

# Using Clay to Make Miniature Foods for Jewelry

By Janet Smith (more or less...see first paragraph!)

Before I get started with this tutorial, I want to give credit where credit is due. I never would have thought of ANY of this without this little book, "The Polymer Clay Cookbook: Tiny Food Jewelry to Whip Up and Wear" by Jessica and Susan Partain. If you get that book, you can stop reading right now, but I have done my own spin on things, so if you just want a little taste, keep reading! Also, keep in mind that I am not a jewelry expert. This is what seems to work for me, but if you know better, then by all means do what you know!

Also, while the focus of this tutorial is on items to use for jewelry (so no particular scale), you can always scale the food to your scale of interest and use it as food in a miniature scene.

Supplies Needed:

- Polymer Clay, Various colors (each section will tell you what colors to use for each piece)
- Headpins. Those are the metal pieces that you're going to use to connect your clay pieces to the jewelry findings you want to use. They look like long pins with a bit of a head on them, or you can get them with loops at one end, which might save you some time (and frustration!)
- Any other jewelry supplies you want to use, depending on whether you want to make earrings or necklaces or a charm bracelet. All up to you!
- Oven for Baking Clay
- Something to Bake Clay on or in. You can use a tile, but you'll get a shiny side where the polymer clay sits on the tile. This probably doesn't matter for jewelry as you'll be sealing everything with a glossy finish anyway. Or get yourself a cup of baking soda, drop your pieces into the cup and bake the whole thing. Rinse off the pieces after they're baked to remove any residual baking soda...this prevents the shiny side.
- Gloss Finish for sealing/finishing the products.
- Translucent Liquid Sculpey

NOTE: I bake my little foods right on the "headpins" that I use for the jewelry. If I want to add beads, they get baked too. This way, I don't have to worry about glue giving out. If you're concerned about your beads melting, try a test bake with a bead and see what happens (most melt at a higher temperature than used for polymer clay.) Once you have the foods on a pin like this:

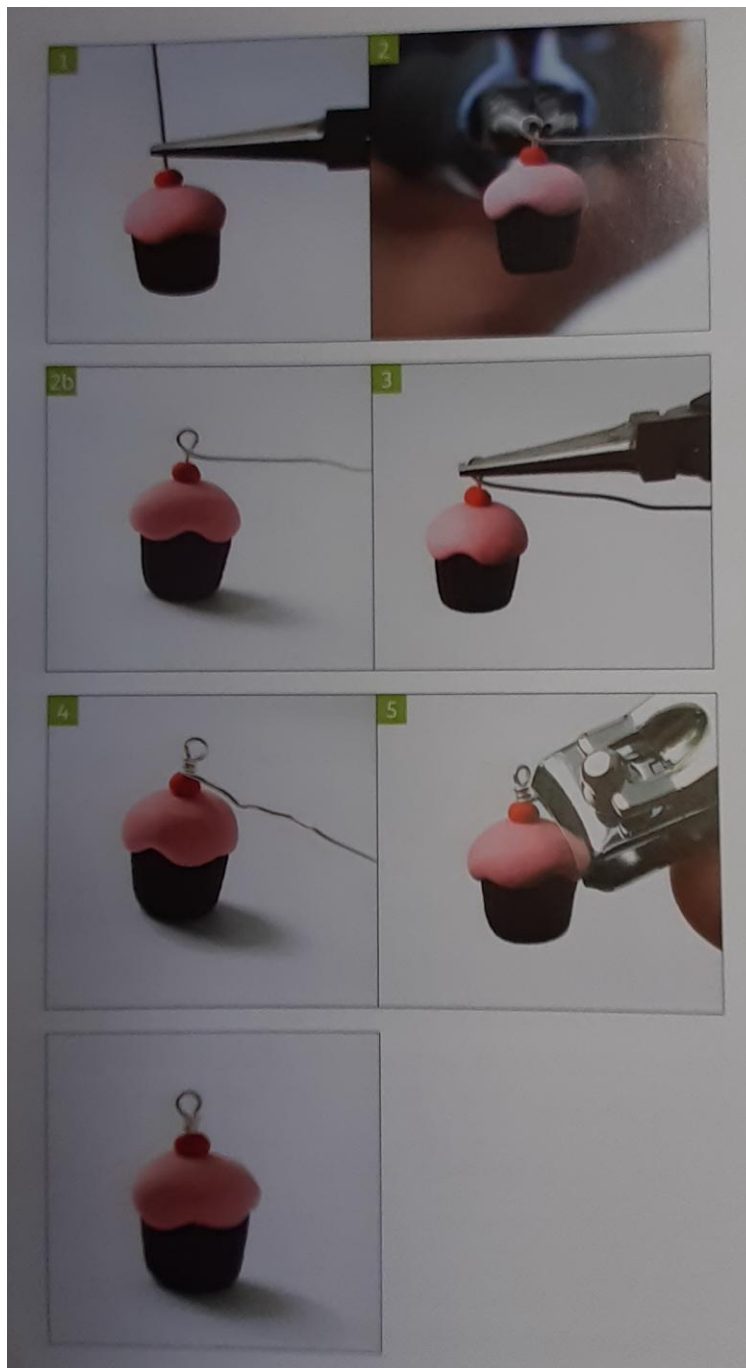


Then you can bake them. After they're baked, you can add more beads at the top if you want and then you form a circle out of the top of the headpin and wrap the wire around to give a nice finish. I find I'm not that good at that anymore, but here is (sort of) what they would look like:



Mine doesn't look so hot! But it's functional. But once you have a loop on the end, you can use a jump ring to connect it to an earring base or a charm bracelet or a necklace. All up to you!

Here's a better set of pictures illustrating this part of the process, as done by Jessica and Susan Partain in their book mentioned above.



If you want to do more of these, just google "miniature food as jewelry" and you'll find lots of inspiration!

## Candy Corn and Jack-O-Lanterns

With the preliminaries out of the way, let's dive in. For our first set of earrings, we're going to look at making candy corn and jack-o-lanterns.

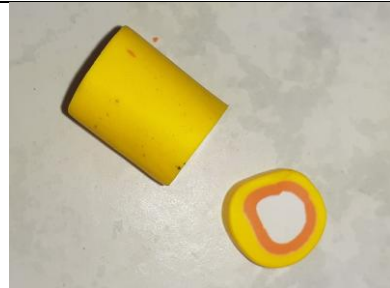
For the candy corn, you will start with white, yellow and orange clay.



Roll out a ball with the white clay, then flatten it/shape it into a cylinder. Mine was about a half inch in diameter. Then roll out a strip of orange and wrap it around the cylinder. Then roll out a strip of yellow and wrap that around the cylinder so it looks like this.



Roll it and squeeze it until you have a cylinder the diameter that you want. A piece of candy corn will be as tall as HALF of the diameter of your cylinder. Cut off the ends so you have the pattern clearly showing. If you boo-booed a little (like that little bump showing in my orange clay), don't worry about it. You just won't use that part of the clay.



Slice your cylinder. You probably want it to be roughly a quarter to a half as thick as the width of your circle, but if you go too thin, you'll have trouble getting the headpin through without it poking out the side. Now cut that circle into six "slices" (like a pie.)



Smooth the edges if you want with your fingertip...it's not really necessary...but you might like the way it looks a little better.



Now, grab some "pumpkin" colored clay. I used Sculpey Sweet Potato, but you can just darken your orange clay by adding a little brown if you want. Roll out a couple balls of this clay. Score them, top to bottom, with a razor blade or poly clay knife.



Armed with these UNBAKED pieces of clay, grab a headpin and figure out what you want where. I'm showing a couple of examples here, one with one pumpkin (we'll add the face later) and one piece of candy corn, and another set with two pieces of candy corn each. Note that I added my beads as well before baking.



Bake these per the instructions on your package. Once done, you can draw the faces on the pumpkins to make jack-o-lanterns, then spray the whole things with some glossy finish.



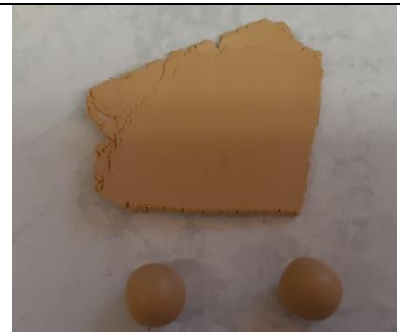
Once dry, you can add more beads to the top if you want. Then it's time to give that loop making and wrapping a go. For me, I connected the loop on the headpin to a jump ring and then put the jump ring on an earring. You can see what I ended up with here!



## Chocolate Chip Cookies

Nothing like Yummy Chocolate Chip Cookies! Fresh from the oven! For my set, I even took a bite out of one of them...but you might not want to (so that's up to you).

Start with a little Ecru colored polymer clay. Roll out two balls. In the sample, mine were about a half inch in diameter.



Flatten those balls, but not too much or you'll have problems getting the headpin through them.



Dust these, mostly around the edges, but a little on top, with Raw Sienna Pastel.



If you want one with a bite out of it, use a round cutter or straw to remove a little on the edge, like a bite mark.



For these earrings, I switched to a headpin that already had a loop on it. Add your beads and cookies to the pins, making sure to realize that you are building them upside down...so what goes on first will be at the top of the earring.



Add a little Translucent Liquid Sculpey to the pin under the bottom set of beads (those away from the loop) to help secure them in place. Bake 'em.



Once they're done baking, you can add the chips. Any brown paint will do, but I like the slick brown fabric paint as it gives a little texture. Let these dry. Then add your glossy finish.



Trim off the excess headpin. If your beads are slightly wobbly, hit 'em with some super glue gel.





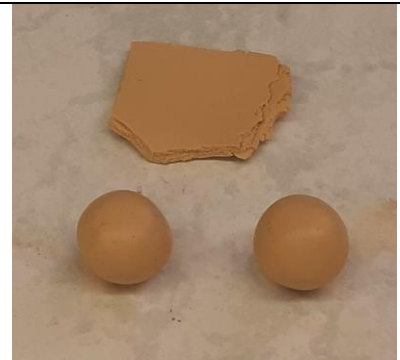
Use a jump ring to connect the cookie to the earring (or necklace or bracelet...) and you're done!



## Hot Dogs

Ball Park Franks! (Not the brand...but the location!) You can dress these as you like. I'm a catsup only girl, but my real hot dog connoisseur friends consider that sacrilegious.

The Ecrú clay was out from the cookies above, so I used it for the hotdog buns. Roll out two balls...you'll probably want these bigger than the cookies...maybe 3/4" in diameter or so.



Roll them into a hot dog bun shape.



Coat them with some golden ochre pastel to give them that toasty bread look on the outside.

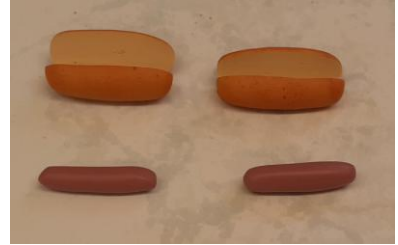




Cut them in half lengthwise, but not all the way through (if you go all the way through, don't worry...you can still use them.) Pry them open, gently!



For the hotdogs, mix a little pink with a little brown until you get a hotdog color. If it's not perfect, don't worry. Not much is going to show.



Add your beads and headpins. For this sample, the headpins with the loop at the end were used, and a little translucent liquid sculpey was added to the headpin along the area where the beads are below the hotdog. Bake.



Add a little mustard or catsup. Any yellow or red paint will do, but I prefer the shiny fabric paint as it adds a little texture as well. Gotta have relish? Try baking a little green clay, chopping it into small pieces, mixing it with a little glue or glossy finish and spread it on the hotdog. Let these dry, then hit the whole thing with some glossy finish.







Once they're dry, connect the hot dogs to the earrings with a jump ring.



## Candy Canes

These are a pretty basic candy cane, but you can decorate your own with a sprig of holly, bows, glitter, whatever you want!

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Roll out two long snakes of red and white clay. In the sample, they were roughly 1/8" diameter.</p>   |    |
| <p>Twist them together and then roll them to smooth them out. If yours are like this...a little inconsistent in the pattern...don't worry. You can pick and choose the parts to use.</p> |   |
| <p>Pick a couple segments of the twisted clay that more or less match and cut them to length. The length will really depend on how long you want your earrings.</p>                      |  |
| <p>Shape into a candy cane shape.</p>  |  |

Cut out some simple bows like this from green clay. Or use silver or gold ribbon. Decorate as you wish!



Add these to the candy cane using a little Translucent Liquid Sculpey to hold them in place. Add your headpin and bake.



This is a sad picture....I broke these before I finished them...so I don't have a final pic of the earrings! But you get the drift!



## Donuts

Donuts. Chocolate, Maple, Filled, Nuts, Sprinkles...endless possibilities.

This is going to start sounding familiar! Grab that ecru clay and make two balls.



Flatten them a LITTLE (you know...donut shaped.)



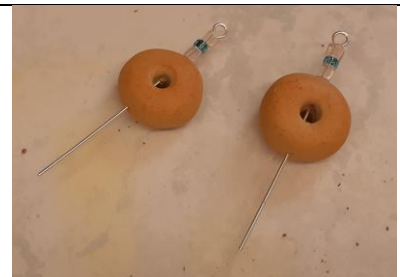
Now you're going to make a hole in the donut. What you use really depends on how big your donuts are. When I was doing quarter scale donuts, I used a thin pin. For these, I used the handle of a paint brush. Push it through one direction and then turn it around. You'll see that there is clay that is pushed out...trim that off a bit and then push the brush through the other direction so you have a smooth transition from donut to hole on both sides.



Dust these with Golden Ochre pastel to make them the color of freshly fried donuts.



Add your beads, put everything on a pin and bake.



Frost your donuts with your choice of frosting. I used pink frosting here, and then added sprinkles (glitter). You can use plain paint for the frosting or fabric paint (which is my preference). After they're dry, seal them with your glossy finish.



Trim any excess from the head pin and connect the rings to the earrings with a jump ring.

