

Nebula Jhumka Earrings Tutorial



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Jhumka or jhumki refers to a style of earrings popular in India. They can be identified by their trademark semi-sphere or dome shape. Traditionally these are made using metals: gold, silver, white metal etc, and vary in size patterns. Recently these earrings have become very popular and are made using many different materials like quilled paper and terracotta clay. Polymer clay works wonderfully and can be dressed up in a variety of ways. This Nebula Jhumka or Aurora Dome technique is one that I feel in love with because of its simplicity and elegance. They're named after the Aurora Boralis or Northern Lights and remind me of a beautiful night sky!

Tools and supplies

- Black clay, 2 oz
I prefer [Premo Sculpey](#), use your professional clay of choice.
I like the effect on black clay the best. Feel free to experiment with different base colors. I suggest making little test tiles to see what the powders look like on other colors.
- Liquid clay such as Liquid Sculpey or Bake and Bond.
- Dome shape to use as a mold
I like [these 1" bath bomb molds](#) to get a consistent size. Search for 1" bath bomb mold or 25 mm stainless steel hemisphere.
If you prefer not to buy the molds, glass marbles a little under 1" in size will work.
- [Circle template](#) or circle cutters
- Color shift or Chameleon powders.
I really like [these color shift powders](#).
Alternative sources are [here](#) and [here](#).
Make sure you try any powder on a small sample of clay first.
- [DeepShine from TinyPandora](#)
- Clay blade
- Exacto knife
- Needle tool
- Pasta machine
Optional, but very useful for rolling out even sheets of clay.
- Pin Vise and small drill bit.
- Jewelry findings and tools to assemble earrings
I used headpins, ear wires and a set of jewelry pliers.



Instructions

Step 1:

Condition ½ ounce of black clay and roll it out to a medium thick setting on your pasta machine. I rolled it out on the 4th thickest setting on my Atlas pasta machine, around 1 mm thick.



Step 2:

Using your circle cutters or template, cut out circles of clay that will fit comfortably inside your mold. If using a marble, the circle should cover about half the marble.



Step 3:

If using the mold:

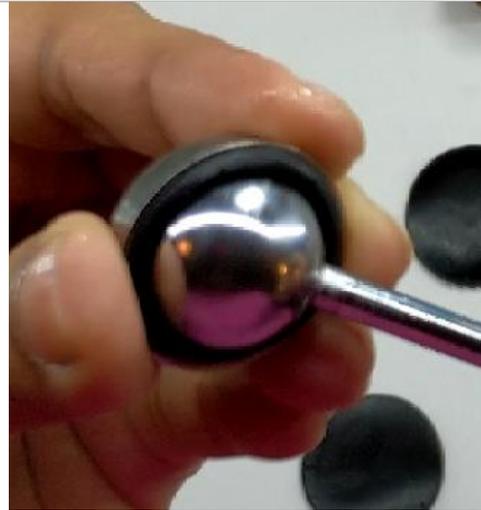
Insert your circle into the mold.
Place the circle approximately at the center of the mold and gently push the edges inward. The clay should slump into the dome shape.



Using a needle tool, poke a hole in the center of the clay. Use your fingers to push the air out and press the clay against the metal.



Trim the excess clay with a clay blade using the edge of the mold as a guide.
Optional step: If you have a ball tool that fits nicely in the dome, spritz it with water and use it to push the clay against the mold.



If using marbles:

Place the circle of clay on the marble.
Gently press down on the edges on the marble. I like to press down at the 3'o clock and 9'o clock positions and then 12 and 6. Continue till the clay is well attached to the marble.



Step 4:

Bake your marbles or molds at the appropriate temperature for your clay for the full cure time. I bake Premo for an hour at 275 F. I like to use a scrap clay donut stand to prevent the molds from rolling about.

Step 5:

Let the pieces cool down completely before handling them. Remove the domes from the bath bomb mold or marble. You may need to use a needle tool to push the clay away from the metal or glass.

Step 6:

Prepare another sheet of black clay (another ½ ounce) at a thinner setting than the first sheet. Cut out circles that will cover the baked domes completely.

**Step 7:**

Apply liquid clay or Sculpey Bake n Bond on the baked dome. Press the clay circle onto the surface gently, just like in step 4 on the marble. Fold any excess clay over the edge.

**Step 8:**

Trim excess clay using a clay blade. Use the palm of your hand to smooth the surface and remove any fingerprints.



Step 9:

Choose a colorshift pigment color. Here I'm using one of my favorites, [CP5 Violet/Blue/Green](#) from [ColorCraze2000](#).

Using your finger or a favorite tool or brush, apply some powder on the raw clay. Once you've covered a reasonable area, pick up the dome using the covered clay to avoid fingerprints and cover the rest of the dome.



Step 10:

This step is optional. If you would like a starry spatter on your jhumkas, you can use acrylic paint. Make sure you protect your work surface for this. Dip an old tooth brush in some watered-down white paint and flick the bristles using your thumb over your domes. Do this till you are happy with the starry look. Let this dry for a few minutes before baking.



Step 11:

Your jhumkas are ready for their final bake. Bake for the full cure time again.



Step 12:

Drill your jhumkas. I like to do this by turning them upside down and letting them settle. I try to find the center of gravity and drill them using a small drill bit in a pin vise.

You can neaten the edge using coarse sandpaper at this point. Or scrape a blade on the edge to remove rough spots.



Step 13:

To coat the jhumkas with DeepShine, I find it easiest to put them on a toothpick with a clay handle. Pour a little DeepShine into a disposable container and dip the provided brush into it (alternatively use the Goldilocks brush from TinyPandora). Wait till the excess drips off. Gently sweep the brush across the clay till the whole dome is covered.

Place them in the UV light till the coating is cured.



Your nebula jhumka domes are ready!

The simplest way to make these into earrings is to insert a head pin through the center hole. Form a loop on top and add an ear wire. Close the loop. Your earrings are ready to wear!

