

You will need:

- 2 oz or more white
- 2 oz or more color
- Nublade or tissue blade
- Pasta machine (or rolling pin/dowel coupled with your own strength and precision)
- measuring devise (ruler, tape measure, etc.)

1. Begin with two blocks of clay of the same dimensions, one white, one a color of your choice. They don't have to be pre-conditioned.

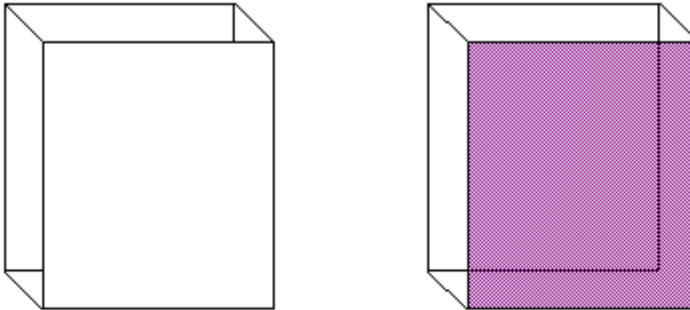


Figure One

2. Next, cut each block in half on the diagonal. If you wish to have the original white and the original color on either end of your stack, then cut them according to figure 3 below.

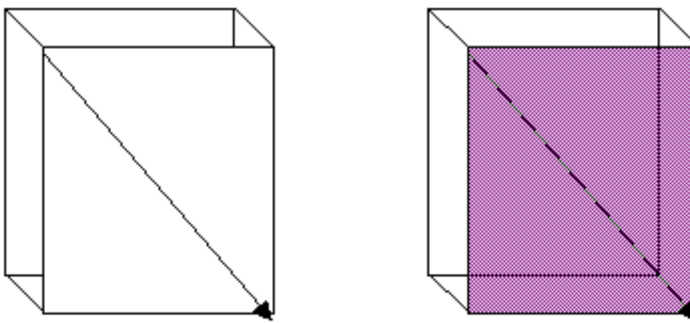


Figure Two: Diagonal Cuts

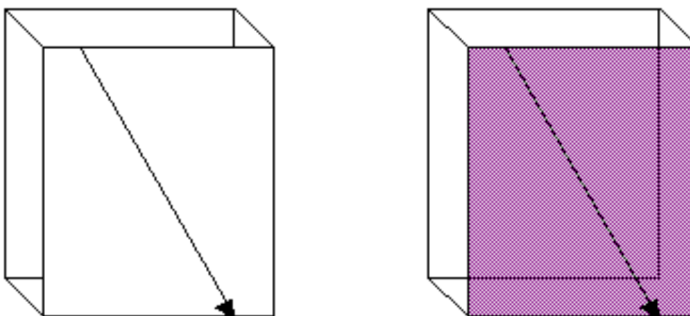


Figure Three: Skinner-style cut

3. Reassemble the blocks with half color, half white so that you achieve two blocks of the original dimensions. You can choose to blend both blocks, or not.

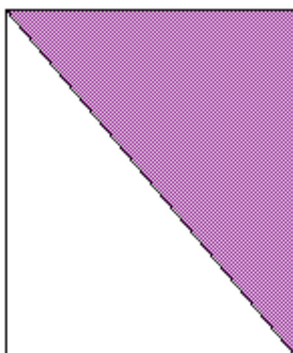


Figure Four

4. Cut the block into eight equal lengths on the long side. I recommend using a measuring device for this part. After you've measured and marked both ends, you can cut up your block. (You can also "eyeball" it, making the first cut down the center.)

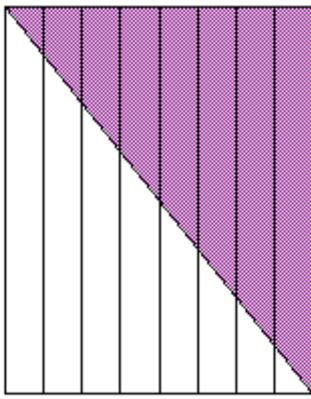


Figure Five

Then, cut this half again, and each of these in half again. Repeat with the other half of the block.) Now you will note that you have eight thin blocks of clay with varying amounts of white and color. (Example: if you started with a block of clay that measured 2" across by 2.5" long, you'll end up with eight narrow blocks of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " by 2.5"). Now you can condition each of these blocks separately.

5. To make a gradient stack, roll each color into a sheet, attempting to achieve similar dimensions with each shade. Starting with the darkest color, stack your sheets with successively lighter colors, rolling over each sheet with a brayer, until you have all eight colors in your stack. Roll over the stack with a brayer a final time to remove air pockets. Trim the stack and it's ready to use.

**Variations:**

- Use a color of your choice and gray or black for blending to get shades rather than tints.
- Use two or more complementary colors (e.g. ultramarine blue and fuchsia) for a different effect.
- Use Premo pearl in place of white (translucent might work – haven't tried this).

**Ways To Use Gradient Stacks In Canes**

**1. McCaw Cane**

This is a fascinating technique developed by Sandra McCaw. For this cane, you will need gradient stacks in two colors. a) After creating your gradient stacks, cut the stacks into square loaves as shown below.

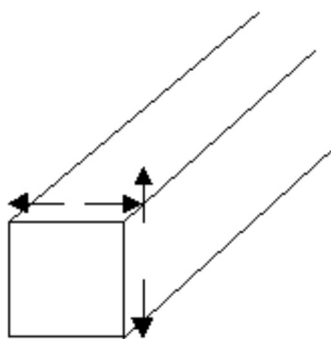


Figure Six

b) Next, you will be cutting off slices of this cane at right angles to the corners from both stacks. You should measure and mark these cuts on both ends of the stacks before beginning to cut.



Figure Seven

c) Make the first cut from each stack. Flip each of these slices on its end, and replace it on the opposite stack. (Example: you have two gradient stacks, one in turquoise, one in purple. After you've cut the first slice off each stack, place the turquoise slice on the purple stack, lighter side of the turquoise slice to the darker side of the purple stack, recreating the square.)

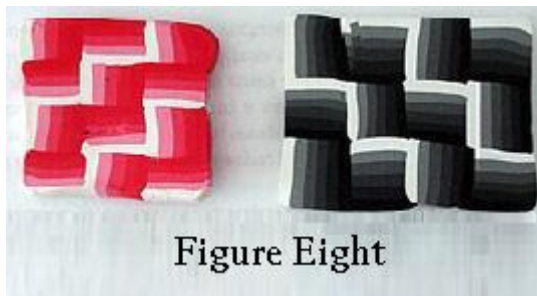
d) Continue cutting, flipping, and replacing until you have two new square stacks of purple and turquoise slices where the light end of the turquoise slices are matched to the dark end of the purple slices.

e) You can use these canes as they are, or you can continue putting the canes together to create even more complex geometric patterns. You can cut one cane into four equal pieces, and match these up to create one pattern; you can join the two different canes together, cut these in

half, and put these back together to make yet a different cane. Experiment putting together slices of the canes until you find something you like.

### 2. Woven Cane

- a) Reduce a gradient stack to 12 inches of useable cane.
- b) Cut this into 12 2-inch lengths.
- c) Reassemble these pieces in the pattern shown below.



### 3. Card Trick

Based on a quilt pattern, this cane can be made either with solid blocks of color or gradient colors.

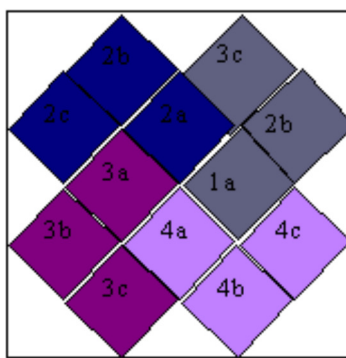


Figure Nine

#### a) Solid Colors

- i. If you choose to use solid colors, you can make a small version using the square and triangular disks with your clay extruder, or you can make a larger version by layering sheets of clay and trimming into a square stack.
- ii. You can add another element by separating each square with a very thin sheet of black or gray.

#### b) Gradient Colors

If you go the gradient color route, you can proceed in one of two fashions.

- i. You can cut four different colored square stacks each into three equal lengths. Assemble as shown in the pattern above. Place your squares on a surface and move them around until you achieve a pattern you like. Then abut each surface to the adjoining piece. Fill in the triangular areas with a conditioned background color(s) of your choice.
- ii. This variation requires that you create gradations in four colors using the simple diagonal cut (see first page).

After you've completed your color blending, create sheets of the pure colors you started from so that you have nine sheets. In this case, you will need to fold over your sheets so that you have double thicknesses; roll over with a brayer.

Beginning either with the dark or light tint, stack three of these folded sheets in successive tints, and trim to a square loaf. Do the same with the next three tints, and again with the last three tints. Roll stacks with brayer after adding a new sheet.

Again, moving light to dark or vice versa, assemble these loaves as shown in the diagram above, maintaining your pattern. For example, if 1a is the lighter tints, then 2a, 3a, and 4a should be as well. You can also play with this by starting with the lighter tints in 1a and 3a, and darker tints in 2a and 4a. When you've assembled your color stacks, fill in the triangular areas with a conditioned background color(s) of your choice.

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