



**50 TIPS
TO HELP YOU BE
BETTER WITH RESIN**

By Katherine Swift

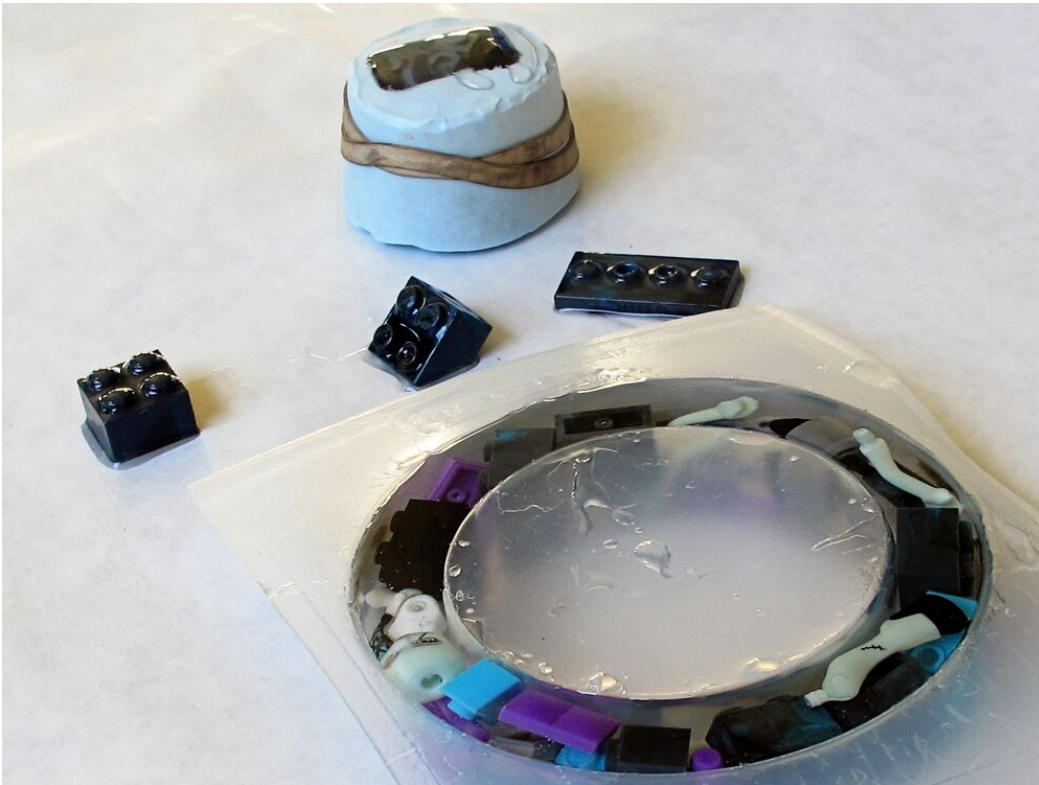
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Resin crafting. It's a TON of fun. I started out making metal jewelry only to find that I was consistently drawn to color. Once I learned I could create any color I wanted with resin, my love affair with resin began! Add to that, the possibilities of things other than colors, and I was totally smitten.

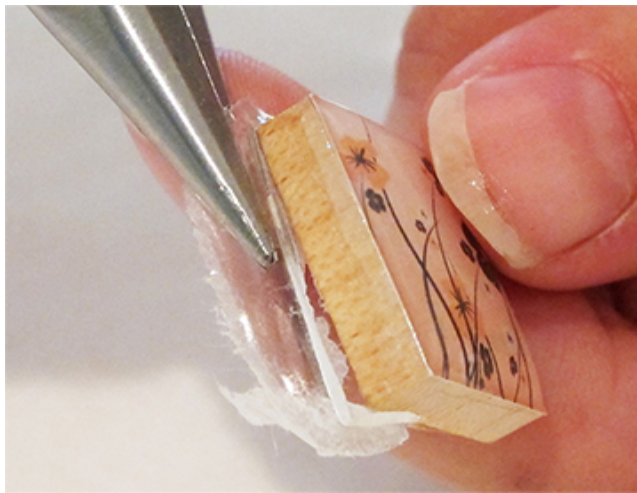
But as with any relationship, there are some rocky times. Yes, the resin has humbled me a time or two. (Okay, it's been a few more than that, but who's counting?) Once I got involved with resinobsession.com, I wanted to be sure others could have opportunities for resin success as well.

Enjoy the journey.



Before you make a purchase

1. Understand [resin vocabulary](#). The terms are very important to making sure you know everything that impacts getting the best results from using resin.
2. Learn everything you can about the resin you want to use. You will want to make sure you are using the right resin for the right project. Some resins are better suited for molds, while others are better suited for bezels, whereas some are best used for resin artwork.
3. Don't overestimate your abilities. You are not likely to be good with resin right away. Start small. Gain skills and knowledge.



4. Prepare yourself for mistakes. I made them. Lots of them. They are the best learning opportunities you will have about resin.



Time to cast the resin

5. Understand the directions COMPLETELY before you get started. You need to know mixing ratios, minimum and maximum mixing amounts, pot time, demold time, cure time and best uses for your chosen resin.
6. Give yourself twice the amount of time you think you will need to work with the resin. If you are a beginner, make that three times. You don't want to rush yourself because that will likely lead to mistakes.
7. Pick a spot to craft with resin where your projects can remain undisturbed for long periods of times. It may even get messy too.
8. In general, ideal room temperature for resin casting is around 70 to 72 F. If your room is cold, consider turning the heat up or creating a 'hot box' for your resin.

9. Wax paper is a great surface to put down before doing anything with resin. Spills can be easily wiped up and cured resin will peel away from the surface. It is inexpensive too, so if you happen to mess it up, simply throw it away.
10. If your resin containers feel cool to the touch, place them in a container of warm (not boiling hot) water for 2 to 5 minutes to warm them up. If you do this, make sure your bottles are dry before using them. You do not want to get any water in your resin.

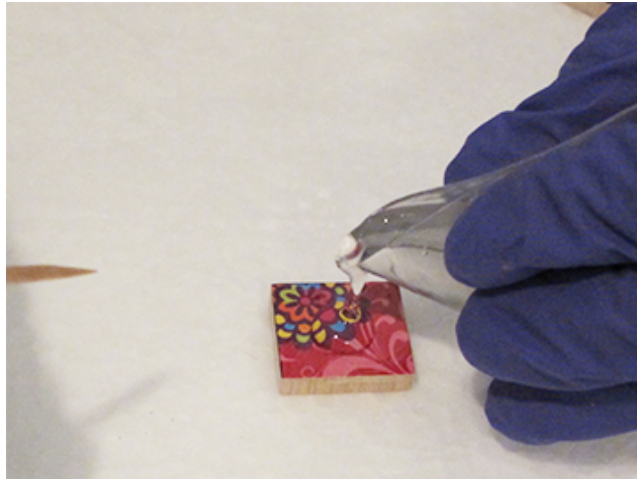


11. Measure accurately. I use graduated mixing cups EVERY TIME to measure my resin.
12. Mix thoroughly. My rule is to mix for 10 percent of the resin's pot time while scraping the sides of the cup and mixing utensil a minimum of three times during the process.
13. Don't assume you can add anything into resin and it will cure. Resin hates moisture amongst other things.
14. Keep a journal. Write down everything about what you did with your process. It will be helpful when you go to finish your projects later to know what you did and did not do so you can do it (or avoid it!) next time.



Casting tips

15. Once you start mixing your resin, it is 'use it or lose it'. Make sure everything is ready (molds, supplies, etc.) You cannot afford to waste time.
16. If you are wondering if you should coat something before adding it to resin, ask yourself whether getting the item wet with water would affect the appearance. If the answer is yes, then you need to seal it.
17. For [hard plastic mixing cups](#) (like the ones sold on [resinobsession.com](#)), if you wipe them out with acetone while the cups are still wet, you can easily reuse them another time.



18. If you are using a small plastic cup for your resin, squeeze it together at the top to form a spout. This spout will help you control your pour.
19. You can also pour from your spout onto a toothpick to help guide your resin to your casting surface.
20. If you want to see how your resin is curing without touching what you have poured, keep a little bit of resin in your mixing cup and hold it with your project while it cures. You can check on the resin in the cup without disturbing your casting.



Save money

21. Have a good place to store your resin. It doesn't like heat, direct sunlight or temperature swings. You don't want to shorten the life of your resin and have to throw it out prematurely because it has started to yellow or even worse -- won't cure.
22. As a cheap way to get started with tools, you can check your local pharmacy or beauty supply store to get an inexpensive manicure/pedicure tool kit. Some of those will have 'sanding' attachments which are helpful in finishing your castings.
23. If you want to try your hand working with silicone molds without spending a lot of money, check your local dollar store. You can usually find inexpensive silicone ice cube trays to try as molds.
24. A hairdryer can make an inexpensive heat gun, but use it on low airflow. The force of the air may blow your resin out of the mold or bezel.
25. Cups and mixing items designated for medical use are good quality for resin crafting. Know anyone in the medical field that throws out supplies on a regular basis?

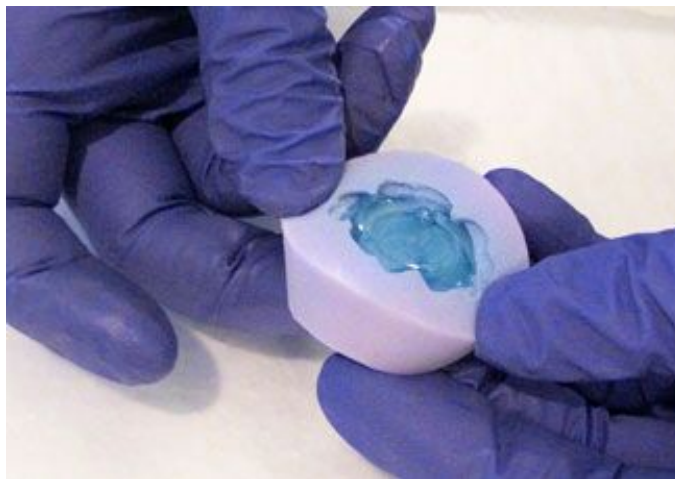


26. I hate wasting resin. I always have a series of 'experiments' ready to go whenever I have any leftover resin. For example, I will try including new liquid or powder colors in leftover resin to see how well they work together.



Ensure success

27. Even after making resin jewelry for years, bubbles continue to be my number one nemesis. I have found that using a bright LED light helps me to see bubbles better.
28. Sometimes trapped bubbles can come up to the surface later. Be sure to check your casting approximately 20 to 30 minutes after pouring (depending on your pot time) for any additional bubbles.
29. If you are trying to dome resin, add a little bit of resin, and then let it spread. This will (hopefully) keep you from adding too much and it running over the edge.



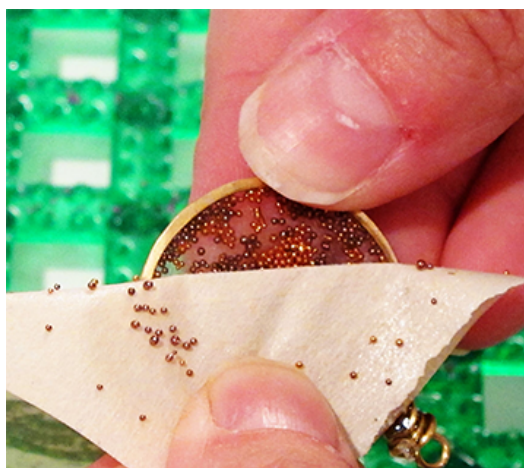
30. With intricate silicone molds, it is easy for bubbles to get trapped while you are pouring. Pour a bit of resin, then pick up the mold. Twist it a bit, as you would if you were trying to demold it. This will allow trapped bubbles to come to the surface.
31. When adding inclusions, dip them in resin first before adding to your casting. This will break the surface tension and make it less likely you will introduce bubbles.

32. Put inclusions into resin on an angle. This will help you avoid trapping bubbles underneath them that can escape later and ruin your casting.
33. Make sure everything you plan to cast is compatible with one another. For example, epoxy resins tend to take liquid colorants well, while polyurethane resins generally only work well with liquid pigments designed specifically for them. If you have questions, contact the resin manufacturer. They can comment as to what works well with their product.



Favorite resin tricks

34. Use a heat gun or embossing tool to pop bubbles. They produce a lot of heat without a lot of air force.



35. Want to fill an open backed bezel with resin? Place it firmly onto good quality packing or masking tape. Fill the bezel with resin. Once it has cured, you can peel away the tape.
36. Use open backed items such as cookie cutters, placed onto masking tape and sealed around the edge, as molds. Demold the resin before it has completely cured and let rest to finish curing. It will retain its shape.
37. Cast resin into silicone molds and remove before completely cured. It will be bendable and can be molded into three dimensional shapes.
38. Use baby powder in a silicone mold before casting resin. It releases the surface tension of the silicone rubber eliminating air bubbles.
39. Warm up molds with a heat gun before casting resin. It will help the resin cure faster.
40. A crème brulee torch can be used to go over resin to pop bubbles. (Use caution when using a flame, especially indoors.)
41. Learn when the soft cure time (when the resin is rubbery) of your resin happens. You can peel drips off the sides or bottom of your pieces before they are totally cured.



Clean up

- 42. Baby wipes are great to get resin off your skin should you accidentally spill some.
- 43. Acetone or denatured alcohol plus paper towels are good for getting wet resin off surfaces. (Be sure to wear gloves when doing this.)



- 44. When using a plastic mixing container, you don't need to clean the leftover resin with solvents afterwards. Leave it to sit overnight with the mixing stick standing up in the container. The next day, simply pull the cured resin mass out using the stick. The whole mass will come out like a skin, leaving the container clean and ready for use again.
- 45. Have cured resin on a surface you want to remove? Place boiling hot water on an old towel or rag and place it over the resin, then wait a few minutes. Use a putty knife or other flat tool to gently get up under the resin and pop it off. (Make sure the surface is hard, one that water will not damage.)



Resin Safety

- 46. Make yourself aware of all safety precautions when using resin. At a minimum, you will need to wear gloves, protective clothing and work in a well ventilated environment.
- 47. Familiarize yourself with the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) of the resins you are using. They will share the proper safety precautions you need to take when working with that specific product.
- 48. Items from your kitchen can be helpful in the making resin crafts, just be sure not to use them for food again.
- 49. If you notice any irritations when working with resin, please stop using it and consult your physician.

And my last best tip?



- 50. When something goes wrong, don't blame it on the resin. It is almost always an operator error. Get help, either from us, or the manufacturer.

Getting started with resin? Then you will want to be sure to read our [beginner tips](#).

Already tried resin and having a few problems? We have [troubleshooting tips](#) as well.

And as always, we are happy to answer your questions. Be sure to check out our [resin forum](#) where a community of resin crafters is ready to help you.

I hope you look forward to receiving more useful tips, advice and inspiration in your inbox to help you be a better resin crafter.

Happy Crafting!

Katherine

