. Pick up a new bead with the needle and sew through the next bead [fig B]. As you pull through, the thread trapped under your finger / thumb will slide out [fig C]. Keep the thread pulled taut with your dominant hand [fig D].

Repeat steps B through D for each new bead, keeping constant tension on the thread. While pinching the beadwork, use the tip of your thumb and forefinger to hold the last bead in place until the next bead is established.

fig A

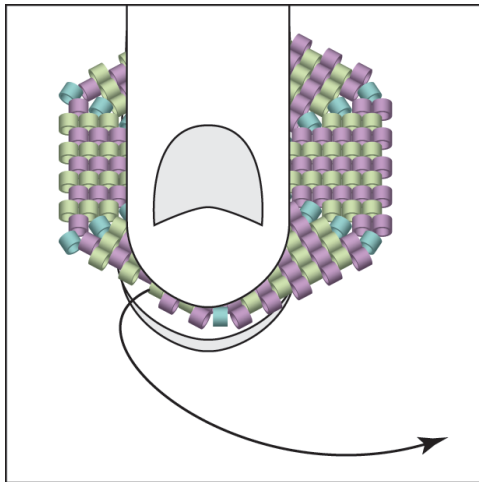


fig B

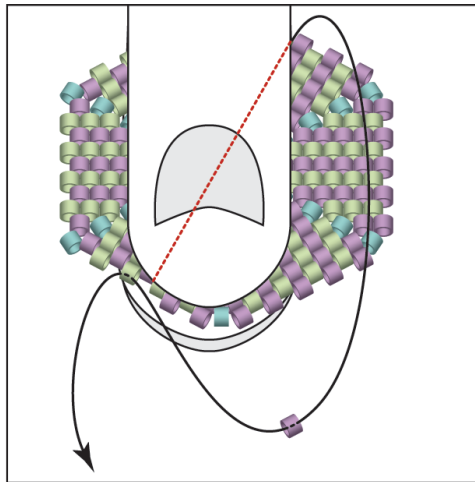


fig C

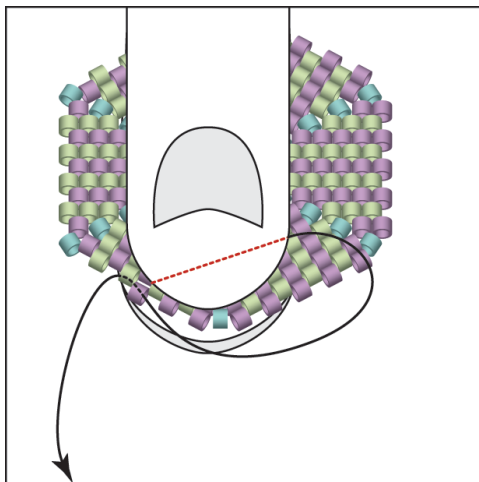


fig D

