

Empress Pendant

By Toni Pullen

I have always been fascinated by the history of jewelry and the ways in which all cultures adorn themselves. I believe jewelry is the ultimate form of self-expression, and find inspiration from our history in art, books, music and dance. While sorting through antique coins to use in a bracelet design, I envisioned a Roman lady of quality, her wrists embellished with coins and golden leaves making her stately appearance at court.

The trademark of Etruscan jewelry, thin leaves attached to an ornamental band, has survived throughout the ages as a timeless classic.

Make this Etruscan style polymer pendant with its freeform leaves and learn how to make and attach a wire bail.



Materials List

- 1 ounce Premo! Accents Antique Gold polymer clay #5517
- 8 inches 20 gauge antique brass wire
- Perfect Pearls pigment powders – perfect gold, perfect copper & heirloom gold
- Sculpey Bake and Bond
- Sculpey Glaze – satin or gloss

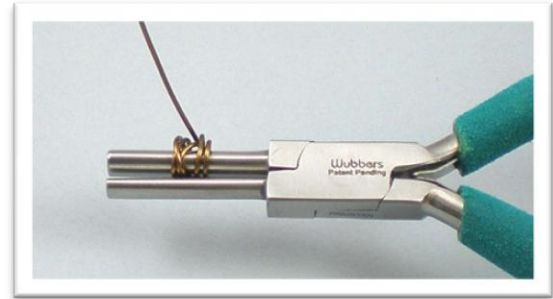
Tool List – Don't forget Safety Glasses!

- Acrylic roller or pasta machine
- Flexible tissue cutting blade
- Clay cutting tool
- Small soft paint brush
- Wire Cutters
- Stylus – extra small
- Dedicated oven and work surface for clay – ceramic tile or non-stick craft sheet
- Safety Glasses
- Wubbers Medium Bail Making Pliers

Safety Tip: Designate an oven for baking clay. Preheat with an oven thermometer and bake according to manufacturer's directions on the package. Do not use a microwave!

Step 1

Make a wire bail by wrapping the 20 gauge wire around the large side of the Wubbers Medium Bail making pliers. Wrap 5-6 times in freeform style and leave remaining length of wire as a tail. Set aside.



Step 2

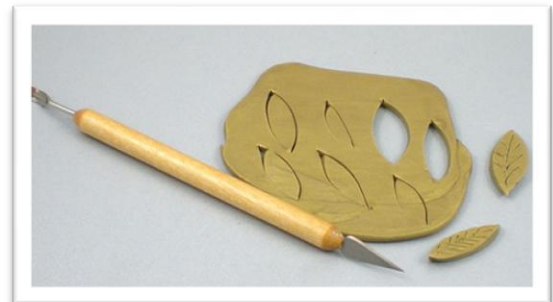
Condition half of the clay well by working with your hands until it is soft and workable. Roll a sheet with an acrylic roller or run thru pasta machine at the widest setting. With flexible tissue cutting blade, cut a rectangular shape about 2 inches long by 1 inch wide. This will be the pendant base.

Optional: Sides can be curved slightly or cut to size and shape you prefer.



Step 3

Roll a second sheet of clay (as before) large enough to cut several freeform leaf shapes of different sizes with a clay cutting knife. Remove from sheet and make veins in each leaf with the cutting tool. Smooth edges with your finger or other tool if desired.



Step 4

Position the wire bail in the center of the pendant base and press down into the clay firmly. Trim the excess wire. Apply Sculpey Bake and Bond along the wire.



Step 5

Apply each leaf shape, one at a time, randomly along the pendant base. Using a small stylus or other texture tool, press each leaf down onto the base gently to secure layers.

Optional: Curling some of the leaf ends adds a natural look.



Step 6

Roll several very tiny balls of gold clay and randomly place into empty areas left around the leaves. Make designs in these pods by pressing straight down with a small stylus. This will give texture to the piece as well as secure the pods to the base.



Step 7

I am very partial to using pigment powders in polymer clay designs. I believe the two are a marriage made in heaven! Place the pendant on an index card and ceramic tile. Using a small, soft paint brush, apply powders in order: heirloom gold to the entire pendant; perfect gold to the centers of the pods; and perfect copper highlights to the leaves.

Bake on the tile according to the manufacturer's directions.

Let cool completely. Use a small brush and seal with Sculpey gloss or satin glaze.



Your pendant is now finished. Wear on a leather cord, ribbon, neck wire or chain and enjoy!



Review Questions

- 1) Polymer clay can be baked in a microwave.
 - a) False
 - b) True
- 2) It is necessary to seal baked polymer clay if pigment powders are used.
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 3) Polymer clay must be kept on a dedicated work surface.
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 4) The following are good work surface options for working with polymer clay.
 - a) Ceramic tile
 - b) Non-stick craft sheet
 - c) Both a and b