

# It's All About Color!

## Colored Pencil on Glass

Beth Williams



In this tutorial, I will explore alternative methods of coloring glass to create color blends, gradients, and patterns.

### What You Need

#### Texturing Tools

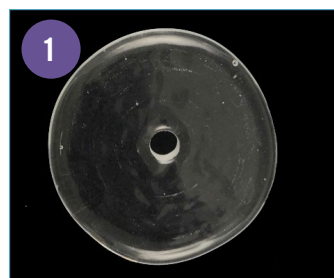
- Flex shaft (or Dremel)
- Diamond bits (different shapes for different textures)

#### Coloring Tools

- Prismacolor Pencils (best for high-wax content)
- Soft toothbrushes (one per color or gradient tone)
- Finishing and sealing tools and supplies:
- Coffee warmer or hot plate
- Spray varnish for final sealing

### Process to Prepare Glass for Coloring:

1. Create your blank (it's easiest to get an overall even texture if one side is as smooth as possible):



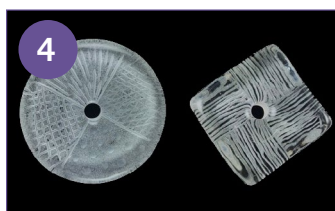
2. Using a diamond bit, grind one surface evenly all over so no shiny spots show; alternatively you can chemical etch or tumble your pieces.



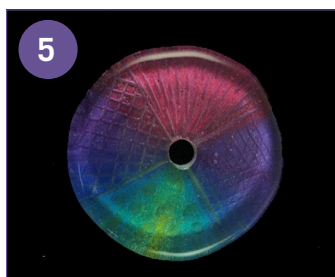
tutorial



3. Decide on the texture wanted and use appropriate diamond bits to cut in as desired. Keep the glass and diamond bit wet when working and wear safety glasses.



4. Once you have your texture done, use a stiff toothbrush to scrub the piece well; be sure any slurry is cleaned out. Dry the piece well before coloring.

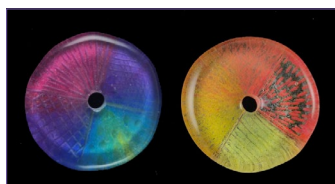


5. Now the fun starts! Start lightly, laying in color in the pattern or gradient with your pencils, and burnishing with a soft toothbrush for each color as you go.



6. Once the first layer of color is laid down, turn the coffee warmer on and put the piece on it, COLORED SIDE UP, for a couple of minutes. This melts the wax from the pencil and sets it into the texture. You'll see it develop a slightly matte finish; after a couple of minutes, very carefully remove from the heat and let it cool down a bit then burnish again with your brushes.

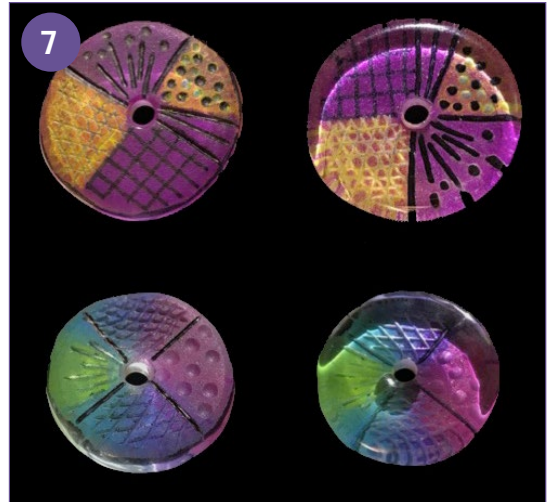
You can see here where the color has been burnished into the texture and crevices. At this point you can decide to add more color, or you can seal it if you're happy with it.



"Exploring the qualities of glass and color are what drive my work; using light and transparency in surprising ways along with layering color on color helps me to create unusual contemporary beads and jewelry. Inspiration comes from my gardens, the ever-changing light on the ocean, the seascapes that surround me... anywhere colors collide in nature."

—Beth Williams

7. You can also add details with an ultra-fine permanent marker before sealing (or, lay the lines in first and then color).

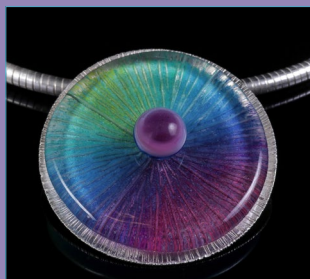


8. Use 2-3 light coats of spray fixative to seal the colored pencil, letting the fixative dry between coats. I prefer a matte finish, so I use the matte version of the spray.



A video of the complete process (speeded up) can be seen [here](#):

Beth Williams has been designing and making jewelry for more than 35 years, first in metals and then incorporating handmade glass. Creating her own glass beads for more than 25 years has given her the opportunity to customize each piece she makes. Although some may be similar in feeling, each is unique to its wearer.



**Colored Pencil on Glass Necklace, which Beth donated to the ISGB fundraising live auction at the Gathering in April, 2019.**

Beth has been a member of ISGB since it was the Society of Glass Beadmakers and has presented or participated in panel discussions at the

Gathering several times over the years. In her 2019 Gathering presentation, she challenged ISGB members to try the Colored Pencil on Glass technique at home and bring a piece of jewelry made with the technique to the Gathering in 2020. She is offering a prize made specifically for this project to one person at the Gathering 2020. The winner will be chosen randomly from all the pieces that Beth sees at the Gathering 2020. To enter, show Beth your Colored Pencil on Glass piece at the Gathering!

Website: [www.BethWilliams.com](http://www.BethWilliams.com)



**Beth Williams working in her Gloucester, Mass., studio.**



*Glass Bead Evolution* extended Beth's challenge to our readers in issue 7.2. Here are the CPG photos submitted by readers. Thanks so much for sending in your photos!



Bright colorful series made by Susan Otto-Bain of Calido Art Glass



Pansy made by Martha Giberson



Patty Lakinsmith  
Top left: Heart ring charms  
Top right: Bullet pendant, white base under clear  
Bottom left: Ginkgo leaf headpins  
Bottom right: Charms