

# YOU'VE GOT QUESTIONS, WE'VE GOT ANSWERS!

## BY LISA PAVELKA



Dear Lisa,

I am trying to match a pink in my daughter's bedroom fabric and am failing miserably. I have done some research on color theory for painting and can't seem to relate the standard names (burnt umber, cadmium yellow, etc) to the available polymer clay colors. Are there any available sources for polymer clay color theory or should I just keep experimenting?

Helen Dauchess  
Richmond, VA

Dear Helen:

Actually, the Premo Sculpey line has several colors devoted to the traditional painter's pallet such as the burnt umber, and cadmium yellow you spoke of, in addition to zinc yellow, raw sienna, cadmium red, alizarin crimson, and ultramarine blue.

American Art Clay Company has a terrific color mixing guide (for use with the Fimo line) that you may find useful. You can contact them at: 4717 W. 16th St, Indianapolis, IN 46222, (317) 244-6871.

As far as color theory and clay goes, Nan Roche has a very helpful chapter on color theory and mixing in her book, *The New Clay*, published by Flower Valley Press.

In addition, Barbara McGuire also devotes considerable attention to color theory and mixing in her book, *Foundations in Polymer Clay*, published by Krause.

I know that several polymer clay artists around the country are spending a considerable amount of time devoted to studying color theory as it applies to polymer clay. We can only hope that there may some day be a publication devoted solely to polymer clay and color theory.

In the meantime, continue to experiment. The biggest trick is to either find or blend a pink in the correct tonal range. Once you've done that, you can easily match the color you desire by either lightening it by the addition of white clay, or toning it down by adding more pink or red. As you experiment, be sure to keep notes. When I'm trying to custom match or blend a color, I write a "recipe," specifying the ratios of colors I use on the back of a baked sample. Good luck!



Dear Lisa,

Hi. I have a question that I hope you have an answer for. I presently use a vibrating tumbler to sand my bead. I use Lortone grit, which is great for first (comparable to 400 grit-wet/dry sandpaper), and a second grit which is comparable to 800 grit-wet/dry sandpaper. But, the final polish I use, bleaches my bead. Do you know of any tumbler grit that I can use that won't bleach my clay, and is comparable to sanding at 1000 to 1500 grit-wet/dry sandpaper? I would really appreciate any help. Thank you very much!

Sarah Moore

Dear Sarah:

I don't use a tumbler myself for polishing my work, but I'm aware that many people find this an attractive alternative to the tedious and sometimes painful task of hand sanding. You didn't specifically mention the other grits you've been using after the Lortone.

I spoke with Elise Winters, who is known for her pioneering efforts in using a tumbler for polishing. She explained that the problem you are experiencing is actually the result of waxes in the grits becoming embedded in the clay.

She encountered this very same problem and found that lining the tumbler with a polishing paper called "Micron Finishing Papers" actually gave better results. This paper can also be used by hand.

It is available from the Rio Grand Tools Catalog. You can contact them at 800-545-6566 for more information.

Elise has published the complete results of her research on tumbler polishing in an article that can be found in the March/April 1997 issue of *Jewelry Crafts*.

I hope this helps.



Dear Lisa:

I just got turned on to this wonderful stuff, and can't find books or tools locally. Any suggestions as to where I could get some catalogs? Please advise. Thanks!

Diane Tabbott

Dear Diane:

You're in luck. There is a myriad of resources, both on-line and accessible by phone and mail order. Rather than list a full compendium of those resources, I've listed several reliable resources that I'm familiar with in alphabetical order. You will have to inquire with each individual company regarding whether or not they offer a catalog. The good thing is that many resources have complete on-line catalogs, complete with color product photos. This will eliminate that dreadful waiting period we often endure while waiting for a printed catalog in the mail. Don't you just love instant gratification? Happy shopping!

Clay Factory  
750 Citracado Pkwy, #21  
Escondido, CA 92029  
877-SCULPEY  
[www.clayfactoryinc.com](http://www.clayfactoryinc.com)

Polymer Clay Express  
PO Box 13017  
13017 Wisteria Dr.  
Germantown, MD 20874  
800-844-0138  
[www.polymerclayexpress.com](http://www.polymerclayexpress.com)

Prairie Craft  
800-779-0615  
[www.prairiecraft.com](http://www.prairiecraft.com)

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18476 Natchez Ave.  
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Yours in Clay,

Lisa

