

# The Best Of "Creative Living with Sheryl Borden"



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**Due to the size of this section, it has been separated into two sections in order for it to be downloaded more quickly. For instance, “Aardvark to Zebra” is in Section I on page 3, whereas “Creating a Handmade Tile” is in Section II on page 8.**

# CREATING A HANDMADE TILE

Although the basic process of making handmade tile is similar from artist to artist, the variations on method are a result of the tile artist's experience. Many tile artists find ways to improve on an age-old technique by cutting corners that suit them and their product. The basics become the starting point, while individual techniques are developed over time.

Making sure your clay is the right consistency has a huge impact on the quality of the finished tile. When you open a bag of clay, check how wet it is before you roll the first slab. If you pinch the clay and your finger comes away sticky with clay residue, the clay is too wet and will be hard to handle without disfiguring it when transferring it from one surface to another. Loosely close the bag to allow air circulation, which will evaporate excess water. Remember to check periodically to make sure the clay doesn't get too dry or hard. Pinch the clay between your fingers. If it feels cool, slightly moist but firm to the touch, it's ready to handle.

Work on a flat level surface with plenty of elbow room and in close proximity to the space where you'll place the completed tile. There is nothing more aggravating than finishing a tile and having to walk across the room to set it down to dry. When your hands are full of wet clay, 20 feet might as well be 20 miles.

Before you begin making your tile, cut two cardboard squares, one 4 5/8" by 4 5/8" and one 2 1/4" by 2 1/4". These are the templates for 4" by 4" tiles and 2" by 2" tiles, factoring in a shrinkage rate of 12%. In woodworking they say, 'Measure twice and cut once.' This also goes for making handmade tile. What looks like 1/8" out of square on a wet tile will look like 1/4" out of square on a finished fired tile. These basic considerations become very important as you move onto more advanced projects. Every tile, whether it is a simple field tile or a blank for a future carved tile, must be square the first time around. So when you measure for the cardboard template, check to make sure all right angles are square.



1. Cut a slab from a block of clay, approximately 2" thick. Lay thickness strips on the canvas and place the slab between the strips. Flatten the clay with the heel of your hand.

2. Place a piece of canvas over the slab and roll out the clay, keeping the rolling pin on the thickness strips. Change directions when rolling out the clay. If you always roll in the same direction, the clay particles will lie in one direction, causing your tile to shrink more in one direction than the other and a 4"x 4" tile will be out of square.



3. Remove the canvas and slightly moisten the end of a squeegee, making sure the edge is free of any dried clay or debris. Firmly pull the squeegee over the surface of the clay in one direction to remove the canvas marks.



4. Gently lay the cardboard template on the clay slab. Hold the template firmly against the clay with one hand and use your other hand to hold the pin tool perpendicular to the slab to cut around the template. Pull the excess clay from the tile and run the pin tool around a second time to create a smooth edge. Too-wet clay will pull and distort with the pin tool. If this happens, use firmer clay.



5. Push the tile gently from the side to dislodge it, which will make it easier to lift up without pulling and bending the tile. With a slightly moistened finger, ease the edges to create a more natural corner. Support the tile with your palm and place it aside to dry.



**COURTESY: Kristen Peck  
Author & Designer**

# Trash to Collectible Tote

Optional "Faux fur" edge: Measure the top of the bag and, with one strand each of the Lion Brand Microspun and Fun Fur yarns (held together as one), crochet a chain that length. Then, double crochet 3 rows onto the chain. If you don't crochet, you can knit 4 rows instead. Or, buy some of those "fun feather" trims and attach it around the top of the bag.

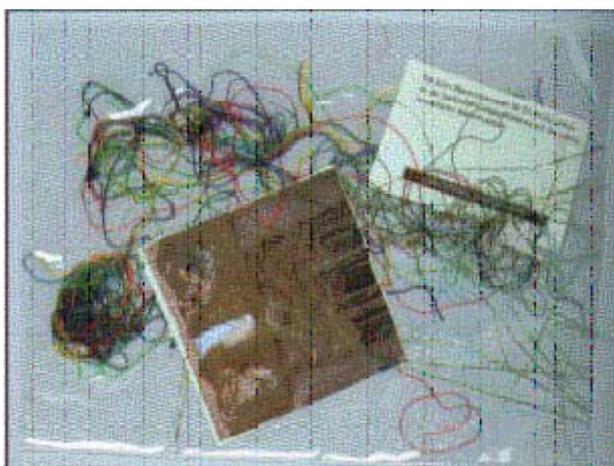


## What You Will Need:

Zig-zag Sewing Machine  
14/90 or 16/100 Topstitch sewing machine needle  
Sulky Paper Solvy  
Sulky Decorative Threads  
Sulky KK 2000 Temporary Spray Adhesive  
Construction thread  
Scissors  
Rotary Cutter, Mat and Quilter's Ruler  
Paper Clips  
Q-Tips  
2 -13 1/2" x 31" pieces of clear, medium-weight (10 Gauge) Vinyl  
1 1/2 yds. of either purchased braid, decorative cording or 1" grosgrain ribbon for the strap  
For knit or crocheted edge: Lion Brand® Micro Spun™ Fuchsia, and Fun Fur Fuchsia  
General Sewing Supplies

## STEPS:

1. Lay one piece of vinyl out flat. Mark a small dot on both sides 14 1/2" down from each short end. (This delineates the 2" flat bottom.)



*Hint: Lay your memorabilia and treasures face down on a piece of cardboard or newspaper. Very lightly spray each one with Sulky KK 2000 Temporary Spray Adhesive. Give them just a little "pffit"; don't overspray. Turn them over and place them in position on the vinyl. Place heavier items, like heavy card stock or coins, toward the bottom. Don't put any items in the 2" bottom area that will interfere with the folding.*

2. Lay the second piece of vinyl on top.  
3. Make sure you have a fresh needle in the machine, and thread the top and

bobbin with a Sulky Decorative Thread of your choice. Sew random straight stitches through all layers and in all directions, avoiding solid objects.



*Hint: If the vinyl sticks to the bed of the machine, place Sulky Paper Solvy underneath to help it flow smoothly. A non-stick foot would help the top flow through as well.*

4. To stitch the side seams, use a medium-to-wide zigzag stitch and about a 1/4" seam allowance. For extra reinforcement, stitch a second time. Do the same for the top, attaching either the braid, grosgrain ribbon or cording about 3" in from each side seam.

5. While the project is inside out, fold the corners that form the box bottom, and stitch.



**COURTESY: Patsy Shields  
Sulky of America**  
[www.sulky.com](http://www.sulky.com)

Book: *Sulky Secrets to Successful Embroidery*

# Hat Pincushion Needlecase

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## Supplies:

- Four 5" circles of matteboard
- One 2 ½" of matteboard
- Four 5" circles of thin quilt batting or felt
- Two 6 ½" circles of pale green/cream satin fabric
- Two 6 ½" circles of green moiré fabric
- One 6" circle of green moiré fabric
- 9" of 1 ¾" wide fancy jacquard green shirred ribbon for bow
- 10" of 5/8" wide green silk shirred ribbon (or substitute) for hatband
- 18" of 5/8" wide pale green satin silk ribbon for needle keepers
- 18" of 9mm wide pale green satin silk ribbon for closure ties
- 3" of 1" wide satin silk pale green ribbon for hinge
- 9" of 1" wide pink wired ribbon
- 9" of 1" wide mauve wired ribbon
- 9" of 1" wide cream wired ribbon
- 12" of ½" wide pink ruffled edge ribbon
- 12" of 1 ½" wide olive green wired ribbon
- 18" of 5/8" wide medium green silk satin ribbon
- 12" of lavender/green loop trim
- 8" of 2" wide embroidered lace
- Cup of fiberfill
- 2" square of crinoline
- Tacky glue
- Hot glue

## Steps:

*How to make the hat pincushion/needlecase:*

1. Glue one circle of batting to one 5" matteboard circle. Repeat for the remaining three 5" matteboard circles.
2. Stitch around one of the 6 ½" diameter green moiré fabric circles ¼" from edge. Place one of these circles over the batting of one 5" cardboard circle. Tighten the gathering and secure. Repeat for the other green moiré fabric circle and the other two pale green fabric circles.
3. With the two pale green covered circles, set them side by side, face down and "join" them together by gluing a 3" piece of 1" wide pale green satin ribbon to the wrong side of the boards - this is the hinge.
4. Turn the joined boards over, right side up and place 7" - 9" of pale green silk green ribbon across each of the boards - these are the needle holders. Glue them in place on the back of the boards.
5. Glue a 9" piece of 3/8" (9mm) wide narrow pale green satin ribbon to each side of the "joined" boards - these are the hat closures.

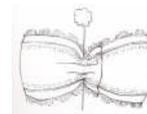


6. Glue the green moiré covered circles to the pale green circles (wrong sides together). This completes the needle case portion of the hat pincushion.
7. Take the 6" circle of green moiré fabric and gather ¼" from edge. Loosely draw in the gathering and then tightly fill the cavity with fiberfill. Insert the 2 ½" cardboard disk in top, tighten the gathering and secure the stitching. This forms the pincushion (crown of hat). Glue the crown to center of top of the needle case.

### How to make the bow, flowers and leaves:

#### Bow:

Make a simple two-loop bow – like a bow tie. Use 9" of the green shirred ribbon. Overlap the ribbon about ¾" at the center. Either sew across the overlapped ribbon and gather tightly or scrunch the center tightly and wrap with thread.



#### Roses:

Make three folded roses. Use 9" of ribbon for each rose from three different wired rose ribbons. See yellow diagrams.



#### Pink Coil Rose:

Make three coiled roses using 3" – 4" of pink ruffled edge ribbon. Use the u-gather stitch pattern. See pink diagrams.



#### Loops:

Make two sets of two loops from the lavender/green loop ribbon.

#### Leaves:

Make three, prairie point leaves. Use 4" of the green 1 ½" wide wired edge ribbon.



### Putting the Composition Together:

Gather the lace along the 8" edge. Referring to the main photo, stitch the lace to the 2" piece of crinoline followed by the bow. Stitch three leaves in a circle and cover them with three folded roses. Tuck in three pink coil rosebuds and two sets of lavender loops. Trim the excess crinoline.

### **Finishing the Hat:**

Place 10" of 5/8" wide green shirred ribbon around the crown and cut to fit. Secure with stitches or glue. Stitch, pin or glue the floral composition to the base of the crown at the back of the hat.



## **Two Ribbon Flowers**

Simply cutting out a petal shape, from bias cut silk ribbon and adding some stamens makes a pretty flower. Two very simple cut flowers are delphinium and hydrangea.

### **Delphinium**

Just one or two of the florets from this technique make a good filler flower in a ribbon composition. Or, make a lot of stems and put them into a large arrangement of ribbon flowers. Each delphinium stem has 20 florets attached to a wire stem. One stem of delphinium uses two yards of 1 1/2" wide blue bias cut silk ribbon, 18" of 20 gauge stem wire and 60 black or white stamens. Each floret is made up of two 1 1/2" wide bias cut silk ribbon squares with three stamens at the center.



### **Steps:**

Offset two pieces of ribbon, one on top of the other. Make a tiny slit in the center. Fold over the stamens so all the heads are together, twist the bottom of the stamens and insert them into the slit in the silk ribbon. The stamens should stick up about 1/2" from the slit in the ribbon. With a dot of glue at the junction of the stamens and the ribbon pinch together at the base. Wrap the exposed stamen stem with floral tape. Make all the other florets in the same manner. Put the delphinium florets together starting with one floret at the top of the stem wire. Wrap with tape and continue adding florets until you have them all secured. The florets will take up about 8" of the stem.

### **Hydrangea**



One small hydrangea head looks sweet in a small cut glass vase or perfume bottle. One or two un-stemmed hydrangea florets make nice fillers in a small composition of flowers. Each hydrangea floret uses one 1 1/2" square of bias cut silk ribbon and one yellow stamen. For one small head of hydrangea (twelve florets) you'll need twelve yellow stamens, 18" of bias cut silk ribbon, four 6" pieces of 22 gauge wire and some floral tape.

### **Steps:**

Cut twelve 1 1/2" squares of bias cut silk ribbon and fold each square into quarters. Snip off the very tiniest piece of ribbon at the folded center. Cut the outer edges of the ribbon to form a rounded petal shape. Open the ribbon and you will see four petals with a very tiny hole in the center. Fold over and insert one stamen into the tiny hole so the stem hangs down below the ribbon. Place a dot of glue at the junction of the stamen and the ribbon and pinch them together at the base of the stamen head. Wrap the exposed stamen stem with 2" of floral tape. To easily manage the florets, assemble them into four groups - three florets in each group. Wrap three floret stems together in floral tape. Repeat for the remaining groups. Join all four groups together around a 6" piece of 22 gauge wire and secure with floral tape.

**COURTESY: Helen Gibb**  
**Helen Gibb Designs**  
[www.helengibb.com](http://www.helengibb.com)



# Paper Creations from Paint

## MATERIALS:

- Delta Paint for Paper™
- Dynamo Blue 21 101
- Just White 21 113
- Jazzy Purple 21 100
- Delta® Paper Plus Sheer Color Finish 57007
- Delta Stencil Magic® Stencil Sponges 60 510 000
- Rubber Stampede® Transition 3580D
- Rubber Stampede® No Act of Kindness 3615C
- Rubber Stampede® Love Letters 3014H
- Texture Magic Easy-Grip Texture Comb™ 28 101 0028
- Delta® Sobo Glue



## Other Supplies

- Cards of choice
- 3 Sheet of watercolor paper 9"x12"
- Palette or paper plate
- Stiff edge to squeegee
- Water container
- Paper towels
- Double-sided foam tape
- Scissors
- Deckle edged scissors
- Embellishments of Choice

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please take a moment to review all instructions on product packaging before beginning any project.

1. Basecoat all sheets of watercolor paper in mix of 10 parts White to 1 part Jazzy Purple and Dynamo Blue using sponge brush. *Tip:* to basecoat is total opaque coverage. Two thin coats are preferable, as they won't get thick and streaky. A good tip is to load brush, never more than halfway up bristles. Start in center of area to be painted, pushing color out to pattern line. This technique will leave no ridges.

2. Using wedge sponge apply coat of Sheer Color Finish working with one sheet.

3. Using sponge brush apply heavy coat of Jazzy Purple and Dynamo Blue allowing areas to mix. Using Texture Magic Easy-Grip Comb, drag through wet glaze swirling as you go. *Tip:* This is just fun to play with; the number of patterns that you can come up with are unlimited. Because of the Sheer Color Finish

if you come up with a pattern that you don't like, use the brush to work the paint back to a smooth finish and re-comb. This may be done about three times before the color is to dry.

4. Drizzle Dynamo Blue and Jazzy Purple straight from bottle randomly on one sheet of painted paper, using stiff straight edge squeegee off color.

5. On last sheet of paper using wedge sponge that has Sheer Color Finish on it, pick up a small amount of excess color and rub on third sheet.

6. Using clean wedge sponge pick up small amount of Dynamo Blue on one half of sponge and Jazzy Purple on other half, pat excess color off on palette. Pat color on image of Love Letters stamp using gentle straight up and down motion. Do not apply color too heavily or it will fill in fine cuts of stamp. Press stamp firmly on surface lifting straight off. Rocking or sliding stamp will cause blurred images. Repeat this process with the sentiments stamps of choice.

Referring to color photo cut or tear into interesting shapes and glue to cards. *Tip:* Tearing towards the body will leave a contrasting white edge, tearing away from the body will leave a painted edge on your paper.



7. Glue embellishments of choice.

**COURTESY:** Chris Thornton  
Delta Technical Coatings  
[www.deltacrafts.com](http://www.deltacrafts.com)

# Crafts Guests

**Lois Boncer**

Aardvark to Zebra  
5219 El Arbol Dr.  
Carlsbad, CA 92008  
760-438-3431  
E-Mail: [lois@aardvarktozebra.com](mailto:lois@aardvarktozebra.com)  
Home Page: [www.aardvarktozebra.com](http://www.aardvarktozebra.com)

**Helen Gibb**

1002 Turnberry Circle  
Louisville, CO 80027  
303-673-0949  
E-Mail Address: [helen@helengibb.com](mailto:helen@helengibb.com)  
Home Page: [www.helengibb.com](http://www.helengibb.com)

**Liz Gourley**

190 Hillhaven Ct.  
Ventura, CA 93003  
805-650-1351

**Bruce Johnson**

Minwax  
10 Mountainview Rd., Suite A  
Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458  
973-386-1486, Ext. 2434  
e-mail: [askminwax.@sherwin.com](mailto:askminwax.@sherwin.com)  
Home Page: <http://www.minwax.com>

**Lonzo Lassiter**

1597 US Hwy. 60-84  
Clovis, NM 88101  
505-791-5353  
E-Mail: [lonzo.lassiter@enmu.edu](mailto:lonzo.lassiter@enmu.edu)

**Connie Moyers**

Roosevelt Co. Coop. Ext. Service  
P. O. Box 455  
Portales, NM 88130  
505-356-4417  
E-Mail : [comoyers@nmsu.edu](mailto:comoyers@nmsu.edu)

**Kristin Peck**

3400 Dandelion Cres  
Virginia Beach, VA 23453  
757-368-8322

**Patsy Shields**

Sulky of America  
381 S. Fern St.  
Sellersburg, IN 47172  
e-mail: [patsysews@insightbb.com](mailto:patsysews@insightbb.com)  
Home Page: <http://www.sulky.com>

**Ellen Talbott**

2018 Monarch Ridge Cir.  
El Cajon, CA 92019  
619-441-0129  
E-Mail: [ellentalbott@yahoo.com](mailto:ellentalbott@yahoo.com)

**Chris Thornton**

Delta Technical Coatings  
2550 Pellissier Place  
Whittier, CA 90601  
E-Mail: [cricinda@earthlink.net](mailto:cricinda@earthlink.net)  
Home Page: [www.deltacrafts.com](http://www.deltacrafts.com)

**Denise White**

The Cat's Pyjamas  
522 Thomas St.  
Scottsboro, AL 35768  
256-574-1691  
e-mail: [denise@scottsboro.org](mailto:denise@scottsboro.org)  
Home Page: [www.thecatspyjamas.com](http://www.thecatspyjamas.com)