

In today's economy I find so many people trying to figure out ways to make a little extra money in their spare time. One way that's fun and entertaining is to start making your own jewelry, beaded jewelry to be exact.

I got into making bead jewelry about seven years ago when I needed a hobby and wanted to find a way to make a little extra money. To be honest another hobby of mine was to BUY jewelry, so replacing that hobby with one that was cheaper, and allowed me to both sell and wear my product was a no brainer. I sell at the local farmer's market and a few surrounding arts and crafts show. The space rent for places like this is pretty inexpensive, and I always earn enough to pay for the cost, materials and time it takes to set up and spend a weekend. I've also started selling on consignment at some local stores, like the very bead store I usually buy all of my beads at, and I've been experimenting with selling online at places like Ebay.

The jewelry I make is fairly simple, but resembles the type of costume jewelry you'd find at Target. I started out making necklaces, earrings and bracelets out of [semi-precious stone beads](#), like green malachite or [lapis lazuli](#). But the cost of materials has gone up quite a bit (have you seen the price of [American turquoise beads](#) lately?).

My advice is to stick to the less expensive pieces, under \$20.00 for a necklace in my area of the country. This type of jewelry is a compulsive buy for many people: they see it, they like it and they buy it.

In the past couple of years I've found that I sell more jewelry (and make more money) by using [glass beads](#) instead, particularly [Chinese or India glass](#). They come in a huge variety of shapes, sizes and finishes.

If you want ideas about what type of jewelry to make, just go by the local department stores, or even better the local clothing stores. This type of jewelry goes in and out of fashion about every three months. You can even target styles to gender and age by hitting the appropriate stores

(American Eagle and A&E for the younger beach-bum crowds, Express for the young fashionistas, etc.).

Aside from the beads, you'll just need a variety of

[clasps](#)

, some

[bead wire](#)

and

[crimp beads](#)

. If you want to make earrings you'll have to also get some

[French wires](#)

and

[drops](#)

. In all you could get enough materials to make a table's worth of merchandise for less than \$100.00.

With any luck you can turn that \$100.00 into \$300.00, and have fun (and look good) doing it!

For great prices on glass beads and stone beads, look online at Western Traders. We have the largest selection of beads in Southern New Mexico and West Texas.