

Lentil Clasp Project

STEP 1

Decide on the size of the overall clasp. Will it be a small discreet clasp placed at the back of the neck or a larger main decorative fastening element at the front? For your first attempt don't go too tiny! A 10mm circle would be a good diameter to start with.

STEP 2

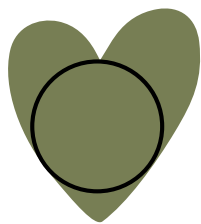
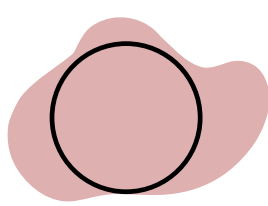
Use 0.5mm sheet metal to make three circles, two for domes, one for base circle. Use a disc cutter, select the size and cut three circles. Alternatively use a saw and cut them out. Use 1mm sheet to cut the final circle of the same size. Sand the edge of the domes onto emery to create flat surface for soldering.

STEP 3

Anneal two 0.5mm discs, quench and dry. Use a doming block and metal punch to dome your discs one at a time. Start with a larger, shallower punch and take it in steps with smaller, deeper punches to create the perfect matching domes. Check that they have come out slightly smaller than the remaining two flat discs (1 x 0.5mm & 1 x 1mm)

STEP 4

You will be making a key and a key hole, they match on both sides. One side of the lentil clasp will form the key. This will be a shape that can only be lined up in one way, an equilateral triangle as suggested by the original source (T McCreight) has three ways of opening making it a poor catch. Don't make your shape too complicated but do make sure that a circle can fit onto your shape and that at least three sides make contact



STEP 5

Make sure the shape you choose for your key fits neatly in the circle allowing for room for movement. I would suggest the shape to be roughly half to two thirds of the size of the circle. Cut the key from 1mm sheet metal and stamp or cut a circle to fit as shown above in 1mm sheet. Solder into together to create a little tower.

STEP 6

Line up the key central to the 1mm flat disc and mark the design. Drill and pierce out the shape just slightly inside the marked line. This will give you metal to carefully file back to the perfect fit.

STEP 7

Ensure all components are pickled, rinsed and dry. Solder the 0.5mm disc onto one dome. Quench, pickle, rinse and dry. Line up the tower centrally to the flat side and solder in place.

STEP 8

solder the key hole disc to the remaining dome. Quench, pickle, rinse and dry. Try your two halves. They should turn to lock. If they do not turn consider the connection between the 1mm keyhole and 1mm circle tower. Does it need a slight file?

STEP 9

Ensure that your two halves swivel in place and then carefully consider the line up of the jump rings to attach the chain to.

STEP 10

Tubes cut in half to work well as the grip is greater than using round wire. Remember that you will be unable to line the jump rings up with chain on when opening so have them slightly away from each other, but as far away to the opening line-up as possible for a secure lock.



FURTHER READING:

Complete Metalsmith by Tim McCreight