

Mosaic Tile Jewelry

Project 8

Supplies and Tools

beading or jewelry glue	specifically
beading needles	for glass and tile)
containers (small mint tins	pencils
with lids are perfect)	pliers or tweezers
craft knives and/or small	polyurethane varnish
scissors (cuticle scissors	(clear)
work well)	scissors (regular size)
decoupage medium	Styrofoam trays
foam brushes	water in small containers
paint pens (the ones	

Materials

assorted beads	pin backs
jewelry clasps (optional)	small embellishments
jewelry cording	(sequins or jewels)
mosaic tiles, 1 inch by 1	stretchy beading cord
inch (you need the ones	
with grooves along the	
back)	
paper scrap to decoupage	
(discarded comics,	
catalogs, children's	
books—anything with	
small images)	

Session 1

Step 1: Collecting Images

Leaf through the paper scraps and find an image that you like and that will fit on the tile. Cut around the image. If you need to, use a tile to draw a square pattern and cut along the outline. Put the image aside in your small container. Keep in mind that you can also cut out words to use.

If you want to forgo the paper scrap and design your tile from scratch, use the paint pens and draw directly onto the tiles.

Think of this phase as building a collective pool of cool images for the group to use later.

Step 2: Decoupageing

When you have the supply of images you need, you're ready to start decoupageing. Brush a light coat of decoupage medium onto the tile. Place your image on the tile. The decoupage medium stays wet long enough for you to move the image around if you need to. Once you have the image placed where you want it, brush on another coat of decoupage medium. Put aside to dry.

As you're decoupageing, think about how the tile will be used. The grooves on the back of the tile will need to align for stringing later. For bracelets, the grooves should go side to side, whereas for necklaces or complex pins, the grooves should go up and down.

While your first tile is drying, you can make more tiles exactly the same way.

Step 3: Sealing

When all your tiles are decoupageed and dry (drying should take about fifteen to twenty minutes), use a clean brush to add a light coat of polyurethane varnish. Let dry for about twenty to thirty minutes. The polyurethane doesn't need to dry completely, but it should be dry enough to touch without leaving fingerprints.

Step 4: Finishing

When the tiles are dry enough to touch, glue them back-to-back with the grooves running parallel to each other. Try to keep the grooves as clear of glue as possible so you can run cord through later. Tiles can be glued together as pairs, so each side has an image, or back-to-back with blanks.

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When all the tiles are glued, leave to dry at least twenty-four hours. This is the end of the first session.

Session 2

You can make several different types of jewelry with your tiles. Each type will have its own special steps, so decide what you want to make first. It's best to complete one piece before starting another.

Bracelets

STEP 1: DESIGNING

Using the stretchy string, measure your wrist. The stretch in the string will allow the bracelet to slip over your hand but fit snugly on your wrist without the stretch. Before cutting, add some extra length to tie a knot to close the bracelet at the end. You'll need at least 3 inches extra. You'll need two strands of stretchy string cut to the same length. When you have the string cut, lay it out flat on your workspace and start laying out your tiles and beads. Because the tiles have two grooves, you'll need two strings to stabilize them, but this also means they work well for double-strand bracelets as well. For a double-strand look, plan your layout accordingly.

Tip: Bracelets look best with one or two tiles per bracelet.

STEP 2: ASSEMBLING

Leaving a 1½-inch tail, tie the two strands together. Choose a beading needle, making sure it fits through the beads you're working with. Thread one or both of the strands through the beading needle, depending on whether you have a single- or double-strand layout. String the beads as your layout dictates. If you're using different-size beads, you may need to change your beading needle as you go.

STEP 3: TYING OFF

Once you have your bracelet beaded, double-check the fit around your wrist before tying off. You may find that you need to add or remove a few beads. When the length is correct, tie both strands into a secure knot. The stretchy string can be slippery, so you may need to double your knot. Make sure the beads don't pass the knot. You should have at least 1½ inches of string at the end.

STEP 4: CLOSING AND FINISHING

Tie the tails together twice, making sure to pull the knots tight and secure. You may want to secure the knot with a dab of glue.

STEP 5: EMBELLISHING (OPTIONAL)

To add extra flash or flair to your pieces, glue small sequins or jewels to the faces of the tiles. As you're gluing make sure to use just a small dab of glue to hold the jewel or sequin in place.

Necklaces

STEP 1: DESIGNING

Cut the cord to the desired length, leaving room for knotting or adding a clasp. Once you have your string cut, lay out your tile and/or bead pattern.

STEP 2: ASSEMBLING

If you're planning a fully beaded necklace, knot one end of the cord, leaving a tail long enough to tie the necklace around your neck, or add a clasp later. Choose a beading needle, making sure it fits through the beads you're working with. Thread the cord through the beading needle. If your necklace is a simple pendant design, string the tiles and beads as you have them laid out. Keep in mind that knots in the cord can be quite decorative as well.

STEP 3: TYING OFF

If you have a fully beaded design, tie off the end with a secure knot that's big enough to stop the beads from falling off. Be sure to leave another tail at this end to tie the necklace on, or add a clasp.

STEP 4: CLOSING AND FINISHING

If you're adding a clasp, simply tie the ends of the string to the wire loops on the clasp. These loop attachments may look slightly different depending on the type of clasp you are using, but the string should tie in essentially the same way on most types.

STEP 5: EMBELLISHING (OPTIONAL)

To add extra flash or flair to your pieces, glue small sequins or jewels to the faces of the tiles. Make sure to use just a small dab of glue to hold the jewel or sequin

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in place.

Pins

STEP 1: DESIGNING

Plan your pin with any beads or tiles you'll want to use. Once you have your layout established, cut the cord that will hold the piece together. The cord will loop through the design in a U shape. Make sure to leave enough extra cord to tie your knots.

STEP 2: ASSEMBLING

For a simple pin of a single tile, glue a pin back to the back of the tile, let dry, and you're done. You can even do this without gluing the tiles back-to-back—a good use for any stray tiles that don't have a partner.

For a dangling pin, knot one end of the cord. Choose a beading needle, making sure it fits through the beads

you're working with. Thread the cord through the beading needle. Add your beads and tiles according to your layout. When you get to the top of the design, loop the cord into a U shape and travel down the other side of your layout. Keep in mind that knots can be decorative as well.

STEP 3: TYING OFF

For a dangling pin, tie off the end to make sure the beads won't slip over. Trim the tails.

STEP 4: FINISHING

Glue a pin back (bar or clutch) to the back of the top tile and let dry.

STEP 5: EMBELLISHING (OPTIONAL)

To add extra flash or flair to your pieces, glue small sequins or jewels to the faces of the tiles. Make sure to use just a small dab of glue to hold the jewel or sequin in place.