

POLYMER WEEK

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SOWDA EARRINGS

by Shila Habibian

Born from the influence and inspiration of sea corals, Shila presents a tutorial for bold earring design using the replacement technique, brought to life through striking color contrasts. "Designing and creating with such techniques brings me joy, and I hope it does the same for you," Shila says. She named the earrings Sowda — a Persian word that refers to "fiction" or imaginative ideas, which fits the creative nature of this project.

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TOOLS & SUPPLIES

POLYMER CLAY

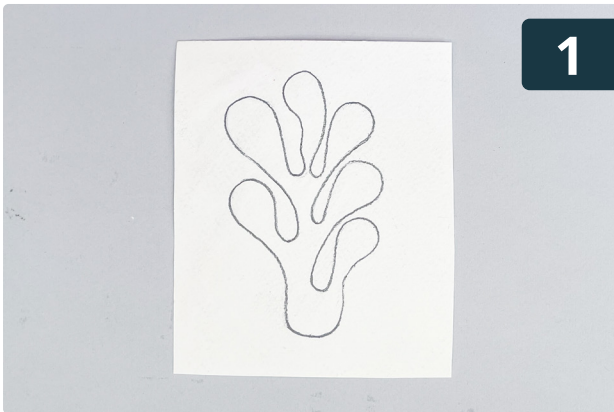
- Fimo polymer clay: black, white, orange, brilliant blue, true blue

MATERIALS

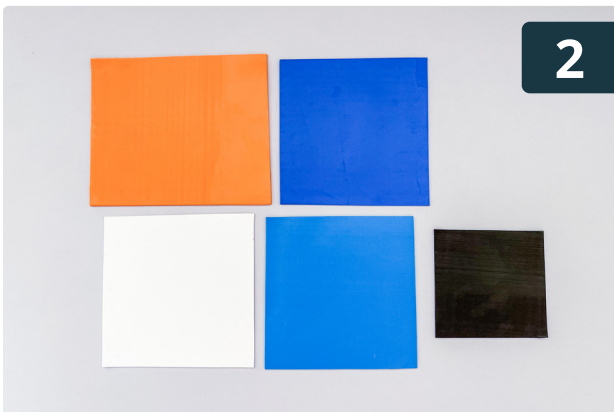
- cardboard template
- wax paper
- earring studs
- uv resin (optional)
- super glue

TOOLS

- machine
- micro circle cutters
- scalpel
- sandpaper (grid 400, 800)
- texture sponge
- brush
- acupuncture needle or pin
- drill and drill attachments



Draw your earring shape on a piece of cardboard and cut it out to create a reusable template.



Condition and mix all the colors you'll need for both the base and the top layer. In this case: two shades of blue, orange, black, and white.



Roll out the orange clay on setting 3 of the clay machine. Texture the back using sandpaper or a texture sponge. Place your template on the clay and carefully cut out the shape. Then repeat for the second piece, mirrored.



Bake the pieces in the oven for 30 minutes. Once cooled, sand the surface (the side without texture) using 400-grit sandpaper to smooth it.



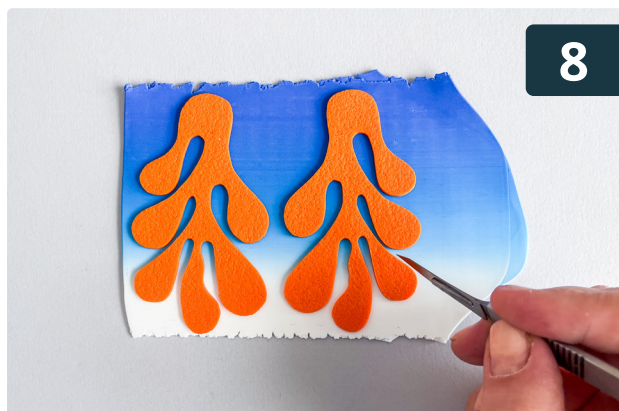
Prepare for a Skinner blend using the two blue shades and white. Arrange them as shown, matching blue-to-blue and white-to-white edges.



Fold and run repeatedly through the clay machine until the gradient is smooth. Roll the blended sheet tightly into a cylinder and press both ends to compress into a firm log.



Ensure the length matches your base shape. Gently flatten the log and run it through the clay machine to create a thin, approx. 1.5 mm gradient sheet.

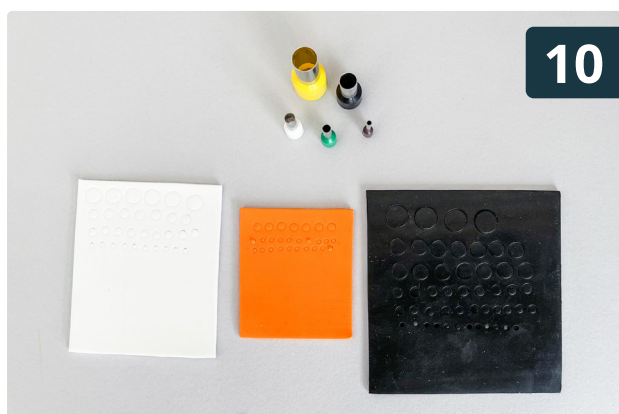


Place the template on the gradient sheet and cut out the same shape as the base — these will be the front pieces.

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Use micro circle cutters in various sizes to punch holes throughout the shape.



Cut small clay circles in black, orange, and white.



Place them into the holes in the gradient shapes.



Once all holes are filled, sandwich the piece between wax paper (shiny side of paper touching clay). From the matte side, burnish until the dots level and blend in.

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Remove the paper. Brush a very thin layer of liquid clay onto the baked orange base.



Place the dotted gradient layer on top. The textured orange part will be the back side of your earrings.



Carefully trim any excess clay around the edges using a sharp blade.



Before baking, pierce tiny holes with an acupuncture needle to prevent air bubbles.

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Bake the piece for 30 minutes at 110°C, then sand both the surface and edges using 400- and 800-grit sandpaper.



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You can smooth the edges even more with a drilling tool and sanding bit.



19

Apply an extremely thin coat of liquid clay and bake again at 130°C for 15 minutes.



20

Drill a small hole on the back for the earring studs.



If you don't have a drill, glue the studs directly to the back. You can also strengthen the bond with a layer of UV resin or cover them with another sheet of clay.



Your earrings are ready — enjoy your new wearable artwork!

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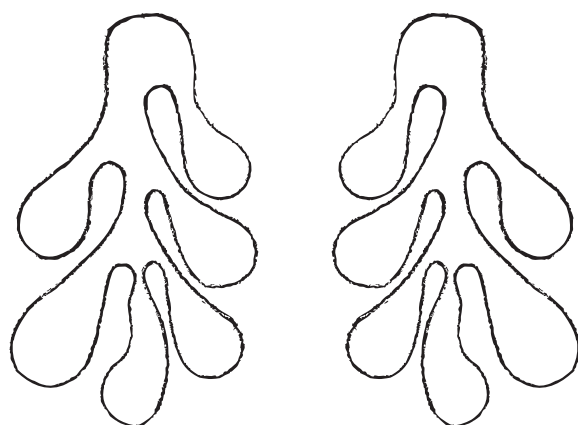
INSPIRATION



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TEMPLATE





SHILA HABIBIAN

A polymer clay artist from Iran, Shila Habibian is known for her emotional depth, bold forms, and imaginative use of color. She discovered polymer clay five years ago during a stop-motion class and has since built her creative world despite limited access to materials and cultural restrictions. With a background in painting, sculpture, and graphic design, she brings a refined visual language to her work, while her photography and styling give her jewelry a distinct fashion-forward identity.

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