

ID Me

Remember how popular those identification (aka ID) bracelets were back in the day? Every kid had one. They normally were square and all looked the same except for your name or initials that were engraved on them. This ID Me bracelet (see Figure 7.56) spins off from this trendy jewelry piece from the past, but it is updated with the help of metal clay. You will use metal clay techniques for cutting clay, stamping with metal alphabet stamps, and then oxidizing with Silver Black. Then use your jewelry skills to connect jump rings, add a beaded dangle, and fabricate a little wrapped hook.



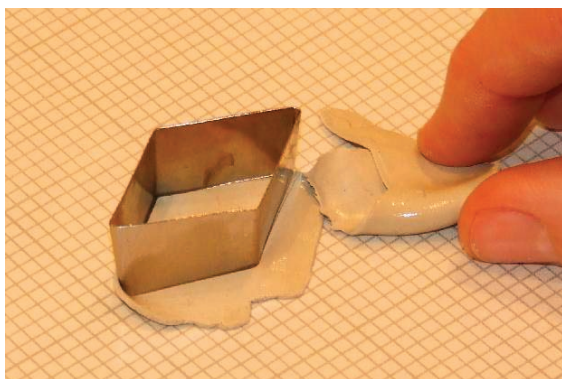
Figure 7.56

Personalize your metal clay with alphabet stamps.

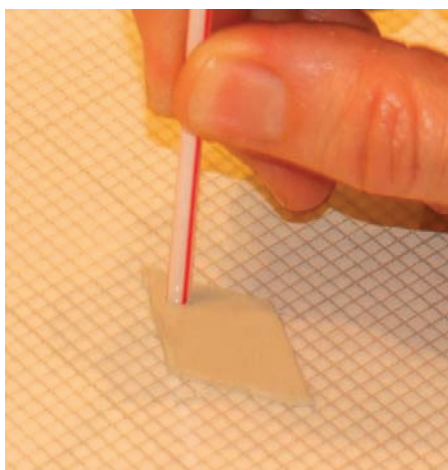
You will need the following supplies and materials:

- ▶ **Low-fire metal clay**
- ▶ **Small straw**
- ▶ **Metal alphabet stamps**
- ▶ **Diamond-shaped metal cutter**
1½ × ¾ inches
- ▶ **1 10x8mm blue crystal teardrop bead**
- ▶ **3 5mm 20-gauge sterling jump rings**
- ▶ **2 inches of 21-gauge, half-hard sterling wire**
- ▶ **2 inches of 22-gauge, dead-soft sterling wire**
- ▶ **2 2¼ inch long pieces of medium-weight sterling chain**
- ▶ **Round-nosed pliers**
- ▶ **2 chain-nosed pliers**
- ▶ **Wire cutters**
- ▶ **Nylon-nosed pliers**
- ▶ **Silver Black**
- ▶ **Polishing cloth**

1. Begin by rolling out your clay four cards thick and using a diamond-shaped metal cutter to cut out your clay piece as shown in Figure 7.57.
2. Next, using a small drinking straw, cut out holes on both ends of the clay piece, as demonstrated in Figure 7.58.

**Figure 7.57**

Make the metal clay section first using a diamond-shaped cutter.

**Figure 7.58**

Add holes to both ends of the diamond piece.

3. Select the alphabet stamps you need depending on your initials. I used TJP to represent my first, middle, and last name. As shown in Figure 7.59, stamp in the middle initial in the middle of the metal clay piece first. This will help make sure you have room for the other two. Then stamp the first initial right before and a little higher up than the middle initial, and do the same with the last initial, only position a little further down. Set it aside to dry.

**Figure 7.59**

Determine where you will place the letters on your piece before you start stamping.

4. Once the piece is dry, file the sides with an emery board as necessary, fire either using a hot-pot or torch, and burnish with a burnishing brush.
5. The next step requires dipping the metal piece in Silver Black. This will help the lettering to show up much more. After dipping it in the solution, take a polishing cloth and rub until you get the look that you want. Mine was very dark after dipping, so I rubbed a lot before I got the effect you see in Figure 7.60.

**Figure 7.60**

Silver Black helps bring out the lettering.

6. At this point, you are ready to start assembling the bracelet. You will need some sterling chain. The chain pictured in Figure 7.61 is “long and short” because it has oval links connected by three small round links in between them, but you can really use any kind of link-style chain for this.

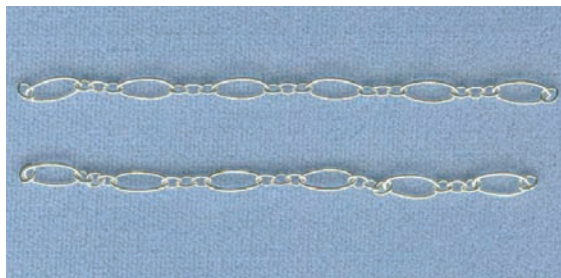


Figure 7.61

Link-style chain comes in many different varieties.

7. You also need to get your teardrop dangle bead ready. Using 22-gauge wire, make a curl head pin as pictured in Figure 7.62 (remember this is from Chapter 6), add the teardrop bead to the head pin, and make a wrapped loop at the top.



Figure 7.62

A simple crystal teardrop adds a dash of color.

8. Open one of the jump rings, slip on one end of the chain, the teardrop dangle, and connect it to one of the holes in the metal clay piece as shown in Figure 7.63. Using a pair of chain-nosed pliers in each hand, close the jump ring.



Figure 7.63

Jump rings are used to help connect the bracelet pieces.

9. Just as in step 8, use a jump ring to connect the other chain section to the other side of the metal clay piece.
10. For the clasp, attach a jump ring to one chain section, and using 21-gauge wire, make a small wrapped hook clasp making sure to attach it to the chain before wrapping it closed as shown in Figure 7.64.



Figure 7.64

Remember the wrapped hook clasp directions are available in Chapter 6.

If you'd like an ID bracelet that is a little more colorful, consider adding some bright lampwork beads to hemp or waxed linen cord as pictured in the variation project in Figure 7.65. Waxed linen cord is very easy to work with and very inexpensive. It is a favorite of those who enjoy making macramé jewelry because it holds knots really well. To appeal more to the guys out here, you could vary this same bracelet design but use earth-tone beads instead. A simple mounting knot is used to secure the waxed linen, and overhand knots keep the beads in place. Then you just tie the ends together to secure it to your wrist.

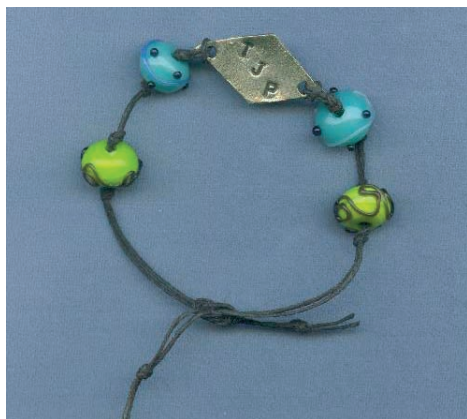


Figure 7.65

These fun lampwork beads were made by glass artist D.D. Hess.

Ribbon Beads

If you are a bead lover, then you will love the fact that you can use metal clay to make your own fine silver beads. These ribbon beads, pictured in the finished necklace in Figure 7.66, are a good place to start if you'd like to make some of your first beads, though of course, there is an infinite number of techniques to make metal clay beads. You will use the metal clay techniques of cutting with a craft knife and wrapping around a straw. While you can fire these with either a torch or hot-pot, I prefer to use a hot-pot for this project because I can fire more than one bead at a time. These beads remind me of ribbon, so I decided to string them up on some beautiful organza ribbon. But, you could combine these with any other beads of your choice as well as use other stringing media such as beading wire.



Figure 7.66

Ribbon beads are strung on organza ribbon for this easy to make feminine necklace.