

Surprise Canes by Jenny Dowde [print version](#)

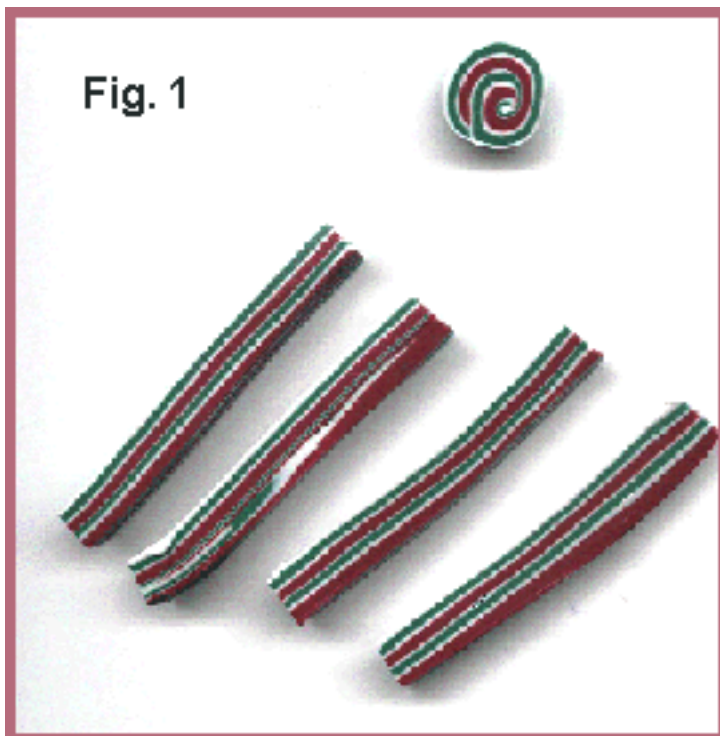
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This is a fun method for making canes for buttons or beads and one that doesn't require a lot of concentration or precision (which is why it suits me perfectly)!

You will need:

- Several colours of your choice – I used scrap clay as well as some "clean" clay.
- Pasta machine
- Cutting blade

For the first 'surprise' all you need to do is make a jellyroll in however many colours you like. Make the roll at least 2 cm (.8 inches) thick, and about 5 cm (2 inches) long. This will make about ten 2 cm (.8 inches) buttons.



Now cut the jellyroll in half **lengthwise** (Fig. 1). Then, cut those halves in half lengthwise.



Reassemble the four lengths in any configuration you like (Fig. 2). They don't need to be symmetrical.

Compress and roll the new cane to the size required, then cut in half across the cane to

mirror image it. Compress and roll again.



At this point, you can decide if you like the cane as is, or you can cut and mirror image it again. Fig 3 shows an example of each.

It really is amazing just how many different patterns you can create from this very simple idea. Try it with Wrapped Canes (or Bulls Eyes) and others still more options.

SECOND CANE

For the second 'surprise' or abstract cane, you need to make some components or use left over canes if you want, such as:

- A jellyroll or two
- A wrapped cane, used whole or cut in half lengthways
- Some chequerboard
- Some strips of various colours
- Some plain logs, used whole or cut in half lengthways
- Lace cane

Simply assemble the canes in an abstract manner, making sure that if two similar toned colours are side by side that you use a thin sheet of a contrast colour to separate them.

Build your new cane into one that is at least 2.5 cm (1 inch) thick and 5 cm (2 inches) long, as any smaller might make it difficult to reduce the cane without losing definition. This is another reason for using contrasting colours, or at least separating components with a contrast strip.



Fig. 4 shows the original assemblage and two mirror-imaged results.

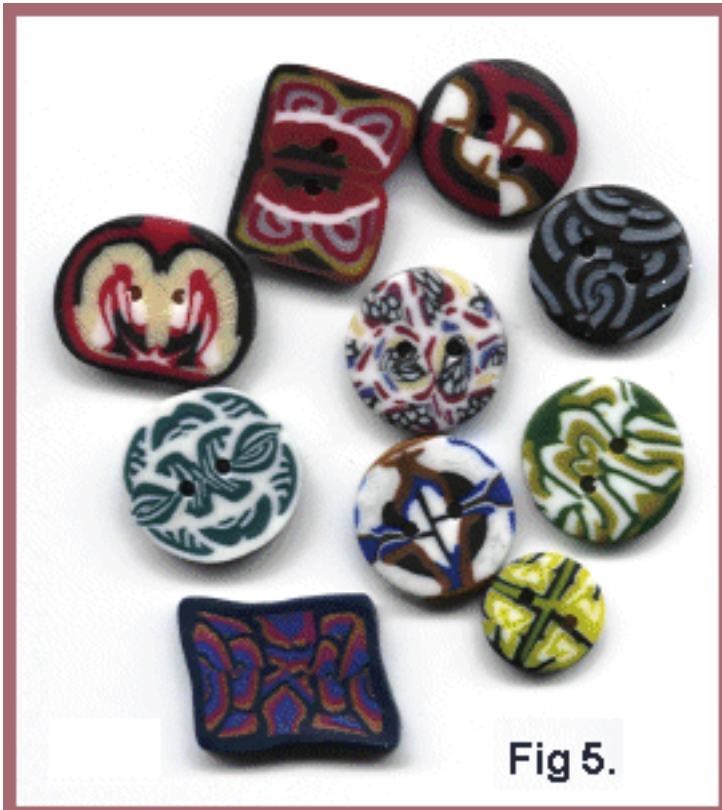


Fig. 5 shows variations of the same theme. I have made lots of these 'surprise' canes and not once have I duplicated the design.