

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

This is a fun technique with both sculpting and some cane work. Brighten up the children's hair with these fun-to-make hair bands for the Easter holiday. Put a couple in their Easter basket. Have fun with it.



Supplies:

- clay in rose, white, grey
- clay and canes in any colors for the dress
- Translucent Liquid Sculpey (TLS)
- Exacto knife
- elastic cord
- toothpicks and chopsticks
- talcum powder
- pasta machine (optional)
- permanent marker

Click on pictures for larger photo

Step 1:

I use cane work technique for the rabbit's ears. The grey clay is actually scrap clay, and I finally got some good use for it.

You can also see that I have made some white rabbits.

I start with making a Skinner blend with rose and white.

Cut the cane a bit and make it into a teardrop shape.

Use white or grey clay and make two sheets of clay on the Number 1 (thick) on your pasta machine.

Pack it around your teardrop cane.

Finish it with a last sheet of clay run through the pasta machine on Number 5.

Reduce the cane.



Step 2:

Very lightly pinch the clay together from each side of the end of the cane, persuading it to meet.

**Step 3:**

Cut the ear off with a blade. Doing this, the pink clay on the inside ear won't show on the back side, and the ear look more realistic.

**Step 4:**

Press the ear down towards your working surface using your thumb. Now make the second ear.

**Step 5:**

Roll a ball of clay for the head, and make the ball into a cone shape.

**Step 6:**

Press your thumb at the end of the cone, making it into the rabbit's forehead.

**Step 7:**

Pick up the ears and press them onto the head.



Step 8:

Use your finger or a tool to smooth out the seams. Twist the top of the ears.

**Step 9:**

Make the cheeks of white clay from a little log. Cut it and roll two equally sized balls of clay. Make them into cone shape.

The long strip of clay as seen on the picture, are pre-baked teeth. I roll out a snake of clay, use a brayer and flatten the log. Use an Exacto knife and make several teeth in a row. Bake for about ten minutes.

**Step 10:**

Snap two of the teeth from the pre-baked log and put a tiny dab of TLS on the underside of checks. Press the teeth into the clay. I like to use a tiny bit of TLS to make it adhere well.

**Step 11:**

Press teeth and checks onto head.

Make tiny holes for illusion of whiskers using a needle tool of some sort.

**Step 12:**

Make a tiny ball of pink clay for the nose. For extra support put TLS on before attaching it. Leave the head to rest.

**Step 13:**

Print out the pattern for the dress by clicking on the picture and selecting print.



Step 14:

Condition the clay you prefer to use for the dress and make a sheet on Number 5 on your pasta machine.

Lay the template on top of the clay, and cut along the template using an Exacto knife.

**Step 15:**

Decorate the dress using cane slices or cut outs as shown here.

**Step 16:**

Use a chopstick as an armature on which to bake your rabbit dress. Cut the stick in half so it's short enough to use in the oven.

**Step 17:**

Lay the dress over the stick.

**Step 18:**

Lightly press the seams together on one side, forming the clay over the stick.

**Step 19:**

Use a knitting needle to make the holes for the arms.

Add patterns on the sides of the dress as well, if you wish.



Step 20:

I have found the best solution is to place the chopstick in a cup with foil. That will make the chopstick with the rabbit stand up straight

while baking (believe me I have tried other methods, and the head has fallen off).

Spread some TLS on top of the dress where the head will sit. Pick the head up and position it well.

**Step 21:**

Positioning your fingers as in the picture, press down on the head. This will make a good rabbit shaped head and it will stay firmly onto the dress.

**Step 22:**

To make the arms and feet, make a log of clay about 0.6 inch (1.5cm) long for arms. Cut it into two equally sized logs.

Make a cone shape of your log and dip a round toothpick in talcum powder. Press the log into the toothpick.

Very carefully persuade the clay to move upwards the toothpick, dragging it slowly upwards. Also press it firmly against the toothpick so it doesn't get too loose.

The ends doesn't matter now, as we will cut them off later.

**Step 23:**

Use a small crochet needle to make indentations in the clay for claws.

Three should do it, one in the middle and one on each side.

**Step 24:**

Lift the arm up from the work surface and bend it carefully downwards into shape. Put it on a tile for baking.



Step 25:

Follow the same steps for feet as with arms, but make the log of clay about 0.8 inch (2cm) long and a little thicker than the arms.

Instead of laying the feet flat on your work surface, press the heel down towards the work surface, making the toothpick stand up almost straight. Make same indentations as arms and lift carefully and put on tile for baking.

**Step 26:**

Some rabbits ready for the oven.

Put your rabbit in the oven and bake it for about 40 minutes. Let it cool in the oven.

Remove the rabbit from the chopstick when cool.

**Step 27:**

Arms and feet ready to be baked.

The feet and arms need only 30 minutes in the oven.

**Step 28:**

When the feet and arms are cold, twist off the toothpicks and lay them on a tile. Cut off the floppy ends with an Exacto knife.

**Putting the Rabbit Together****Step 29:**

Use an elastic band in preferred colour. Measure it to 8.2 inches (21cm).

Double it so you will have a string measuring about 16.4 inches (42cm).

This elastic band will form both the ponytail holder and the arms and legs of the rabbit.

**Step 30:**

Fold the elastic in half.

Lift up the rabbit and put the two loose ends of the elastic into one of the arm holes, and out through the bottom of the dress.



Step 31:

Put the folded side of the elastic through the other arm and down through the dress.

**Step 32:**

Align the elastic so the folded side is half the length of the two loose ends.

**Step 33:**

Make a knot at the middle using all the bands. Tighten it firmly, trying to make the folded side as short as possible.

**Step 34:**

It's a bit tricky to get all the bands knotted. Here you see the knot being made.

**Step 35:**

Cut off the excess folded part.

**Step 36:**

You should now have two long pieces dangling out from the dress, and two pieces running from arm to arm.

Pull the arm pieces up as tightly as possible, pulling the knot into the dress to hide it.



Step 37:

Pull one of the arm pieces up and over the head, so you have one piece to the front of the rabbit, and one piece to the back.

The piece to the front will form the arms.

The piece to the back will be the elastic band for wrapping around hair.

**Step 38:**

Stretch the front band and cut it in the middle. Now you have two arms.

**Step 39:**

Tie a knot in the elastic as close to the arm hole as possible. This knot will keep the elastic arms from slipping into the body.

You may want to make a double knot if your hole is big.

Make sure the knot results in the arm pointing downward. Some knots will cause the arm to point upwards!

**Step 40:**

Cut both the leg and arm pieces to the length you want.

Put a dab of super glue on the end of a leg band and press it into the foot.

**Step 41:**

Do the same for the other foot and the two hands.

**Step 42:**

A tiny teardrop shape of a permanent black pen for eyes makes the rabbit look whimsy and funny.



Step 43:

The finished rabbit!

This rabbit has a silk ribbon knotted around its neck -- ready to be put in a little girl's hair for the right Easter spirit.



My two daughters June (left) and Inez showing how the bands look in their hair. They are quite happy with them. Hope yours will be too.



Happy Easter!