



Holding It Together

THE MULTI-PURPOSE CLOTHESPIN

It's amazing how many common items found around the house can become a jeweler's new best friend. Take the wooden spring-action clothespin: This handy little aid can be easily modified for a number of jobs. For instance, all jewelers know the importance of a vise to secure a pearl they need to drill. With a few easy modifications, your clothespin can serve the same purpose. First, with a large ball bur, carve an indentation into the interior of each jaw (1). The indents should be just deep enough to keep the pearl from slipping out during drilling (2). Now, all you have to do is insert the pearl into the clothespin's jaws, and allow the pin's light pressure to hold the pearl securely during drilling (3).

When you're ready to glue the earring post assembly into the hole, your clothespin can help you here as well. Simply cut a slot in the front end of one of the clothespin jaws, wide enough to fit the post (4). Now open the clothespin, rest the pearl between the jaws, and fit the post through the slot. Once closed, the clothespin will again apply enough pressure to secure the assembly and ensure that the glue affixes properly.

And if you want a device to hold a part to a polishing wheel, the clothespin can be of service yet again. Since the prongs are made of wood, you can be sure the heat build-up won't reach your fingers.