

## METAL-STAMPED LIBRARY BOOK BANGLES

by Sarah A. Donawerth





The inspiration for these bangles came from a tote bag I found online that said “I still believe in 398.2.” This number is the Dewey Decimal system call number for fairy tales. It seemed like a coded message — a way of announcing to the world that I still love a happy ending and that everything can be solved with a fairy godmother or a mermaid.

I added some silver charms and red roses that captured the motifs of some of my favorite stories. The little crowns hearken back to the fairy tales, and the red roses, of course, remind me of “Beauty and the Beast.” To capture my love for reading, I created these bangles with the call numbers for fairy tales and Jane Austen. Jane Austen has always held a special place in my heart ever since I read “Pride and Prejudice” in high school. I then proceeded to read her entire list of novels four times and took two college classes on her work. Needless to say, I’m a little obsessed. These bangles are a constant reminder of what I love about literature — clever writing and a happily ever after.

## SUPPLIES

- Ball-peen hammer
- Bangles
- Charms: silver, crowns & keys
- Headpins
- Jump rings
- Metal disc cutter
- Metal files
- Metal stamps: letters & numbers
- Permanent marker: black
- Red rose beads
- Rubbing alcohol
- Sheet metal blanks
- Steel dapping block

## TECHNIQUE

Cut silver sheet metal blank with the disc cutter. Be careful! The edges will be sharp once they are cut. Make circles in several different sizes, from ½–1 inch. File the edge of the circles until smooth.

Using the ball-peen hammer, add texture to the metal circles. Vary the texture so some circles have hammered edges and some have

texture all over. Do not over-hammer the circles because it will make it more difficult to stamp the letters and numbers — less is more.

Put the metal circles onto the steel dapping block to protect the table underneath from the effects of hammering.

Hold the stamp steady and hammer the Dewey decimal number into the largest of the metal circles with one solid strike. Hammer ampersands into the smaller discs.

Run permanent marker along the outline of each letter and number, getting into the grooves. Apply a small amount of rubbing alcohol to a paper towel and wipe off the surface of each message, leaving black in the impressions.

Thread each red rose bead onto a headpin. Trim the excess and make a loop at the top.

Add an assortment of charms and red roses to each of the bangles with a jump ring. The different bangles don’t have to be identical and the charms should be scattered at random. These bangles have a clasp, so some of the charms are attached to the clasp and others are scattered around the rest of the band. Add the metal discs to each bangle with a jump ring. \*

## TIPS

- Embrace imperfection. Metal stamping will never end up perfect. Allow your letters and numbers to be a little crooked — it adds to the charm of the piece.
- Try to make your metal stamping impressions with a single, solid strike. This takes practice, but a single hit will leave a clearer image than trying to line up the image multiple times.
- The Dewey decimal numbers for your favorite books can be found with a simple Google search. I chose fairy tales (398.2), Jane Austen (823.7), and messages like “Read” or “Books.”
- The permanent marker mimics a jewelry process called “blackening.” This process typically uses black paint or black nickel plating, but the permanent marker achieves the same effect with minimal cost or time. If the permanent marker fades over time, it can always be redone to bring out the details on the bangles again.

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