

Summer Flower Mosaic

Design, Fabrication, and Text by Melanie Churchill

Summer is such a lovely time of the year. When the weather has warmed up and the days get longer, I get excited to see new blooms popping up everywhere. This 11-1/2" x 12" mosaic project celebrates these new beginnings.

Uroboros Glass Studios

00-43, Dark/Light Blue Mottled for Background, 1/2 Sq. Ft.

00-49, Gold Purple/White Mottled for Border, 1/4 Sq. Ft.

00-621, Red/Orange/Yellow Mottled for Flowers, 1/4 Sq. Ft.

00-74 Dark/Light Green Mottled for Stems,
Leaves, and Grass, 1/2 Sq. Ft.

Other Materials Required

11-1/2" x 12" Piece of Wood

Carbon Paper Pencil White Grout

Weldbond® Adhesive Mosaic Wheeled Nippers

Safety Glasses Glass Cutter Running Pliers

Latex Gloves Particle Mask

Masking Tape Brush



Step 1

Seal your wood base.



When you are using unfinished wood as the base for your mosaic project, it is important to seal the wood to prevent it from warping due to the moisture in the grout. You can seal the wood by mixing one part PVA glue (such as Weldbond) with one part water. Mix thoroughly and use a paint brush to coat the top of the wood. Allow it to dry.

Step 2

Transfer the pattern.



Center the carbon paper and pattern on top of your wood base. Tape it down to secure the pattern and trace it.

Step 3

Cut the purple glass into 1/2" squares.



Make sure to wear eye protection during this step. Using a straightedge ruler as your guide, score the glass into 1/2" strips with a glass cutter, then run the score with running pliers. You will need four strips that are 1/2" x 12". Using mosaic wheeled nippers, you can easily cut the glass into various shapes. To create the 1/2" squares, hold the wheeled nippers straight up and down, center the wheels where you would like the glass to break, and squeeze the handles.

Step 4

Glue the border.



Working one side at a time, apply glue along the outside edge of the wood and press the purple 1/2" glass chips into place. Leave about 1/16" in between the glass pieces and 1/8" space from the edge. This will be the space that the grout will fill, covering up the sharp edges of the glass.

Step 5

Cut small circles for the flower centers.



Selecting from the lightest part of the Red/Orange/Yellow mottled glass, use the mosaic wheeled nippers to break off a piece of glass. Nip the glass into a small square and nip off the four corners to create a circle. Glue into position.

Step 6

Cut the glass for the flower blooms.



The way that you align the mosaic wheeled nippers with the glass allows you to produce different shapes. I created shards for the flower blooms by holding the nippers at an angle versus straight up and down for the 1/2" squares. I like to nip a small batch of glass and then glue into place one petal at a time. You may need to nip off some additional small parts of the glass along the way for a better fit.

Step 7

Cut and glue the green glass to create stems and leaves.



Nip the glass sheet into shards. Select small shards for the stem and glue into place. The stems can be slightly larger at the bottom

and thinner at the top. Trim the ends of the shards so that you can get a closer fit. Follow the pattern and glue the glass into place. Next select larger shards for the leaves, trim to fit, and glue into place.

Step 8

Mark the area for the grass.



Measure 1-1/2" up from the top of the bottom border and draw a straight line across. This will be your guide.

Step 9

Cut and glue the grass.



To create the different sizes of squares and rectangles for the grass you will need three 1/2" x 8" strips and one 1" x 8" strip of green glass. Nip the strips of glass into 1/2" squares, 1/2" x 1" rectangles, and three 1" squares. Create some 1/4" squares by quartering a few of the 1/2" squares. Spread glue in the marked off area and arrange the different sizes of squares and rectangles into a geometric pattern.

Step 10

Nip the background pieces.



Using a glass cutter and running pliers, cut the blue glass into 1/2" strips. Nip the glass strips into different sized triangles with the wheeled nippers.

Step 11

Fill in the background.



I like to paint the glue onto a workable section (about a 3" square) and then press the pre-nipped pieces into place, leaving about

1/16"–1/8" in between the glass pieces and around the edge of your design. Nip off some additional small parts of the glass along the way for a better fit.

Step 12

Mix the grout.



Always wear a respirator when mixing grout, since it contains portland cement. Also avoid prolonged skin contact by wearing latex gloves and always wear eye protection.

Tape the sides of the wood first to protect the edges of the wood from getting grout on them and lay down paper to protect your work area. Grouting is messy. Mix 2 or 3 tablespoons of water to each 1/2 cup of dry grout and mix to the consistency of brownie batter. The grout should have enough body that it doesn't ooze, but it should not be so dry that it is crumbly or hard to press into spaces between glass pieces. Add more water for a thinner consistency or more dry grout to thicken the mixture. Mix up the grout in small batches. Unused mixed grout cannot be saved.

Step 13

Grout the mosaic.



Wearing latex gloves during this step, place mixed grout in the middle of the area to be grouted and spread to cover, working the grout in to fill the space between the glass pieces. Remove excess grout from the top of the glass with a rubber spatula or folded paper towel, being sure to not dip into the grout line.

Step 14

Use a paper towel to buff off the thin layer of dried-up grout that is left on the glass.



To loosen any remaining grout, use a damp paper towel or sponge.

Once you've finished grouting, remove the tape to reveal a clean edge. To give your mosaic project a finished look, paint the perimeter of your wood shape with acrylic paint. When the grout is completely dry, protect it by applying a grout sealant following the manufacturer's directions.

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Michigan native, Melanie Churchill, is an accomplished stained glass, fusing, and metal clay artist, but her true passion is mosaics. It's a discipline that fits well into this busy working mom's lifestyle.

As an instructor, Melanie has been introducing people to the world of mosaics for close to a decade. Her work has been featured in the book, Mosaic Art Home Décor for Beginners, as well as extensively throughout the Delphi Glass catalog. In addition, she has served as a guest instructor for the Michigan Art Educators annual conference.

Melanie's skilled use of color turns even the most simple design into a beautiful piece of artwork. You can see more of Melanie's work or sign up for one of her classes at www.Delphiglass.com.

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