

# Day and night

This light, sparkly necklace looks equally good whether you're strolling along the beach, sightseeing or partying until dawn.

By Julia Rai

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A clay extruder is a great tool to use when you want to make your metal clay go further. It also allows you to design pieces that have unique patterns. This necklace uses less than 10g of silver clay, which makes it very cost effective, as well as light and attractive. Turn your doodles into unique jewellery with this technique!

## MATERIALS

- 10g silver clay
- Clay extruder
- 1mm drill bit
- Small amount of syringe and paste
- 2 x fine silver embeddable eyelets
- Silver chain, jumprings and clasp
- Greaseproof paper
- Clingfilm
- Teflon® sheet
- Tissue blade or sharp craft knife
- Paintbrush
- Sanding pad
- Polishing tools
- Burnisher
- Pliers

## EASY PROJECT



### STEP 1

Take some time to decide on your design. Since you'll be building it up from lengths of extruded clay, you need to think about where the joins and contact points will lie. Also consider the thickness of the lines you'll be extruding; they need to be at least 1mm thick to be strong enough for jewellery. When you've drawn your design roughly, trace it onto greaseproof paper using a thick felt-tip pen.



### STEP 2

Add water to the silver clay and knead it thoroughly to make sure it's very well hydrated. Extruded lines dry fast so have some clingfilm handy to cover the lines as soon as you've extruded them. Oil the inside of the extruder and the die, roll a lump of silver clay into a smooth ball, pop it into the extruder and extrude the whole amount onto a Teflon sheet.



### STEP 3

Cut the line a little longer than you need for the first element and cover the rest of the line with cling film to keep it moist. Gently lift the line by one end. Lay it on your pattern and using a damp paintbrush, move and manipulate it into place. Sometimes it helps to lightly damp the greaseproof paper so the lines stay in place. Cut off any excess.



### STEP 4

Build up the whole pattern, making sure joins and contact points are well stuck together with paste and then put to dry. After drying, check all the joins and reinforce them with syringe or paste if necessary, and then dry again. Drill holes for the embeddable eyelets using a 1mm drill bit, put a little syringe into the holes and push the eyelets in. Clean up excess paste and dry.



### STEP 5

Refine the surface using a sanding pad, taking off any sharp edges and tapering the ends as necessary. Depending on the finish you want, you can texture the surface using thick paste or smooth and refine it if you prefer a mirror finish. Ideally, place in a kiln and fire at 900°C for two hours for maximum strength. You could also torch-fire as long as the piece is not too big.



### STEP 6

After firing, polish the piece to obtain the finish you require. If you want a satin finish, use a brass or steel brush. A burnisher will shine the high spots of the texture after brushing. Polishing papers will give you a mirror finish. Attach jumprings and a chain to the eyelets, cutting the chain to the required length. Add a clasp and a jumpring to the chain ends.

## Designer tips

- The Makin's Professional Ultimate Clay Extruder is the best on the market - it's worth spending a bit more to get one that works well with metal clay.
- Take the time to clean out the silver clay from your extruder every time you use it. That way, it'll always be ready when you want to use it again.
- If you use other types of clay, such as bronze or copper clay, invest in an extruder specifically for these clays to avoid cross-contamination with your silver clay.

## RESOURCES

**Silver clay and embeddable eyelets:**

[www.bluebelldesignstudio.co.uk](http://www.bluebelldesignstudio.co.uk)

**Extruder:** [www.metalclay.co.uk](http://www.metalclay.co.uk)

**Chain, jumprings, clasps:**

[www.cooksongold.com](http://www.cooksongold.com)

## CONTACT

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## Extra projects

### Make earrings and charms

Use the same technique to make light matching earrings. You can make freestyle patterns for earrings or perhaps use your initials as a design. Remember to flip your pattern over when making the second earring so you have a proper matching pair. This technique is also good for making charms.

