

## **WHAT GLUE DO I USE?**

We often get many questions about what glue to use with rhinestones and other beading and jewelry-making projects. Nothing is perfect, but based on our experiences, here are some good tips:

- (1) Always experiment with your adhesives first, before you use an adhesive on your final project. No one glue works with every project.
- (2) Glues vary widely in terms of which materials they stick to, how well they form a bond between two smooth surfaces, and how the glue bond ages, both in terms of durability and color, and whether the glue expands in volume after it dries, or not.
- (3) Clean the excess glue off your piece before you display or sell it.
- (4) You will probably have to rely on more than one type of glue to accommodate all your types of projects.

## **E6000 and Beacon 527**

My favorite glues are referred to as a 1-part epoxy (but it's not really an epoxy). "1-part" means that you don't have to mix anything to make the glue – it just comes out of a tube.

One brand is called E6000, and this version of the glue is thick in consistency. Another version of the glue is called Beacon 527. This glue is runny. Some people prefer one or the other. E6000 is the first one I used, and I prefer that one. There are other brands as well.



Perfect for attaching findings to base metal and costume jewelry pieces. Also, use E-6000 on bead strands to seal end knots and to provide a strong, flexible seal that won't become brittle or damage the bead cord. E-6000 is safe for use with virtually every type of gemstone and works on wood, leather, vinyl, and canvas.

Non-corrosive and self-leveling, E-6000 adheres in 5 to 10 minutes, and hardens to a clear, waterproof cure in 24 hours. This means you have about 10 minutes to position and reposition whatever you are gluing. After about 20 minutes, you can take your finger and/or a tweezers and rub off any glue that has oozed out from any edges or around any pieces. If you are making jewelry, you should let the piece dry "hard" overnight, before you wear it.

E-6000 dries like rubber, so the glue acts like a shock absorber, as your jewelry moves.

Drawbacks: It doesn't bond well between two smooth pieces of glass. It doesn't bond well to very oily surfaces.

## **Superglue**

Superglue is not our favorite, and has few uses in jewelry design! It often ruins rhinestones (*it discolors them and makes them cloudy*) and other pieces we use in jewelry-making. It's bond is tough, but it

breaks easily. Superglue dries like glass, and the bond shatters like glass. Moreover, the shattered bond looks like a piece of broken glass, so if any stringing material is nearby, the bond can cut it.

We do, however, use superglue occasionally. We prefer a stronger brand of this glue called G-S HypoCement or Watch Crystal Cement. We often use it to seal end knots, or coat a frayed strand of cord. We sometimes use it on crimp beads to enhance the closure. Unlike its super glue cousin, G-S Hypo Cement takes several minutes to set, so you can move things around during this time.



## **Hot Glue Guns**

Hot glue guns are fun to use. When the materials you are using are large and bulky, hot glue guns make the projects go faster.

The glue's bond will not last forever. The glue will yellow with age. The bond weakens at body temperature. If you made a dangly pair of earrings, and hot-glued a rhinestone to the piece that touches the ear, the rhinestone will likely pop off when the earring is worn. If you hot-glued stuff on the dangle, you won't have the same problem.

## **Fabric Cement**

With cords like silk or cotton, we prefer to use a fabric cement, like G-S Hypo Fabric Cement, or a tacky glue like Alenes Fabric Glue.

Regular glues work by forming a collar around what they are securing. As the solvent in the glue evaporates into the air, the collar tightens around the object.

Most cords made of natural materials are very fibrous, and the glue does not adhere to all these little micro-fibers in the cord.

Cements attach themselves to all these micro-fibers.

So, in pearl knotting or mala making, we prefer the fabric cement or tacky glues.

### **Some additional suggestions about glues**

A great book to buy is *The Crafter's Guide To Glues* by Tammy Young. In it she discusses all the types of glues, including the following:

*White glues*, such as Elmer's Glue All

- bond is not strong, so useful for lightweight objects only
- bond is not flexible, so not useful for things where there is movement
- may not dry clear
- materials used must be porous

*Tacky glues*, like hot glue gun

- usually dry clear and are flexible, but can wash out
- body temperature can weaken bond

*Clear Craft Glues*

- wash out easily
- for lightweight projects

*Super Glue*

- instant adhesive, that works with many smooth surfaces, but not well with smooth glass surfaces
- will cloud rhinestones

- especially good with plastic pieces
- water resistant, but not best choice for washable projects
- inflexible; does not work well where there is movement

*High Tech Adhesives, like E6000 and Beacon 527*

- not water soluble
- bonds to both porous and non-porous materials
- does not bond well to rubber
- sets slowly, so you can reposition things
- dries clear

*Fabric Glues, like No-Sew*

- holds up through several dry cleaning cycles
- formulated to glue fabric to fabric
- make also work well to glue various embellishments to fabric

*Fusibles, where you melt the glue with an iron or another heat source, such as a transfer*

- for applying appliques or transfers
- prewash all materials before fusing

*Aquarium Glue (glass cements)*

- great for bonding two smooth surfaces of glass

*Clear Cements, like G-S Hypo Tube or Watch Crystal Cement*

- Doesn't dry as fast as super glue, so can do some repositioning, but bonds strong like super glue
- Good to use for sealing knots in jewelry projects
- Not as strong as epoxies or high tech adhesives
- water resistant and not affected by temperature

As with anything you do as a bead and jewelry artist, you want to ask lots of questions and get lots of advice. You want to play with a wide variety of tools and glues and stringing materials and metals and beads. You want to experiment. Let yourself try and err. This is a lot of information. But this Orientation is important. Very important. Making jewelry is very similar to building a bridge – you must be

familiar with many kinds of materials, how the materials interrelate, and how you link and connect these materials in a durable and appealing piece which wears well, and moves well with the wearer.