

Discover Countless Ways To Play

- Move any number of beads to one side of the frame. Have kids match your "move" on the wire below yours. This can also be done with a repetitive pattern--arrange the 10 beads in different groupings (e.g., 3 beads, 1 bead, 3 beads, 1 bead, 2 beads) that the child has to mimic on the wire below.
- Move a certain number of beads to one side and have kids count how many beads you moved and how many remain on the other side. Have kids count from one to 100 as they move the beads on all 10 wires.
- Have kids try to make simple shapes using beads on multiple wires--a square, triangle, rectangle, diamond, or a perfectly straight vertical or diagonal line.
- Choose a number and determine how many different combinations kids can find to achieve that sum. (Combinations of 10 would be $9+1$, $8+2$, $7+3$, $6+4$, $5+5$, $4+6$, $3+7$, $2+8$, $1+9$).
- Do addition, subtraction, or even simple multiplication and division problems by using the first wire for the first number, the second for the second number, and have kids answer it on the third (e.g. $7-4=3$). Put a certain number of beads on the first and second wires, then yell out the type of problem ("addition!") and have them race to get the answer.
- Draw or say a capital letter and have kids create its shape on the abacus -- the letters A, E, I, and L are good for starters.