

# Rooster Mosaic

*Design, Fabrication, and Text by Melanie Churchill*

There's something intriguing about roosters—that full-of-pride barnyard strut, sleek feathers done up in gorgeous colors, and a built-in, crack-of-dawn alarm clock to boot. This charming little guy will lend the perfect touch to your country decor or be a welcome addition to any bird fancier's collection, but without the noise.

## **Kokomo Opalescent Glass**

150, Kelly Green/Dark Amber for Body, 1/2 Sq. Ft.

4C, Cobalt Blue/Opal

for Tail Feathers, 1/2 Sq. Ft.

225D, Red for Tail Feathers and Head, Scrap

254D, Orange for Beak and Feet, Scrap

## **Other Materials Required**

Rooster-Shaped Wood Base Carbon Paper

White Grout Green, Blue, and Red Colorant

Black Grout Weldbond® Glue Mosaic Wheeled Nippers

Glass Cutter Running Pliers

Straight-Edged Ruler Glass Grinder with 1/8" Bit

Masking Tape Latex Gloves Particle Mask

Grout Sealant Paint Brush Acrylic Paint

## **Step 1**

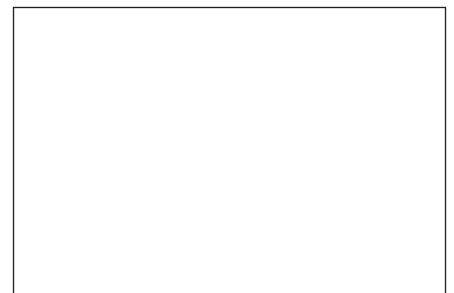
*Seal your wood base.*



If your mosaic project uses unfinished wood as its base, it is important to seal it to prevent the wood from warping due to moisture in the grout. You can seal the wood by mixing one part of PVA glue (such as Weldbond) with one part water. Mix thoroughly, paint it onto the wood base, and allow it to dry.

## **Step 2**

*Transfer the pattern onto your base.*



Center the pattern and a piece of carbon paper on top of your wood base. Tape them down to secure and trace the pattern onto the wood base.

### Step 3

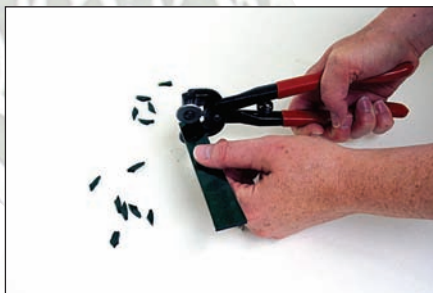
*Cut the green glass into strips, making sure to wear eye protection while cutting.*



Using a straight-edged ruler as your guide, score the glass into 1" to 1-1/2" strips with a glass cutter; then run the score with running pliers. Varying the size of the glass strips will give you a greater assortment of different size "feathers" to use to create a realistic looking rooster.

### Step 4

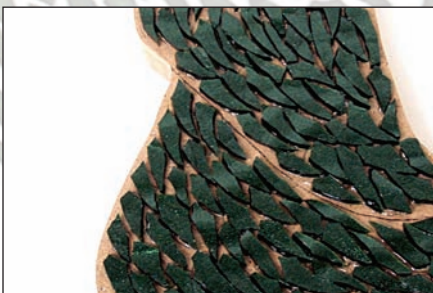
*Nip the strips into pieces.*



Using mosaic wheeled nippers, you can easily cut the glass into various shapes. To create the featherlike shapes for the body, hold the wheeled nippers straight up and down, center the wheels where you would like the glass to break, and squeeze the handles. Continue to nip the strips into thin, elongated triangles and then nip off the top two corners.

### Step 5

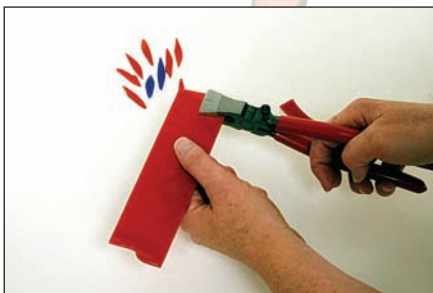
*Glue your glass pieces onto the wood base.*



I like to paint the glue onto a workable section (about a 3" square) and then press the pre-nipped pieces into place, leaving about 1/16" to 1/8" in between pieces and around the edge of the design. Starting at the top and working your way down, adhere the green pieces for the body, first going vertical and then curving them toward the bottom until they are horizontal. You may need to nip off some additional small parts of the glass along the way for a better fit.

### Step 6

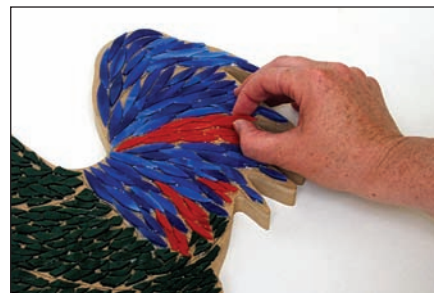
*Cut out feathers for the tail with a glass cutter and run the scores with running pliers.*



Using a glass cutter, cut the blue and red glass into strips varying in size from 1" to 2", reserving some of the red glass for the head pieces. Once the glass is cut into strips, create feather-shaped pieces by cutting the strips into elliptical shapes.

### Step 7

*Glue the tail feathers into place.*



Following the direction of the pattern, glue the feathers into position placing larger feathers at the top and smaller ones at the bottom.

### Step 8

*Cut the red and orange glass for the head and feet.*



You can choose to cut these pieces out whole as I did using the pattern as a guide, or you can nip the glass into small pieces and then fill in the area. Play around with the way you hold the nipper to see the different kinds of shapes you can create. Varying the shape and size of the glass pieces in your mosaic project will not only create interest, but it will also allow you to show movement and direction.

### Step 9

*Use the 1/8" bit on your grinder to drill a hole for the rooster's eye.*

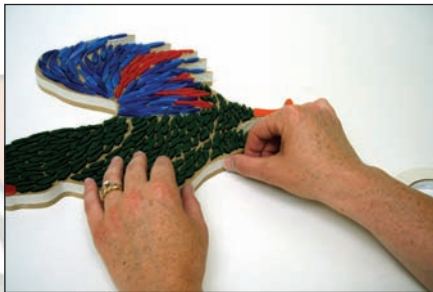


To create a space for the black grout to become the eye, hold the glass against the grinder bit at an angle to start the hole. Once a groove is started, you can hold the glass parallel to the grinder bit and apply pressure until you have completely drilled through. Remember to wet the back of your piece and grinder bit with a wet sponge periodically. This not only prevents cracking, but it also prevents glass powder from becoming airborne.



## Step 10

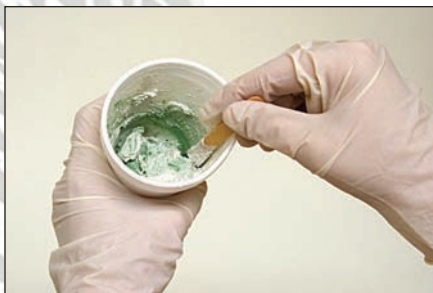
*Tape around the area to be grouted.*



Use masking tape to control the placement of the grout and protect areas that you want to remain ungrouted. This is especially important when you are using multiple grout colors. Taping the perimeter of your wood base also makes cleanup a snap. Remove the tape once the grout is dry.

## Step 11

*Mix the grout and add colorant.*



You should wear a respirator when mixing grout, since the grout contains Portland cement. Also avoid prolonged skin contact by wearing latex gloves and always wear eye protection.

Mix 2 or 3 tablespoons of water to each 1/2 cup of dry grout and mix to the consistency of brownie batter. The grout should have enough body so that it doesn't ooze but should not be so dry that it is crumbly or hard to press into spaces between glass pieces. Add more water for a thinner consistency or more dry grout to thicken the mixture.

Once you achieve the correct consistency, add colorant a little at a time until you reach the desired color. Please note that as the grout dries it will lighten in color. Be sure to make enough colored grout for the area that you need to cover, because it is difficult to match an already created grout color. Unused, mixed grout cannot be saved.

Grout color can add emphasis or unify your glass pieces. For my rooster, I chose to use black for the head and feet to make them stand out. Green, blue, and red were used for the body and tail to coordinate with the feathers.

## Step 12

*Apply the grout, being sure to wear latex gloves.*



Place the mixed grout in the middle of the area to be grouted and spread it to cover, working it in to fill the space between the glass pieces. You can remove excess grout from the top of the glass with a rubber spatula or folded paper towel. Be sure to not dip into

the grout line. Then use a paper towel to buff off the thin layer of dried-up grout that is left on the glass. To loosen any remaining grout, use a damp paper towel or sponge.

## Step 13

*Seal the project.*



To protect the grout lines, apply a grout sealant following the manufacturer's directions.

## Step 14

*Paint the edge of your project.*



To give your mosaic project a finished look, paint the perimeter of your wood base with acrylic paint.

**GPO**

*Michigan native, Melanie Churchill, is an accomplished stained glass, fusing, and metal clay artist, but her true passion is mosaics. It's a discipline that fits well into this busy working mom's lifestyle.*

*As an instructor, Melanie has been introducing people to the world of mosaics for close to a decade. Her work has been featured in the book, Mosaic Art Home Décor for Beginners, as well as extensively throughout the Delphi Glass catalog. In addition, she has served as a guest instructor for the Michigan Art Educators annual conference.*

*Melanie's skilled use of color turns even the most simple design into a beautiful piece of artwork. You can see more of Melanie's work or sign up for one of her classes at [www.Delphiglass.com](http://www.Delphiglass.com).*



This is Melanie's **Summertime Mosaic Tray** featured in the last issue of *Glass Patterns Quarterly*.

