

Basic Mosaic Directions

Needed:

Item to put mosaic on (pots, trays, bird houses, stepping stones, vases)
spray sealant, tiles, painters tape, SANDED grout, cotton and latex plastic gloves, glasses, hammer, rags or sponge, cardboard tray, hammer, rags, bucket for water (Unsanded grout is used for tiny projects with less than 1/4" between the mosaic pieces, most projects use sanded grout.) I prefer the premixed type but you can buy powder grout to mix also. Be sure to wear a mask when mixing the powder type. Grouts come in some color variations and there is also a process for adding color to the grout.

Preparation:

If you are planning to add mosaic tiles to a surface that is porous, you'll need to seal them. For clay pots, spray both the outside and inside of the pot with clear Verathane, ceramic sealer, or spray latex paint etc. Allow to dry.

Make a template of the item you are going to mosaic onto so you can plan your mosaic pattern on it.

Mosaic materials and process

Ceramic tiles are the easiest to work with if you are breaking them yourself. They are available at hardware stores like Lowe's and Home Depot. If you want to try this with plates, be sure to try to purchase plates of the same depth. You will not be able to use the rims, just the center of the plates which are flat. You may also use items like small shells, glass balls, buttons, etc. Use your imagination.

Wearing cotton gloves and glasses, place your tile in a cardboard tray like plants come in on top of a piece of wood. With a hammer, give it a hit from the side of the hammer's head. You might also want to cover the tile with newspaper before you break it to keep the shards from flying about. Break the pieces into appropriate sizes for your project. Use a tile nipper to cut off sharp edges or to resize the pieces when you are working out your pattern.

Using painters tape, tape off the areas where you don't want the grout to touch; under the rim of the pots, on the inside edges of a tray, etc.

Using your template, plan out your mosaic pattern. Put on your disposable latex gloves to protect your hands. Place a bit of grout on the bottom of the tile piece, then place it onto your pot (or whatever you are using). Push down on it as you apply so that you don't have too much grout underneath, just enough to adhere it.

Once all your pieces are adhered, start filling in the gaps between the tile pieces with grout. Do small sections at a time as every 15 minutes you need to stop and use a wet rag or sponge to clean off the tile pieces from the excess grout. Be careful not to put any water you used down the drain or rinse your rags in sinks. The grout could cause an issue with your pipes! I dig a hole outside in a hidden spot and pour the water into it. Even washing your hands inside might be an issue. Better to be too safe than have to call the plumber.

Remove the painter's tape. Let your project dry completely then spray the grout with a clear spray sealant. Bring your mosaic creations inside over the winter.

I use <http://www.mosaicbasics.com> to purchase precut tiles in various patterns as well as shapes. Michaels Craft Store also carries some of these but they cost a lot more!

ENJOY!