

Matchbox Amulets©

by Marty Woosley



This little covered matchbox will bring you lots of attention when you wear it. When someone asks to see it, I always open the drawer for him or her and everyone always responds with great enthusiasm!

Supply List

- Polymer Clay: 2 packages for Skinner Blend, 1 package for one color
- Small cardboard matchbox-purchase at grocery store
- Pasta machine or acrylic roller
- Powder release agent for box and molds
- Tissue blade and Exacto \hat{O} blade
- Drill bit the size of your neck cord
- Buna cord and washers or neck cord of choice and polymer beads
- Texture tools, Texture plates or Rubber Stamps for embellishment
- Mold for embellishment or what ever embellishment you might like
- Bowl of water to soak off matchbox
- Stamps or pictures to put inside little drawer
- Oven to bake finished piece at 265 degrees for 30 minutes

1. Condition clay and make a Skinner Blend if desired. One of your pieces for the top of the amulet will be approximately $4\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ and the other for the drawer will be approximately $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$, # 4 on my Atlas machine or medium thin so figure accordingly.

2. Lay down matchbox cover and roll on clay to figure out the measurement to completely wrap around the cover. Cut to size leaving a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch at the two open ends of the box. (You want to leave this as our inside drawer is a bit bigger after it is wrapped with clay.)

I like the seam to hide on the back of the box. After you have your piece of clay cut to size, brush it with some release powder lightly and wrap the clay around the box.

Make sure your clay on the open ends of the box remains straight and does not wrap down over the edge. Lay the inside (drawer) of the matchbox down on the clay and cut it as in the picture.

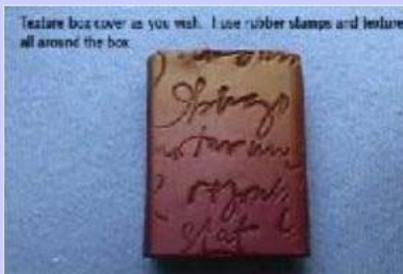


3. Brush with release powder and fit around drawer. Work your corner seams to make sure they are joined well. Make sure there are no air pockets.

Cut off at top of drawer making it even with the edge of the box. Try to keep everything very neat and even, as it will affect your finished product if it is out of shape.

With scrap clay that matches matchbox clay, make two beads about $\frac{1}{4}$ " and push end of Buna cord in or make a hole that will accept the cord you are using. Bake them with your amulet pieces.

4. Now it is time to embellish your amulet. Use rubber stamps, texture sheets or any texture tool you might want to use. I have seen one done with a transfer onto the clay. Use whatever will make it yours.



Add a snake of clay at both the top and the bottom of the outside as shown in pictures above. Here is where one might want to use a mold and add an embellishment to the front of the amulet.

Sometimes I bake the embellishment and add it to the amulet with glue after it is sanded and buffed but that is up to the designer. Remember if your hands are warm, you might want to let it rest for a bit as it will shift the clay from the box with too much handling.

5. Bake as separate pieces at 265 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool and soak in a bowl of water for however long it takes to soak thru the cardboard. Depending on your matchbox brand, this can run from $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to 2 hours but the better it is soaked, the easier it removes from the inside of the box top. Patience here will help.

6. I sand with a 400, 600 and 1000 grit wet dry sandpaper and polish with Dremel cloth buffing wheel. Care should be taken here as not to break your drawer. These pieces are very thin and catching on the buffing wheel can break them. (How would I know that?)

7. Now it is time to add your neck cord---I use the Buna cord (rubber) but I am sure leather or chain would work as well. I use my little hand drill bit in a polymer clay handle to drill my holes for the cord. Do this thru the drawer only.



Make the holes the size of the cord you are using and as shown in photo. Run cord thru holes and glue matching polymer beads to ends of cord.

8. Now it is time to test your drawer. Sometimes it takes some trimming on the drawer depending on the shift of the clay. Use your Exacto and work at it slowly. You want the drawer to fit tight but you should not have to force it out with much pressure.

I trim along the top edge of the drawer but not too much as you might make it too loose to hold in the cover. I have to trim most of mine. Add a picture or surprise inside and enjoy. I have used mine to carry breath mints, money (paper) and medication.





Let me know how your Matchbox Amulet works out. Email me at: Marty@pcPolyzine.com.

Here are some of my examples for the Matchbook Amulet!

