

# Simply *Whimsical* FINE SILVER RING

BY TES SHEA



This ring can be made in one of two ways. The first method is to create the embellishments on the 4-inch-by-4-inch non-stick surface and then attach them to the ring liner with one of the following: Art Clay Silver Paste, Art Clay Silver Overlay Paste, or Art Clay Silver Oil Paste. The ring liner does not need to be dried, so all embellishments can be created first

and then placed on the ring liner after partially drying them.

Secondly, the decorations or embellishments can be done by spreading Art Clay Syringe Paste directly onto the ring liner, but save this direct syringe thought for another day. Today we'll conquer the first method: creating the embellishments first and then adding them to the ring liner.



**Step 1** Attach the nonstick ring liner to the ring mandrel with tape. Slide the ring liner onto the mandrel and coat the ring with a fine layer of Art Clay Silver Oil Paste, Art Clay Silver Overlay Paste, or Art Clay Silver Paste. I used the Art Clay Silver Oil Paste, but the other pastes work just as well. Set the piece aside to let the paste become slightly tacky. (Photo: Step 1)



Step 1

**Step 2** Using the Art Clay Silver Syringe Type on a 4-inch-by-4-inch nonstick mat, create the shapes you will be attaching to your ring liner. This is the time to experiment with syringe type and the various nozzles. Let your imagination guide you. Make squiggles, shapes, dots, flowers, etc. Any embellishments you don't use can be saved for other projects or added back into your Art Clay Silver Paste pot to be recycled into another creation.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

Art Clay Silver Syringe Type with one or more syringe tips  
 Art Clay Silver Paste, Art Clay Silver Overlay Paste, or Art Clay Silver Oil Paste  
 Pure Silver scored Ring Liner from Metal Clay Findings in your desired size  
 Ring mandrel or dowel the size of the ring, preferable one with a stand  
 Tape  
 Nonstick liner for ring mandrel  
 4" x 4" nonstick surface  
 Work surface (such as plastic placemat)  
 Art brush or small paintbrush  
 Water  
 Cup  
 Cosmetic sponges, baby wipes, polishing papers, or sandpapers (600-2,000 grit)  
 Tweezers  
 Craft knife or tissue blade  
 Kiln or torch, depending on the type of paste (always follow package firing directions)  
 Stainless steel or brass wire brush

### Miscellaneous:

Agate burnisher or tumbler (optional)  
 Liver of Sulfur (optional)

### Lesson Plan Objectives

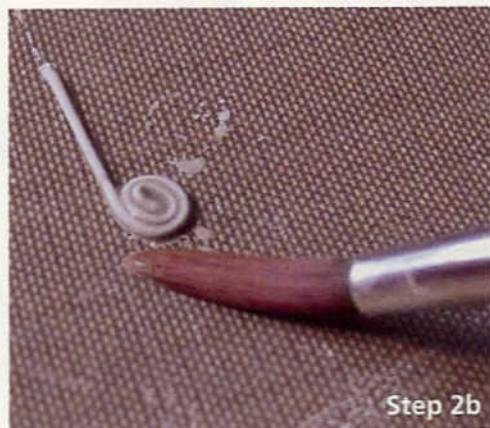
- Create a perfectly sized ring using ring liners as a base
- Learn to use Syringe Type to create fanciful and unique decorations to be used as embellishments

**Try this:** Draw a line with the Syringe Paste, then using a damp (not wet) paintbrush, manipulate the clay into a perfect curl. (Photos: Step 2a and Step 2b)

Set your decorations aside to dry a bit. You want to be able to pick them up with your tweezers without distorting the shapes. (Photo: Step 2c)



Step 2a



Step 2b



Step 2c





Step 3



Step 5



Step 6

**Step 3** Attach your embellishments to the ring liner using an incredibly thick—though not sloppy—layer of paste. The ring liner is already the correct thickness, so the thickness of your embellishments is not a factor. Be careful when attaching your decorations to prevent cracking or separation as the clay shrinks. If you make long lines, you'll need them to be only partly dry, so they can follow the curve of the ring. If they become too dry, give them a quick spritz of water. The embellishments are at risk of sliding around if the paste is too wet. Make certain your embellishments make complete contact with the ring liner. (Photo: Step 3)

**Step 4** Set the ring aside to dry completely. This is very important to the handling and firing of a piece. Trying to finish a piece that is not yet dry can result in damage to your design, and more work in reshaping it. Trying to fire a piece that is still moist inside results in little crackles and holes where that stubborn moisture has become steam and blown out, just like the water in a popcorn kernel.

**Step 5** You will want to clean up any "pokey bits" (new technical term) with a damp cosmetic sponge, baby wipe, dry sandpapers or any other prefire finishing technique you prefer. For these rings I used sandpaper in 600, 1,200 and 2,000 grit in order to make all of the embellishments the same height and to give the ring a luster finish when completed. (Photo: Step 5)

**Step 6** Fire the piece accordingly, based on the paste you have chosen to use. If using oil paste, your ring needs to be fired at 1,472 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes. If using overlay paste or regular paste, the piece can be fired at 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes. Also, if you used regular paste, torch firing is an option, holding the piece at an orange glow for a minimum of 3 minutes. Remember your beautiful creation should be supported during the firing stage to prevent distortion. Nestling the piece into fiber blanket, or building a fiber blanket hill for the ring to "ride," works well in the kiln. Lay the ring flat to torch. After firing, allow the ring to cool. (Photo: Step 6)

**Step 7** The fired ring will appear to be white. Now is the time to use your brush and your burnisher, and a little elbow grease. Brush the ring with a stainless steel or brass brush, creating a matte finish. If desired, burnish the ring with an agate burnisher or tumble the ring to achieve a shinier effect. If you choose the burnisher route, you will





Step 7a

have to work at bringing out all of the beauty of your ring, but it will be well worth it. However, if you are fortunate enough to have a tumbler, add the ring to your tumbler with a few drops of dishwashing detergent and tumble away for a couple of hours. (Photos: Step 7a and Step 7b)

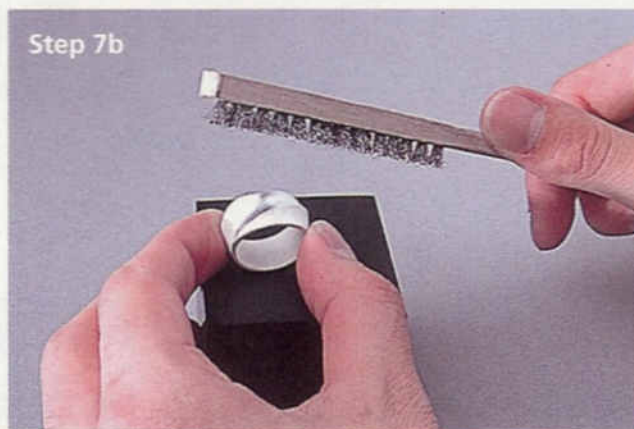
**Step 8** If you would like to increase the color or contrast of the design, use Liver of Sulfur patina on the ring (add a fingernail-size chunk of the Liver of Sulfur to eight ounces of very hot water, dip in your piece until you get the color you want, then polish away to reveal shiny silver on the hills and contrast in the valleys).

Wear your ring and enjoy its whimsical elegance. Tell everyone how you made it yourself! *FC*

### About This Lesson

This is a wonderful project for any artist, but especially fantastic for someone just beginning to work with rings. Thanks to the creative minds of Metal Clay Findings ([www.metalclayfindings.com](http://www.metalclayfindings.com)) it is finally possible for a silver clay beginner to fashion a trendy fine-silver ring.

For more information please contact Tes Shea at (619) 723-8495, visit [www.GBU-Art.com](http://www.GBU-Art.com), or e-mail [ArtClayCoach@gmail.com](mailto:ArtClayCoach@gmail.com). Tes is a certified Art Clay World, USA instructor and a member of the Art Clay Society. She is currently teaching for the City of Santee Recreation Department. You can find her scheduled classes by visiting [www.ci.santee.ca.us](http://www.ci.santee.ca.us) Recreation Services page.



Step 7b

