

Make an EARRING TREE

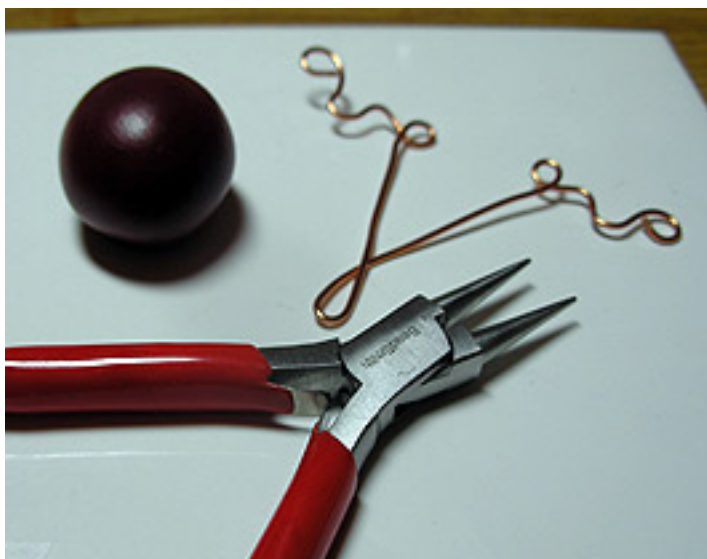
by Stacey Apeitos

This is a simple project, even if you are a beginner when it comes to wire and clay.

I used polymer clay for this project, which requires baking to harden it. You could also use air dry clay like Makins Clay or DAS. You'll need a clay rolling pin or round glass to roll out the base of the trees.

You will also need between 8" and 15" of wire. I used 18 gage Artistic Wire, which is colored copper wire. I would not use anything thinner or softer than this.

You will also need wire cutters and round nose pliers to manipulate the wire.



STEP ONE

Cut a length of wire that is somewhere between 8" and 15" long (20-38 cm). The longer the wire, the bigger your tree. Bend the wire in half and cross over at the base to make a bottom tear-shape. Bend each end of the wire into a loop shape. Continue to bend and loop the wire as desired. Refer to the photos here for ideas.



STEP TWO

Condition your clay. Roll a ball of clay about 1" or 2.5 cm in diameter.

Stacked balls as shown left: Squash the ball a little, using a smooth, flat object.

Roll some additional clay into a thin sheet using a clay rolling pin and use a circle cutter to make a base slightly larger than your squashed ball. Stack the flattened ball on the base. If you want, roll a second smaller ball and stack it on the very top.

Cube with heart as shown above: Follow the directions on the next page to turn your ball into a cube shape. Roll a sheet of clay and cut out a square base, a little larger than the cube. Use a tiny heart cutter to make a pink heart shape and attach this to the cube.

STEP THREE

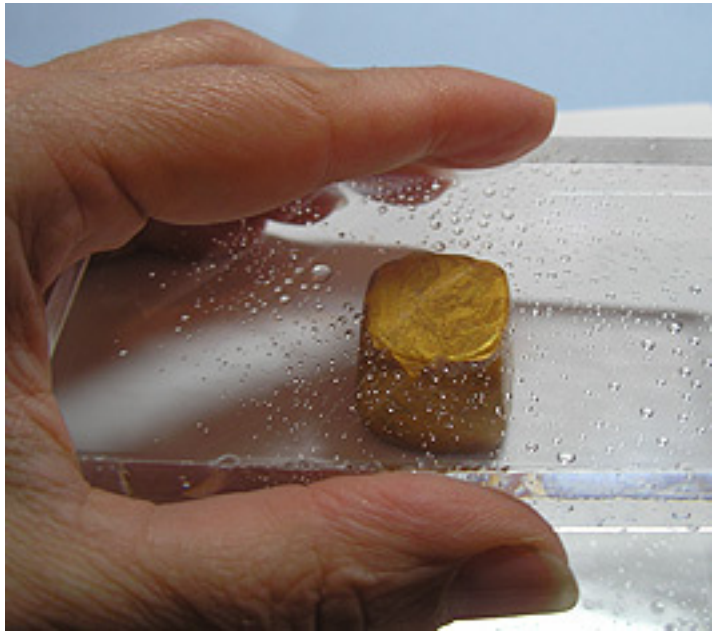
Insert the wire tree straight into the clay as shown. If using polymer clay, place on a thick piece of cardboard and bake according to manufacturer's directions.

Squash a ball into a cube

There are just four steps involved in turning a clay ball into a cube.

I use a clear acrylic block as my "squashing tool". Any smooth, flat object will do. Some people use a ceramic tile. Spritz the object with water so the clay doesn't stick to it.

Roll a ball, squash it, turn it on its side, squash again, then stand it on one rounded side and squash the top rounded side flat. Voila! It's a cube!



The **pink beads** used in these earrings are also made from polymer clay.

1. Start with two small balls, a little larger than peas. Squash them to a thickness of around 1/4" or 5 mm.
2. Pinch one end to make a teardrop shape.
3. Use a rounded object like a wooden skewer to indent the top of the heart shape.
4. Poke a hole from the bottom through the top of the heart using a large needle or a needle tool. Transfer the bead to a piece of wire.

If using polymer clay, rest the beads on a bit of polyester fiberfill and bake according to clay manufacturers instructions.

If using air dry clay, just suspend the wire across a glass and place it out of harm's way while the bead dries.

*Hope you enjoy working with clay and wire!
- Stacey from Go-Make-Art*

