

Illuminated Decopatch Earrings

Tutorial

These lightweight earrings show off pattern and color with a mix of mica and Decopatch papers. The simple ear loops are a modern touch. If you haven't made your own ear wires before, this project will get you started.

Finished length 3 inches
Designed by Cynthia Deis

techniques:
decopage
riveting
forging earwires

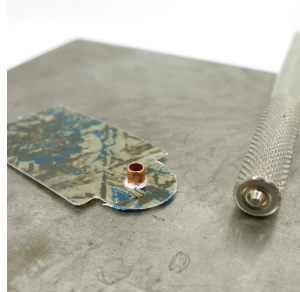


To make the mica tags:

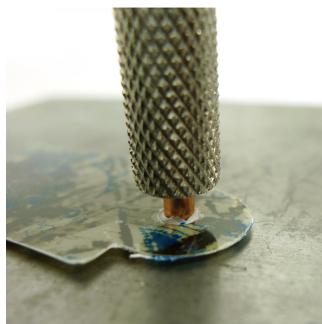
- 1 Brush an even coating of the Decopatch varnish onto the surface of a mica tag. Press the tag down onto the Decopatch paper. Repeat, coating the remaining 3 tags with varnish and paper. Allow all tags to dry for 15-20 minutes.
Using scissors, trim the Decopatch paper around the shape of the tags. Coat the backs (paper side) of all tags with a very thin coat of varnish and paste tags together so that the paper is sealed between the sheets of mica. Check to see that the tags are lined up and the edges are even.



- 2 Using the paper hole punch, punch out the Decopatch paper in the holes in the mica tags. Set one tag aside. Select the side of the remaining tag you want to appear on the front of your earring. Place an eyelet inside the hole of the tag so that the 'front' side of the tag faces down and the un-flared side of the eyelet faces up.



- 3 Place the tag with the eyelet on your bench block, un-flared side up. Fit the flowered eyelet setter tool into the eyelet. Make sure the tool is held straight up and not at an angle. Using your rawhide or brass hammer, strike the setter to flare and set the eyelet. Note: if you have never done this before, practice setting an eyelet into a hole punched in cardboard first.
Repeat to set the eyelet in the second tag.
Set tags aside while you make your ear wires.



Supplies:

- 4 mica tags*
- Decopatch paper
- Decopatch varnish
- 6 inches of copper wire, 20 gauge
- 2 copper jump rings, 14 mm
- 2 copper eyelets, 3/32"
- flower stem dangle, right-facing
- flower stem dangle, left-facing

Tools:

- Decopatch brush
- scissors
- hole punch
- steel bench block
- rubber bench block (to cushion)
- steel block and soften sound)
- flowered eyelet setter
- rawhide hammer or weighted brass hammer
- wire cutters
- round nose pliers
- chasing hammer
- hoop mandrel
- wire rounder tool or needle files

All tools and supplies are available at
Ornamentea.com
or at **Ornamentea** in
Raleigh, NC!



To make the ear wires:

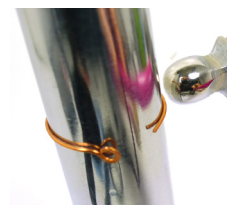
- 1 Cut wire into 2-3 inch sections. Using your round nose pliers, create a 1/8" loop in the end of one 3" wire. Repeat on the second wire. Lay one wire onto your bench block and lightly hammer the loop with your chasing hammer. Do not hammer the straight part of the wire. Repeat with second looped wire.



- 2 Using your hands, curve one wire around the hoop mandrel to form the ear wire shape. Repeat with second wire. Set wires next to one-another and check to see that they are similarly-sized. Leave sufficient space in the curve of the wires to fit them into your ear. They will form circles approximately 1 1/4" in diameter.



- 3 Place an ear wire on the hoop mandrel. Using your chasing hammer, lightly hammer the ear wire to stiffen the wire and add texture. Hammer around the curve of the ear wire, curving it and forming it with your fingers if it starts to open up too much. Repeat with the second ear wire, checking them against each other as you work to keep the shape consistent.



- 4 Using your chain nose pliers, bend the hoop on each ear wire forward a bit. Using the wire rounder tool or your needle files, smooth the ends of the ear wires so they will fit comfortably in your ears.

To assemble the earrings:

Using your chain nose pliers, open a jump ring. Use the jump ring to attach the mica tag and the flower dangle to the ear wire. Repeat to assemble the other earring



***About using Mica**

Mica is a lightweight, naturally-occurring mineral often found in the upper mid-western U.S. and Canada. Made up of silicate, mica is extremely durable and can tolerate high temperatures without cracking or shattering. Mica is used commercially as an insulator, but we love using it for it's glittery, shimmery surface. The transparent mineral allows you to add color or detail to your craft and jewelry projects. Mica can be riveted, cut with a razor knife, soldered with stained-glass solder and used in altered books. Mica glitter can be used with most commercial resins and glues, including heat-set resins like Amazing Glaze. Mica does not dissolve in chemical resins, and will retain a glittery appearance.

To cut mica use a razor knife and score through each layer until you have cut through the entire sheet. Scissors will crush and crumble mica sheets. Save any scraps for use as glitter or sparkle in your craft projects.