Fantasy Sunflower Bangle Tutorial

Designed by Krithika Parthan
The Beaded Bazaar

Brought to you by Tiny Pandora
Create a lovely bangle decorated with petals that look like they dropped from a fantasy sunflower! Change the petal cane to a leaf cane, make other petal canes with different colors, change the placement or background for infinite variations. This tutorial will walk you through all the steps starting from a petal cane, making a bangle base out of polymer clay and decorating it with cane slices.

Tools and supplies

- Polymer clay
  I prefer Premo Sculpey, use your professional clay of choice.
  I used Premo in White, Cadmium Yellow, Orange, Cadmium Red, Cayenne Red and Black for my petal cane. You can buy a premade petal cane if you like.
  Use scrap clay for the bangle base. I used about 3 oz. You may also want additional scrap clay for a “cane cradle”.
  Background color for the bangle. I used about 2 oz of black.
  I mixed in ¼ ounce of White Gold Glitter and Yellow Gold Glitter (combined) for added bling. I also used a very small amount of Gold clay for the center of the flowers. This is optional.
- Easy Bangles Kit from Tiny Pandora
- Pasta machine
- Liquid clay
  I prefer Bake n Bond from Sculpey.
- Tissue blade
- Acrylic roller (optional)
  Helps smooth sheets of clay while blending. You can use a cane bender here.
- Small roller (optional)
  You can use the smallest cane bender, a knitting needle or any other similar tool
- Small ball stylus (optional)
  I use one of the Sculpey Style and Detail tools to add some texture to my flower centers. You can use an old pen or the tip of a toothpick instead.
- Cane slicing machine (optional)
  This is totally optional! I can't slice straight no matter what, so I love my Lucy clay slicer.
- Texture sponge for the inside of the bangle (optional)
  I like having some texture against my skin, so I always use a sponge to texture the inner layer of the bangle. I used a texture on the front to contrast with the smooth petals as well. You can use any texture you like* or leave the surface smooth.
- Metal leaf (optional)
  I used some gold leaf to wrap my petal cane

*see Helpful Links page for texture ideas
Instructions

This is a project with several stages and multiple curings. Don’t let this intimidate you! You can do this easily in a day, especially with a premade cane. The project also naturally splits itself across multiple days. Read through the instructions, watch the video and decide on a pace that is comfortable for you.

Making the petal cane:
You can use any cane in your stash. Check helpful links for some petal cane tutorials.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1:</th>
<th><img src="image1.jpg" alt="Image" /></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lay out colors you like to create a Skinner blend. I used the Skinner blend template included in the handout with Premo colors White, Cadmium Yellow, Orange, Cadmium Red, Cayenne Red. I used two layers at #3 on my Atlas. Use a single sheet in any thickness you like, or double the sheet for a lot of blend. You do NOT have to use this! Use any blend you like, with any colors. Or use any petal cane or leaf cane you prefer.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Step 2:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Blend this sheet till you’re happy. You can adjust the blend by adding more of a certain color anywhere in the sheet and blending it again.</td>
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<th>Step 3:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The blend is intended to fill the width of the pasta machine. For the cane, we want to narrow the width of the blend. The following steps are one way to do this. Once you’re happy with the blend, fold it along the direction of the blend and feed it into the pasta machine with a solid color at one end. You should get a nice long sheet with a solid color at each end. Make this as thin as you can manage. Mine was about 2” wide.</td>
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**Step 4:**
Starting with one solid colored end, start “fanfolding” the blend to create a block. Mine looks a bit blotchy because my sheet was quite thick.

**Step 5:**
Using an acrylic roller, start making the block thinner. You want the width of the blended portion to be around 2” and make the length longer and longer.

**Step 6:**
Once the block is thin enough, roll it out on the thickest setting on your pasta machine. You should have a nice long sheet. My sheet was 1.5” wide.

I used a lot of clay, so I got two long pieces. I used only one for this cane.

**Step 7:**
Cut the sheet into piece lengthways. I aimed for 1.5” long pieces approximately. Note that these dimensions make it easy for me to work with the cane. You don’t have to stick to this.

**Step 8:**
Roll out a sheet of dark colored clay as wide as the blend. This will make the spots on the petal,
so pick a contrasting color. I used Black on setting #4.

**Step 9:**
Using a stiff blade, cut out strips of the black clay about 1/8 of an inch wide. Lay two of these on one piece of the blend. You want the strip to go along the length of the blend.

Note that my black sheet is a little wider because I wanted to show the arrangement of strips. You can make it the same size as your blended pieces.

**Step 10:**
Pick up another piece of the blend and lay it over the first sheet with the brown lines. I like to offset it a little for variation in the petal. Add one or two black strips again, in a different position from the strips below.

**Step 11:**
Continue step 8 till all the blended strips are gone. There will be no black strips on the outside.
**Step 12:**
Compress the block and start reducing along the length of the blend. I like to pinch the ends to make a petal shape and continue reducing in this shape. You can reduce it however you feel comfortable.

I pull and tug along the length and keep pinching the ends to maintain the petal shape. I reduced it to an inch high. I wrapped my cane in gold leaf taking a leaf (ha!) out of Susan Bailey’s book.

**Auditioning background colors**
This is optional! If you’re not sure about what background color would go with the petals, this is a good way to try out some different options. You can also make lovely matching pendants or earrings.

**Step 1:**
Reduce a small part of the cane down further to less than half an inch high. This is just to save more of the cane for the bangle. And you can use these samples to make pendants or earrings.

**Step 2:**
Cut three to four thin slices. Butt them against each other and bake this. A brush of liquid clay between the petals will help. Since I had gold leaf on the outside, I spread a little liquid clay on a tile and lay my petals on this and baked it.
Step 3:
Condition and sheet out different colors of clay. I like to texture them. Try laying out the baked petal set on different sheets and see what pops. I like to take pictures and sleep on the decision! Here I decided to go with black, with a little bit of glitter in it.

To see all the colors I tried, check the Appendix. I used just two petal sets (one with 4 petals and one with 5) with different colors and took pictures. You don’t have to bake them!

Building the bangle
Now we’ll build up a nice domed bangle that will be the base for our pretty petals!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1: Condition your scrap clay, making sure the length of the sheet fits the template from the Easy Bangle Kit. I’m rolling mine out on #3 on my Atlas pasta machine. Use whatever thickness you like.</th>
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| Step 2: Roll out a strip of black clay (or whatever clay you’re using for the inner layer). Mine is textured. Make sure it’s wide enough for your template. |

| Step 3: Place the textured strip on the scrap clay sheet. Use the same texture to press down and fuse the sheets together. |

If you’re using a smooth sheet, burnish with paper.
**Step 4:**
Lay the widest template on the sheet carefully. Using the acrylic edge as a guide, trim the double sheet to the size of the template. I like to use the edge of my tissue blade.

**Step 5:**
Set aside the rest of the scrap to fill the bangle. Try to peel away the black clay to reuse it.

**Step 6:**
Cut a clean edge on one narrow side. With the smooth scrap clay against the metal, lay the strip of clay against the inner surface of the bangle form from your Easy Bangles kit. Press the ragged against the point of overlap and trim the sheet.

**Step 7:**
Use the texture sheet or your fingers to press and smooth the seam. I pressed a little too enthusiastically and created a divot! You don’t have to be too careful since additional sheets of clay will be added around this.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 8:</th>
<th>Press the excess clay against the metal edges. Trim this excess with a tissue blade, using the metal edge as a guide.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Step 9:</td>
<td>Cure this in the oven. Check <a href="#">helpful links</a> for a The Blue Bottle Tree article on how to bake polymer clay. Once out of the oven and cooled, the clay ring should come away easily from the metal. If not, use a needle tool to pull the clay away.</td>
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<td>Step 10:</td>
<td>Take the remaining scrap clay. Mine was in a decent usable sheet. Lay the three narrower templates on the sheet and cut out three strips of clay. I like to make them a little longer than the template.</td>
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<td>Step 11:</td>
<td>Apply liquid clay on the baked base ring. Starting from the widest, lay the strips on the base centering them as best you can. You will need liquid clay only between the baked and raw clay.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 12:</strong></td>
<td>Once all the strips are on, use your thumbs to start smoothing down the clay to a dome. Flip the bangle around every now and then.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 13:</strong></td>
<td>Keep working the clay smooth till you’re happy with the dome. This seems time consuming, but will move very quickly once you’re in the zone. This will be covered up with a nice layer of clay, so you don’t have to be too careful! Just watch out for any large divots or bumps.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 14:</strong></td>
<td>Make sure the edge of the bangle is smooth. Peel off any excess clay over the edge. You can use a blade or your fingers.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 15:</strong></td>
<td>Once you’re happy with the dome, cure this again. You can apply the next layer of clay at this stage if you like. I prefer to do as another cure.</td>
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<td><strong>Step 16:</strong></td>
<td>Your bangle base is ready! You can make a bunch of these without the inner textured layer and have them ready for when bangle inspiration strikes.</td>
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Decorating the bangle
We have a bangle; we have a cane. Now let’s put the two together!

**Step 1:**
First, we’ll add a thin layer of clay. This will be the background for your cane slices. After auditioning some colors, I chose black. For some variation, I added some White Gold Glitter and Yellow Gold Glitter. This is optional!

**Step 2:**
Roll out the clay you choose (I have about an ounce here). Create a long strip. I used a Clay Yo texture sponge for this. You can leave it smooth if you like. Make sure this is wide enough and long enough to cover the bangle.

**Step 3:**
Apply a generous amount of liquid clay on the bangle base and apply the clay on bangle base.
Fold the excess over the inner edge. Use a blade to trim the excess. Make sure there are no air bubbles trapped under the raw clay sheet.

TIP: if using a texture, use the texture to press down on the seam to cover it.

**Step 4:**
At this stage, I chose to bake the bangle again. This way I can play around with petal placement without worrying about the raw clay below.

**Step 5:**
Now it’s finally time to add the petals! Cut yourself some cane slices. If you’re not sure what size you need, start with a few slices.

Also roll out some gold clay. I will use this for my flower centers. This clay sheet is about a #5 of an Atlas.

I cut out 6 little dots, 6 medium circles and 6 larger circles of gold clay. The medium dot will be the center to fit the petals around. You may or may not need this.

**TIP:**
For a roundish cane like this, I like to make a scrap clay “cradle”. Check the helpful links page for a Polymer Clay Tutor that shows this process in more detail. I basically rolled out a log of scrap clay. I pressed it down to flatten it a little, and used an acrylic rod to create a curved indent that matches the cane.

If this didn’t make a lot of sense, don’t worry! Watch the linked video. If it still doesn’t make sense, go forth and cut up your cane however you like! You can reshape the slices if you want, or not!
Step 6:
Based on the size of the cane, and a previous bangle, I knew I wanted to add 6 half flowers around the bangle. It’s still good to check if that will fit.

I place the bangle on the centering template and line up the inner bangle edge with one of the circles on the template as best as I can.

Step 7:
Place dots of gold clay aligned with the 6th marks. Lift the bangle off the template and apply a coat of liquid clay.

Using the dots as a guide, place a medium dot at one bangle edge. Place the next dot on the opposite edge. I do it this way because it’s hard to reach the edge of the bangle while on this template.

Step 8:
Start adding the petals. I want to fit 5 petals. I will start with the center, bottom and middle on each side.

TIP: If you’re not sure if your petals will fit, try two adjacent flowers first. Do quarter of each flower and check if they overlap. If they do, you may need to use smaller petals or fewer flowers.
**Step 9:**
Add all your petals.

**Step 12:**
Using a small roller, roll over all the petals and make sure there’s good contact with the base. Try to make the petal as even as possible. A knitting needle would work great.

**Step 13:**
I like to add a slightly larger circle of gold clay on the center. This will hide any weird squishing at the center. It’s totally optional. You want to use a thin sheet to avoid raising the flower profile too much.

I use a small ball stylus to texture the center.

**Step 14:**
It’s time for the final cure!
And your bangle is ready!! Wear that showstopper and enjoy! You should have plenty of cane leftover to make some more bangles! Take a look at two bangles here. The petal canes are slightly different, and one has a white/pearl background and one has a black background.
Helpful links

- Tiny Pandora Crafting Boutique
  Easy Bangles kit, DeepShine and lots of fun products
- Turtle Soup Beads has lots of easy video tutorials including leaves and flowers. You can use any of them for this project.
- This article from The Blue Bottle Tree has lots of good texture ideas.
- This video from Polymer Clay Tutor, Cindy Leitz shows you how to cut a round cane without distortion.
- Checkout this article from The Blue Bottle Tree on how to bake polymer clay.
- Meg Newberg has lots of interesting blend templates. Checkout her Pinterest board for blends.
- If you don’t want to make your own cane, Ivy Niles makes gorgeous canes that you can buy from her Etsy shop ikandiclay.

Check out my clay work at The Beaded Bazaar!
Skinner blend template

Note: this is intended for at Atlas 150
Angle template for 3rds, 4ths, 6ths and 8ths

Laminate this or print it on acetate
Angle template for 5ths and 10ths

Laminate this or print it on acetate
Background color samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearl background</th>
<th>Silver background</th>
<th>Graphite Pearl background</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black background</td>
<td>18K Gold background</td>
<td>Rose Gold Glitter background</td>
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<td>Wisteria background</td>
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