

MAKING BANDS

You will need the following items; rubber latex tubing, a 3/16" wooden dowel 6" long, light sand paper, 8mm airsoft ammo, a tape measure or yardstick, a sharp pair of scissors.

McMaster-Carr sells rubber tubing in 25' lengths. For heavy bands, approx. 15 lb. pull, use black 3/16" I.D. 5/16" O.D. 1/16" wall, for light bands, approx. 5 lb. pull, use amber 3/16" I.D. 1/4" O.D. 1/32" wall.

1. Make a tool - Wrap the light sandpaper around the 3/16" wooden dowel and sand down the diameter one end, a couple of inches in, and, at the same time, round out and smooth that end of the dowel. Sand the dowel down so that it can be slipped into an end of the tubing, but not loosely. You want it such that you will be able to slip it in, but not be able to pull it back out. Using a marker, make a mark on the dowel 3/4" up from the rounded end, and another, 1 3/4" up from the rounded end.

2. Cut the tubing - Determine what length you want your bands to be. Length is measured from end to end of a completed band when laid down flat, the tubing side by side. Cut a length of tubing twice that length plus 1 1/2". ex., for a 17" band, cut the tubing 35 1/2".

3. Make a band - slip the tool into one end of the cut black tubing up to the first mark. Using thumb and forefinger, roll the tubing back to the end of the tool and hold the rolled end between thumb and fore finger. The tubing should roll up like a donut. If it folds over, push it back and start over again.

Take an airsoft ball (thank you mr. potatohead, a.k.a. mikey) and push it into the rolled tubing and then push the tubing back over the ball. The tubing should cover the ball with the end of the tubing extending just slightly beyond the ball.

Slip the tool into the other end of the tubing up to the second mark. Roll the tubing back to the end of the tool and hold the "donut" between thumb and forefinger. Take the other end of the tubing with the ball and push it into the rolled tubing, and then unroll the tubing back over the end with the ball. Make sure that the length of tubing isn't twisted before doing this. It takes a bit of finesse to get that rolled end up and over the end with the ball. Holding the rolled end with thumb and middle finger and pulling, while using your index finger to unroll it is the best way I can describe it. Just do it. It might take a bit of practice at first.

For the light amber bands, slip the tool up to about 1/8" back from your marks.

Keep your airsoft ammo and tool in a sealed container. You don't want to end up with 500 little balls rolling around on your floor.