

This project involves transferring two ink-jet images to polymer clay, then creating two small "tiles" which can be used in elasticized tile bracelets. Each tile will use a different technique, resulting in a slightly different look. In both methods, an image is applied face-down, directly to polymer clay, thus my names for the techniques: **Method # 1, "Direct Opaque"** will result in bright, clear colors. **Method #2, "Direct Translucent"** will yield an image that is a bit less clear and a little yellowed, giving in an aged look.

These instructions are based on techniques from a combination of sources, primarily Dottie McMillan's transfer lesson on www.polymerclaycentral.com/pcc and Donna Kato's book, *The Art of Polymer Clay: Creative Surface Effects*, with additional findings through trial-and-error. I have found one particular brand of T-shirt transfer paper that yields consistently bright, clear images with almost no color distortion, along with these two methods that produce good results.

Images:

1. You will need one ink jet image for each tile. I've had the best results printing them on **Avery "Personal Creations" Ink Jet T-Shirt Transfer Paper** for light backgrounds. Some brands didn't work for me at all, so I've settled on this paper, which I found at Staples.
2. If you choose an image with writing on it or an image that just won't look right if reversed, for the opaque transfer (Method 1) you will need to reverse the image before printing it. For the translucent transfer, do not reverse the image. Size your images for the size tile you would like for your bracelet. Some like very tall tiles, about 3" x 1 1/4". I'm using medium-size tiles, about 1.5" tall by about 1" wide.

Making the Bracelet

Here are the directions for making the bracelet after you have made the tiles:

Materials:

- Several tiles for your bracelet
- Spacer beads (optional, if needed)
- Glue for the connecting knots in your elastic bead cord

Most tile bracelets have at least 5-7 tiles, but you may choose to use as few as one.

1. Thread the elastic bead cord through the channels of your tile. Depending upon how many tiles you have for your bracelet, you may need to thread spacer beads between tiles. You may also decide to knot the cord as it comes out of the channels on each side of the tile.
2. After the bracelet is strung, Donna Kato recommends joining the ends of each cord with a small square knot and securing it with Cyanoacrylate (CA) glue. Then conceal the knots by pulling them into the channels of the nearest tile.

Two Methods for Making Tiles

Method # 1: Direct <u>Opaque</u> Transfer	Method # 2: Direct <u>Translucent</u> Transfer
1. Roll out a half log of white clay on the medium setting of the pasta machine, and place a piece a little larger than your image on a baking tile.	1. Roll out about a half log of translucent clay on the thinnest setting of the pasta machine, making sure it is a little larger than your transfer image. Place it on a baking tile.
2. Cut out your (reversed if necessary) transfer image, leaving a border 1/8" or wider all around. (The border makes it easier to handle when you remove the transfer paper after baking.)	2. Cut out your non-reversed transfer image, leaving a border of between 1/8 and 1/4 inch all around.
3. Place image face-down on the white clay.	3. Place the image face-down on the translucent clay.
4. Bake in a preheated oven for 7 minutes.	4. Follow steps 4 through 8 at left.
5. Remove from oven and, taking hold of the border, gently peel off the transfer paper. All of the image should be gone from the paper and be on the clay.	5.
6. Return the piece to the oven and bake for 20-23 minutes. Heat seems to set the image and make it waterproof.	6.
7. Remove the clay from the oven and let cool.	7.
8. With scissors, carefully cut out the image, trimming away the extra clay.	8.
9. Roll out a sheet of black clay on the medium setting of your pasta machine. Place a piece larger than your image on a baking tile. This will form the back of your tile.	9. The transparent image must be backed with white clay. Roll out a sheet of white clay on the medium setting of your pasta machine and place it on the baking tile.
10. To make channels for the elastic bead cord between the backing and the image, roll out a sheet of scrap clay on medium or thicker setting, depending on the diameter of your cord.	10. Rub a thin layer of liquid polymer clay on the back of your clay image (on the side which was in contact with the transfer paper). Press the image onto the sheet of white clay and roll with a brayer to force out any air.
11. Cut a strip of the rolled scrap clay as wide as your image is tall. Divide the strip into three narrower strips. Leaving 2 spaces wide enough for your cord (with a knot in it), create 2 channels for the cord to pass through the tile by laying the three strips horizontally across the black backing clay sheet.	11. With a clay blade, trim the white clay backing even with the edges of the clay image and bake for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool on the baking tile.
12. Place the clay with the image face up on the other two layers (3 strips on black backing) and trim the bottom two layers to match the top (image) layer. You will have a 3-layer tile with 2 horizontal channels through the middle (scrap clay) layer.	12. Follow steps 9 through 12 at left.

<p>13. Rub a little liquid polymer clay on the back of the image and place it again on the 2 layers, making sure the edges match. Press down lightly to make sure the image is firmly on the scrap clay layer. <i>At this point, you may want to apply a layer or layers of liquid clay to the image and baking each layer, if you intend to sand and buff your tile.</i></p>	<p>13. Follow steps 13 through 20 at left.</p> <p><i>There is no need to cover this image, since it is already encased in translucent clay.</i></p>
<p>14. Bake the 3-layer tile again according to the directions for your brand of clay.</p>	
<p>15. Roll a medium thick sheet of black clay, making it long enough in one direction to go around the edges of your tile. Cut a strip this length and a little wider than the edge of your tile.</p>	
<p>16. Gently sand the edges of your tile to even them out. Apply a thin layer of liquid clay to the edges.</p>	
<p>17. Wrap the black strip around the edges of your tile, butting the ends together (no overlap). As you reach each channel, poke a needle tool through from the other side, then make the hole through the wrap from the right side. Smooth out the butted seam.</p>	
<p>18. Laying a clay blade horizontally, flush with the tile surface, carefully slice off the wrapped strip even with the front and back surfaces of your tile. Smooth everything with your fingers.</p>	
<p>19. Bake a final time according to your clay instructions.</p>	
<p>20. You might want to consider sanding and buffing your tile. Unless you applied layers of LPC to the image, as mentioned in step 13, this tile has an unprotected surface transfer, so do not sand the image.</p>	<p>20. If you wish, you may sand and buff your tile, including the side with the image.</p>

Exposed edge of tile showing
channels for bead cord

