

Faux Dichroic Basics

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The look of beautiful dichroic glass can easily and affordably be duplicated using Lisa Pavelka's techniques and her foils for clay and crafting plus Magic Glos quick cure UV resin. Unlike traditional dichroic glass, this method is much easier than traditional glass working, faster to create and much less expensive. There are literally dozens of variations that Lisa has developed based on these initial concepts including methods for utilizing foiled clay scraps for beautiful creations. This overview is a great way to get started in creating your own dichroic-esque artwork.

Basic Foil Application

Foil, even under the best of clay conditions rarely comes off the Mylar backing completely. Applications to smaller surface areas usually yield the best results. Even then, small pieces of foil may remain on the Mylar. In most instances, these are tiny little specks that in cases such as stamp embossing and molding, will not even be noticeable. When large patches of clay remain un-foiled, this can usually be fixed easily.



1. Begin with well conditioned clay. The clay should be as smooth and flat as possible. Any surface deviation such as ridges from a pasta machine or divots can prevent the foil from adhering in spots. Not all pasta machines create these roll ridges, but it's best to even out the surface with an acrylic rod before applying the foil. Make sure the rod is clean of debris as anything sticking to it will create a divot in the clay's surface when you roll.



2. Lay the foil with the color facing up towards you. ("Pearlidescent" is my translucent water slick effect foil. The colors appear on both sides of this particular variety. The matte surface is applied directly against the clay so that the shiny surface of the pattern faces upward.) Smooth the foil down from one end towards the other. Use a small piece of deli or scrap paper between your fingertip and the foil to vigorously burnish the entire surface for 30-60 seconds. Remember that the heat of burnishing is what causes the foil to stick to the clay and not pressure. Applying too much pressure can cause surface deviations in your clay. It's important to use the paper when burnishing since the body oils in your finger will cause drag, which will prevent sufficient friction to be achieved. Not enough friction means not enough heat and less of a change that the foil will release well.

Tip: If you have very cold fingers, warm them first by briskly rubbing them back and forth against your pants leg first.

3. Immediately after burnishing, lift a corner of the Mylar backing and pull it backwards (not

upwards) in a ripping-like motion as quickly as possible. It's very similar to the method used in hair waxing. The faster you pull, the better the results will be. Pulling upwards instead of backwards will also inhibit the foil from releasing from the backing. Lastly, it's important to pay attention to which corner you pulled the Mylar from for patching if needed as explained in the next step.

4. It's not uncommon to see tiny specks of foil remaining on the Mylar backing. This is typical even when the best application method is followed. These small areas where the foil doesn't adhere are seldom noticeable, especially when using foiled clay for molding or stamped embossing purposes. If larger patches of clay remain uncovered, this can easily be fixed in most cases except where there are surface depressions or divots in the clay.

5. To remedy larger spots where the foil didn't stick simply relay the Mylar backing over the clay so that the exposed areas are recovered. This is much like placing the pieces of a puzzle into place. Refurnish as in Step 2, making sure to concentrate heat and pressure while you burnish over the areas where the foil didn't stick. When you rip the Mylar off the second time, pull it from a different direction than in the first application. Ripping from a different direction will lay the foil down into exposed spots nine out of ten times if properly positioned and burnished. If the area still remains exposed, try burnishing the foil into the spot using a fresh section from an edge or corner. Again, the reason the foil doesn't stick during this step is usually due to a depression in the surface.

Tip: Another thing that can make it hard to get foil to adhere is working with under conditioned clay or a brand of clay that is very firm/stiff. If you are sure the clay has been properly conditioned, but it still feels very stiff, rub a very tiny amount of liquid clay into the surface. It's important to wipe away as much of the residue as possible in order for the foil to adhere. Apply the foil as described in Step 2.

6. Polymer clay foil, like leaf, can wear away with repeated handling or contact. Protect with a coat of liquid clay, polymer clay compatible sealer or

UV resin. Again as with leaf, heat set the clay for a few minutes first before applying liquid clay to prevent it from coming off on your brush or finger.

Tip: Certain foil colors may fade if baked too long or when used with brands of clay that require higher temperatures to cure. Sealing the foil with a layer of liquid clay after a few minutes of heat setting can minimize or prevent fading all together. This can be a great thing to keep in mind if you want a more pastel effect with your foils. If you find that one or more colors have faded and it's not the affect you wished to achieve, you can make the colors "pop" again by coloring over the foil using permanent colored markers which can be found in office supply stores in dozens of colors from primaries to fluorescents. Heat set for a few minutes after applying color before sealing the surface with liquid clay, acrylic sealer or UV resin to prevent the inks from bleeding.

7. If you find your clay is no longer flat on the surface after applying the foil, place a deli sheet over the top and lightly roll with the acrylic rod. Running the clay through the pasta machine can also be done, but keep in mind that if the setting is much thinner than the clay, the foil may stretch enough to dilute the color or even crackle.

Note: When uncured clay has been foiled directly against a tile work surface, using a clay blade to remove it will cause the surface to get a crepe-like effect. This can be desirable in some cases, but when a smoother metallic finish is desired, you can re-smooth it with a light burnishing of your finger. If you know you don't want the creped appearance from the beginning of your foiling, work with clay on a deli sheet or patty paper. This paper can be peeled off the clay without disturbing the surface.



Basic Confetti Foil Pendant

Materials and Supplies Needed:

- Black Polymer Clay (although other colors can be used with the foils)
- Lisa Pavelka Bezel Setting
- Lisa Pavelka Crafting Foils (Celebrations or Expressions)
- Lisa Pavelka Magic-Glos™
- Lisa Pavelka Polybonder™
- Polymer Clay Blade
- Acrylic Rod
- Clay dedicated pasta machine (optional)
- Smooth ceramic tile to work and bake on (optional)
- Baby Wipes
- X-acto type Craft Knife
- Toothpick
- Toaster Oven
- Thermometer
- Parchment paper

1. Condition ¼ to ½ block of black clay by kneading or rolling through the pasta machine on the largest setting until smooth and pliable. Be sure to clean hands well after conditioning with a baby wipe.

2. Using the pasta machine, roll the clay through reduced setting until you have rolled it out on the 3rd largest setting. You can also roll out clay to the thickness between two stacked decks of 4 playing cards using an acrylic roller.

Tip: When using the pasta machine to roll the clay out, always place the folded edge down against the rollers to avoid trapping air pockets in the clay.

Tip: Pasta machine settings vary from brand to brand. Check to see if the smallest number is the largest setting between rollers or the thinnest.

Adjust your settings down or up from the largest setting when following suggested thickness.

3. Place the clay sheet on a piece of deli/parchment paper.

4. Place foil color of your choice, color side face up over the clay. Press your fingertip down over the foil for about 10-15 seconds and then quickly rip the Mylar backing away. The heat of your finger against the foil triggers the release of the color onto the clay. Continue to do this

repeatedly; applying different colored areas of the foil until all or most of the black clay is covered with a random speckled pattern of foil.

5. Press one of Lisa Pavelka's bezels down over the clay to create an embossed outline of the bezel. cut out the focal piece. Using a craft knife, trim along the inner line of the bezel edge impression. Lay the cutout clay into the bezel. Remove the clay and continue trimming if needed to fit into the bezel.

6. Apply a few light strokes of Polybonder™ to the inside of the bezel. Carefully place the trimmed clay sheet inside the bezel and gently tamp down to ensure the clay is smoothed onto the bezel pan and along the edges.

Tip: If you under cut your clay sheet, gently push the clay sheet towards the edges of the bezel until the entire bezel is covered with your clay sheet. You can also use textures or tools such as sandpaper, a ball-tip stylus, or texture stamps to give the foiled surface an interesting effect and to spread the clay outward against the bezel walls. Remember, a little glue goes a long way - less is more!

7. Your pendant is almost complete. Preheat your oven to the clay manufacturer's recommended temperature. Once the oven temperature is calibrated to the correct temperature (refer to oven thermometer), bake the clay inside of the bezel for 10 - 15 minutes.

8. Remove your piece and let it cool. The yellows, orange, and green areas of Rainbow foil may fade a bit. If this occurs and you wish to bring the color back to its original saturation, lightly color over these areas with a permanent ink marker of the same color (alcohol inks or other non-permanent markers will not work for this). Don't press too hard with markers as this may actually remove foil, rather than enhance the color. Apply one thin layer of Lisa Pavelka Magic-Glos™ as directed, spreading it over the entire surface. Allow a few minutes for it to seep along the edges, giving a chance for any trapped air to rise to the surface. Follow tips for popping any bubbles that may appear. Cure your piece outside in direct sunlight or by using Lisa Pavelka's UV cure lamp for approximately 10 minutes. A second, thicker layer can be added.

This can be slightly lower than the top edge of the bezel wall, which will create a concave finish. Other options are to just add enough to be level with the bezel wall for an effect that looks like a glass lens is covering the piece, or Lisa's favorite – adding enough to create a slightly domed effect like a glass cabochon for a faux dichroic effect. Cure for another 10 minutes. When back-setting crystals, wait at least an hour after curing to drill into cured Magic Glos.™

Tip: Lisa's UV cure lamp allows for added convenience for quick curing when it's cloudy, windy day or at night.



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www.lisapavelka.com

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