



all about™ Clay Tools!

Types of Clay

Polymer Clay, Modeling Clay and Bread Dough are wonderfully creative mediums for making jewelry, small sculptures and home décor items. Their ease of use, versatility and air-dry or oven-bake properties make them very crafter-friendly.

As you explore the world of clay, you will find a variety of tools to assist you and make your creative efforts easier and more fun. Some may be household and kitchen items like a pasta maker, and some, like Loew-Cornell's clay tools, are specifically designed for the task. The shape of a pottery tool often suggests its best use, however, there is no firm right or wrong. Hurray if another method works for you!



Types of Tools

Boxwood Modeling Tools are smooth, strong and lightweight. Available in a variety of shapes, let the shape suggest its use.



Cutting



Smoothing



Holes



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Clay Tools and Their Uses



Texture



Contour
& Shape



Join Pieces



A Word About Plastic Tools

Traditionally, modeling tools have been made of wood, preferred for their stiffness and slight absorbency when working with natural clays. Plastic modeling tools are also appropriate for air dry/bake clays. Like boxwood modeling tools, they come in a great variety of shapes, but are also flexible and great for children.



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Clay Tools and Their Uses



Ribbon Cutting Tools

Sculpt and shape by removing areas of clay. Use the broad head or corners for precision detailing to pull flat or curved areas.



Needlepoint Tool

- Create holes in beads
- Scribe lines in clay
- Create a distressed look by making holes and scratches



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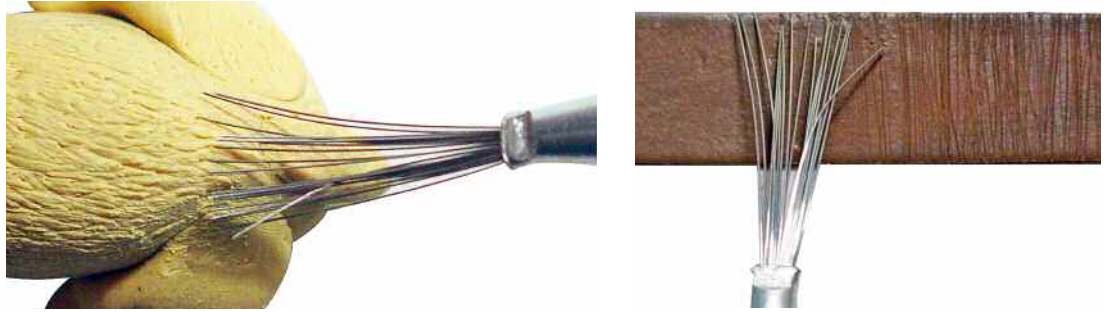
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Clay Tools and Their Uses

Wire Tool

Poke or scrape to create texture suggesting hair, fur and roughness.



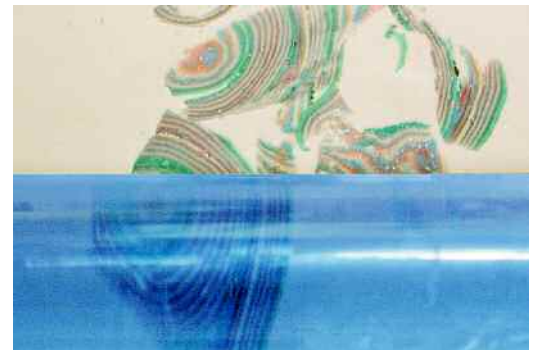
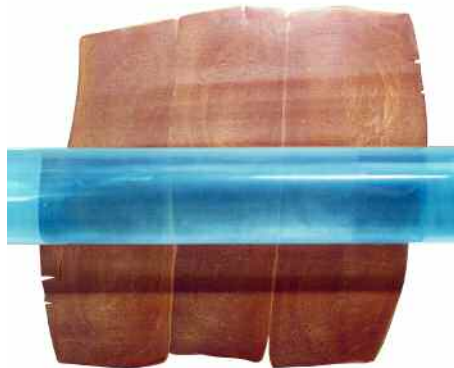
Drill Bit

Especially useful on dried/baked clay. Drill new holes or make existing holes larger in beads or pieces that will hang.



Acrylic Roller

Use to flatten and condition clay, press clay to other surfaces, join or layer pieces together.



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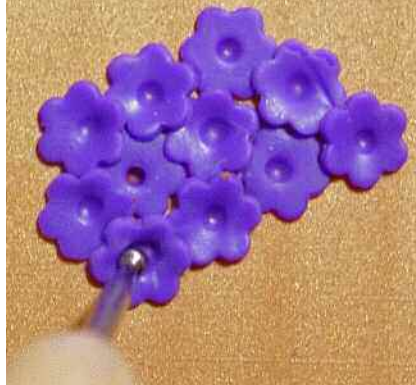
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Clay Tools and Their Uses



Stylus

Variety of sizes lets you make precision holes and indents. Excellent for picking up small beads and embellishments. *Tip: Wet the end of the tool to help them stick.*



Brushes

Brushes are definitely tools where shape often suggests their use, but hair characteristics are also important.

Small foam brushes (A) are excellent for adding powders to clay. Think 'rouge on cheeks.' Soft hair brushes in an appropriate shape can add powder to any area as an accent detail or an overall dusting with a soft mop brush can change the color of the clay (B).

Synthetic brushes are ideal for applying liquid polymer clay, a clay to clay adhesive (C). Bread doughs are often painted or varnished and water-based paints can be used to touch-up and accent polymer clays and modeling compounds. Synthetic brushes are an excellent choice for these applications.



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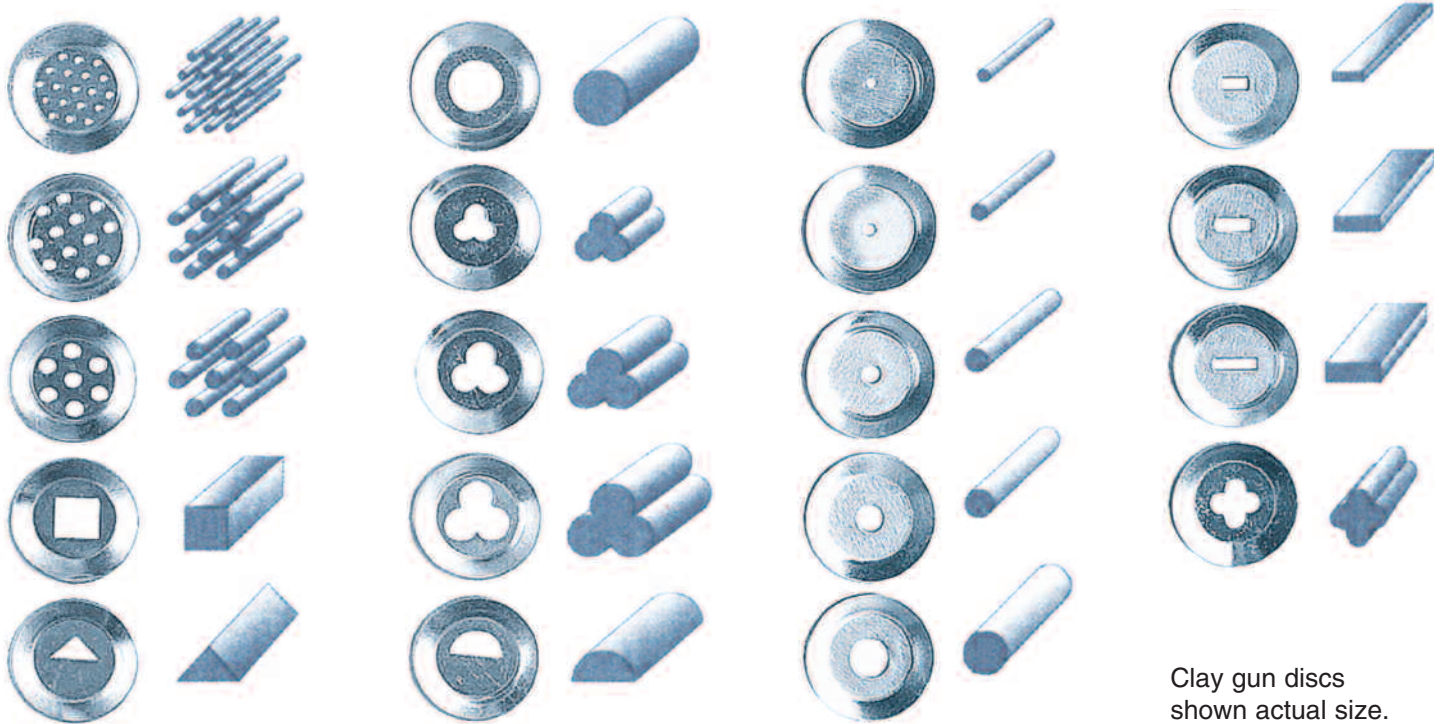
Clay Tools and Their Uses



Clay Gun

The clay gun is an extruding tool that comes with 19 design discs. Create textures & shapes quickly & easily. Cut, bend or join pieces as needed to create beads, add-ons, textures & other surface decorations in one or more colors.

Bricks, Hair, Food, Flowers, Grass, Ribbon...



Clay gun discs shown actual size.

Tips for Using the Clay Gun Effectively

- Before putting polymer clay into the gun, it is important that it be soft & pliable. This is called “conditioning” the clay, and is done by running it through a pasta machine, using a clay roller or working it with your hands.
- Small amounts of heat can keep the clay conditioned, but be careful not to bake it. You should also warm the gun itself to keep the cool metal from cooling the clay. Blow dryers, a heating pad (protect the surface), or placing the clay & gun in a plastic bag in a bowl of warm water, all work well. This can be done before or after putting the clay into the gun.
- Small amounts of clay are easier to extrude.
- Insert disc of choice, roll clay into a "log" shape to fit in metal tube. Insert plunger and apply steady pressure. Watch shapes appear. It may help to stand the gun on a table with the plunger-side down, and press down on the handles to extrude the clay.
- To clean gun, use a small bottle brush or wrap a baby wipe around the plunger and insert into gun.



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