



Indian Corn Necklace

By Cindy Littlefield



The Powhatans believed that corn was a gift from the Creator, and they made good use of every part. They dried the kernels and pounded them into meal to make breads and soups, and used the husks to make masks, rugs, and dolls. They even burned the stalks for fuel. This colorful necklace is strung with clay kernels that feature the deep yellow, red, and blue hues found on flint corn. It also serves as a reminder of how very versatile this treasured Native American crop turned out to be.

You'll need:

- Waxed paper
- Polymer clay (assorted shades, such as yellow, off-white, blue, purple, and maroon)
- Toothpick
- Scissors
- Baking pan or sheet
- Aluminum foil
- Beading cord or monofilament
- Magnetic necklace clasp

Instructions:

1. Cover your work surface with waxed paper.
2. Knead the clay until it is soft and flexible. For each corn kernel, roll a bit of clay into a 3/8-inch ball. You should get about two dozen or so kernels per two ounces of clay, and you'll probably need about five kernels for each inch of necklace length.
3. Shape each ball into a kernel by first flattening it with your thumb so that it's no more than 1/4-inch thick, and then pinching the upper sides together slightly to narrow the top just a bit.
4. Use a toothpick to make holes through each kernel. You can poke holes along the top of the kernel, across the width of the kernel, or through its middle. The necklace will look best if you poke most of the holes through the faces of the kernels and a few through the sides for variety.
5. Place the clay on an aluminum foil-lined pan and bake it according to the manufacturer's directions. Allow the kernels to cool completely.
6. Cut a piece of beading cord or monofilament a few inches longer than you want the finished necklace to be and tie one end to the magnetic necklace clasp. Thread on the clay kernels and tie the free cord end to the other side of the clasp. Finally, thread the cord ends back through a few kernels and trim any excess length.



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