

Spring Harvest of Berries

by Linda Campbell
Black Bear Art Glass

Every May picking my own strawberries is one of my favorite things to do. It's almost as much fun to make these whimsical strawberry beads. They lay flat and are perfect for bracelets and earrings as well as necklaces.

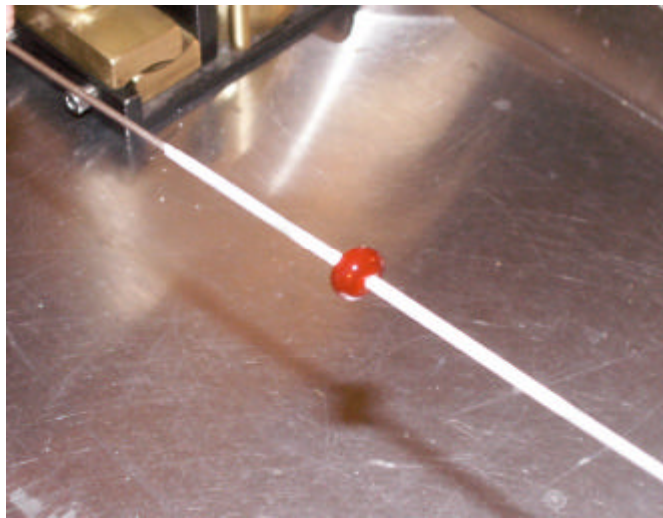
What you will need:
1/16" mandrels
Red glass of your choice

Vine Stringer 1.5-2 mm dia. (does not have to be encased since it will not be melted in)
Squeeze or Crunch bead press



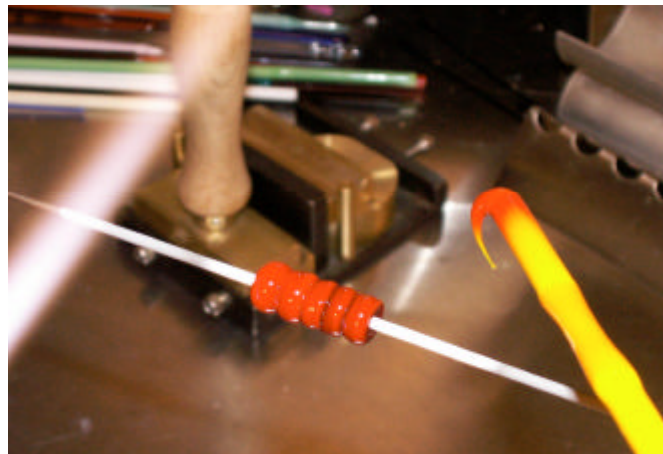
Step 1

Start with a simple donut shaped bead on your mandrel using your red glass. This first wrap should be about 6-7mm diameter



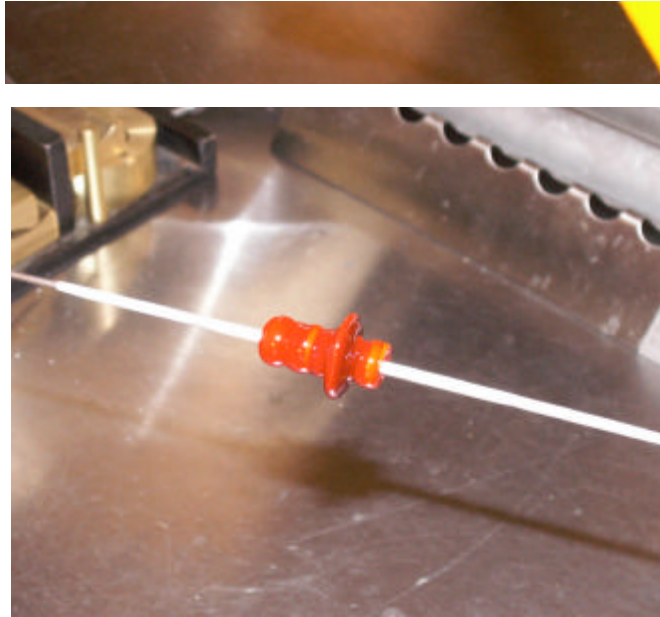
Step 2

Make 4 more wraps on the mandrel the same size beside the first for a total of 5 wraps. Notice I am using yellow glass so you that it photographs well.



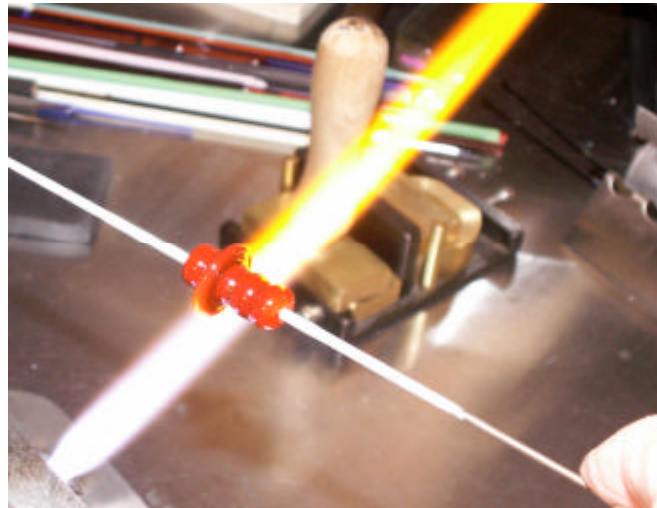
Step 3

On either wrap 2 or wrap 4, make a second wrap so that it stands out about 12-15 mm. This wrap will be toward the top of the berry. I do this on wrap number 4 because I am right handed and having the top of the berry to my right makes it easier for me to apply the stringer to make the cap of the berry in later steps.



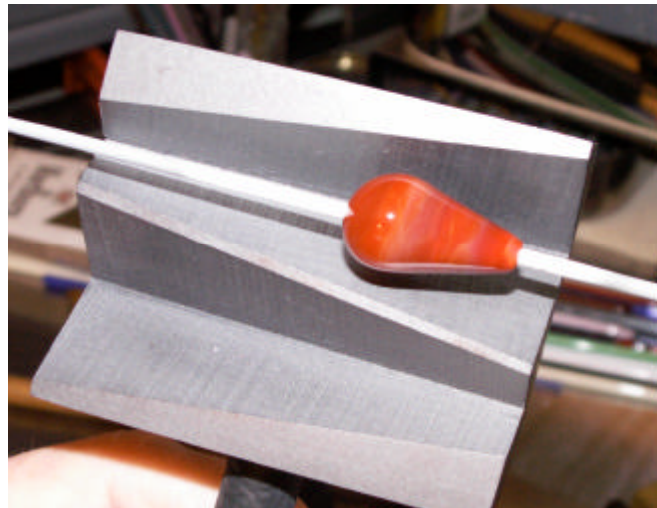
Step 4

Melt in the ring you added to the 5 wraps. Sorry, I changed hands since I rotate better with my right hand.



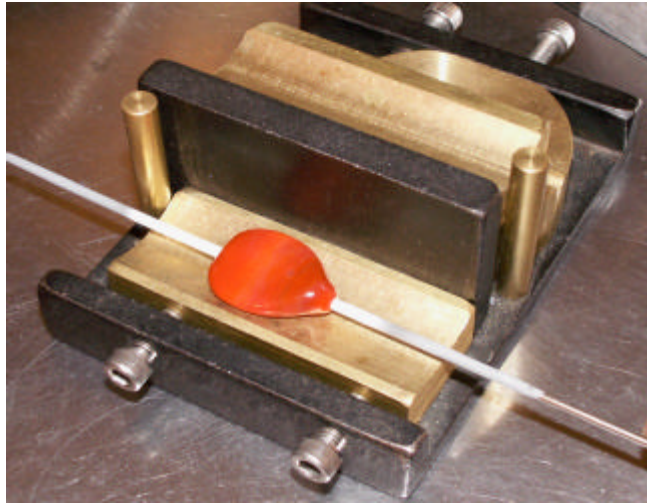
Step 5

When you have the glass molten, marver it into a teardrop or plumb bob shape. You do not want it to be a cone as the top of your berry would turn out too square. Note the narrow end of the teardrop should be very thin. This will be corrected when you flatten your berry and nice puckers will be made by the squeezing process.



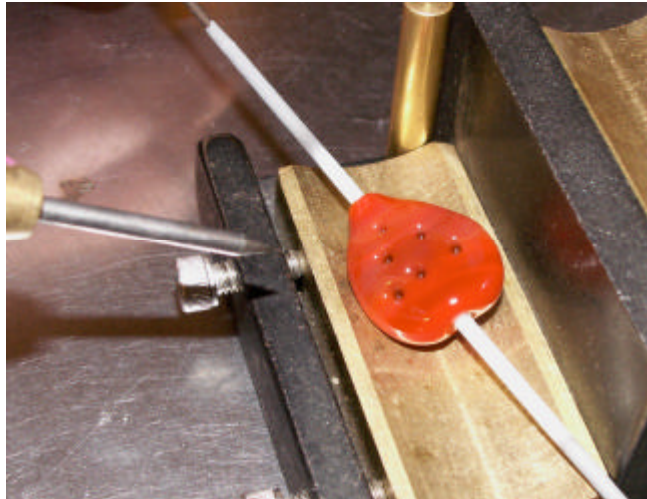
Step 6

Place your teardrop shape into your press and squeeze. See how nice the ends turned out? Return to the flame and fire polish to remove the shill marks.



Step 7

After you remove the chill marks, let the berry cool to hard. Then heat one side at a time and using your tungsten pick, make six indentions on each side as shown.



Step 8

Heat a small ball on the end your stringer and apply the berry caps by touching near the top of the berry and swiping it down the berry, lift and burn off. Do this three times to make three leaves for the cap. That's it. You are ready to string your berries into a terrific spring creation.

