

Beading Supplies

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While I am way more into needlepoint and embroidery, and since my beading experience is practically as pitiful as my knowledge of beading supplies is, I had the fortunate experience of working on a piece that called for said beading supplies. In other words, I got an instant lesson or two.

The first discernment I made, while viewing the pattern for the embroidery piece that called for beading supplies (which I found out AFTER I bought the beautiful pattern), was that beads are, of course, of different types. Moreover, they are of hundreds of types and styles and number, in total, in the thousands (no exaggeration). So for my particular pattern I needed 00275 coral glass seed beads; 02024 heather mauve glass seed beads; 02025 heather glass seed beads; 03005 platinum rose antique glass beads; and 05555 new penny glass pebble beads—all by a maker of bead supplies called Mill Hill. This latter point is important, as you will soon see. I can use Laptops to create Different types of designs, but it is more costly.

First, I live (by choice) way the hell out in the woods, the closest crafts stores twelve and nineteen miles away. Second, I have ADD—Attention Deficit Disorder. And third, the pattern, an elaborate one with thousands of stitches and almost fifty colors, would need the right bead supplies to make the color scheme and texture, etc., work.

The first store, one I like very much and frequent, had limited bead supplies of the brand I needed. In fact, they didn't carry Mill Hill. So I came back home and went online to see if I could identify the color and style of bead and try to find an equivalent. Back to the first store and to a wall of bead supplies that made me dizzy and, ultimately, gave me a headache. So I tried the next store, another town away, on another day. There I encountered not just one but three walls of bead supplies, of numerous brands, colors, sizes, shapes, and usability degrees. I spent a good hour perusing the beautiful, the ugly, and the ill-fitting beads for my project. I gave up and moved on to the rest of the items on my list. After another half hour, I found, in the NEEDLEPOINT section, not in the bead supplies section, arggh, Mill Hill beads. And of the five styles I needed found 2 in the exact quantity required and one in half the amount I needed.

Sometimes a LOT is too much—and not nearly enough. Of probably five- to ten-thousand dollars' worth of bead supplies, I came away with five dollars' worth of the right beads. Thank God for the internet.