

Oriental Chainmaille Balls

These balls are based on the Oriental chainmaille weave used in China and Japan to cover gaps in their plate armor. This variation is called 10-in-3, because each set of 3 inner rings has 10 outer rings connected to it. Chainmaille balls can be made with a variety of ring sizes. My favorites are 20ga 5/32", 18ga 1/4", 16ga 5/16", and 14ga 3/8". The AR range is between 4.7 and 5.4, with a 5.4 AR ring creating a much looser ball than a 4.7 AR ring. This project uses exactly 96 16ga 5/16" rings, 36 inner rings and 60 outer rings.

Step 1

Open 3 inner color rings and close 10 outer color rings. String the 10 outer rings on 1 inner ring and close the ring. Add the remaining 2 open inner rings in the same manner, so that there are 3 inner rings going through 10 outer rings. Each inner ring will be "tripled" so that there are always 3; there will always be "doubles" of outer rings.



Step 2

Open 3 inner rings and close 4 outer rings. String 1 inner ring through 2 of the 10 outer rings from the last step. Add the 4 closed outer rings, then close the ring. Add 2 more inner rings to triple the inner ring.



Step 2.5

Repeat **step 2** 4 more times, so that each pair of outer rings from **step 1** has 3 inner rings and 4 outer rings attached to it.



Step 3

Open 2 outer rings. Use these to connect 2 of the 5 sets of inner rings.



Step 3.5

Repeat **step 5** 4 more times to connect all the inner rings together. Now each set of inner rings should have 5 pairs of outer rings (10 rings) going through them. Congratulations, you're halfway done!



Step 4

Open 3 inner rings. Take 2 outer rings from one set of 4 outer rings and take 2 outer rings from the set next to them. String the open ring through these 4 rings. Triple the inner ring.

Step 4.25

Repeat **step 4** once more.



Step 4.5

Close 2 outer rings. Repeat **step 4**, but this time add the 2 closed rings, then close and triple the inner ring.



Step 4.75

Repeat **step 4.5** 3 more times. You should have something that looks like a lopsided star.



Step 5

Open 2 outer rings. Use these to connect 2 of the 5 sets of inner rings. Remember this from **step 3**? This will cause the star to curl into a ball shape.



Step 5.5

Repeat **step 5** 4 more times.

The ball is almost finished!

Notice the 3 pairs of outer rings just hanging there?



Step 6

Open 3 inner rings. String 1 ring through the 3 pairs of outer rings “left over” from **step 5**. Triple the inner ring.

There are 4 more outer rings that need to be placed.



Step 7

Open 2 outer rings. String 1 through the inner rings just placed and through the set of inner rings diagonally to the right. Repeat on the left. Double those 2 rings.

If you get confused, look for the 3 sets of inner rings that don't have 5 pairs of outer rings attached. Each set of inner rings must have 5 pairs of outer rings attached to it.



You've made a chainmaille ball!

