

Quick Hand Sanding and Buffing Tips

Sanding

- Sanding is the most important step in getting this process.
- Use a drop of dish soap in your water (I find that it allows the sandpaper to glide over your piece better)
- Find what set up is more comfortable for you (Sanding can be a little messy)
- I use the following grits: 600, 800, 1000, 1200 must be wet/dry sandpaper. Just personal preference. I've read about people using anywhere from 320 to 2000 (I tried 320 and scratched my piece, so be careful, but do experiment). You can get sandpaper at your local auto body supply store.
- It helps to smooth your piece with your finger or gloves before you cook it (if you can)
- Begin with the lowest number of sandpaper (the coarse grit), each piece if different, and will require a different amount of time sanding, but you should only typically have to sand anywhere from a minute to a few minutes, vigorously.
- Rinse your piece and paper after you see some debris build up and then continue to sand more.
- Use the grits stepping up to the next number and continuing until you finish the last grit you want to complete. When you get to about 1200-2000 – It really won't feel much like sandpaper, because it's so fine, but go through the motions, as it is really finishing your piece.
- If you want to do lots of roundish type beads, I've read on the internet many suggestions for tumbling machines; I have not tried it myself.

Buffing

- You can hand buff with a cloth/old jeans or machine buff
- Make sure your piece is dry
- I attempted hand buffing with an old pair of jeans and didn't like the results so I researched electric buffers. (My hands and arms were tired and the jeans turned parts of my piece blue).
- There are many different ways to "rig" devices to be used as a buffer.
- I bought a 3" Multipurpose Bench Grinder (Mini Tool Grinder/Polisher) from Harbor Freight Tools – It cost \$25.00.
- I "rigged" a 2 "buffing pad (also purchased at Harbor Freight – 2 pads for \$5) in place of the polisher wheel. I did a search on the internet for this and loosely followed someone else's tips.
- Make sure your hair/other loose items are not near the buffer when in use (can cause injuries)
- I don't turn the buffer on full speed (more ½ to ¾ speed is plenty).
- Hold the piece tightly, or else it will fly across the room and possibly do some damage or worse yet get flung back at you and hurt you. You may also want to wear eye protection.
- Run the piece across the buffing pad, pressing against the pad gently.
- Depending on the size of your piece it should only take a couple minutes to buff it.
- If you are attempting to buff beads, put them on a stick or bead pins to hold them as you buff them. (They are a bit trickier).
- No need to seal or do anything else to your piece after you get your natural shine.