

Julia runs the Metal Clay Academy and teaches metal clay classes around the UK. She holds the prestigious Metal Clay Masters Registry credential at level four.

Calla lilies represent elegance, charm, beauty and grace and would be a good choice for bridal jewellery as lilies are often used as wedding flowers. These earrings are quite small and use very little silver clay but you could make them larger for a more dramatic effect. Beginners will find these easy to make but you will need to work quickly!

MATERIALS

- 5g of silver metal clay
- Two fine silver eyelets
- Two Sterling silver earring wires and two jumprings
- Small paintbrush
- Clay shaper
- Pin tool or craft knife
- Sanding pads and polishing papers
- Tumble polisher or brass/steel brush
- Marabu Ceramica porcelain and ceramic paint - metallic gold

Designer tips

- Make these lilies any size you like or even make several in different sizes and combine them to make a bunch.
- These earrings are hung upside down but you could solder ear posts onto the back of the lilies and wear them facing upwards.
- If you use a texture on the outside of the earrings, keep it natural. Try using thick paste and stipple it using a finger or a stiff stencil brush for a subtle texture.

RESOURCES

Silver metal clay: www.bluebelldesignstudio.co.uk
Fine silver eyelets and earring findings: www.metalclay.co.uk
Marabu Ceramica porcelain and ceramic paint: www.artifolk.co.uk

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Calla lily elegance

These delightful earrings are simple to make and very light to wear. **By Julia Rai**



STEP 1

First make the spadix, the spike-like centre of the flowers. Take a small piece of silver clay and roll it into a sausage with a pointed end. You can use a flat piece of acrylic - like a CD case - or just roll it with your finger in the palm of your hand. You need to work quickly so the clay doesn't dry out. Make two and dry them before moving on.



STEP 2

The lily flower is formed from a wide teardrop shape. Teardrop cutters are too long and thin so cut this out using a needle tool or craft knife. Cut it freehand - it's a natural form so some individuality is fine - or make yourself a paper pattern to use. Roll out the clay three cards thick, texture if you want to and cut the shape. Do this one at a time.



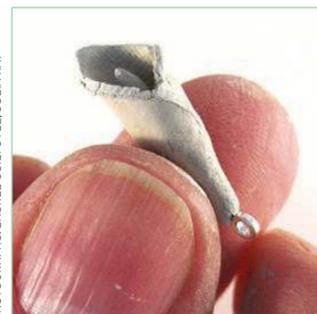
STEP 3

Don't worry if the edges of the cut shape aren't neat; you will clean these up in the dry stage. Take one of the dried spikes and put a little water on the flat end. With the point of the teardrop shape at the top, roll the edge of the teardrop halfway around the spike. The point of the spike should be visible above the rolled edge.



STEP 4

Now take the other edge of the teardrop shape and roll it over the outside of the part you've already rolled. Add some water to the part that flaps over and gently press it at the bottom of the flower so it sticks. Smooth the join with a clay shaper. Calla lilies have an open fold over so gently ease the edges of the flower outwards around the centre spadix.



STEP 5

While the clay is moist, push the 'key' part of the fine silver eyelet into the base of the flower. Leave to dry and make the other earring. After drying, use sanding pads and polishing papers to refine the edges and surfaces of the flowers. A damp paintbrush will remove small surface imperfections. Fire the clay using a torch or in the kiln on a bed of vermiculite or fibre blanket.



STEP 6

Polish using a brass brush, polishing papers or a tumble polisher. Burnish the edges of the flowers to add shine. Colour the inside of the flower using ceramic paint; I've used gold. Apply several coats to give good coverage, allowing the paint to dry completely between coats. Allow to dry for at least four hours and bake according to the manufacturer's instructions. Add a jumpring and ear wires.

Extra project Make a pendant

The lily shape is perfect for a pendant to match the earrings, hung upside down and just using a larger fine silver eyelet for one lily. Or paste several lilies together to make an eye-catching pendant for a wedding. Add a bail on the back to hang the pendant rather than an eyelet.



fashion inspiration



Tan handbag, £19.99, www.a-shu.co.uk

Silver bracelet, £135, www.forherfromyou.co.uk

Platform wedges, £29.99, www.pilotfashion.com

