



By Linda Hartung
with Stacy Werkheiser

FunJig flowers

See how your garden grows with WireLace and a new jig.

The WireLace FunJig comes with a caution on the package: “highly addictive fun!” And it’s true. Jigs in general are great for making consistent shapes and angles, and they lend just the right amount of support to free-form wirework.

The FunJig was specifically designed for making flowers with WireLace. If you’ve never worked with a jig or WireLace before, this technique is a good introduction to both.

Meet the jig

The FunJig measures about 2½ x 5 in. (6.4 x 12.7 cm). It has holes for the starting and ending pegs (at the far left and right), two rows of holes that hug a center cutout, and seven lines of holes that radiate out from the center.

At first, this configuration might seem a bit odd — how do you make a whole flower from what appears to be a half-flower arrangement? Don’t worry; the petals you make on the jig will spread out to create all 360 degrees of your WireLace flower.

The jig comes with 20 tapered pegs that fit securely in the holes. If your design requires more than 20 pegs, you can move pegs as you create the flower, as we’ll see in the spider mum project.

Loading the WireLace

WireLace is a thin tubular mesh that requires a wire core to keep its shape. For the core wire, we recommend 24-gauge enameled craft wire in a color that coordinates with your WireLace.

Begin by cutting the length of wire indicated for your project, and make a U-bend about 1 in. (25.5 mm) from the end to create a hook. Cut a piece

Difficulty level



Materials

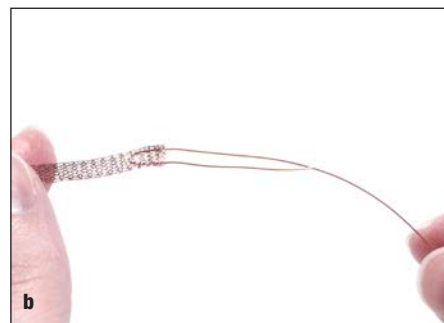
Spider mum pin 3 in. (76 mm)

- 7½ ft. (2.3 m) 3 mm WireLace (www.alacartecclasps.com)
- 9½ ft. (2.9 m) 24-gauge (0.5 mm) enameled craft wire (color to coordinate with WireLace)
- Three-tier crystal cabochon (www.alacartecclasps.com/funjig.aspx), assorted beads and head pins, or flat-back crystals
- Pin-back finding
- 5 g two-part epoxy clay
- Wire cutters
- FunJig (www.alacartecclasps.com/funjig.aspx)
- Mod Podge Gloss and wedge-style makeup sponge (optional)

of WireLace that’s about 6 in. (15.2 cm) shorter than your core wire, and insert the bend of the hook into one end of the WireLace. Make sure the core wire doesn’t poke through the weave.

Feed the entire length of core wire through the WireLace until there’s an equal length of wire extending from each end. Try pushing the WireLace onto the core wire rather than pushing the core wire through the WireLace. As the WireLace begins to bunch along the core wire, smooth it out with your fingers. The goal is to keep the WireLace smooth and straight, not twisted.

Now you’re ready to begin working with your WireLace! The adventure starts with a spider mum flower.



Spider mum

1 Arrange the pegs in the FunJig as shown (a). Note that there will be three pegs in each line radiating from the center, except for the last line, which only has one. You will move two pegs to this line later.

2 Cut 8 ft. (2.4 m) of 24-gauge wire and 7½ ft. (2.3 m) of 3 mm WireLace. Follow the instructions for “Loading the WireLace” (b).