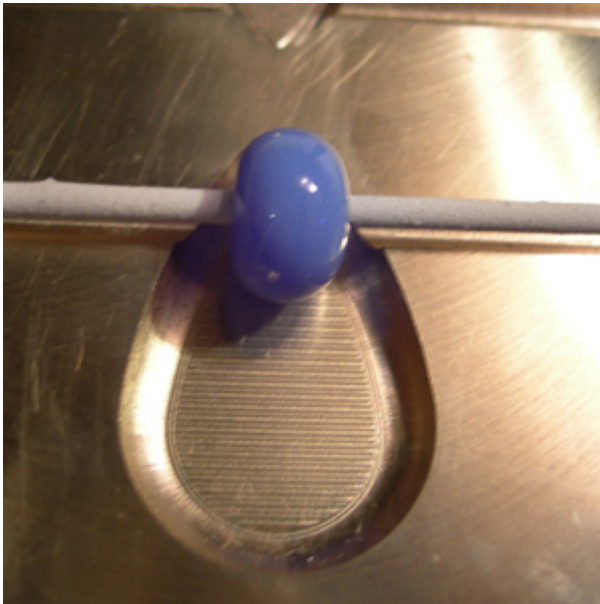


Tear Drop Tutorial

Step 1: Make a baby bead. This bead is going to be the footprint for your bead, a base on which to build. This way you do not have to try to heat/droop glass from the mandrel. One reason I do it this way is so you have the greatest amount of control, which is particularly important when using the larger sizes. However, control of your glass is something you should always strive for. The other reason I chose this approach is so that you will have good puckers around the bead hole. You want nice ends, and if you droop the glass, the bead release may droop too, causing breaking, or you could end up with too little glass around the mandrel, making an indent on either side of the bead at the mandrel.

So, make your baby bead



Step 2: Press it! See the glass forms nice shape around the holes if it is able to push out into the glass. This baby bead is just enough to form the top of the Tear Drop and the thickness of the baby bead allows the glass to push out, making the great bead holes.

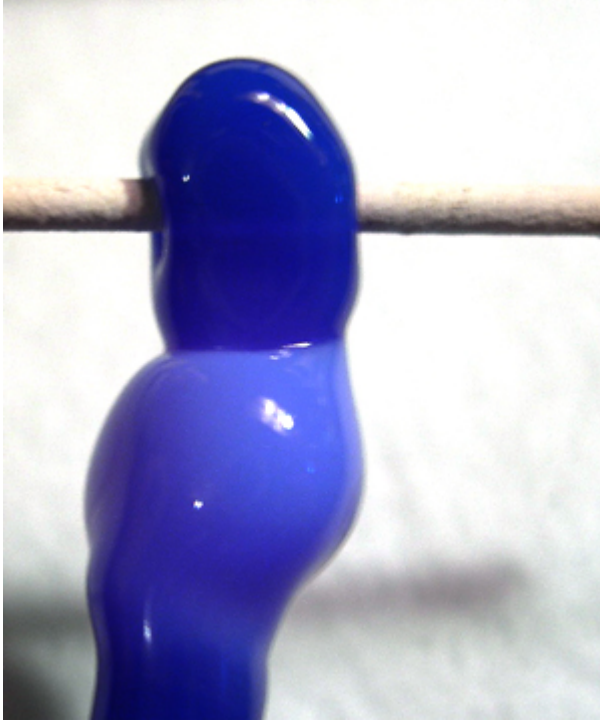


Step 3: Keep the pressed baby bead warm, while you form a gather on the end of your rod of glass.

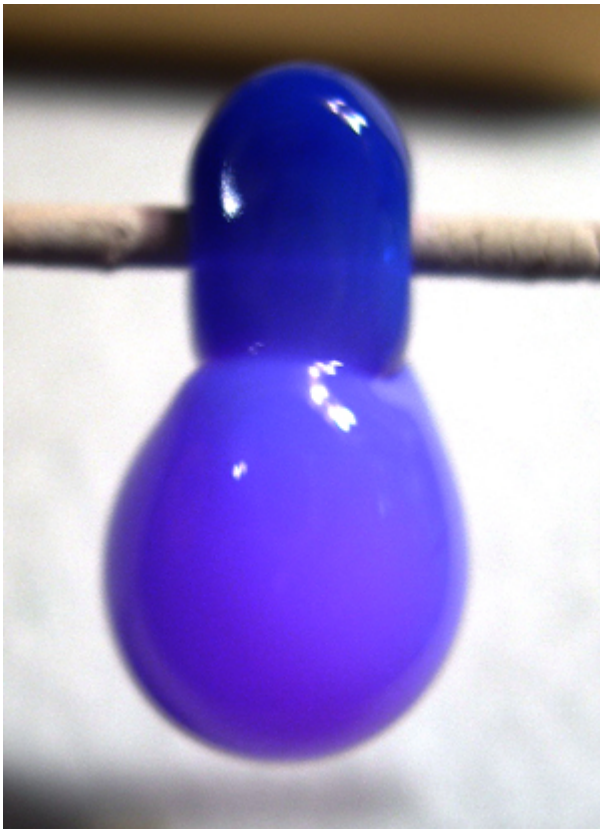
Note: From here on in, you are going to keep the baby bead part of the bead warm, not hot. You do not want it to get melty and change shape.



Step 4: Join your gather to the bottom of your warm, pressed baby bead. To join them, get the gather hot, and the bottom of your baby bead warm, and push them together, gently. You want to be sure to keep the new gather from touching the mandrel. It actually should be hanging off the end of the baby bead part, not even close to the mandrel.



Step 5: Now remove the rod.



Step 6: I heat the gather part of the bead and I tip the bead upside down so that the join is nice and smooth. If you start to lose control of the glass, you can blow on it. That will help to slow it down, or stop the movement (just don't get your lips too close..hehehe). Once your join is smooth, you are ready to press.



Step 7: Press.



Step 8: I sometimes reheat the bead, to red, but not melty, and press again. This can help to make the bead more "crisp". Then you can decorate. You can either leave the decorations on the surface, or you can decorate and then heat and press again...This will make your decorations lay flat on the surface.

