



PMC CONNECTION

FINDING THE PERFECT LEAF

Pick a fresh leaf for your project. It can be kept fresh in a plastic bag with a spritz of water until you are ready to use it. Remember you will be painting the back of the leaf.

SHAPE

1. The general shape of the leaf should be interesting. Less interesting shapes can be combined into groups. Contrasting shapes and sizes make beautiful collage pieces.
2. Ruffled edges or bug holes can add a great design element to your piece.
3. Be careful of sharp points on the leaf edges. When they become solid metal they can scratch or tear clothes.
4. The leaf should be firm. Weak, limp leaves do not hold their shape well.
5. Long, narrow leaves can roll or curl.
6. Keep the stem on the leaf to provide a handhold.

TEXTURE

1. The vein structure gives you a beautiful texture. The veins should be pronounced. Feel the veins to make sure that they are tactile, not just visual. Sometimes the leaf may look interesting but the clay will not pick up the texture if it is not defined. When you cannot feel the texture of the leaf, the clay will reflect that fact. Make sure you can feel the veins.
2. Leaves should not be too waxy or hairy. These are difficult to coat with paste.
3. Thick, moisture-filled leaves may split during firing.

COLOR

1. The leaves can be beautiful in bright silver. However, most people enjoy coloring the leaves with liver of sulfur. The color of the leaves can range from gold to green, blue, purple and black, depending upon the length of time the leaf is exposed to the liver of sulfur solution. The darkness also accents the vein structure of the leaf and gives depth and dimension to the pendant. Going over the edges with a burnisher strengthens the leaf and gives it the look of finely finished jewelry.
2. Pods make interesting pieces. Remember that they can split open during the firing but that may be a great place to set a stone.

REINFORCEMENT

1. A single leaf should be 1 mm thick to make it strong and durable. If you make the leaves thinner, they can bend. You can group leaves into a collage to strengthen them or add clay design reinforcements.

HINT:

Make up several leaves and set them aside. A leaf makes a great accent on jewelry, to seat stones or on pottery, etc.

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