

Mucking about with mosaics: Make your own mosaic

There are lots of different ways you can make a mosaic. Here are a few ideas that you can try at home.



How to create a simple mosaic from coloured paper

You will need:

- Thick paper or thin card for the background
- Paper of different colours
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue

1. Sketch your mosaic design on the background paper. Remember, it is only meant to be a guide for when you create your mosaic, keep it simple. The Romans liked geometric patterns and images which showed off their hobbies, sports, education, beliefs, family and status/wealth. Designs commonly depicted mythological scenes, gods and goddesses, gladiators, athletics, chariot racing, and birds, animals and fish.
2. Cut the coloured paper into strips then cut the strips down into 1cm squares.
3. Glue the pieces of coloured paper to the background paper. Allow the glue to dry and the mosaic is complete.



How to create a mosaic using air drying clay

You will need:

- Air drying clay
- Ice cream tub lid or other disposable plastic lid
- Dried seeds, beans, lentils, pasta, beads, sequins, shells, pebbles etc.

1. Fill the lid of the ice cream tub with the air drying clay.
2. Press small objects into the surface to create your pattern.
3. Let the clay dry and your mosaic is complete.



How to create a mosaic using stone tiles

You will need:

- Thin MDF board (3mm thick)*
- Stone mosaic tiles*
- Safe Grout*
- PVA glue
- Paintbrush or glue brush
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Sponge
- Water
- Bowl for mixing grout.

* all available from hobby shops and online

1. Sketch your mosaic design on the MDF board. Your design will determine how big your board needs to be. Keep the design clear and bold and remember to allow some space for a border around the edge.
2. Separate the mosaic stones into different colours so they are easy to select when you start filling in the design.
3. Before you glue the stones onto the background, think about which colours would work well together. Dark and light colours placed together help to define a design.
4. Brush glue over a small area of the background (approx. 6cm x 6cm), then start sticking the mosaic stones following the picture outline. Place the stones close together, with 1-2mm between each one. Mosaic stones can be carefully trimmed with scissors to make angled, rounded and pointed pieces or into smaller pieces to fill in the gaps.
5. Leave the glue to dry thoroughly for at least 1 hour so the tiles are firmly stuck onto the background.
6. Mix up some grout with water following the instructions on the packet. The consistency should be smooth and creamy but not too runny. Add more grout to the mix to thicken it if necessary. Stir in a small amount of paint to make coloured grout, or you can leave it white.
7. Use a sponge to spread the mixture over the mosaic design so the spaces between the stones are filled. Immediately after the grout has been rubbed between the stones, rinse the sponge with water and after wringing out the excess water from the sponge, clean off any remaining material from the surface of the mosaic. Repeat this step several times using a damp sponge, until the mosaic has been completely cleaned of any remaining material. Leave to dry.