

How To Stained Glass

by Hillary Johnson

Some of the more common stained glass projects are windows, lamps and sun-catchers, but the oft and unjustly overlooked projects range from kaleidoscopes to necklaces. Unlike wood, plaster, or sheet rock, for which the tools are easily attainable, tools for stained glass are only available at specialized stores. It's a good idea for beginners to begin in a studio. They'll have all the tools you need, and instructors on how to use them. Kelly Glass, Venturella, and Frank Close Studios are all good places to start in New York.

1. **Draw a pattern for your project, or find one in a book.**
2. **Pick your palate. Whereas painters mix paints to color their artwork, stained glass artists select from all sorts of beautiful glass.**
3. **Cut a copy of your pattern, and paste it onto the glass.**
4. **In order to put something beautiful together, you must first cut it apart. Score the glass in straight or curved lines and break it apart.**
5. **Grind the edges to make them smooth, and then clean the piece well to get off all the extra chips and powder. Remove the pattern piece from the surface.**
6. **Take a special sticky foil (it's not your average Reynolds Wrap) and wrap it carefully around the edges of each piece of cut glass. Pressing it securely is important, because the soldering metal that holds the glass together sticks to this foil and not to the glass.**
7. **Assemble the foiled pieces like a puzzle. Put flux along the lines between the pieces.**
8. **Solder is a metal that, once heated to several hundred degrees, is spread with a soldering iron between pieces of glass to fuse them together. Solder both sides of your piece.**
9. **Patina is a chemical that instantly oxidizes the metal- which takes the glass from shiny silver to a tarnished black. Artists do this so people focus on the glass and not the shiny metal. Spread patina over all the soldered joints.**
10. **Clean it again, polish, then etch in your signature if so inclined.**

Voilà!