

Blurred Geometric Cane tutorial

By Fiona Abel-Smith.

As far as I am aware, this is a new tutorial, designed by me. I have researched as far as I could on the internet to check that no-one else had thought of this first, and couldn't find anything. However, as we all know, more than one person often comes up with a similar idea, so if this has been thought of before, please let me know, and I will amend this tutorial accordingly.

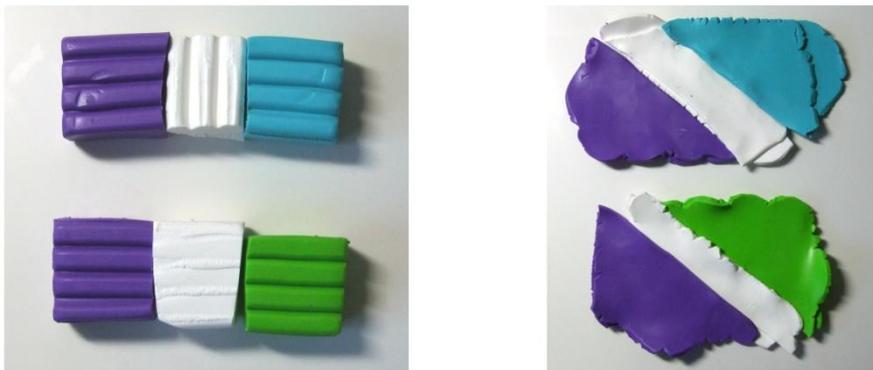


I have done the instructions and photos using a multi coloured version, as it is easier to follow in the pictures.

(NB. I haven't added full instructions for a Skinner Blend, or reducing a cane, as there are hundreds of free tutorials on the web that cover these already.)

The Cane.

1. Make 2 Skinner Blends using colours which will mix well together in the final cane.



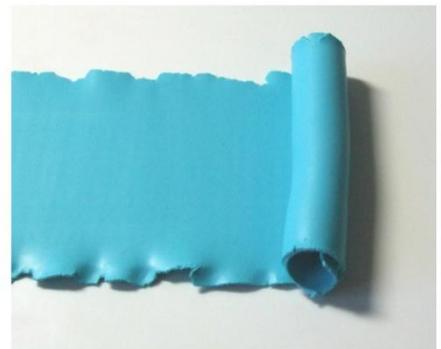
Tip: When mixing 2 colours in a Skinner Blend, I usually add a central diagonal stripe of white, so that each colour is lighter when they mix together in the middle section – I find it gives a softer look, and even with a mix such as green and purple, gives an acceptable soft brown, as opposed to a murky dark one.

All brands of Polymer Clay differ in the amount of white they have in their base colours, so some brands need a smaller strip of white to create a lighter blend, some more. I am using

FIMO which has a lot of white in the base colours I have used, so needs a wide stripe of white in the Skinner Blend.

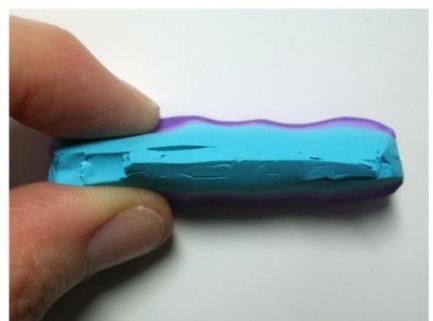


2. Take one completed Skinner Blend, and cut it in half across the graded colours and lay one piece on top of the other (see photo). Put back through the pasta machine on the same setting you were using, end on, to give one long strip. Then carefully feed it, end on, through the machine on your lowest setting (or 2nd to lowest, depending on how your machine works on its lowest setting!) to give a continuous long strip of clay.

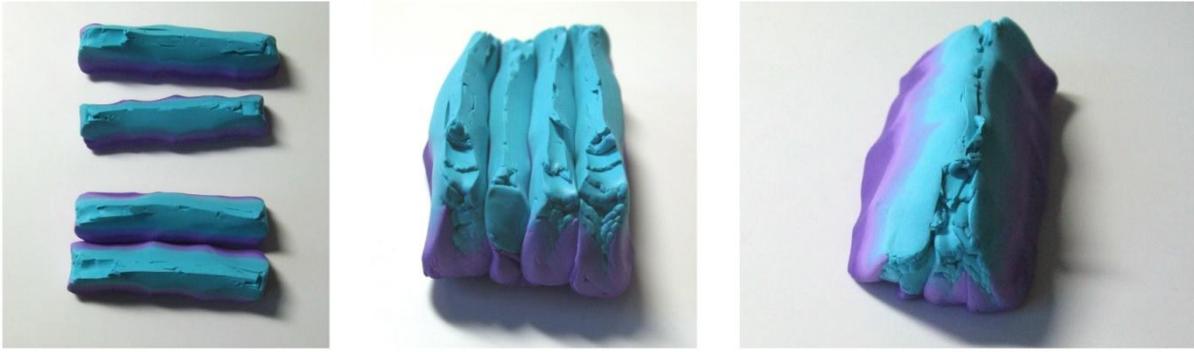


3. Roll up your strip from one coloured end to the other (trying to exclude as much air as possible) until you have a cane.

4. Set the cane on its end and cut down through it, to give 4 roughly equal segments. Press each segment separately down its wider length, squeezing the bottom edges inwards to give a thinner, squashed looking, triangular shape. When all 4 are done, press them together firmly, first, just at their bottom edges, and then pull the tops together too, to create a large triangular cane.

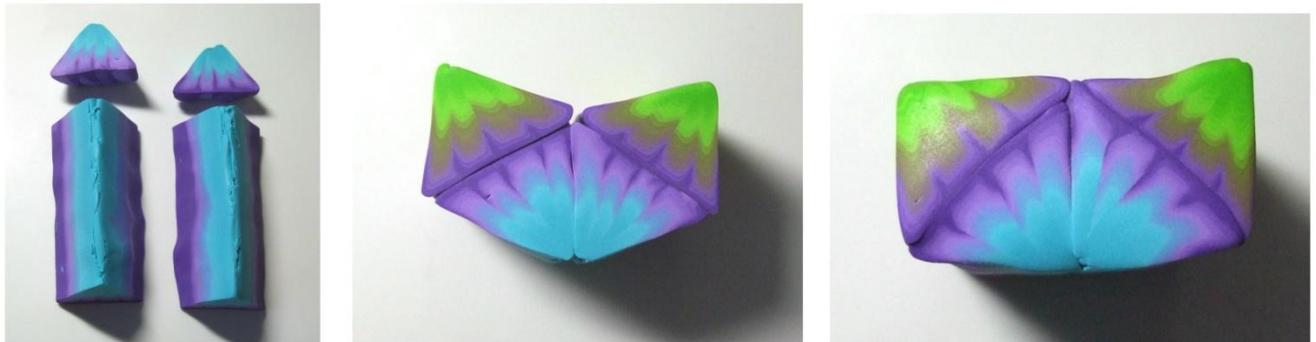


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5. Reduce this triangular cane until it is about 4 inches (10cm) in length (after removing the wastage from either end,) and cut into 2 even pieces. Repeat this process for the other blend.

6. Place 2 matching canes together, with the other 2 set diagonally on top (see photo) then press the 4 canes together down their lengths, gently manipulating them till you get a rough oblong shape. Cut your cane in 2 equal pieces and place together to create a square block.



7. Press in down the length of your cane along 2 opposing corners, gently flattening them out, repeat for the other 2 corners. The idea is to make the corners the sides, and the sides the corners, moving the orientation of your pattern by 90degrees.

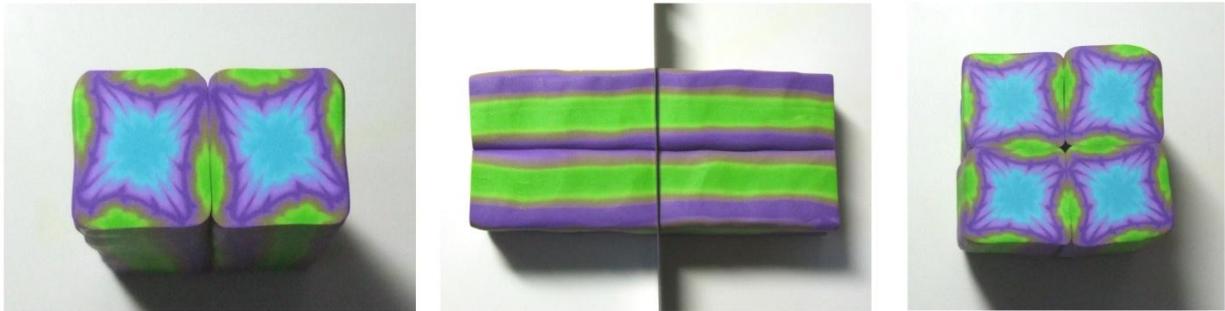


Tip: The easiest way to remember where to press is to look along the sides of your cane, and see the seams where your canes initially joined together. These seams need to end up at the corners of your square cane, and the sides of your cane should then be seamless.

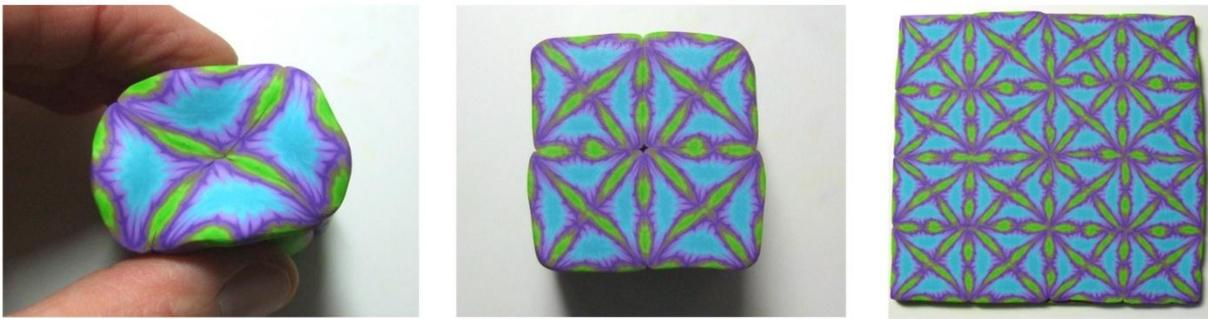
8. Reduce this cane until it is about 6 inches (15cm) long (not including the waste from either end). Cut into 2 equal parts and lift them up next to each other to get a perfect match. (Make sure you match

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them top and bottom.) Then lay your 2 canes down, and again cut into equal halves and lift up next to each other to create a square, geometric, kaleidoscope cane.

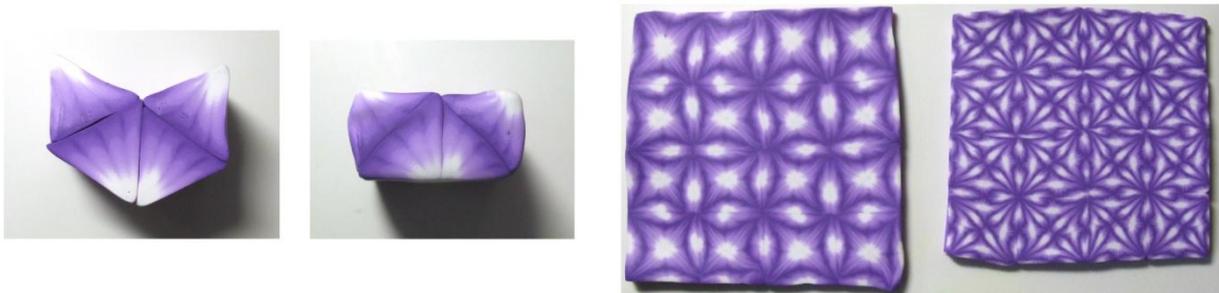


9. If you wish, you can now repeat from no.7 onwards, to turn the orientation of the cane again, or keep it as it is.



When the cane has rested, cut off slices to use as a veneer to create a multitude of polymer clay goodies.

The technique looks great in monochrome too, just use twice as much of a single skinner blend and add the canes as before.



The photo on the right above, shows the difference between re-orientating your cane once, or twice, so you need to decide which look you want.

That's it – have fun and enjoy!!