

How to Make Upcycled Bike Tube Earrings



1. Rescue Tubes and Chains

Ask your local bike shop to save old inner tubes for you. I find wider ones work better than super-skinny ones. I especially like the ones with the stripes, which come in white, blue, and yellow. Truth? The solid black earrings tend to be the most popular. Ask for hardware, too. Chains have lots of fun parts, as do brakes. Do NOT take hardware that's very greasy. Trust me.

2. Break Chains

Breaking the chains is ridiculously fun, and, dare I say, inspiring. It reminds me to break chains in all areas of my life. I use a small vise and a chain-breaking tool. Oh, and if you haven't put music on yet, now's the time.

3. Clean Hardware

I've tried everything, from the super-toxic to the ultra-eco. Nothing works better than anything else. Try SuperGreen. Try baking soda and vinegar. Dedicate a container to it. Don't let stuff sit too long in liquid or it will rust. Do your best. Use what looks best. Don't lose sleep over this, team.

4. Design, Cut, Assemble, Test

Take a look on Etsy at bike tube earring designs. Create a prototype of your own and ask friends to road-test them. Hone in on what you think works best.

Make templates for yourself and for however many people will be cutting them. Purchase 6-millimeter jump rings and hypoallergenic earring dangles from a craft shop. Use a seam ripper to punch the holes in the bike tube earrings. I use a tweezer to open and close the jump rings. I can assemble 3 pairs of earrings per hour, but slower is more relaxing.



5. Create Packaging, Branding

For my packaging, I strive to be zero-waste so I hand-make packaging out of newspapers (see my #BikeBloom TikToks). I throw in wildflower seeds. I dried buttercups as accents. I wrap the finished products in recycled tissue and package in banana-paper envelopes to mail. Do what works best for your situation. Recycled cardboard and a hole puncher would be super simple. Now, pick a cute name, create a fun market display, establish a social media presence, share a custom-created playlist, start a blog . . . HAVE FUN!

