



How to Create Mosaic Art

The basics

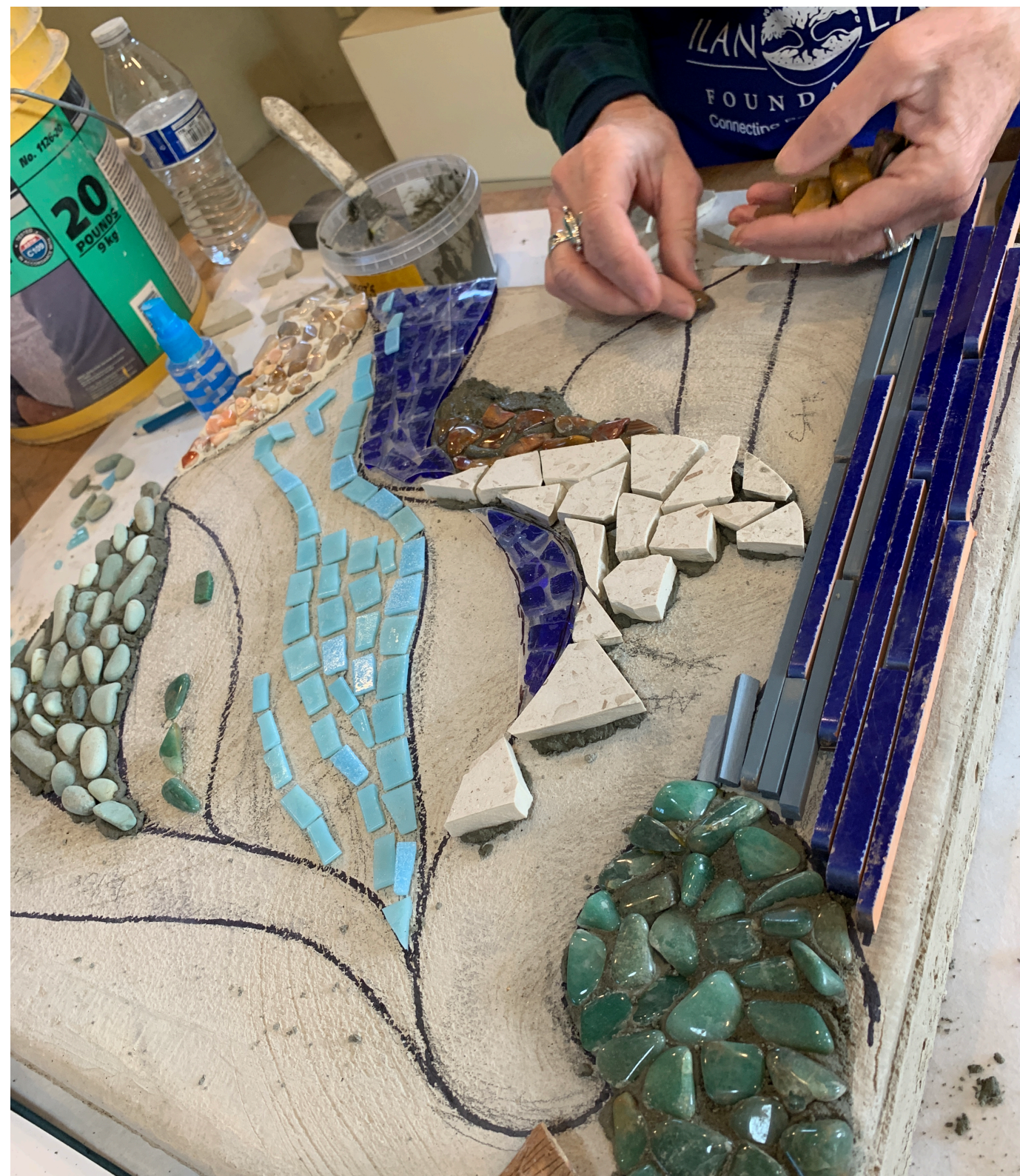
01 Introduction

Welcome to your step-by-step instructions to create Hubbell-inspired glass mosaics! Because James Hubbell is known for such a distinctive mosaic style, this will not be your typical how-to manual. The following pages will give you the basic skills to use the tools included in your at-home kit. Throughout these instructions, you'll be given some visual inspiration from Hubbell's work as well as some of his words of wisdom for the art of mosaic

So, let's start with James Hubbell's most important rules of mosaic:

- Make it like water
- Limit your colors
- Trust yourself
- And most importantly, have fun!

If you ever get stuck while working on your project, come back to these rules to guide you, as they will often help your eyes look at what your hands are doing in a different light.



01 Tools

Your mosaic kit includes the following:

- glass tile nippers
- glass grinding stone
- tweezers
- glue
- syringe
- a selection of glass vitreous tile, stone and glass
- two backing boards for your tile creations
- grout

You will also need:

- Disposable Gloves for grouting
- Sponge: grouting sponges are preferred, but any cut up plain sponge will do!
- Masking Tape
- 2 Rags: one that gets dirtier, one for your final buff.
- 2 Disposable Containers for mixing grout
- Pencil/Permanent Marker
- Disposable Knife: for mixing and spreading your grout
- Sewing Needle: useful for unclogging your glue syringe, keep track of it in a cork.
- Razor Blade (not pictured): very useful for getting in between your tiles and moving them around.

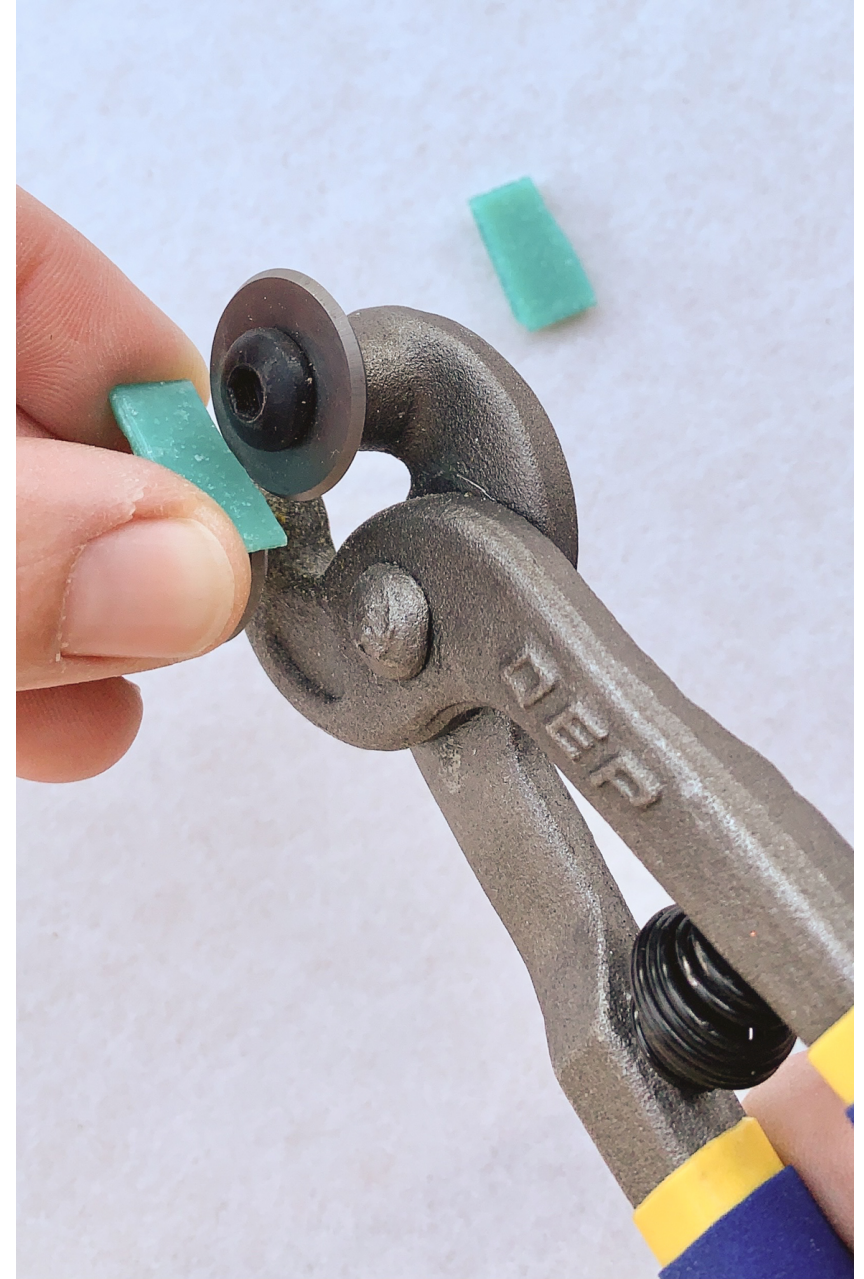




Hold your nipper at a 90° angle to the tile you are cutting.



Place the nipper in the center of where you would like the tile to break



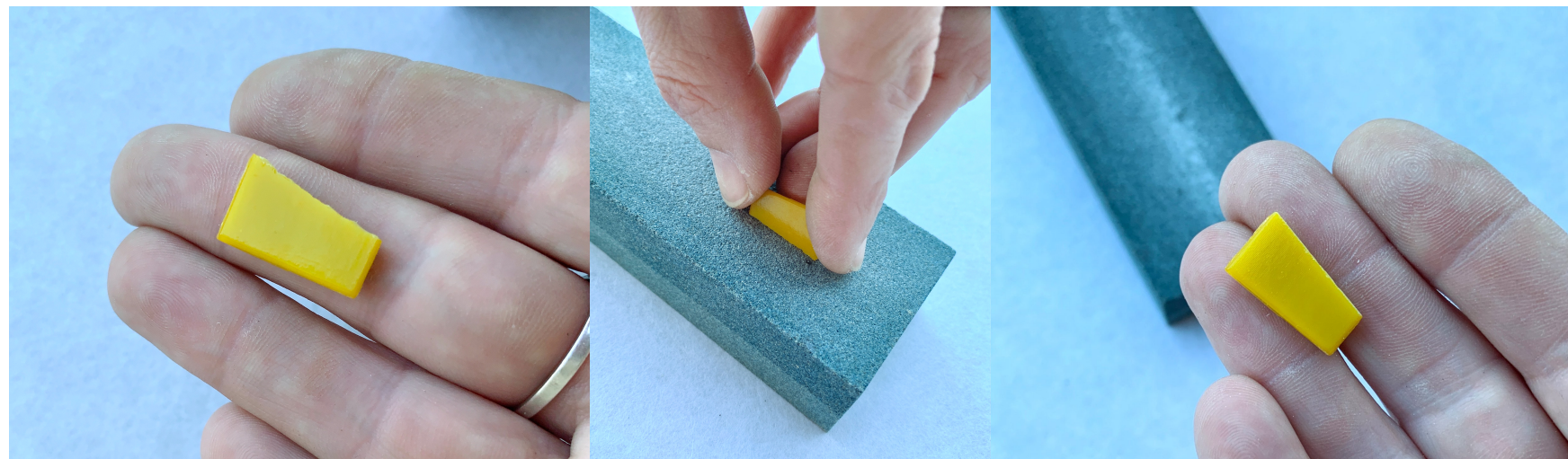
Snap your tile

Advanced Tip: Tile, like wood, has grain, if you can see the grain, cut perpendicular to the grain

02 HOW TO USE YOUR NIPPERS

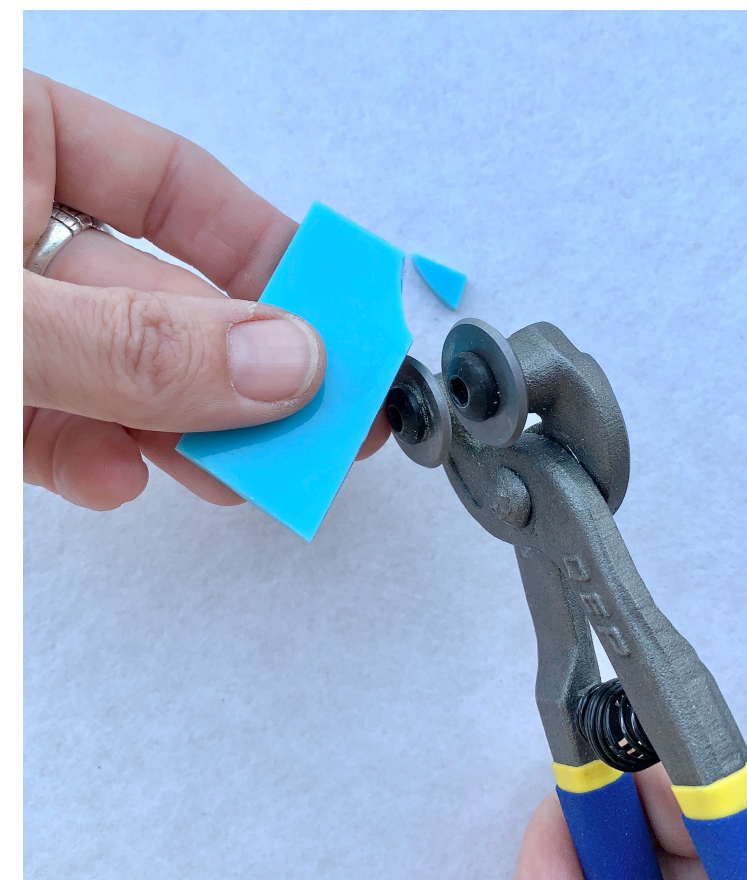
Smoothing and grinding

If your final cuts need a just a little bit of smoothing, that's when it's time to use your grinding stone. Remember, this stone will help smooth your edges. It is not meant to actually grind your tile down to a different shape.



Stained Glass in Mosaic:

We've included some pieces of opaque stained glass from Hubbell Hill in your kit as well! Although you'll need stained glass tools to cut this glass precisely, you can actually nip stained glass to add a different texture to your glass mosaic art!



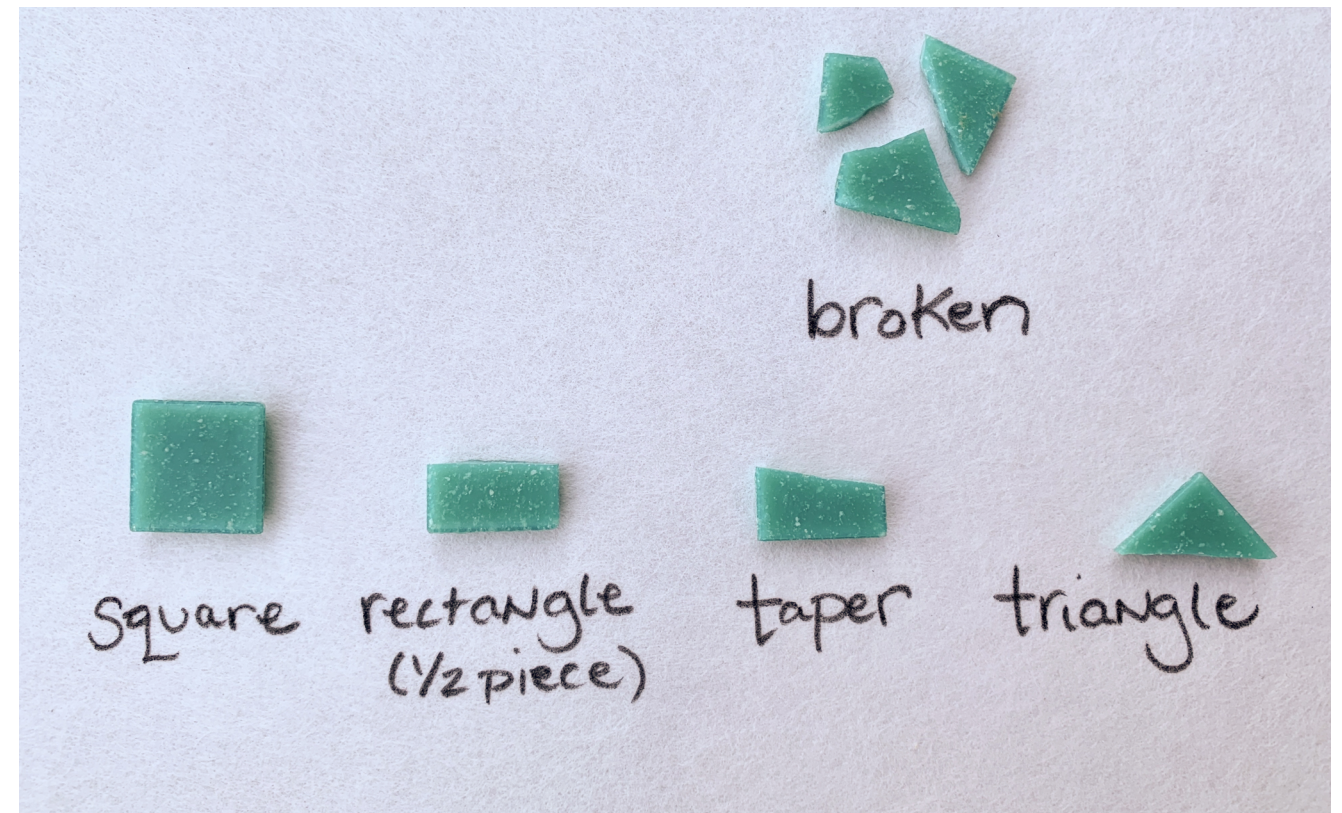
03 SHAPES AND TEXTURES

Now that you've gotten a bit more familiar with your tools, it's time create!

As mentioned in the introduction, James says to try and remember to make your tiles move like water. So, we must always be thinking about the “flow” of our tiles. We'll be laying out a few different ways to make your tiles flow in this next section.

As you'll be discovering, there are so very many ways to play with these 3/4” squares! For the most part, if you choose to cut your tile, you'll be ending up with these four shapes:

- Square
- Rectangle
- Tapered rectangle
- Triangle



Brick-layed or Offset Rectangles:

a great first texture to explore. Achieved by snapping many tiles in half and laying them in an offset manner, this way of filling space with your vitreous tile can be explored in multiple ways

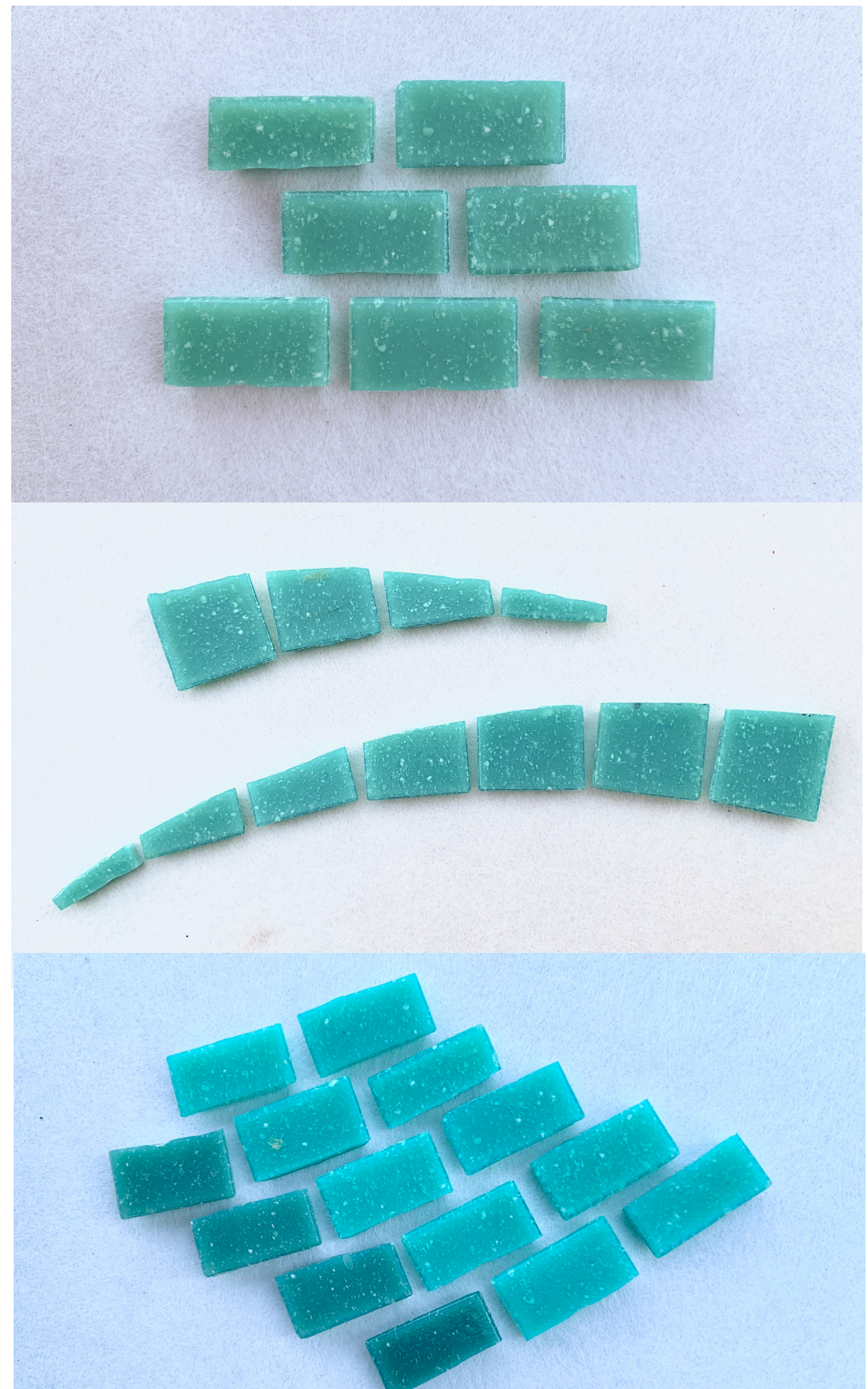
As your lines twist and turn, the tiles may want to find their way back into a squared grid, try to avoid this as it distracts the flow of your grout lines.

Tapers:

a bit tricky, but also the necessary technique to add or remove lines from your line flow. Tapers can be achieved in just a few tiles, or slowly over the course of many tiles. Once you're in a groove with tapers, everything else will feel easy!

Feathered:

this beautiful texture is created by taking many half pieces and beginning with an offset line on a curve. The next rows grow from this initial curve, rather than growing lines one by one.



03 SHAPES AND TEXTURES

Broken:

You can break your squares into odd and random shapes to put them back together in a puzzle-like manner. This is a fun way to bring in a broken ceramic feel to your glass tile mosaic. You can really achieve a fun and contrasting texture to your piece by playing around with some broken tiles, rather than precisely cutting each one.



Swirl or wave:

This classic Hubbell shape is essential to creating water like flow.



It's pretty amazing what you can do with having just one hand tool to work with your vitreous glass tiles!

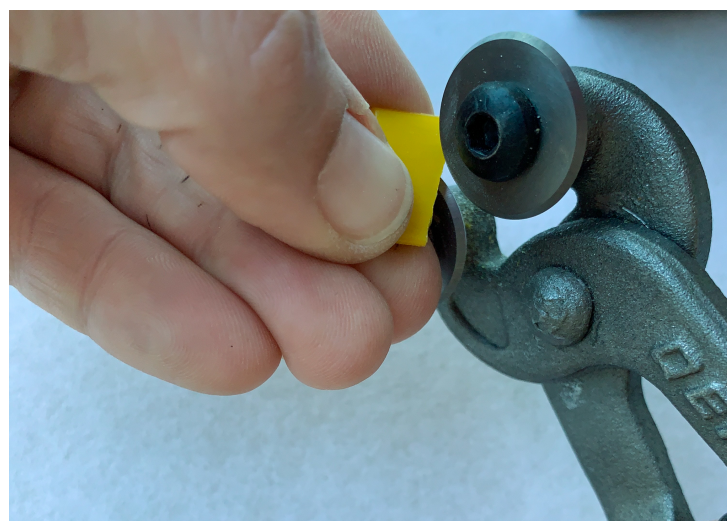
Take your tapering skills to the next level! By shaving down the inner corner of each tile, you can get your lines to twist more tightly without creating large, pie-shaped grout lines. It is a-ok to leave those larger grout lines if you'd like, again, there is no wrong way! James would just say "Trust yourself"!

Below is an example of how to tighten up those grout lines if you'd like to create a swirl or wave.

In order to fit tiles closer together, you use a permanent marker to mark where you'd like to snap your tile. Use a fine-tipped permanent marker. Don't worry about the marks staying, you can clean any and all traces of permanent marker with 91% alcohol



Caution: Always use glass nippers for glass tile, do not attempt to nip any stone or ceramic with your glass nippers, as you may crack one of the wheels.



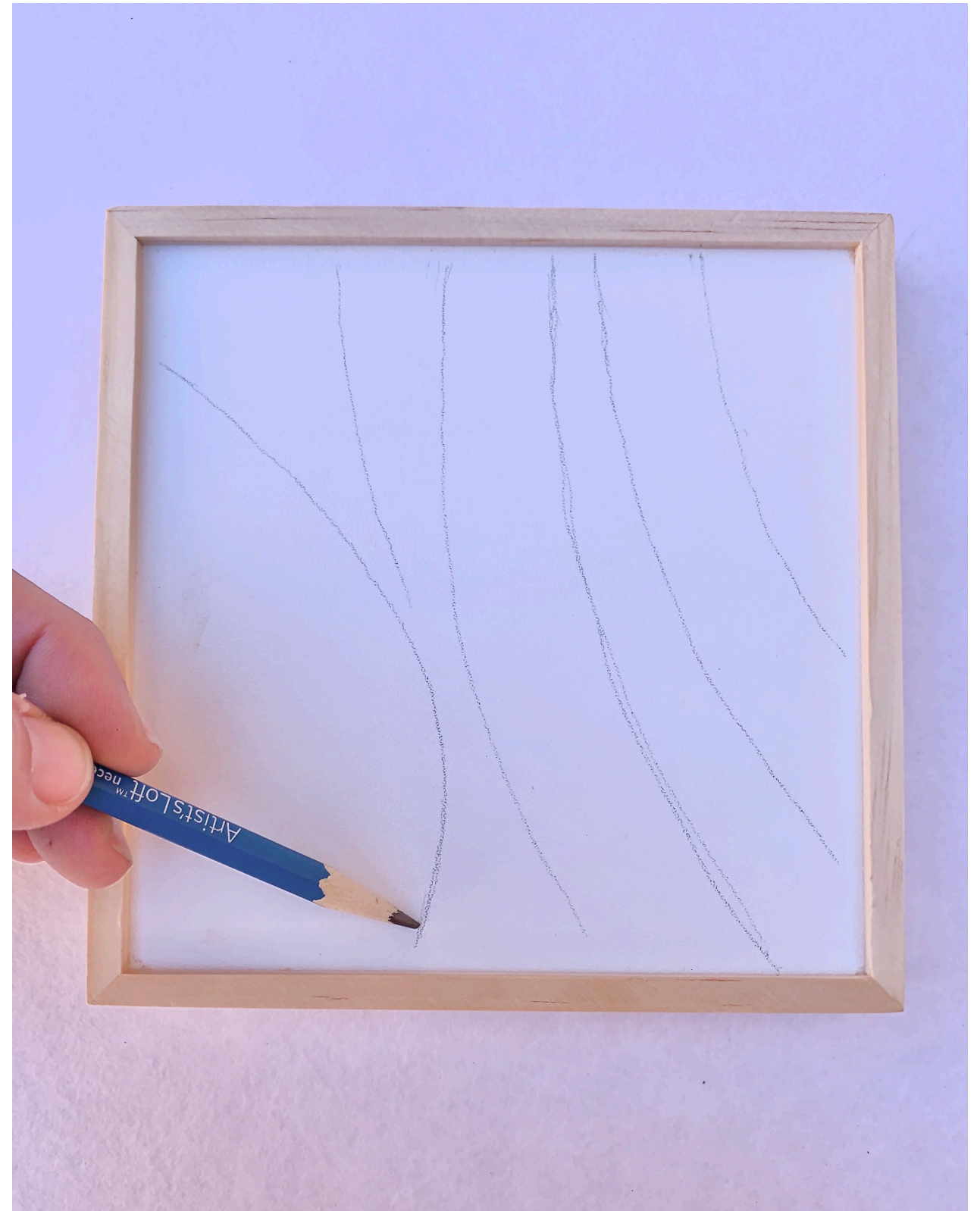
Advanced Tip: You can actually "shave" the tile a bit by using your nipper at a 45 degree angle to the edge of the tile and slowly depressing the nippers with pressure. This will help you grind away the tile edge bit by bit, getting your tile to your desired shape.

How to Design:

It's really up to you what direction you decide to take your mosaic project. You may prefer to sketch your idea onto your backer board, or you may want to just let your intuition carry you. There are no wrong ways to design and create, just many different ways.

Using a pencil on your backer board is helpful so that you can erase any lines you'd like to change.

If you decide to sketch out your design ahead of time, don't forget that you can always change your mind, shift your design, or let the tiles go outside your initial drawing. Your drawing is eventually going to disappear under your tiles and grout, so really, your mosaic is more important to focus on!

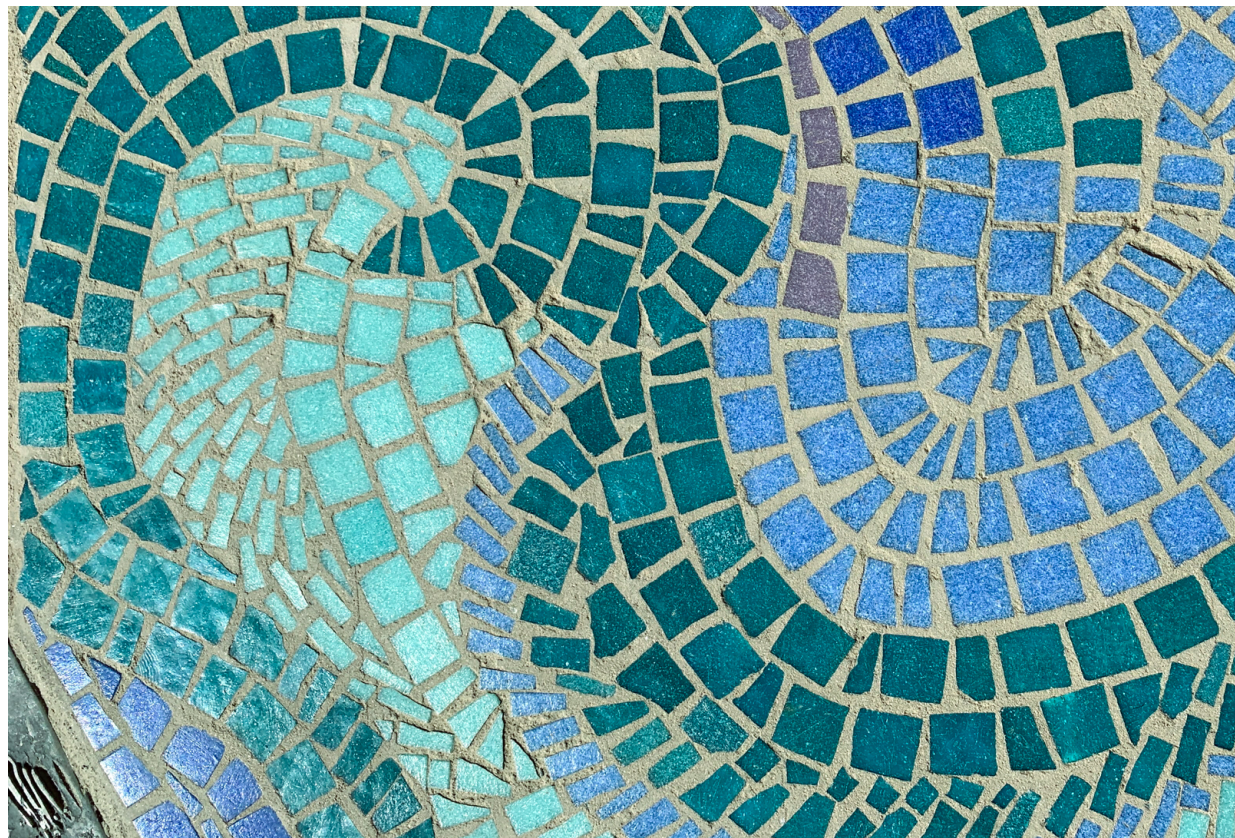


Now it's time to get going on your glass art!! It's entirely up to you if you want to draw out your piece ahead of time or whether you'd like to just let it grow organically.

As you get going, try to remember these great words of wisdom from James:

“When you are tiling, you should think about more than just the tile's shape. You should be bearing in mind its shape, its color, its texture, and the grout line it will create. The grout lines are almost as important as the tile themselves.”

Here are some photos of iconic Hubbell mosaics created with vitreous tile to help inspire you in your creative endeavor!



Gluing your tiles:

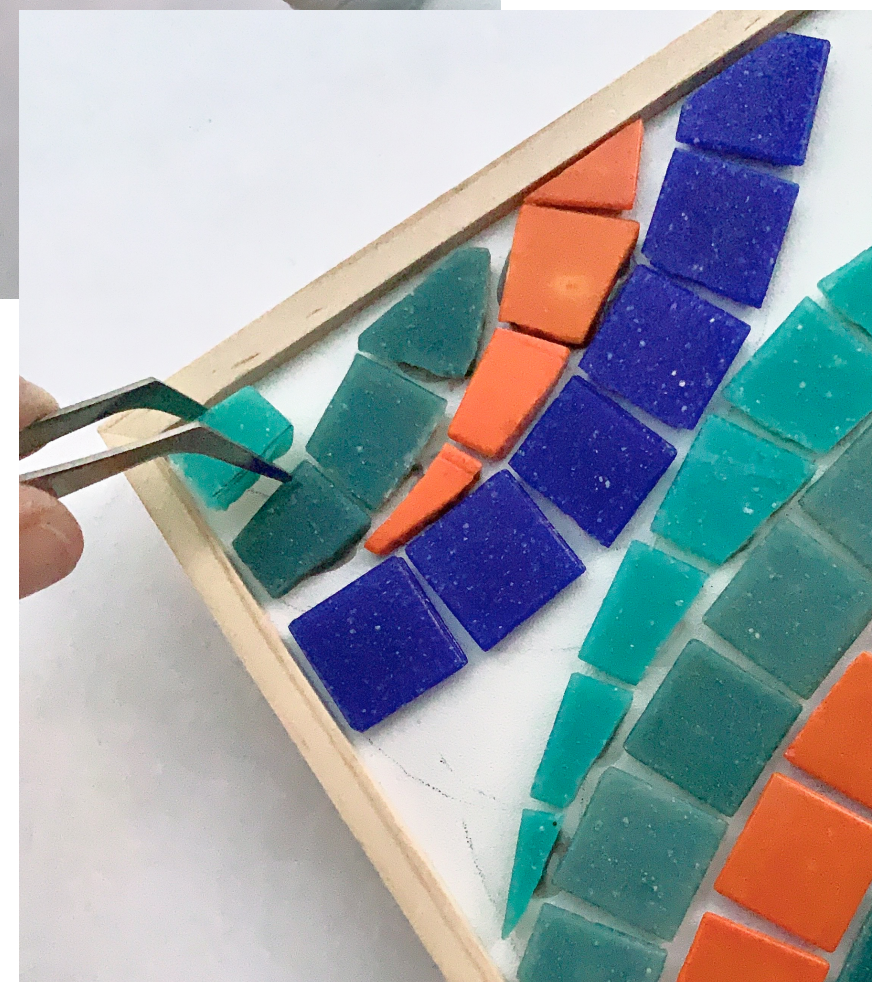
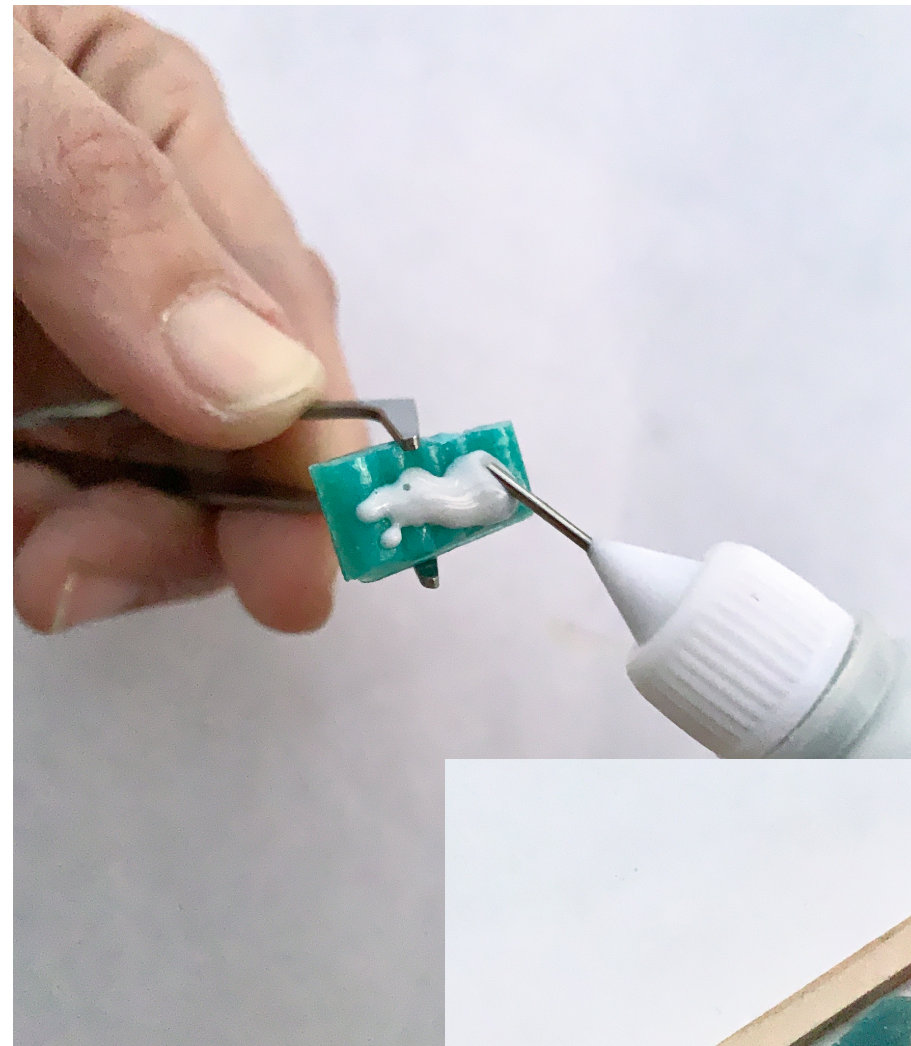
Once you have decided on a design, You are ready to layout and glue.

You can glue as you go OR you can lay out your tile first and then glue once you are happy with the placement. If you choose the latter you this is where the tweezers become very useful.

Glue:

We've included Elmer's Probond glue, as we've found it's more liquid texture works best to syringe small amounts of glue onto the back of your tiles. It also makes it nice and easy to slide your tile around to adjust them for a few minutes after you've glued them.

It dries clear. If you work with tackier glues, you'll want to work with a larger syringe or use a disposable knife to adhere the glue to the back of your.

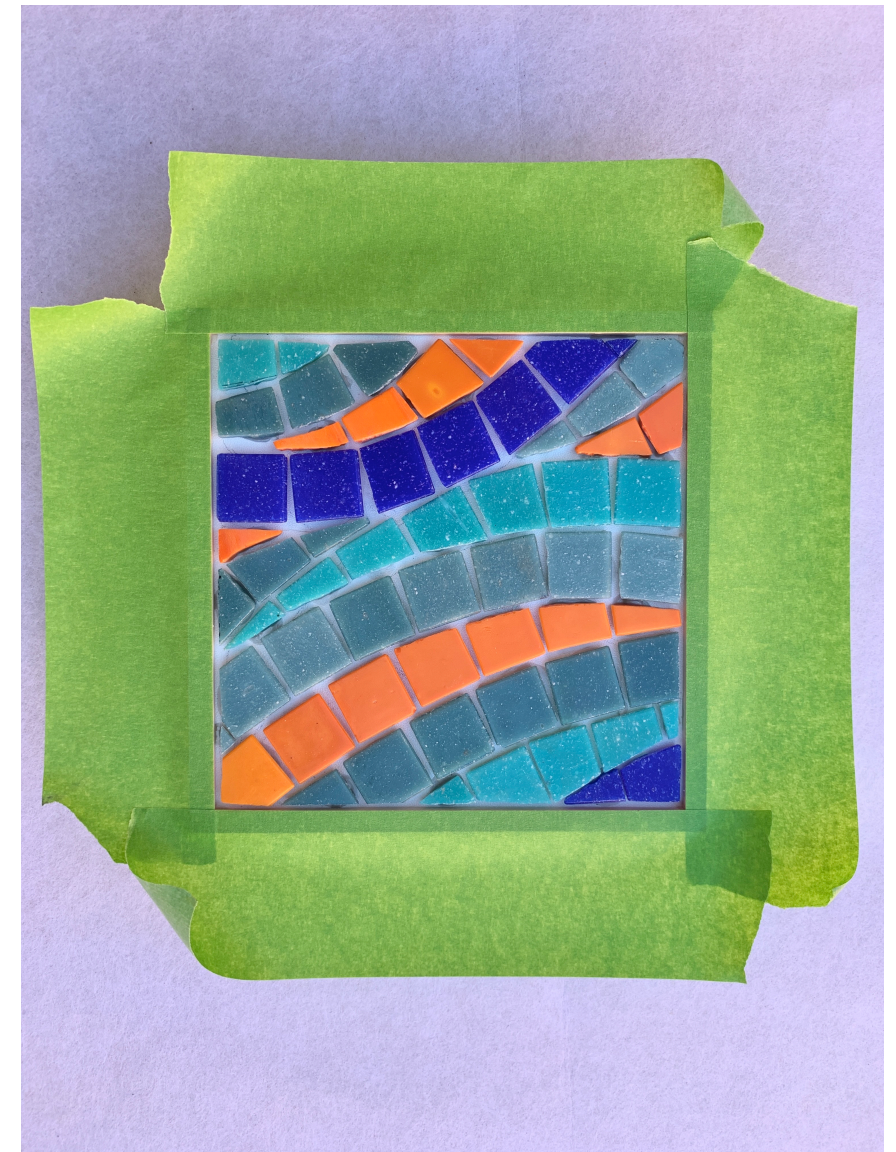


Preparing your piece

Once you've glued down all of your tile, you'll want to give the glue at least **two to three hours to dry** before you grout. Please be patient with your drying glue, as the tiles can come loose in the grouting process if they're not fully glued down!

Before you grout your piece, use masking tape to tape off the wood surface of your backer board frame.

We've included enough grout for both of the backer boards in your kit. If and when you decide to purchase your own grout, make sure it's sanded grout!



Mixing your grout



Take approximately half of the included grout and pour it into a disposable container. Fill another container with water.



Take a small sponge-full of water and add a small amount of water to your grout, then mix, and repeat.
- DO NOT pour water directly onto your dry grout. Using a sponge allows you to add very small amounts of water at a time.

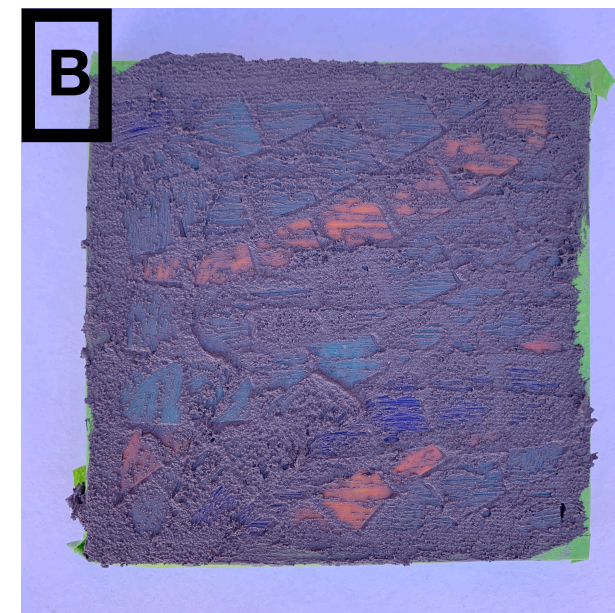
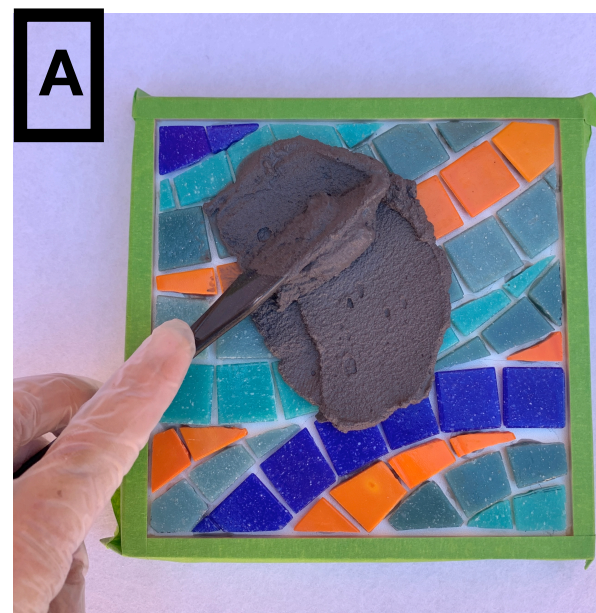


Mix your grout until it seems similar to icing or thick batter. Make sure to mix thoroughly to avoid any dry clumps.

Time to apply the grout!

Step 1

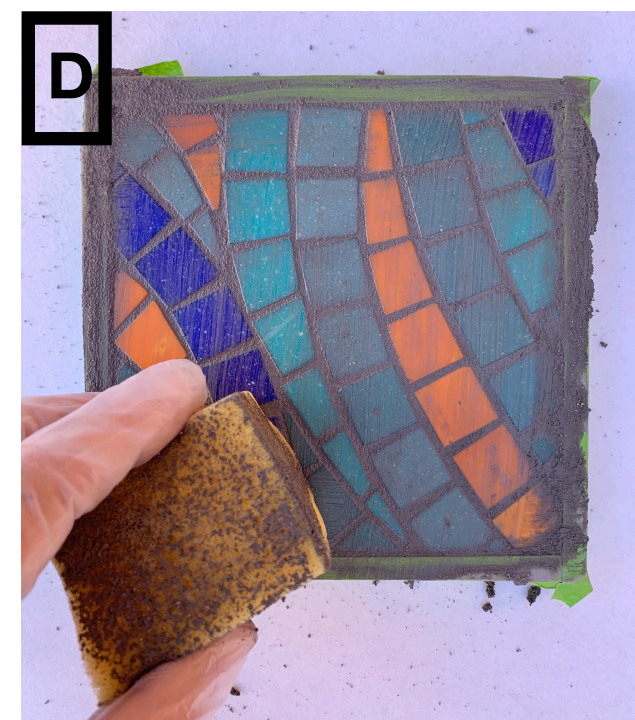
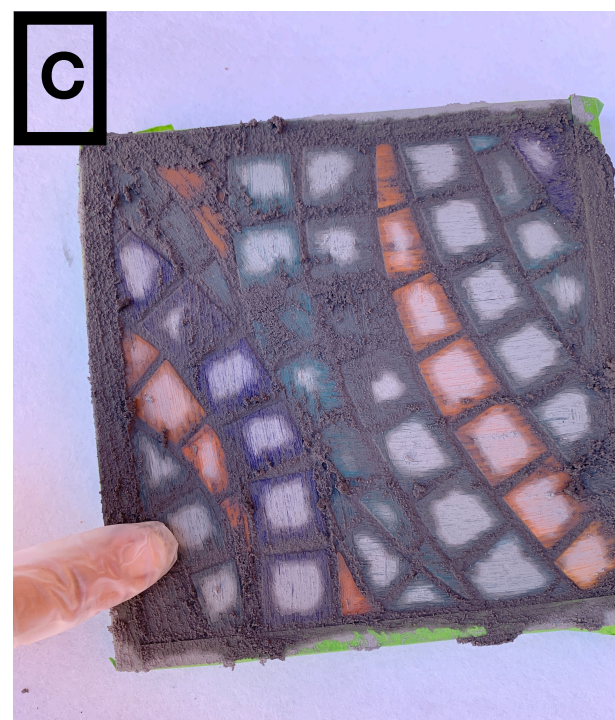
Spread the grout over your entire piece. Be sure to spread grout in every direction so that your grout has completely worked itself in between every tile. It's a bit scary but trust the process....magic is about to happen!



Step 2

Let dry 5-10 minutes until you notice the grout has begun to dry. Use a barely (seriously, barely) wet, clean sponge to wipe away the initial layer of grout away.

Your piece will still look messy at this point. Don't worry, it's ok!



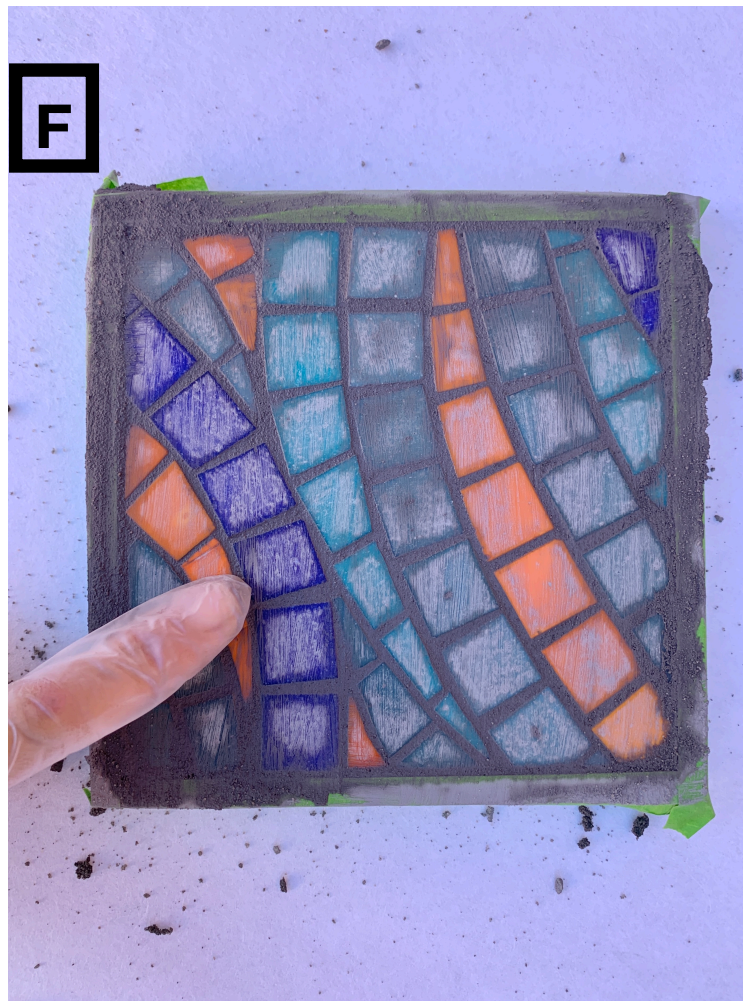
06 GROUTING

Drying and Buffing

Step 3 Use your dirty rag to buff off grout

Step 4 Wait another few minutes until the white haze of the remaining residue is revealed, see image F

Step 5 Use your clean rag to polish the pieces clean



Viola! You are finished!

You've just made a Hubbell-inspired glass mosaic!
Hope you've had a blast while exploring and trusting
your inner artist!

Give your piece 24 hours before you hang or use it.



Below are links where you can purchase more materials for future projects!!

witsendmosaic.com

mosaicartsupply.com

*the backer boards are “Liquid Art Panels” from michaels.com and come in many different sizes!