Because of the flexibility of the woven paper elements, this necklace moves nicely when worn.
Summers in South Dakota were such fun for a young girl growing up in the ‘60s. Diamond Ball Park, in Watertown, is where I learned this weaving technique. We would spend hours making friendship bracelets, key chains, and necklaces with plastic “luster” lace. So many fond memories of those days percolate whenever I weave with this technique.

The steps are simple, and you will surely notice how time passes quickly and peacefully as you work in this repetitive, meditative way. I have woven beads from wire, lace, ribbon, and bezel wire, and all have turned out beautifully. I love the flexibility of paper chain and how lightweight it is to wear. Choose colors that appeal to you, and just enjoy the process!

Take a blast from the past into flashy new territory with a necklace made of woven paper and gilded building blocks.

by Karen J. Lauseng
PART 1: PAPER BEADS

Build the armature. Use a #30 (¼-in./3 mm) drill bit in a hand drill or flex shaft to drill a hole halfway through a piece (6 x 4½ in./15.2 x 11.4 cm) of scrap lumber.

Generously apply wood glue into the hole, and insert a ⅛-in. (3 mm)-diameter, 6-in. (15.2 cm)-long wooden dowel into the hole at a 90° angle [1]. Remove any excess glue with a damp cloth, and allow the armature to dry.

Anchor the weave. Use painter’s tape to secure a strip of quilling paper to the armature. Leave a two-inch tail on one side of the dowel. The paper strip should fit snugly against the dowel.

Attach the second and third strips of paper in the same manner [2]. Orient each strip at a 90° degree angle to and on top of the previous strip.

Attach the fourth strip of paper in the same manner. After placing the strip over strip 3, slide it under strip 1 [3].

Weave a paper column. Fold strip 4 back over strips 1 and 3 [4]. Fold strip 3 back over strips 4 and 2. Fold strip 2 back over strips 3 and 1.

Fold strip 1 back over strip 2 and under strip 4 [5].

NOTE: Cutting the tips of your paper strips into a point will make weaving easier.

Weave in this manner until you have nearly run out of paper. You can either end the column at that point or add more paper (See, “How Big Should My Beads Be?”). To add paper, lay a new strip along the length of the strip you are replacing, and under the adjacent strip [6]. Trim the original strip so that it is flush with the edge of the column. Continue to add and trim strips in this manner until you have replaced all four. Then, resume weaving with the newly added strips. No glue is needed.

NOTE: Change colors on all strips in the same step to ensure a smooth transition.

When the column reaches your desired length, remove the painter’s tape and slide the column off the dowel. Trim the strips flush with the edge of the column [7].

Repeat to make as many paper beads as you desire for your piece.

how big should my beads be?

From one standard package of quilling paper in mixed colors, I made 15 beads in a variety of color combinations. For the longest bead, I used four groups of four strips; for the smallest, I used one group of four strips. You could make the beads all the same size or in a variety of sizes. I suggest that you make your beads no smaller than one group of four strips of quilling paper; if you choose to make your beads all the same size, make them at least 1½ strips long to show off the weave.
PART 2: WOOD ELEMENTS

Measure and mark the wooden pieces.
The toggle bar will be 1 1/2 in. (38 mm) long with a hole drilled at the midpoint. Measure and mark a 1/4-in. (6.5 mm) square wooden dowel for cutting (1 1/2 in./38 mm) and drilling (3/4 in./19 mm) [1].

The toggle catch will be 1 1/4 in. (32 mm) square with an off-center 3/4 x 1/2 in. (19 x 13 mm) cutout. You’ll need to drill one hole at the midpoint of the base, and another to allow you to pierce the cutout. Either mark the measurements on a piece of 1/4-in. (6.5 mm)-thick craft wood, or attach a paper template to the wood with rubber cement.

Count the number of paper columns you are using for your necklace, and add two; that’s how many wooden blocks you’ll need. Draw diagonal lines from corner to corner of the wooden blocks to mark the center point of each.

Drill the wooden pieces. Mark the drill points on all the wooden pieces. Secure a wooden piece in a bench vise, and use the #30 (1/8 in./3 mm) drill bit to drill holes where marked. Repeat to drill the holes in of all the square blocks, the toggle bar, and the toggle catch.

Saw the wooden pieces. Use a coarse blade in your jeweler’s saw to cut the toggle bar and catch to size. Pierce the center of the catch [2].

File the wooden pieces. Use a wood file to remove any saw marks and square up the edges on both parts of the toggle. File or sand to remove any marks or imperfections in all of the wooden pieces [3].

Quilling paper comes in a myriad of colors — you can make your necklace monochromatic or in a rainbow of shades.

materials
- Quilling paper, 1/8 in. (3 mm) wide, 100 strips
- Wooden blocks, 3/8 in. (16 mm) square (approximately 15; number determined by design)
- Square wooden dowel, 1/4 in. (6.5 mm), at least 2 in. (51 mm) long
- Craft wood, 1/4 in. (6.5 mm) thick
- Gold and/or copper leaf, 6-in. (15.2 cm) square sheets, 2
- Leather cord, 1 1/2 yds (1.38 m)

tools & supplies
- Hand drill or flex shaft with #30 (1/8 in./3 mm) drill bit
- Scrap lumber, 6 x 4 1/2 in. (15.2 x 11.4 cm) or larger
- Glue: wood glue, tacky white glue
- Wooden dowels (round):
  - 1/8 in. (3 mm) diameter, 6 in. (15.2 cm)
  - 1/4 in. (6.5 mm) diameter, one end sharpened
- Painter’s tape
- Ruler
- Rubber cement (optional)
- Bench vise
- Jeweler’s saw with coarse blade
- Wood file, sandpaper
- Wood stain touch-up pens, assorted colors
- Freezer paper
- Gold leaf adhesive size
- Stiff brush
- Clear satin spray varnish
PART 3: ASSEMBLY

Reshape the paper beads. While they rested, your paper beads may have twisted or relaxed. Insert a sharpened ⅛-in. (3 mm) wooden dowel through a paper bead, and squeeze the bead firmly to compress the folds [1]. Repeat to realign all the paper beads.

String the beads. Cut a 1½-yd. (1.38 m) length of leather cord. String all of the beads on the cord. Start with a wooden cube bead, alternate between wooden and paper beads, and end with a wooden bead [2].

Check the length of your chain. Mine was longer than I desired, so I removed two paper and two wooden beads. The length of your chain will vary, depending on the sizes of your paper beads.

Glue the beads. Apply a generous amount of tacky white glue to one end of the first paper bead on the chain [3]. Center the paper bead on the wooden bead. When they are positioned correctly, squeeze the two beads firmly together for about 30 seconds until they adhere. Repeat this procedure to glue all of the beads together.

Add the clasp. Insert one end of the leather cord through the center hole in the toggle bar, leaving about a 12-in. (30.5 cm) tail above the wood. Double the cord back through the hole, leaving a loop of leather above the toggle bar [5]. Wrap the cord loop around the ends of the toggle bar [6], and pull the cord tight against the wood. Wrap the short end of the cord over the longer cord end, then through the loop formed between the cords [7]. Pull the knot tight. Repeat this procedure to make eight knots. The knotted section should be about ¾ in. (19 mm) long. Cut the tail of the leather cord ½ in. (13 mm) beyond the last knot [8]. Use a toothpick to apply white glue to the leather cord and inside the opening of the first square bead

Surface treatment

Stain the wooden pieces. Put on a pair of nitrile gloves and apply wood stain to all of the wooden pieces [4]. I used three colors, and used contrasting colors for the toggle clasp. Allow the stain to dry.

NOTE: I use stain touch-up pens. They come in a variety of colors and are fast, clean, and easy to use.

Mask the wooden pieces. Use painter’s tape to mask sections of all of the wooden pieces where you want the stained wood to show. Attach the tape in various gridlike patterns [5].

TIP: To cut narrow sections of tape for precise masking, attach a strip of painter’s tape to a section of freezer paper. Trim the paper, leaving a ¼-in. (6.4 mm) border on each side of the tape. Cut the tape into strips [6]; you can peel each strip from its backing as needed, without the tape sticking to itself.

Apply metal leaf. Apply gold leaf adhesive size to the wooden pieces [7] and let it dry, according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

Lay gold and/or copper leaf over the surfaces of the wooden pieces. Use a stiff brush to press the leaf firmly against the wood [8]. Peel off the tape to reveal the surface patterns.

NOTE: If you find the leaf to be too shiny, rub light-colored stain into the leaf [9].

Seal the components. Lightly coat the wooden pieces and paper beads with clear satin varnish. Let them dry completely.
on the chain [9]. Push both sections of the cord through the hole until the last knot fits snugly against the hole. If necessary, pull the cord from the opposite end of the chain.

Repeat the toggle-tying procedure to attach the toggle catch, but tie only two loops before clipping and gluing the cord [10]. Set the necklace aside for a few hours to dry completely.