



Aztec Adorn Earrings Project Tutorial

By Jade Cameron x

PROJECT LEVEL:
Beginner

TOP TIP:

If your rubber mat is too tough to work with, you can warm it slightly and this will make it softer and easier to work with.

Apply ample pressure when carving to avoid the tool skimming across the mat and ruining your design.

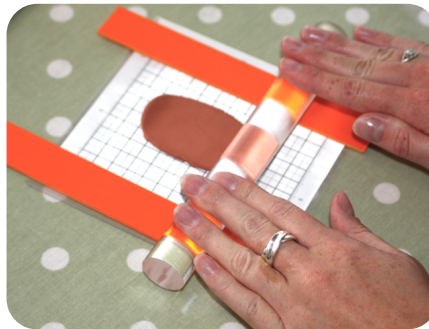
MATERIALS:

- Art Clay Copper 50g
- Art Clay Work Sheet
- 3mm Spacers
- Acrylic Roller
- Rubber Texture Sheet
- V-shaped Carving Tool
- Triangle Cutter
- Cool Slip Spray
- Non-stick Balm
- XL Gel
- Brass Brush
- Sanding Pads
- 3M Polishing Papers
- 2.5mm Drill Bit
- Pin Vice
- 2 x Copper Jumpings
- Niobium Copper Earwires

Instructions:



STEP 1: Use a pencil to draw your design onto the mat or just freehand. Hold your mat still as you start to push the carving tool through the surface of the sheet. You will need to apply some pressure to carve a deep enough texture but not enough to pierce the other side.



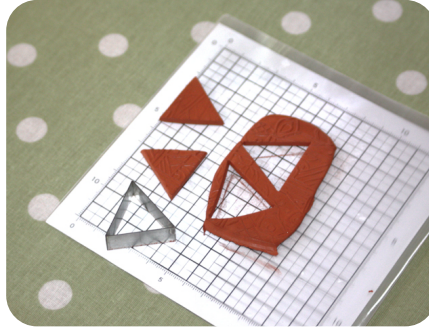
STEP 2: Set up your workspace. Cover your tools with a light coating of Badger Balm; this will stop your clay from sticking. Place the 3mm spacers either side of your work surface and roll out your clay. Make sure your clay is completely smooth after you have rolled it out.



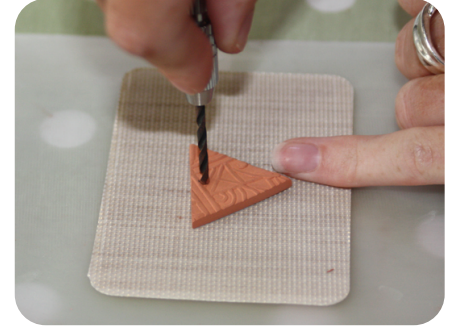
STEP 3: Now that your clay is rolled out, you are ready to prepare your texture. Spray a light mist of Cool Slip onto your texture. Decide which part of your texture you would like to use for your piece and gently lay it on top of your clay.



STEP 4: Gently roll your roller over the texture sheet. The depth of your imprint is dependent on the depth of your carving; take this into consideration when applying pressure. Peel the texture sheet off and you should be left with your imprinted design.



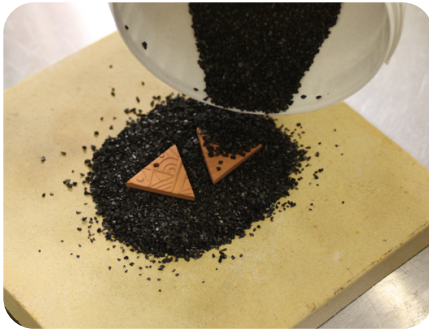
STEP 5: Apply some Badger Balm to your cutter. Cut two shapes and remove excess clay. Store the excess clay in an airtight container. Leave your clay to dry - air dry for 24 hours, on a hotplate or oven (150°C) for approx 10 mins.



STEP 6: When the piece is dry you are ready to drill the holes for the earwire to go through. Use a pin vice and 2.5mm drill bit; hold the vice vertically and turn with your fingers until you have drilled all the way through the clay. Be gentle!



STEP 7: Refine the pieces. This is important, as this is the easiest time to get rid of any imperfections and sharp corners. Use sanding sponges to gently sand the sides, making sure you don't sand away the texture. Don't forget the back of the piece. Once you're happy with the piece, you are ready to fire!



STEP 8: Art Clay Copper can be fired with a torch or straight onto a kiln shelf (I prefer to cover in carbon on the kiln shelf). Fire in the centre of a pre-heated kiln at 970°C and hold for 30 minutes. After firing is complete, safely remove the pieces from the kiln and quench in cold water immediately. Brush with a brass or stainless steel brush.



STEP 9: Take the brushed piece and drop it into some warm water with a couple of drops of liver of sulphur; it will turn black almost immediately. Once you have the depth of patina you want, take the piece out, rinse and dry. You can now brush or polish to your preferred shine, leaving a lovely dark patina in the grooves of the texture. Add earwires to your pre-made holes to finish.