



## Dolls' House | PROJECT



# Pierced candleholder

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*Make a candleholder suitable for holding a pillar-type candle.*

This 1:12 scale candleholder uses skeleton leaves to texture the inside and outside surfaces of the decorative sides. A pierced-out design adds interest to the sides. This candleholder is designed for thicker, pillar-type candles and has a contemporary feel. It is a bit fiddly to make but worth the effort.

### MATERIALS

- 15g Art Clay Silver
- 5g silver clay syringe
- Skeleton leaves
- Teflon
- Roller
- Playing cards
- 10ml measuring spoon
- Cutters
- Hand drill
- 1mm and 1.5mm drill bits
- Paintbrush
- Emery board
- Sanding pads (180 grit)
- Polishing tools
- Liver of Sulphur (optional)

1. Consider your design and the shape of the sides. This design has a square base with petal-shaped sides, textured on both sides with skeleton leaves. The square base cutter used is 13mm across and the petal shaped cutter is 23mm tall. This allows for shrinkage to fit the candle, which is 5mm across.

2. Roll out the silver clay four cards thick on a piece of oiled leather. Lightly oil the rolled-out clay and lay the skeleton leaf on the clay

with the prominent vein-side down. Firmly roll once to impress the leaf design. Cut the base out with the oiled square cutter and leave it to dry.

3. Put an oiled skeleton leaf on a piece of leather. Roll the clay four cards thick onto the leaf. Place another leaf on top of the oiled clay. Keep the central vein of the top leaf in line with the vein on the bottom leaf and roll

firmly. Cut the petal shape with the central vein down the middle.

4. Oil the outside of a 10ml measuring cup. Place the cut petal shape upright against the curve of the measuring cup, making sure the clay makes good contact all round, with the base of the shape flat on the table. This will result in a curved form for the sides as they dry. Repeat for all four sides. ➡



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5. When all the components are dry, use an emery board to refine the edges of the square base, making sure they are all really square. Use a soft sanding pad to refine the edges of the petal shape. Take care to smooth round the tip and square off the base of the petal with an emery board.

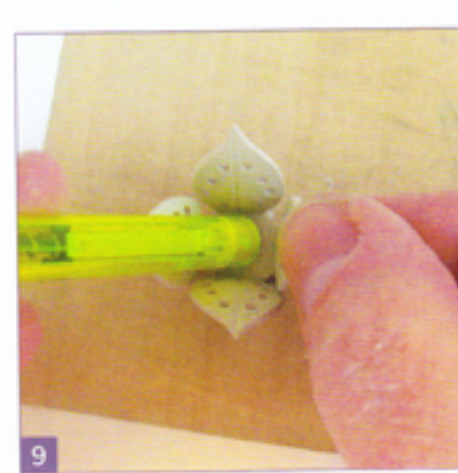
6. With a pencil, mark the places for the pierced-out elements on the petal shapes. Use a hand drill with a 1mm drill bit to make the holes and then use a larger drill bit to widen them if desired with a 1.5mm drill. Support the petal shapes from behind while you drill.

7. If the bottom of the petal shapes do not exactly fit against the edges of the base piece, mark the edges of the base with a pencil to show where they will meet and where there is excess. Mark all sides and then use an emery board to file off the corners so the sides will fit neatly.

8. Dampen one edge of the base with water and also dampen the bottom edge of the petal shape. Extrude a line of syringe-type clay onto the bottom of the petal shape and press firmly against the base piece. Clean up any excess paste that squeezes out. Put aside to dry, supporting the side with the measuring cup.

9. Repeat the process in Step 8 for all four sides. This is fiddly and sometimes requires a pencil to hold the base firmly while you stick the sides on. Clean up any excess paste underneath as necessary. Fire the piece in a kiln at 900°C for two hours, supporting the structure with a fibre blanket all round.

10. Use a steel or brass brush to give the surface a satin shine. To polish the inside parts of the piece, wrap a polishing paper around a pencil and shine up the inside. Alternatively, you can use a Dremel with a small sized polishing wheel. Oxidise with Liver of Sulphur if you want an aged look.



### TIPS

Use the side of the skeleton leaf with the most prominent veins to texture the clay.

When you drill holes in the sides, make sure the holes are not too close to the edges or you risk breaking the piece.

Ensure that the side panels are not too wide to fit around the base. If your shape

is wider than the edges, file them down slightly before drilling the holes.

### EXTRA PROJECTS

Rather than making sides which curve outwards, you could make an open box form by using straight rectangular side panels with a pierced design. Stick the sides together to form a robust box and put the candle inside this.

### RESOURCES

Art Clay Silver and syringe:  
[www.creativeglassshop.co.uk](http://www.creativeglassshop.co.uk)

Skeleton leaves:  
[www.skeleton-leaf.com](http://www.skeleton-leaf.com)

CONTACT  
[www.juliarai.co.uk](http://www.juliarai.co.uk)

