Lapis lazuli and pyrite pair up with chain mail to make a necklace and bracelet set with old-world appeal

by Julia Gerlach

Lapis lazuli, or “stone of azure,” was one of the first stones used in jewelry. It was highly prized by ancient Egyptian pharaohs for its intense blue, and it remains popular today. Lapis is often found near pyrite deposits. The best quality lapis, mostly found in Afghanistan, has tiny specks of pyrite evenly distributed throughout the stone. The beads used here have large pyrite inclusions and are a less-expensive option than those of a higher grade.
1. **Necklace** - Open four 5mm (A) jump rings and close four A jump rings (Basics). Make two 2+2 links by sliding pairs of open jump rings through pairs of closed jump rings. Close the open jump rings.

2. a. Open a 6mm (B) jump ring, and slide it through a pair of As on each 2+2 link. Close the B.
   b. Repeat steps 1 and 2a to make a total of 13 units. (My necklace is 18 1⁄2 in./47cm.)

3. Cut a 3 1⁄2-in. (8.9cm) piece of 22-gauge wire, and make the first half of a wrapped loop (Basics) at one end. The wrapped loop needs to be large enough to accommodate two 16-gauge jump rings. Repeat to make a total of 12 wrapped-loop units.

4. a. With a jump-ring unit, flip an end pair of As back to expose the inner pair of As.
   b. Spread this pair of As to expose the flipped pair.
   c. Attach a wrapped loop to the flipped As; complete the wraps.
   d. String a 2mm silver bead, a 12mm lapis bead, and a 2mm on the wire, and make the first half of a large wrapped loop.

5. With a jump-ring unit, flip an end pair of As back to expose the inner pair of As. Spread this pair of As, and attach the flipped As to the unfinished wrapped loop from step 4c. Complete the wraps.

6. Repeat steps 4 and 5 twice.

7. To attach the clasp, flip the remaining pair of As on the last jump-ring unit. Open an A, and attach it to the flipped jump rings and half of a clasp.

8. Repeat steps 4–7 on the other side of the first jump ring unit. The completed chain consists of 13 jump-ring units alternating with three 4mm-lapis units, six 12mm-lapis units, and three 4mm-lapis units.

9. a. On a head pin, string a 6mm square pyrite bead, and make the first half of a wrapped loop. Make a total of 12 6mm-pyrite bead units. Repeat with 4mm round lapis beads to make a total of 32 4mm-lapis bead units. Repeat with 3mm pyrite beads to make a total of four 3mm-pyrite bead units.
   b. On a head pin, string a 2mm, a 12mm lapis, and a 2mm, and make the first half of a wrapped loop that is large enough to accommodate multiple bead units.

10. Cut a 3-in. (7.6cm) piece of wire. Make a wrapped loop at one end, string a 6mm square pyrite bead, and make the first half of a wrapped loop.

11. Locate the middle B jump ring on the chain, attach the unfinished wrapped loop, and complete the wraps.

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Editor’s note
Prior to the invention of synthetic colorings, ground lapis was used to create the paint pigment ultramarine.
On each side of the pyrite dangle, attach two 4mm-lapis units and one 3mm-pyrite unit to the B.

Attach the wrapped loop of the 12mm lapis bead to the remaining loop of the 6mm-pyrite unit.

To each side of the 12mm’s loop, attach two 4mm-lapis units and one 3mm-pyrite unit.

On each remaining B, attach a 4mm-lapis unit, a 6mm-pyrite unit, and a 4mm-lapis unit. Make sure all the bead units hang from the same side of the necklace and that the chain isn’t twisted.

Open a 7mm jump ring, and attach it to half of a clasp and one jump-ring unit, as in step 7 of the necklace.

Connect the jump-ring units to the wrapped loops, adding a 2mm silver bead, a 12mm lapis bead, and a 2mm on each wire as you go, as in steps 4 and 5 of the necklace.

Attach the other half of the clasp to the end jump-ring unit, as in step 3.

Pair cobalt-colored glass with gray or silver fiber-optic beads for modern appeal. If you have trouble finding flat, square beads for the dangles, this design will look equally good with coin-shaped beads, tubes, or cubes.
Supplies

**necklace**
- 7 12mm round lapis beads (Fire Mountain Gems, firemountaingems.com)
- 38 4mm round lapis beads
- 13 6mm flat square pyrite beads (Eclectica, eclecticabeads.com)
- 4 3mm round pyrite beads
- 16 2mm round silver beads
- 4 ft. (1.2m) 22-gauge sterling silver half-hard wire
- 49 1 1/2- in. (3.8cm) head pins
- 2 pairs of chainnose pliers (or chainnose and bentnose)
- roundnose pliers
- diagonal wire cutters

**bracelet**
- 4 12mm round lapis beads (Fire Mountain Gems)
- 20 4mm round lapis beads
- 10 6mm flat square pyrite beads (Eclectica)
- 8 2mm round silver beads
- 14 in. (36cm) 22-gauge sterling silver half-hard wire
- 31 1 1/2- in. (3.8cm) head pins
- 2 7mm jump rings
- 5 6mm 16-gauge twisted-wire jump rings (Rio Grande)
- 42 5mm 18-gauge jump rings (Rio Grande)
- clasp
- 2 pairs of chainnose pliers (or chainnose and bentnose)
- roundnose pliers
- diagonal wire cutters

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**Beading tip**

**Treatment options**

Gems are treated in different ways to change, improve or intensify their appearance. Some of the most common treatments include:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heating</th>
<th>Therefore, cleaning emeralds with water or an ultrasonic device is not recommended.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heating can lighten, darken, brighten, or clarify a gem's color. Sometimes it can change the color entirely. Rubies, sapphires, tanzanite, citrine, and aquamarine are almost always heated.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Irradiation</th>
<th>Irradiated gems are treated with subatomic particles or radiation. Sometimes irradiation is followed by heating to create a more attractive or different color. Blue topaz and tourmaline are common examples.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irradiation can also change the color of gems such as quartz, agate, and jasper.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Dyeing</th>
<th>Many gems are dyed to create a range of fun and beautiful colors otherwise not found in the gem. As long as there is no deception involved, it is an acceptable treatment. Occasionally stones are dyed to hide flaws. Not all dyeing is permanent and can usually be detected by rubbing the stone in question with nail polish remover.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oiling</td>
<td>Emeralds are always oiled. Oil seeps into the surface fissures and make them less visible.</td>
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