

Polymer Clay Jewelries

The skill of basic jewelry making can be applied to creating customized fashion accessories or other functional items like ornaments, decorated containers, custom magnets, keychains, or other projects. Application of jewelry making to polymer clay sculptures can bring a whole new level of creativity.



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Planning Your Animal Sculpture Jewelry

Style Think about what kind of jewelry you are going to create. Necklaces come in multiple lengths, earrings come in loops or studs, and bracelets come in a variety of thicknesses.

Size The size of the jewelry matters when finding out how much material you will need to create.

Material Metal accessories and findings are best suited for use with polymer clay sculptures, which are baked in a toaster or a conventional oven. If you want to use plastics, be sure to choose those that cannot melt under the necessary oven temperatures,

Colors Consider the color of the jewelry findings, chains, beads, and other items that you will apply to your animal sculpture jewelry. Findings come in gold, silver, rustic, or chrome. The shine and colors of the beads and crystals you choose also play an important role in creating a beautiful, elegant piece.

Functionality A polymer clay sculpture can be created mainly for decoration, or it can become a functional and interactive piece such as a pen holder or decorated container. Jewelry can include materials such as a small clock or locket.

Meaning Whether you are creating jewelry for yourself or someone else, the meaning behind your design adds special meaning to any piece. Initials or charms, symbols, mini picture frames, or mini glass bottles are some examples.



What to Consider

Quality For pieces that will go through wear and tear, direct contact with skin, or movement, use stable installations to prevent findings from being separated from their junctions.

Weight The weight of the polymer clay sculpture is important when creating custom jewelry. To prevent discomfort, consider this weight when creating earrings, necklaces, and bracelets.

Budget Creating animal sculpture jewelry requires only a small amount of clay, but the cost of materials can vary depending on the size of the piece, the intricacy and complexity of the design, and the brand of each material. For cost-effective projects, try reusing beads from old fashion accessories. Avoid reusing metal findings from old pieces as they might appear oxidized and faded.



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Tools and Supplies

Jewelry Pliers These pliers will help you maneuver metal findings placed in the sculpture, open and close metal rings, and create loops at the tips of pins. The three main jewelry pliers are flat-nose, round-nose, and cutter.



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Jewelry Findings

Jewelry findings are used to help you connect jewelry pieces. Some jewelry findings will come into direct contact with the polymer clay and will be included before baking. Adding jewelry findings to the sculpture provide a place to attach other decorative items.

Jewelry findings are available in metal finishes and different colors. Color choices for your findings will depend on the style that you want to achieve for your animal sculpture jewelry.



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Ear Wires

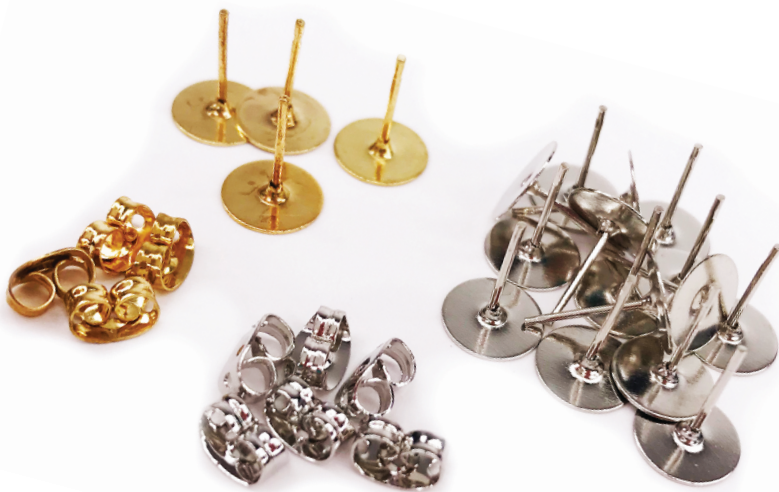
Ear wires are used to create dangling earrings from your small pet sculptures. They come in gold, silver, copper, brass, or gunmetal. These color choices can help you match other fashion accessories, like a watch or outfit.

Earring wires come in different forms. Some have locking mechanisms and some are open loops that require the use of rubber stoppers to prevent earrings from falling out.



Stud Earrings

Stud earrings are used to keep pet sculpture earrings in place without dangling. These style directly touch the ears. The use of a clear super glue gel is required to adhere the small pet sculptures to the stud.



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Metal Jump Rings

Jump rings are used to connect one jewelry piece or small sculpture to another. They also make other decorative or functional items dangle for movement or flexibility.

Jump rings come in different colors. Make sure to match the color to other findings, unless you intentionally want a variety of colors in your piece. Larger jump rings can create more movement and places to attach other findings. The size of the findings also plays a role in the aesthetic look of your jewelry.



Metal Chains

The style of your necklace will depend on the color, design, and length of the necklace chain.





Lag Thread Screw Eye

Lag thread screw eyes are used to add an object so that it can be connected with other items or jewelry. The screw on the end helps grab surfaces and prevent them from sliding away. Depending on the functionality of the sculpture, small lag thread screw eye findings are recommended only for functional, lightweight animal sculptures like earrings and small decorative items like beads or letterings.

For functional items that will go through wear and tear (like magnets) and heavier items that dangle (like bracelets or necklaces), the screw end may be reinforced with more wires to create more security.

Bezels

Bezels are structures that have a flat base and a rim surrounding the structure. Bezel settings are normally used to adhere gems and crystals for security in jewelry making.

In creating animal sculpture jewelry and other decorative pieces, instead of using gems on the bezel itself, you use polymer clay sculptures. The use of a bezel is another option for small sculptures if you want to add more protection to the these pieces.

Rough, fine sandpaper is required to flatten the back of the sculptures, making the surface adhere to the bezel. A silicone adhesive or clear cyanoacrylic gel is recommended for gluing the pieces together.



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Flat Head Pin

Flat head pins are used to stop beading from detaching from a chain. These pins are often used for dangling earrings, charms, and necklaces.

Chandelier Findings

These findings have multiple hoops and holes so that you can attach multiple pieces. These are not often used as an addition to polymer clay jewelry because of the resulting weight.



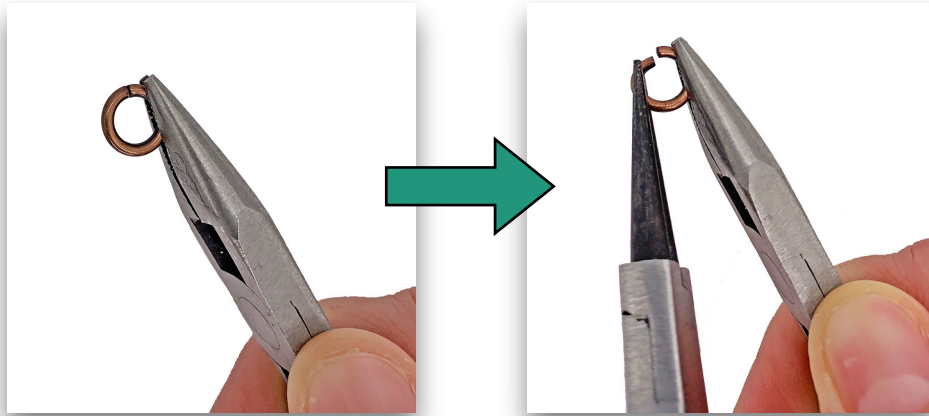
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Two Basic Jewelry-Making Techniques

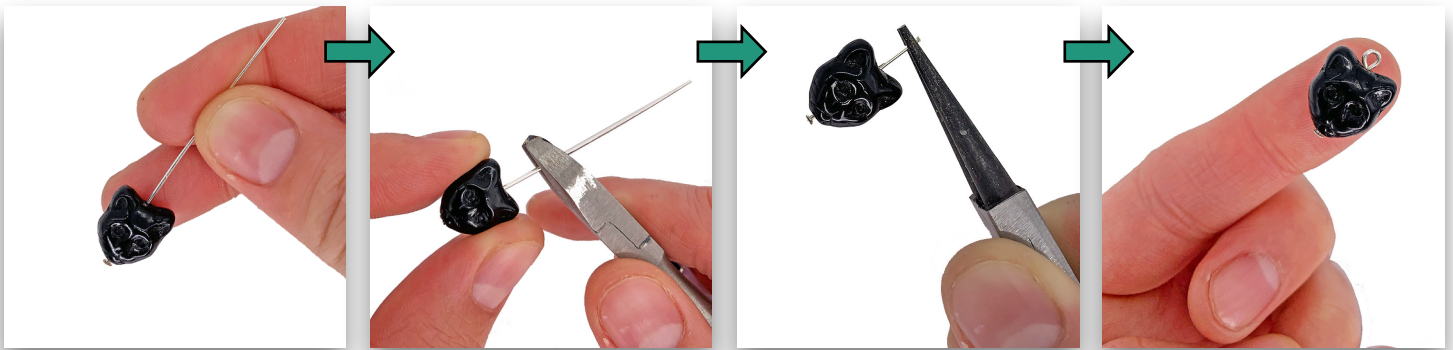
Opening and Closing Jump Rings

Use flat- or round-nose pliers to separate the two sides of the jump ring.



Looping

Use round-nose pliers to loop the end tip of a flat head pin. Hook this loop to any part of a necklace, earrings, or bracelet, then use flat-nose pliers to close the loop.



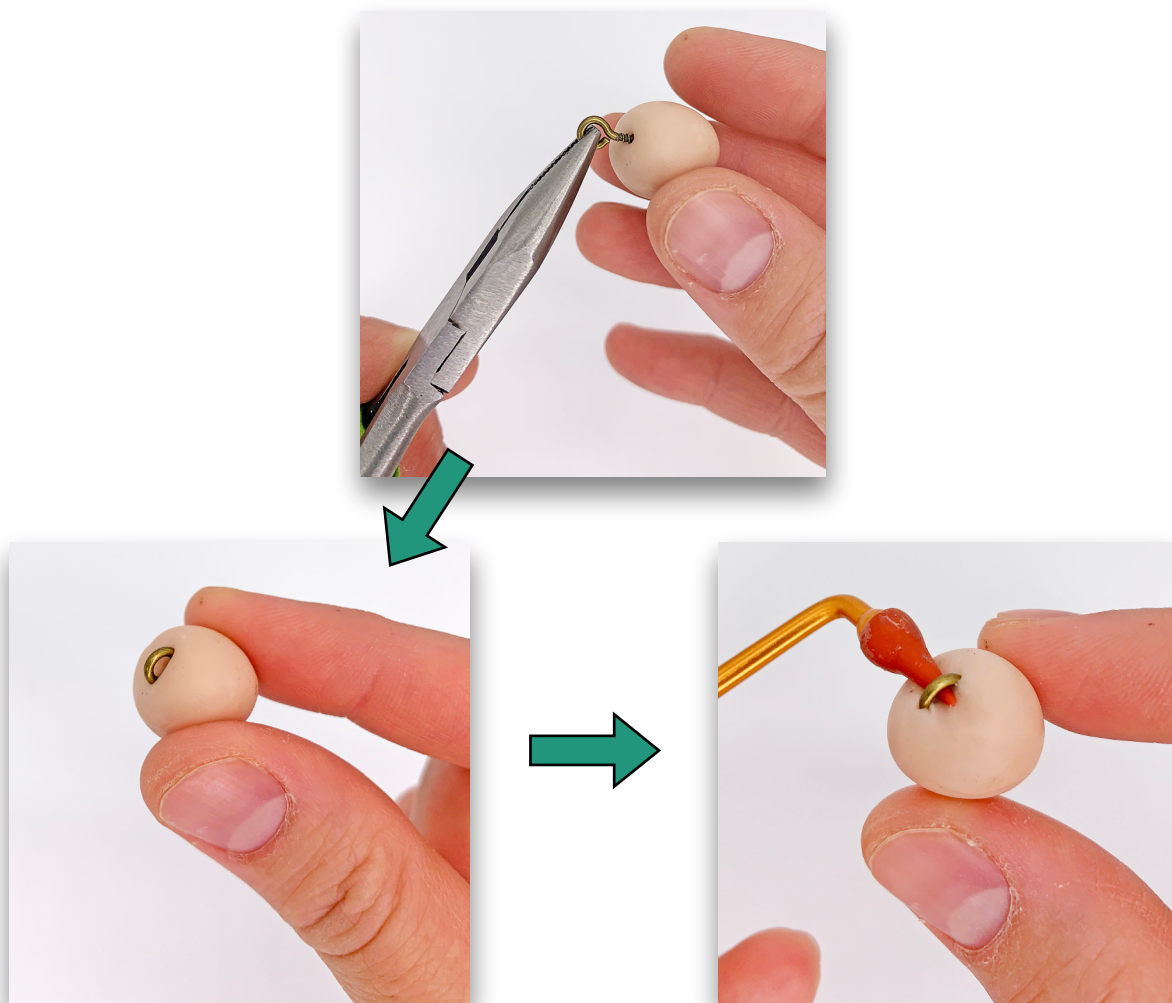
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Connecting Findings and Polymer Clay

Using a Lag Thread Screw Eye

Use flat-nose jewelry pliers to hold a lag thread screw eye, then poke it through any part of the polymer clay sculpture. Press the screw deep enough to expose only half the loop. Cover the inner part of the screw with clay to add security.



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The Artist-Author: Joan Cabarrus

Artist/author Joan Cabarrus is an art entrepreneur, founder of JFCRN Limited, creator of the DoggoBake Animal Sculptures product line, a registered nurse, and The Singing Sculptor on YouTube. She has authored several animal-related sculpting book tutorials and hosts and produces The DoggoBake Show, available on YouTube beginning January 2021.

As a professional artist, Joan's mission is to cultivate creativity, resourcefulness, and compassion for animals through sculpting and art that is accessible to everyone. Her happiness as a creator lies in the practicality of applying critical thinking, problem solving, and resourcefulness to produce innovative, enjoyable art. She believes that thinking courageously and practically as an artist helps us strengthen skills that also apply to bigger tasks in our daily lives.

Visit her Website: www.JFCRN.com



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