

Faux Glass Flowers

Designed by: Maureen Wilson

Inspired by the amazing glass art of [Dale Chihuly](#), these flowers are made from a special plastic called Dura-Lar. A unique characteristic of Dura-Lar is that you can mold it in hot water. When it's removed from the water, it immediately hardens into that shape. The creative possibilities are endless!

Supplies:

Grafix Dura-Lar (.015 weight)
Scissors & hole punch
Pot of hot water
Dishwashing gloves
Pebeo Vitrea 160 glass paint & thinner
Foam plate for paint
Brush or sponge
Sakura Permapaque Metallic Pens

Directions:

1. Begin by heating water. You want it to steam but not boil. You can do this in a skillet or a pot... I preferred the pot because I could totally immerse the piece I was working on.
2. While the water is heating, cut out your flower shapes. I had a lot of fun experimenting with these. Pretty much any shape you cut out can be turned into an exotic flower! If you'd like to add a stem to your flower, you'll need to punch a hole in the center.
3. It's important that you wear good dishwashing gloves. The water will be hot, but not hot enough to scald you if you're wearing proper gloves. For your own safety, do not attempt this project without good dishwashing gloves.
4. Place a flower shape in the water. Give it a few moments to heat and soften. Then you can begin to shape it while holding it under water. Try curling some petals forwards and others backwards. When you lift the flower out of the water, it will hold its shape. You can immerse it again to re-shape it.
5. To make a stem, cut a long rectangle about an inch wide. You can also cut out a leaf on the side of the rectangle. Immerse the shape, and pinch the rectangle between your fingers to create a tube. Pinch the tip of the leaf to give it shape and dimension.
6. You can create cool spiral shapes by wrapping a strip of Dura-Lar around a pencil, then immersing it in the water. Lift and let it cool for a moment, and it will remain coiled.



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Painting Your Flowers

Now that you have all these interesting flower shapes, it's time to give them some color. I like Pebeo's Vitrea 160 glass paints. You'll also want to buy Pebeo's paint thinner. This glass paint is thick and concentrated, so it's hard to work with if you don't thin it first.

I tried several methods of painting to see whether the application would make any difference. I'm not sure which I liked best so I'll show you each.

1. One method I tried was applying with cosmetic sponges. I chose this because I knew it would give a smooth application without streaks. The pieces painted this way are more opaque than the others and not as shiny.
2. I used a sable brush for other pieces. It was easy to get into small areas, but the paint was streakier than with the sponge. Adding a second coat helped to eliminate the streaks.
3. Finally, I just dipped some pieces. This created the most consistent finish, but it was pretty messy.
4. Once the first coat of paint is dry, you can add detail work. Consider layering on another wash of color to add dimension. You can paint stripes, or make dots with the head of a pin.

Assembling your Flower

1. Now it's time to assemble your pieces into a flower. Layer a small piece over a larger one. Insert a stem through the hole in the center.
2. Snip and separate the stem's tip as necessary to create the center stamen of the flower. This will hold the petal pieces in place and keep them from sliding down the stem.
3. Finally, you can make your pieces pop by outlining the edges with a metallic marker. I like Sakura's Permapaque pens.



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