

So You Want To Buy Some Pliers?

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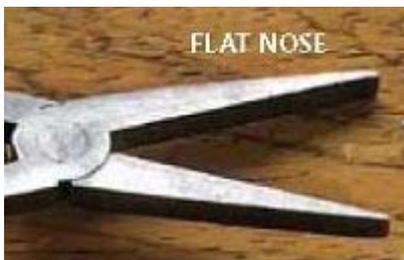
Chain-nose pliers usually have tapered jaws that are flat inside and half round on the outside. Their jaws may be extra long or curved. They're ideal for loops and curves with a small radius.



Bent-nose (or bent chain-nose) pliers are wire jewelry expert (and *Step-by-Step Wire Jewelry* magazine editor) Denise Peck's favorites. "The best tip I ever learned in jewelry school was to use two bent-nose pliers for opening and closing jump rings. Bent-nose pliers allow you to firmly grasp both sides of the ring without obscuring the opening from view."



Cutters (or nippers) are pliers with a cutting edge that may be on the side or at the end of their jaws. The cutting edge may sever wire cleanly (as with flush cutters) so that one or both wire ends are flat, for a smooth fit, or they may simply cut wire, leaving a small peak or point where the wire was pinched during cutting.



Flat-nose pliers have jaws that are flat inside and out and have squared ends. They're best for angular bends and for drawing or pulling.



Round-nose pliers have round jaws that taper from their point to their broader base. They're ideal for making loops, coils, and curved bends. (Tip: To make consistently sized loops for a project or when making lots of eye pins, mark the jaws with a marker and make all your loops on that line.)



Confirming pliers are mostly for working with (or creating) corrugated metals. Their edges are thin, flat, and wide, making them ideal for pinching or "confirming" edges of metal folds. Tip: I also find them handy to hold a wider strip of metal when I'm texturing or stamping on it, rather than using regular pliers (which can leave marks around where their skinny jaws grip the metal) or my fingers (which can get whacked!).

Those are the basics; there are dozens of other varieties of specialized pliers available, including ring bending, looping, hole punching, tube cutting, rosary, bow opening, forming, and many others.

Jewelry Tool Hinge Types

Jewelry-making tools such as pliers and cutters can have different kinds of hinges, which can improve their ease of use, strength, and longevity.

Box-joint hinges are the most expensive and will not loosen over time.

Parallel-action jaw hinges keep your pliers' jaws parallel to each other (as opposed to the pincer-like movement of other pliers' jaws).

Riveted lap joint hinges are less expensive hinges and less durable than box-joint hinges, but they provide greater leverage.