

A new year has begun!

“Rings” in the New Year - Part 1



Supplies

The Basics

Clay roller/slats
Teflon Sheet (TFLR)
Badger balm (BHM)
Water and brush
Scalpel (SCP-X)
Wire Brush (SSBL)

Clay

PMC PRO for strength and durability.

Other Tools & Components

Tissue Slicing Blade (SB)
Oval cutter (approx. 1 7/8" x 1 5/8")
“Going Geckos” Texture Mat (SM2-GOGEK)
“Native Blanket” Texture Mat (SM2-NATBLK)

Firing container (SSFV or FFC)
Coconut Shell Charcoal (CSC1LB)

Optional:
Circle Pattern Cutter Set (PCSR)
Small Drill (PVSET)

Finishing

Wire or Brass Brush
Tumbler/Shot (LRT3A/LRTSS)
Shine Brite Polishing Compound (SHNBRT)
Agate Burnisher (BTSONE3)
2" x2" Ultra Polishing Pad (ULTPOLPAD)
Jeweler’s Black (JBLACK)

Step-by-Step

Note: It is best to make these rings where you can cut them and leave to dry without moving them. Both the body and the edges of the rings are very thin and they distort easily. Drying them slowly in place also prevents warping.

- 1) Lightly coat the surface of the roller, Teflon sheet, hands, and texture mats with Badger Balm.
- 2) Condition each piece of clay before using by gently kneading and compressing into a smooth ball.



3) For easy rolling, slightly flatten the clay into the general shape you want to end up with. Place thickness slats or cards on either side of the clay and roll to the desired thickness. The plain rings are one slat (3 cards) thick. The patterned rings are either one or two slats thick (3-6cards) and were rolled onto the texture mats.



4) Cut out the general ring blank using a small oval cutter.



5) Cut the inner circle in each ring for. Make a template for the desired ring size by tracing the end of the mandrel of that size and use this as your cutting guide. You can also cut around the mandrel placed directly on the clay, if you are comfortable with that, or the finger holes can be cut with a circle cutter. Remember that this is an area where experimentation is necessary. You can

generally make your ring two sizes larger than your finger with PMC3. However, PMC PRO is new and shrinkage may vary with thickness. You may want to make a test ring in order to determine the correct size mandrel from which to make your template.

6) Be creative with your tissue slicing blade and cutting tools. You can cut different shapes that nest or alter the shape of the band with some creative cutting.

Some design ideas. . .



Start with a plain, flat ring and allow to dry completely – allowing small thin pieces to dry completely before moving on is critical. Note that for our version, we cut the bottom corners of the ring on a diagonal. Rolled a small coil, cut it to the width of the top of the ring, and attach to the top edge of the ring with a paste made from a little PMCPRO mixed with water. Roll two tiny balls of clay and attach to the edge of ring in same way. Drill two holes with the PVSET drill.

These rings were all rolled out to a thickness of one slat and cut at various heights to be worn singly or stacked.





Some of these rings are textured on one side only, while some are textured on both sides. To texture both sides, place clay between two mats which are separated by the slats and roll. A thickness of two slats works well for this application.



Portions can be cut out of a ring and replaced with that same shape cut from another texture. To avoid distortion it is best to let all these pieces dry in place until bone dry and then attach them with paste made from the Pro clay. Let dry again and clean up for firing.



To finish. . .

7) Let all pieces dry completely and refine the surfaces as desired.

8) Read the instructions and fire according to manufacturer's directions. Note that PMC PRO should never be fired hotter than 1400 - 1425 degrees F. If firing with PMCC's Fiber Firing Container, fire with the lid off and lower temperature approximately 30 degrees F.

Note: When using a new clay, PMCC always recommends testing with that clay before firing a finished piece. A test firing with small strips of clay of varying thickness should be done before firing finished pieces.

9) These rings, made from PMC PRO, were placed on a bed of coconut shell carbon in the firing container and topped with another layer of carbon. Because we used the fiber firing container, we fired ours with no lid.

10) Set container in a cold kiln, elevated on small posts to ensure even heating.

11) Fire at 1400 degrees for one hour. **Do not** fire this clay at a hotter temperature. The firing time can be lengthened for larger or thicker pieces. We have also had better results with thicker pieces by decreasing the ramp time on our kiln to 700 degrees per hour.

- 12) As soon as the kiln has cooled somewhat, remove container from kiln. Quench the rings in water and finish.
- 13) Brush with a wire brush and tumble for at least an hour.
- 14) Finish with Ultra Polish Pad.
- 15) I used Jeweler's Black to patina the patterned rings.