

USING PREMO SCULPEY

Premo - This is the Polymer clay artists' dream come true! Literally, this clay is the product of the artists input about what we wanted, needed, wished for in a perfect polymer clay. It's easy to use, requires very little kneading, bakes to a very durable finish, and it comes in 32 colours, including several metallic and pearlescent colours and translucent. These colours are INTENSE, so you can reduce those canes to little tiny proportions and maintain your vibrancy of colour. The colours are also based on the Grumbacher colour line - if you know how to mix paint, you can mix the clay just the same way. The sculptors love it since it holds their tiny lines so well, the millifiori artists love it because it moves and canes so well, the stampers love it because it doesn't "slump" their designs when it bakes. The colours hold true after baking, the tensile strength is wonderful.

How do I use it?

Remove the portion of clay you wish to use from the package and knead it in your hands for a moment. This will help redistribute the plasticizers and polymer fibres in the clay. This is often called "conditioning" the clay. If the clay feels flexible and can be pulled easily without breaking immediately, it is ready to go.

How do I store the unused portions?

Unbaked Sculpey should be stored in a cool, dark place. Heat and ultra-violet are the enemies of fresh clay. You can wrap your clay in plastic wrap or put it in plastic bags and store it. This helps keep dirt, pet hairs and bits of other colours from attaching themselves to your clay.

How do I bake it?

The baking directions are on each package. Basically, you will be baking at 130 degrees for 15 minutes for each ¼ inch of clay thickness. Sculpey Amazing Eraser Clay bakes for 10 minutes at 120 degrees. Always use an oven thermometer to accurately maintain these temperatures. A glass baking sheet or dish is recommended, however, you can use a cookie sheet, covered in foil. I work on index cards, which I can then transfer, card and all, to the cookie sheet for baking. The card will not burn. This way both sides of my clay have an even, matte surface. Always allow the clay to cool completely before handling it; you can damage your designs while they are still warm and flexible.

Will it shrink or change colours when baked?

Sculpey clay only shrinks about 2%, not even a noticeable amount! The colours will not change when baked. If you notice that the colours appear more brownish after baking, you may be over baking the clay. Recheck your thermometer.

Do I need a special surface to work on?

You can work on waxed paper taped to the table, old file folders, index cards, tiles - any smooth surface that is not used for food.

Do I need a lot of tools?

No and yes. All you need to create with Sculpey oven-baked clays is a work surface, something to roll the clay flat and something to trim or cut the clay. We've already discussed work surfaces, so let's talk about something to make the clay flat. I use a clay dedicated manual pasta machine for most of my work, however I also use the Sculpey clay roller and even old water glasses for lots of different purposes. They are great for embossing clay into textures and to help adhere the clay to curved surfaces, like glass vases. Now, something to cut the clay - this depends on your age and agility. Sculpey Clay Blades were created expressly for clay use, they are extremely thin and sharp for cutting through clay without distortion and they flex for cutting curves. I also use craft knives, and plastic clay tools for a variety of uses. Why did I answer no and yes? You are only limited by your imagination with Sculpey clay - I've collected a variety of cool tools from my garage, my kids' tool box and my kitchen. I have a 3 story rolling tool box to keep all these in, but everything I REALLY need for clay, I carry in a wallet-sized plastic storage container I found at Michaels!!

Why can't I use my kitchen tools?

You can, but you need to dedicate any of your tools you use for clay or ANY craft to the craft table. Don't use your kitchen items for crafting and then use for food again, unless the craft is certified for food use. Would you put a paintbrush in your mouth?

Do I need to put something in the clay to sculpt?

You may need to add support to some of your sculptures. This is called adding "armature" to the piece. Wire or wood shapes can be covered in clay to create your design. The wire or wood will help keep your shape, support the weight of the clay and help keep your arms and legs from breaking or falling off. You can also use aluminium foil (**NEVER EVER WITH METAL CLAY**), tightly wadded up for a basic shape and then cover the foil with clay. This not only helps support the clay, it helps you to use less clay!

Can I change the colour of my clay?

Of course! You can mix colours together to create your own colours. You can mix powdered mediums such as embossing powders, temperas, heat-tolerant glitters, or Pearl Ex powders into your clay to "tint" them. The surfaces of unbaked clays can be altered with heat set inks, heat tolerant glitters and powders. You can also paint the surface of baked clay with acrylic paints and oil-based or soft-lead coloured pencils. The Sculpey products are magic, if you ask me. Both children and adults find the products fun and easy to work with. It has sure changed my life in positively magical ways. Why once, I even had one of my son's teachers admit that they competed to get my kids in their classes because they knew we'd provide great clay projects and gifts all school year! The first time you pick up polymer clay, you enter a very special family of clay artists that have created a worldwide community of sharing because we love this magical stuff and what you can do with it. The Sculpey People are a big part of this community, providing great products, encouragement and education to all the clay artists.