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The Beadpusher Tool

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Editor's note: This project seems quite long, but is, in fact, quite fast and easy.

This little tool comes in so handy and is incredibly simple to make. I was constantly pushing beads into the clay crooked or the flat end of my needle tool would slip off the bead and mark the clay. To get a neat, straight embedding, I needed something that fit the bead, holding it firmly, so it could be maneuvered easily. Voila, the birth of the beadpusher!

This snazzy little tool has two ends, each one fitting a different sized bead.

Embedding beads has never been easier. You can place them accurately and quickly as eyes, embellishment, the center of flowers and whatever else you can come up with!!

Have fun with this one. Make it with four ends or more to fit however many different sized beads you use! This design can be adapted for almost anything you wish to embed with accuracy.

In this tutorial, I am using glass seed beads and 4mm round goldtone beads.



Supplies:

- scrap clay, a little ball about half the size of a walnut
- your finger
- two beads of different sizes
- a needle tool narrow enough to fit the hole in the beads
- oven (preheated to clay manufacturer's recommended temperature)



Step One:

Pull some clay off the wad of scrap and roll it into a snake a little thinner than a pencil. How much scrap you use depends on personal comfort and how long you want the snake.



Step Two:

Eyeball the two beads and roll the ends down to about the size of the bead's circumference. I like to put a little "waist" on mine as well as that seems to be the most comfortable for me.

When you have the snake shaped, pick it up and hold it as if you were going to use it. If it isn't comfortable, work on the design a little more.



Step 3:

When you have the snake just right, press the ends firmly against your work surface to flatten them.



Step 4:

Slide one of the beads onto your needle tool and press it into the clay until the needle tool just touches the clay.

You do not want the hole of the bead to go below the lip of the Beadpusher.

Repeat with the other bead on the other end.



Step 5:

When you have the beads set, gently roll the end of the beadpusher under your finger to get a smooth end and to make the clay adhere more closely to the bead.

The object here is to have as small an area around the bead as possible so you don't leave any imprints when you push the bead into raw clay.

Leave the bead in the clay and bake at the recommended temperature and time. If you have several clays mixed into your scrap, use the higher temperature and longer time.



Step 6: After your beadpusher has cooled, insert your needle to into the bead and pop it out. Voila! You are done!



How To Use The Beadpusher:

Place the bead on the clay where you want to embed it. Holding the beadpusher straight up and down, cap the bead and press gently but firmly.

If the bead begins to rock to one side, move the beadpusher in the opposite direction of the bead's errant direction and press again.

The results are perfectly set beads every time with no fuss.



Here is one example of what I use my beadpusher for.

I also use it to set beady eyes and embed flower hearts, run lines of beads to highlight or accent and whatever else I can think of!

Enjoy your new tool!

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