

More About Beads...

In addition to the shape and size of your beads, another factor to consider when choosing beads for a project is the type of bead finish. Understanding the different types of bead finishes will help you make the best choice for the effect you desire.

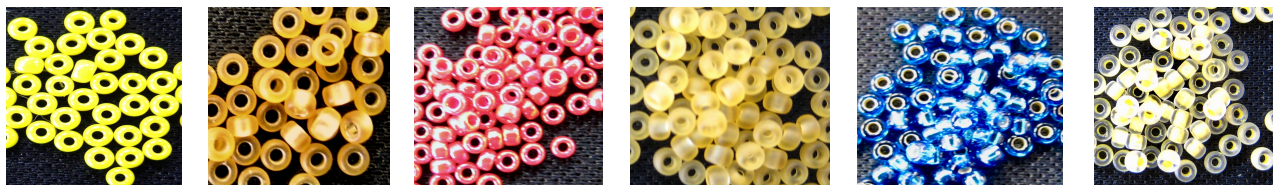
Opaque

Opaque beads are those in which you cannot see through the bead. Also known as **Solids**, there is very little shine to these beads. In a **Matte** finish, the beads have been processed to remove the top outside layer, leaving a smooth, non-shiny, non-reflective surface. **Plated** beads have a covering applied to the outside; for most of the beads we use, that plating is of a metallic finish in gold, silver or other metals. Be cautious of lower-quality plastic beads that have been plated in either a metallic or color finish; the plating can easily chip off the plastic and ruin the look of your finished piece. A **Satin** finish will have the appearance of satin fabric, with the color changing depending on your viewing angle.

Transparent/Translucent

In a **Transparent** bead, you will be able to see through the bead. These are otherwise known as **Clear** beads. A **Translucent** bead will allow light to shine through the bead, although you will not be able to see clearly through the bead. Both of these types of beads add a subtle shine to your stitched area without becoming a focal element of your stitch pattern. In other words, they play well with friends. **Color Lined** beads have a color added inside the bead hole after the bead is made. How much of the color lining is visible depends on whether the bead is transparent or translucent. Some beads are lined with metals such as silver or gold. You may see the abbreviations CL for Color Lined or SL for Silver Lined added to the bead color name. **Opal** finishes are semi-transparent and have a milky appearance. **Frosted** beads are color-lined beads with a slight matte finish. **Aurora Borealis** (also known as AB, iris or rainbow) have a finish with several highlights. The highlights may be in the same color family, or they may include gold or silver.

Some finishes apply equally well to either opaque or transparent beads. Each one affects the look of the bead in a slightly different way. Beautiful effects can be achieved by combining the different types of beads and bead finishes in your stitching. For example, if you are beading a distinct shape, use an AB or SL bead for your highlights; a CL, Opal or Frosted bead for your main shape; and an Opaque or Matte bead for your shadows. However, don't be afraid to "stretch the rules" and have fun playing with the different bead finishes. There is no right or wrong in art!



Left to Right:

Opaque, Matte Silver Lined, Opaque AB, Matte Translucent, Plated , Color Lined Crystal.