

# Mistletoe Earrings

An original design by Laura McCabe, ©2011

Instructions by Laura McCabe, Illustrations by Melissa Grakowsky-Shippee



## Materials:

- 15° Japanese seed beads, color A, 3 grams  
color B, 46 beads
- 15° Czech charlottes, 54 beads
- 11° Japanese seed beads, 42 beads
- 11° Japanese cylinder beads, 72 beads
- 3mm fresh water pearls, 18 pearls
- 4-6mm round glass beads or pearl, 2 beads
- French ear wires, one pair

## Notions:

- Size 12 English beading needles
- Size 13 English beading needles (for use with charlottes)
- Beading thread (fireline, one-g, nymo, etc . . .)

## Tools:

- scissors
- microcrystalline wax
- pliers

-  15° Czech charlottes
-  15° Japanese seed beads (A)
-  15° Japanese seed beads (B)
-  11° Japanese cylinder beads
-  11° Japanese round seed beads
-  4-6mm round bead, pearl or glass
-  3mm fresh water pearls

### Step One: Building the Leaves

The larger leaves used in the mistletoe earrings are actually build separately using peyote stitch and then later attached using the working thread on the herringbone tube which comprises the central "stalk" of the mistletoe.

1. Begin by threading up approximately 20 inches of beading thread onto a size 12 English beading needle. Wax well.

2. String up six 11° cylinder beads and three 15°As. Change thread direction and go back through the sixth cylinder bead to create a picot of the 15°. Peyote stitch back toward the first cylinder bead, adding a total of three cylinder beads, one at a time. At the base of the leaf, after stringing up the third cylinder bead, go back up through the first cylinder bead strung up at the beginning of #2. **(figure 1)**

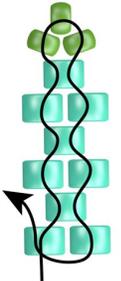


figure 1

3. Peyote stitch three 15°As, added one at a time. Then, pass through all three 15° beads at the tip of the leaf. Peyote stitch three more 15°As, added one at a time. When you reach the base of the leaf, change thread direction and step up through one cylinder bead and one 15°A. **(figure 2)**

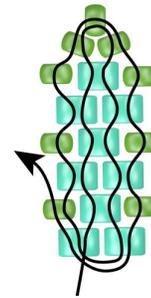


figure 2

4. Peyote stitch two 15°Bs, added one at a time. Then, pass through all five 15° beads at the tip of the leaf. Peyote stitch two more 15°Bs. When you reach the base of the leaf, you have completed the leaf. **(figure 3)** If you pull tightly as you do this last round, you can cause the leaf form to curl and take on shape more like the shape of actual mistletoe leaves.



figure 3

5. Weave off both the working thread and the tail thread, half hitching once or twice within the leaf before cutting the tails.

6. Make 7 more leaves following the instructions above in #1 through #5.

### Step 2: Starting the Herringbone Tube

Tubular herringbone can be started in several ways, however these instructions are for a basic three row start.

1. Begin by threading up approximately 6 feet of beading thread onto a size 12 English beading needle. Wax well.

2. String up eight 15°As and pass through the first 15° again to make a circle of beads. Leave approximately 9 inches of tail thread. Do not tie a knot. **(figure 4)**

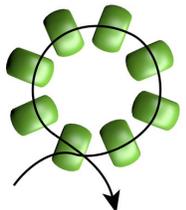


figure 4

3. String up two 15°As and pass through the very next 15° in the circle. Skip over the next two 15°s in the circle (with the thread on the outside) and pass through the bead after that. String up two more 15°As and pass through the next 15° in the circle. Skip over the next two 15°s in the circle (with the thread on the outside) and pass through the bead after that. Step up through the first bead added in #3. **(figure 5)**

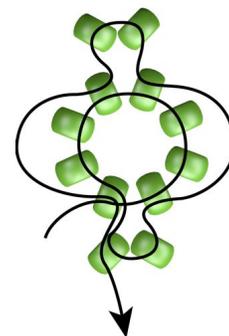


figure 5

4. Pull on the working thread and the tail thread at the same time to pull the beads up into a herringbone tube with 3 complete rows. Weave two more rows, for a total of 5 rows of herringbone. Be sure to step up at the end of each row to keep the tubular herringbone straight and to avoid spiraling. **(figure 6)**



figure 6

### Step 3: Attaching the Leaves to the Herringbone Tube

Both the leaves and the berries are attached to the herringbone tube as you build the tube, so there is no need to go back and add embellishments later.

1. Using the working thread on the herringbone tube, and coming out of the first bead in first ladder (where you left off in Step 2, #4), string up one 11° round pass through one of the two cylinder beads at the base of a leaf. Change thread direction and pass through the second of the two cylinder beads at the base of the leaf. Go back down through the 11° round, and down through the second bead in the first ladder of the herringbone tube.

2. Now string up one 11° and three 15°As. Go back down through the 11° round (creating a picot of the 15°s), and up through the first bead in the second ladder of the herringbone tube.

3. String up one 11° round and pass through one of the two cylinder beads at the base of a second leaf. Change thread direction and pass through the second of the two cylinder beads at the base of the leaf. Pass down through the 11° added at the beginning of #3 and down through the first bead in the second ladder of the herringbone tube.

4. Now string up one 11° round and three 15°As. Go back down through the 11° round (creating a picot of the 15°s), and up through the first bead in the first ladder of the herringbone tube. (See [figure 7](#) for #1 through #4 in this step. Also see [figure 8](#) for a side view of #1 through #4 in this step.)

Before adding another round of leaf embellishments to the herringbone tube, you'll need to weave a section of three rows to allow spacing between embellishment rounds.

5. Coming out of the first bead in the first ladder of herringbone (where you left off in #4), resume normal herringbone, adding two beads at a time to each ladder and making sure to step up at the end of each round. You may need to push the leaf embellishments back so they don't try to sneak inside the tube and so you can see what you're doing better. ([figure 9](#))

6. Do two more rows, for a total of three rows of herringbone beyond the embellishment round. ([figure 10](#))

You will now do another round of leaf embellishments, however the larger leaf embellishments will be rotated round one place to allow for alternating positions from the embellishment round done previously in #1 through #4 of this step.

7. Using the working thread on the herringbone tube, and coming out of the first bead in first ladder (where you left off in Step 2, #6), string up one 11° and three 15°As. Go back down through the 11° round (creating a picot of the 15°s), and down through the second bead in the first ladder of the herringbone tube.

8. String up one 11° round pass through one of the two cylinder beads at the base of a third leaf. Change thread direction and pass through the second of the two cylinder beads at the base of the leaf. Go back through the 11° round, and up through the first bead in the second ladder of the herringbone tube.

9. String up one 11° round and three 15°As. Go back down through the 11° round (creating a picot of the 15°s), and down through the second bead in the second ladder of the herringbone tube.

10. Now string up one 11° round and pass through one of the two cylinder beads at the base of a fourth leaf. Change thread direction and pass through the second of the two cylinder beads at the base of the leaf. Pass

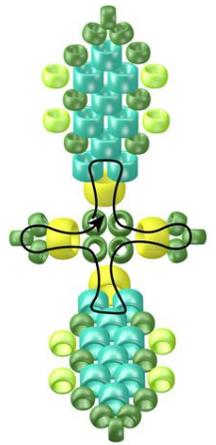


figure 7

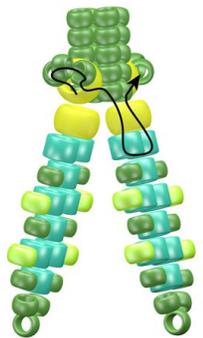


figure 8

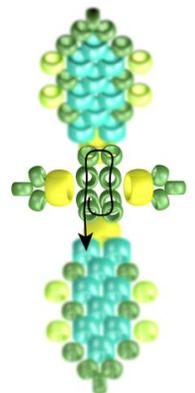


figure 9

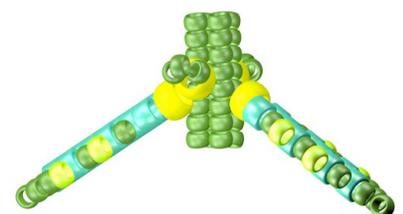


figure 10

down through the 11° added at the beginning of #10 and up through the first bead in the first ladder of herringbone. (See **figure 11** for #7 through #10 in this step.)

11. Resume herringbone and stitch two more rows. (**figure 12**)

12. Do one final round of leaf embellishments, this time adding one of the smaller leaf embellishments (one 11° and a picot of three 15°s) between each bead in the herringbone ladders. (**figure 13**)

13. Resume herringbone and stitch two more rows. (**also visible in figure 13**)

#### Step 4: Attaching the Berries to the Herringbone Tube

Tiny 3mm pearls are used to embellish the ends of the herringbone tubes, creating the mistletoe "berries."

1. Coming out of the first bead in the first ladder of herringbone (where you left off at the end of step 3), string up one 11° round, one 3mm pearl and three 15° Czech charlottes. Go back through pearl and the 11°, creating a picot of the charlottes. Go down through the second bead in the first ladder of herringbone.

2. String up one 11° round, one 3mm pearl and three 15° Czech charlottes. Go back through pearl and the 11°, creating a picot of the charlottes. Go up through the first bead in the second ladder of herringbone.

3. String up one 11° round, one 3mm pearl and three 15° Czech charlottes. Go back through pearl and the 11°, creating a picot of the charlottes. Go down through the second bead in the second ladder of herringbone.

4. String up one 11° round, one 3mm pearl and three 15° Czech charlottes. Go back through pearl and the 11°, creating a picot of the charlottes. Go up through the first bead in the first ladder of herringbone. (See **figure 14** for #1 through #4 in this step)

5. Resume herringbone and stitch one more row. (**figure 15**)

6. Repeat #1 through #4 in this step to create a second round of 4 berry embellishments. (**figure 16**)

7. Resume herringbone and stitch one more row. (**figure 17**)

8. Coming out of the first bead in the first ladder of herringbone (where you left off in #7), string up one 11° round, one pearl and three Czech charlottes. Go back down through the pearl and 11° and down into the second bead in the first ladder of herringbone.

9. Come up through the first bead in the second ladder of herringbone. Pass through the 11°, pearl and picot of Czech charlottes. Then back down through the pearl and the 11° and down into the second bead in the second ladder of herringbone. This will successfully finish off the last berry on the stalk. Half hitch the working thread once or twice before

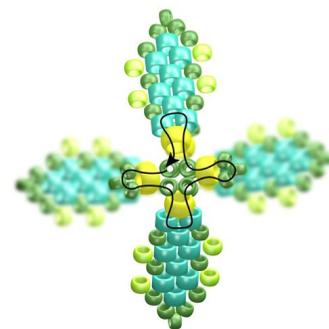


figure 11

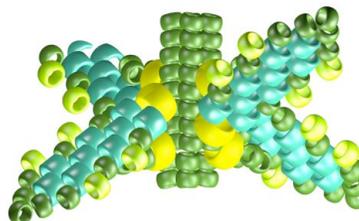


figure 12

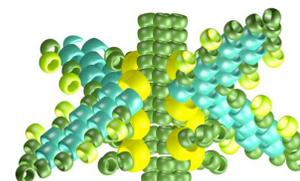


figure 13

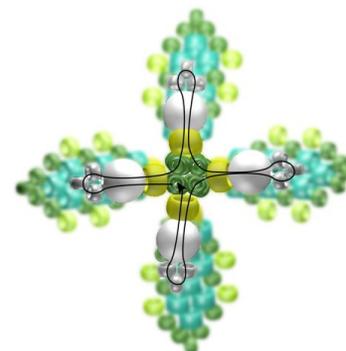


figure 14

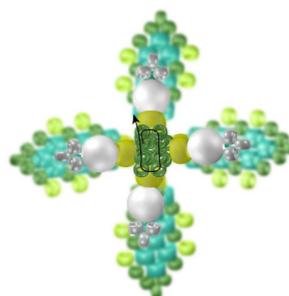


figure 15

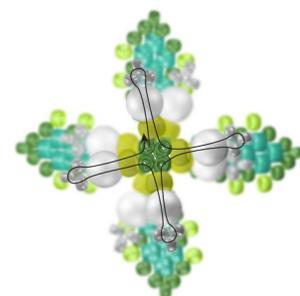


figure 16



figure 17

cutting off the tail. (See [figure 18](#) for #8 and #9)

### Step 5: Finishing off the Top of the Earring

The top-end of the earring is finished off with a simple single 4-6mm bead and loop of seed beads. You can use a glass bead or a pearl. In this case, I choose a bright red pearl, as red is the color of the ribbon used to tie up mistletoe.

1. Thread up the tail thread that is coming out of the top end of the herringbone tube. Make sure the thread is coming out of the first 15° in the first ladder of the herringbone tube. String up one 4-6mm bead or pearl and seven 15°Bs. Go back down through the bead/pearl and into the second bead in the first ladder of herringbone. ([figure 19](#))

2. Change thread direction and come up through the first bead in the second ladder of herringbone. Go back up through the bead/pearl, through the seven 15°s, back down through the bead/pearl, and down into the second bead in the second ladder of herringbone. Weave off your thread, half hitching once or twice before cutting the tail. ([figure 20](#))

### Step 6: Attaching the Ear Wire

Once the earring is complete, the only thing left to do is attach the French ear wire. Using a pair of pliers, pry open the loop on the ear wire, slip the loop of beads at the top of the earring over the ear wire loop and squeeze closed again.

**Repeat steps 1 through 6 again to create a second earring.**

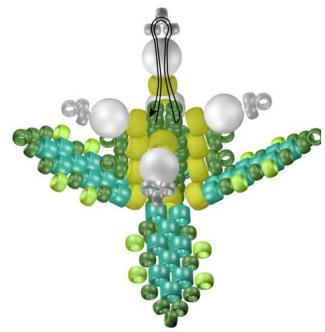


figure 18



figure 19



figure 20



The tradition of hanging mistletoe in doorways between Christmas and New Years has quite a history. While the first documented "kissing" under the mistletoe goes back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there appears to be a much earlier Celtic and Druid tradition tied to mistletoe branches. Regardless of its origins, it remains to this day a symbol of good luck, true love, and holiday magic.

"Mistletoe Earrings" pattern is intended as a gift from the artist to her fellow bead people. Share the pattern and enjoy the project, but please, in keeping with the original intent, do not teach, sell or otherwise use this project for financial gain. Few things in life are free – as for the things that are – let's keep them that way.

