

# Creative BeadCraft Limited

October 2008

## Basic Guide to Bead Effects and Finishes

### AB and Metallic coatings

These terms may be used differently by suppliers which can be confusing.

#### AB coating

AB is an iridescent coating that gives a subtle shimmer. It is named after the Aurora Borealis, the fabulous Northern Lights. It can be full or half coated. For example, a Swarovski crystal bead described as AB is half-coated, AB 2X would mean fully coated.

#### A metallic coating can also be applied to give different finishes:

**Iris** – an iridescent coating that contains subtle flashes of toning colours. It is often used on jet for a striking finish.

**Half coated** – the special coating is applied to one side only which gives some shimmer while also allowing the bead colour to be clearly seen. CAL (Swarovski) or Labrador (Jablonex) is a silver half-coating on a crystal bead.

**Vitrail** – a half coating in differing hues on a crystal bead to give a sparkling look. These surface finishes are often added to fire-polished beads. Quality Czech glass beads have many facets so the finish adds extra sparkle and the beads really catch the light.

### Pearlised coating

A glass or plastic bead is dipped in a special coating to give a pearly effect. For example, Swarovski crystal pearls and Jablonex glass pearls which are good for jewellery. Japanese plastic pearls are high quality but lighter which is ideal for bridal embroidery.

### Lustre

This is a special coating giving a soft, lustrous sheen to glass beads. An AB finish may also be added as with these large lustre beads from India. Embroidery and seed beads may also be lustred.



Jet AB

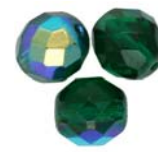


Jet AB 2X

Swarovski crystal beads with different AB coatings



Jet AB



Emerald AB



Jet Red Iris



Jet Green Iris



Crystal Labrador

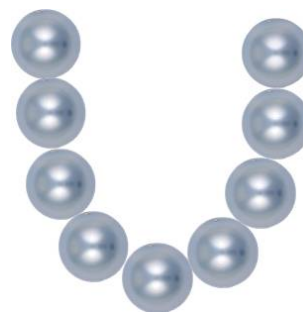


Gold half-coated



Vitrail Medium

Jablonex fire-polished beads with various coatings



Swarovski Crystal Pearls



Jablonex Glass Pearls



Royal Lustre Bead



Royal AB Lustre Bead



## Matt

These may be called frosted and have a dull, non-reflective look. They may also have an AB finish.

For example, small Czech pressed glass beads of this type, in various shapes, can look very attractive.



Pressed Glass Beads in Matt AB

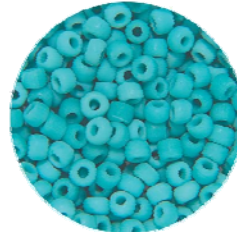


Silver Lined Glass Lamp Bead

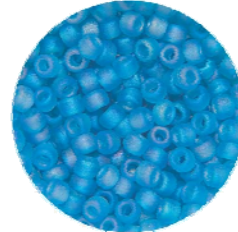
## Silver lined (S/L)

Transparent glass beads with a reflective silver lining in their holes.

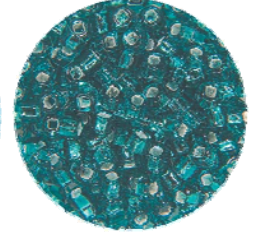
For example: seed beads and delicas are often silver lined. A silver lining can be used with clear or matt beads to achieve different effects. Silver lined large glass lamp beads are widespread.



Opaque Matt



Transparent Matt AB



Silver Lined

## Inside Lined

A clear bead lined inside with a colour, often used on Japanese square beads and seed beads.



Silver Lined Matt



Inside Lined

Turquoise seed beads with a variety of finishes

## Enamel Ceramics

A high quality glaze is applied to the ceramic beads and fired at a high temperature. This may be done several times depending on the desired effect. Each bead can therefore look different.

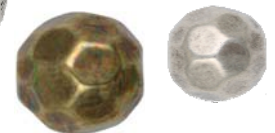


Enamel Ceramic Beads

## Metallised or Copper Coated Beads

These are plastic beads which are copper coated and then given a gold or silver plating. A special plating may be used to give an antique finish. A really high quality plating is a difficult technique.

For example, these large copper coated beads and pendants have the benefit of a metal look without the weight



Copper Coated Beads and Pendants

## Antique Finish

An antique look plating can be applied to base metal chain and findings. Materials such as pewter are often antiqued which gives them a very attractive appearance.



Pewter Beads and Components

Pictures are not actual size and do not show the whole range