

Botanical Jewelry

Creating authentic looking jewelry from dried plant material.
PHS- Botanical Jewelry Workshop

Research your theme. Interpret your Jewelry Class title.

Visit museums
Look at jewelry
Books
Internet search

Collect dried plant materials:

Walk in the park or your favorite arboretum. Aside from basic acorns, grapevine, curlicue pods or holly berries, look for unusual trees and shrubs. In late summer or fall look for dried seeds and pods. Food market. Spices, dried seeds and beans, squash, melons, pumpkins, etc. Neighborhood, yard and garden. Green leaves and twigs can be shaped before drying.

Sketch and play with shapes.

Begin with a simple pencil sketch. Play with botanical elements. Use tracing paper to modify and change.

Experiment with color finishes:

Model paint- Small bottles found at Hobby shops. TESTOR enamel dries glossy, many colors available. Also, acrylic model paints. Both apply with a paint brush. More control than nail polish.
Nail polish- Bright colors. Opalescent finish. Glossy & quick dry.
Acrylic Paint: Bottled gold fabric paint, tube colors.
Spray: Paint in color, clear (final finish) and metallic shades of gold, silver or pewter.
Gold: Leafing pen, 24K spray

Refine your design:

Assemble all elements.
Pick a color scheme related to the theme.
Paint samples as needed to check color.
Figure out construction details.
Make sure you have time for paint and glue to dry.

Craftsmanship:

Keep in mind that your piece must be wearable and functional in appearance. A necklace and bracelet should have a clasp and be appropriate in size.

Suggestions for design success: Textures, pattern, scale & form are all important when choosing material for your piece. Experiment!

The right combination of materials can make the design “pop”. Keep details consistent. Show attention to detail throughout your piece.

TIPS:

Press leaves or make links and other shapes while the material is green- before it is dry.
Use phone or digital camera to journal design process as elements are moved around.
Always test paint for compatibility and drying time.
Make a sample “color kit” from extra painted material.

Created by Hollis Bauer and Mimi Favre. 2014