

Natasha Beads Technique

make your own beads and needle tool decoration

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Photos – Iris Mishly



Every polymer clay artist has TONS of leftovers and scrap from canes.

Natasha beads are a fun way to use up scraps of polymer clay. By pressing pieces of clay together, and with a few twists and turns, you can create beads with intricate designs. These beads are not complicated to make; those who are new to working with polymer clay can make the Natasha bead one of their first projects.

Materials:

Working space, clean and smooth (ceramic/glass tile is great)

Cane/clay leftovers, preferable canes with skinner blend but not necessary, any distorted canes you don't want/like anymore, bad slices and anything with pattern.

Cutting blade

Brayer

Ruler

Pasta machine – recommended

A simple cane for bead ends

Long needle to make your needle tool

Another needle tool to make holes in your beads

1 drop of liquid glue

Pasta Machine

There are few brands of pasta machines; some are different in setting than others.

When I say thickest setting choose yours accordingly whether it's 1 or 9.



Take your leftovers and cut them into slices. They don't have to be thin but not too thick either.



Start making a sandwich from your slices, put slices either randomly or in a specific order (I did it randomly)



This is the sandwich



Cut in half

2 halves open



Turn one half over and hold it in your hand



Make a ball out of all the clay slices



And roll it into a log.





Start twisting the log like a screw.



Continue twisting till you feel like the clay can't be twisted anymore or it will break (don't worry if this happen)



A bit more



Roll it back to a log

Press it to form a squared shape log



Like this.



Using a sharp blade, slice the log in half lengthwise.



Flip the log to an un-cut side and slice again in half lengthwise.



You have total of 4 parts.



Take 2 connected sides, and open those slowly like you are opening a book, keeping both halved together.
You will see that each half has a pattern that is symmetrical to the other half you didn't open yet.



Repeat the last step with the other half.

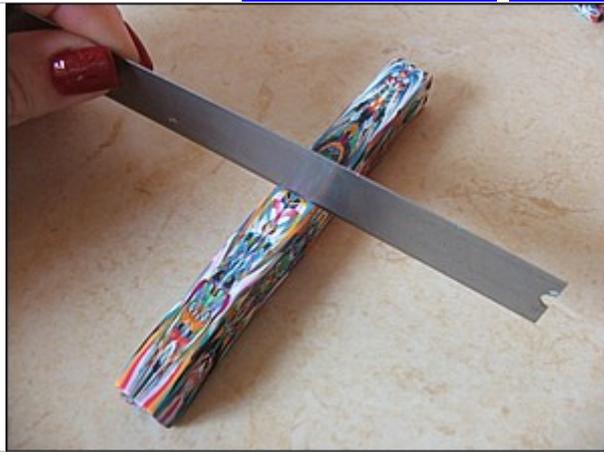
Match the symmetrical pattern of both halves. If you don't see it, turn the clay and look for it. It's definitely there.



Match all sides and smooth slowly over the connecting line.

Notice the beautiful mirror images on the bead 😊 these beads are one-of-a-kind, they are unique and almost never be repeated.
The pattern is only showing on the outer side of the bead.





Although some of the images shown on the bead are so nice, we have to slice it to make the handle of the needle tool.

Cut the bead in half.

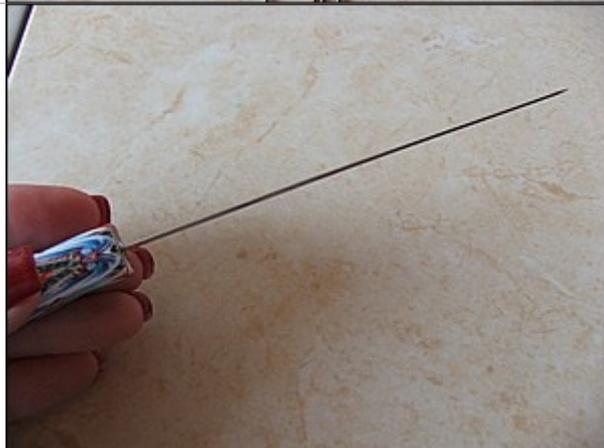


2 halves



Take a needle.

My needles are simple long needle I bought in a sewing store.

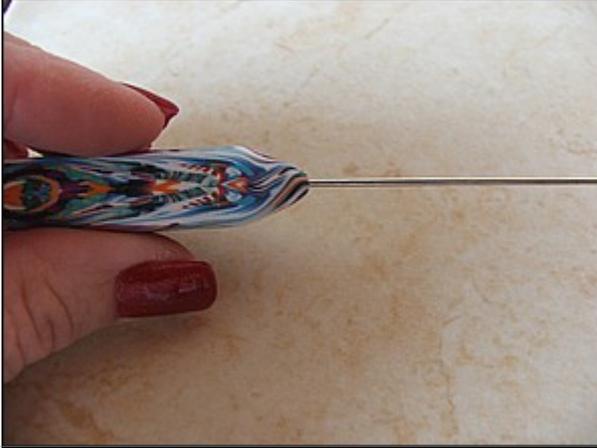


Insert the needle inside the bead (which is partially hollow).

Close the 4 corners of the bead over the needle



Like this



Repeat on the other end.



Like this



Twist the bead if you want that "curly" style handle.



Both needles made from 2 halves.



If you want to make beads out of the Natasha patterns, cut them to the size you want.



Pinch the 2 sides of each bead to "close" the ends.





Take a needle tool you already have and pierce the beads slowly. Start from one side and then pierce from other side, making the hole "meet".



Like this



Take a cane you have.
This cane will be places as a bead end.



Slice to thin slices.



After piercing the bead, place a slice of a cane on both ends of the bead.



Pierce again, this time you only have to insert a hole in the cane slices because the bead already has a hole inside.



Final beads, ready for curing and after curing.

Add a drop of glue to your needle tools so that the needle won't move when we use it for piercing holes.



Good luck! 😊