

# Cobalt Blue Balloon Flower Cane Lesson

by Darlene Kulczycki



## Materials Needed:

- Flower Petals: Two 2 oz packages of each for the Petals (not the center) Fimo Soft Brilliant Blue #33, and Sculpey White #001 (or Fimo Soft #0 White)
- Center of Cane: Fimo Soft Lime #50 (or Sculpey Lime #521), Sculpey White #001 (or Fimo Soft #0 White) and Fimo Soft #10 Lemon (or Sculpey Lemon #573)
- Tissue Blade (Keep the tissue blade clean at all times)
- Needle Tool
- Ruler
- Marx-It (optional)
- pasta machine (necessary)

(Clay referenced in parenthesis above are optional choices, but not the ones I used for my cane.)

## STEP 1:

Prepare or condition the clay and set aside (put in a clean container between wax paper).



## STEP 2:

Center Skinner Log: Skinner blend the lime green and white 15-20 times until you have an even gradation.

Make a Skinner blend log using lime green and white. Wrap one thin layer of the lime green (#4 or #5 setting) around the lime green log, seam the edge. Reduce the lime green Skinner log to a length that will produce six equal pieces.

Using a small portion of lemon/yellow clay, roll a small snake the same length of the six equal lime green Skinner log pieces. Adjust the size of the center so that all of the six pieces of the lime green fit nicely around the lemon/yellow center.

Packing the center: Take the left over pieces from the lime green Skinner log. Be sure the color is similar to the inside of the petals (add small amounts of lime green or white to adjust the color). Roll into a medium snake and cut into quarters. Fill the gaps (using the method shown below on the completed flower), and wrap a final layer of light lime green around the entire lime green center. Set aside. Later you will reduce the center to accommodate the flower petals.



You may substitute any center design you wish: jelly roll, solid color, single Skinner blend log, etc.

## STEP 3:

Petal Skinner Log: Skinner blend Fimo Soft brilliant blue and Sculpey white, blending 15-20 times until the colors are evenly graded.

Roll the log smooth, but keep it thick in diameter.

Add one layer/wrap of brilliant blue to the log (pasta machine #4 or 5 setting).

Put the petal log in the freezer for five minutes,



then trim off the ends. Reserve the end pieces for later.

#### STEP 4:

Using a ruler, find the center of the Skinner petal log, then very lightly mark it with your tissue blade.

Use the Marx-it tool or a ruler to mark five evenly spaced lines on the log, but not too close to the edges. With your tissue blade, cut slightly into the log, keeping the center point referenced.



#### STEP 5:

Freeze the petal Skinner log for five to ten minutes until it is fairly firm.

Begin slicing with your tissue blade, starting with the middle line, and working your way to the outer marks, slicing as straight as possible through the entire log.

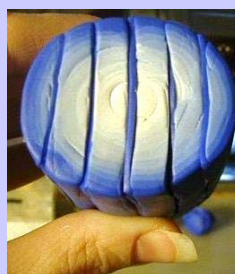
Keep the log standing while you make all five of these cuts.



#### STEP 6:

With the pasta machine on a #5- #6 setting, run a layer of the Fimo Soft brilliant blue through.

Cut the pieces to fit in between the layers you just sliced on the petal Skinner log.



#### STEP 7:

Again, keeping the pasta machine setting on #5- #6, run the white clay through and set aside.

Using the needle tool, make random indentations into one side of the petal Skinner log. That will become the center of the petals.

Cut the white clay the length of the petal log and about half the diameter. Begin pressing some of the white clay into the grooves or indentations you made earlier, using your needle tool.

Trim off the excess white clay.



#### STEP 8:

Using the scrap blue clay you set aside from the petal Skinner log, mix it together thoroughly to produce a medium light colored blue.

Set the pasta machine to #5-6 and run this blue clay through.

Use this to wrap around the petal log, leaving the white area open (not covered).



### STEP 9:

Reduce the petal log to about 9.5 or 10 inches, yielding five even pieces after cutting away the end waste. Shape these five pieces into a petal shape

NOTE: Do not make the white part pointed, that is to be placed in the center of the cane.

Piece the five petals around the center cane you set aside. Reduce the center cane to fit properly.



### STEP 10:

Packing the Cane: Set the pasta machine on #5, run some white through. This will be used as a wrap around all the petals.

Press in between the petals carefully, using the needle tool, trim off excess white, and seam together.

Make a ball of white and roll it into a log, at least the length of the petal cane.

Cut the white log into quarters lengthwise, and put each quarter into one of the gaps. Repeat once more for the last gap. Make sure the petals aren't being crushed or distorted.

Set the pasta machine to #1, run more white through, and continue to fill in the gaps until the cane is quite level (with the tips of the petals barely exposed).

Pack each section slightly to be sure there are NO gaps remaining. Fill in any gaps if necessary. Run one more layer of white (#4 or 5 setting) through the pasta machine and use this to wrap around the entire flower, trim and seam together.



### STEP 11:

Final Layer: Make sure the cane is shaped well (rounded) before this layer is applied. Gently rock the cane on your work surface under the palm of your hand until it is well rounded.

Set the pasta machine on #4 or #5 setting, run some Fimo Soft brilliant blue through. Wrap this around the cane, trim and seam together.



### STEP 12:

Begin reducing the cane (**do not** twist or roll it to reduce it completely). You only need to roll it occasionally to smooth the cane.

Once it has been reduced pretty well, and the cane is packed tightly, put it into the freezer for 5-10 minutes.

Then cut it in half and admire your canework.



You may choose different clay color combinations for this project to produce many different flowers. Some people prefer different brands of polymer clay. Because the brands vary in firmness, each will require a different amount of freezing time before slicing.