

## Peacock Feather Cane

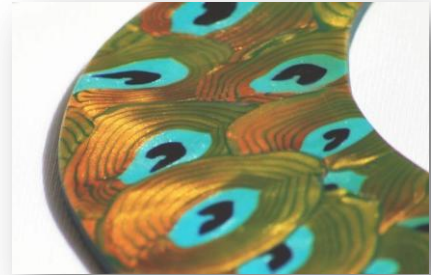
Wendy Meister 2012 for London Polymer Clay Group

This Peacock feather cane tutorial owes a lot to the one created in 2002 by Jean Sheppard.

<http://www.pcpolyzine.com/0211november/0211peacock.html>

The first time I attempted this cane from the tutorial above it took me a whole day. I had to condition the clay, mix the colours and finally work through the long instructions and build the cane. I have to say it was worth the effort and I got quicker at it over time.

This is my take on the Peacock Feather cane reduced to its simplest form. Once you understand how it all works together and the amounts of clay you will need in each colour you will be able to refine the process to come up with a cane that reflects your own taste and colour palette.



### To make the cane you will need:

Pasta machine

Work surface

Sharp knife/clay blade

Acrylic roller

The following polymer clay colours:

### For the Eye cane

1 part dark purple (purple/black mix) for the eye cane's pupil

2 parts turquoise pearl (from the packet or turquoise/pearl mix) for the eye cane's iris

### For the Fronds cane

4 parts gold

3 parts green pearl (out of the packet or gold/green mix)

1½ parts dark forest green (green/black mix) for the outline of the Fronds



## Steps 1 – 3 the Eye cane

### Step 1 – make the pupil of the eye cane

Condition the purple black clay and roll it into a 1st finger thick log shape.

Press a pencil or knitting needle along the length of the log until you have a 'C' shape in the profile of the cane.

**NB.** You can get a nice effect if you make this a skinner blend of black/purple/dark blue and then roll with the darker colours to the inside of the roll.

**NB.** It is important that the pupil of the eye cane is made from non metallic clay to contrast with the turquoise pearl clay of the iris.

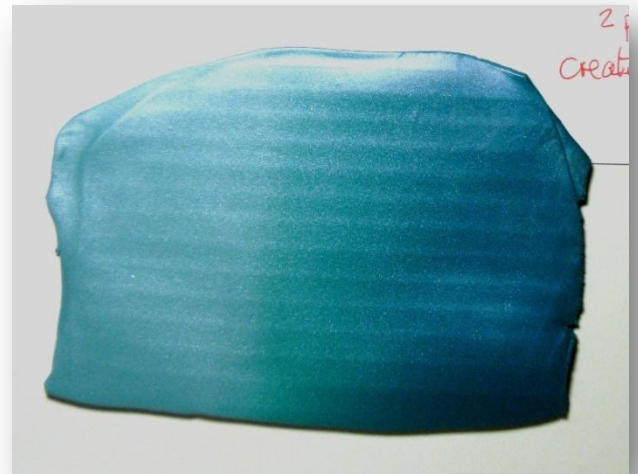


### Step 2 – prepare the iris of the eye cane

Condition the turquoise pearl clay and cut off enough to make a thin snake that will fit into the groove in the pupil log (purple/black clay)

Roll out the rest of the clay at #1 on your pasta machine

**NB.** You can use a Skinner blend here too.



### Step 3 - assemble the eye cane

Roll the turquoise pearl clay sheet through the pasta machine at #2 then #3 so that you have a long strip.

Roll the strip round the pupil cane doubling back in the other direction near the end to make the turquoise clay on the back of the 'C' a little deeper than that on the other side.



## Steps 4 – 11 the Fronds cane

### Step 4 – Make the fronds

Make a Skinner blend of the gold and pearl green clays.

Roll up the clay blend so that gold is at one end of the roll and green at the other.  
Flatten the roll with the palm of your hand until you have a thick rectangle.

**NB.** This will later form the fronds of the feather and will be placed around the eye cane so that the bottom of the frond is gold and the tip of the frond is green



### Step 5 – Make the outline of the fronds

Roll out the dark green clay until it is the same size as the blend rectangle.

Place the dark green clay on top of the rectangle making sure not to trap air bubbles between the layers.

**NB.** This darker colour will create the illusion of separate fronds.

**NB.** You could also add a layer of translucent on top of the darker layer which would give even more definition to the separate fronds.



### Step 6 – STReeeeeeeTCH the rectangle of clay

Stretch out the rectangle so that the stripes of colour are elongated **from side to side** as in the picture. You need to get it thin enough to fit into the pasta machine at #1

**NB.** We will roll this into a long flat strip which will be cut into sections in the next step, so it's important to **STRETCH THE CLAY IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.**



### Step 7 – Roll a long striped strip

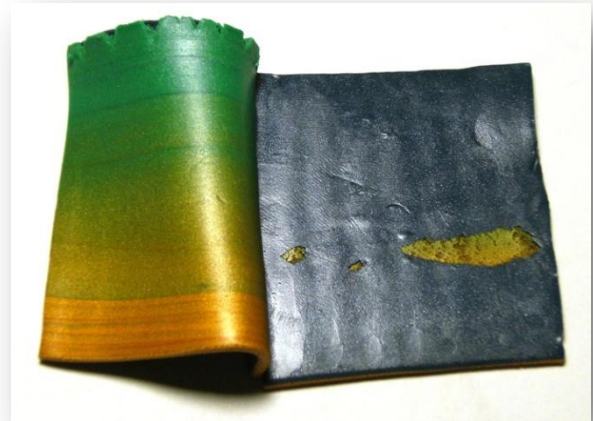
Roll the strip of clay through the pasta machine at #2 then #3 so that you have a long strip with stripes of gold and green running along the length of it. This strip should be dark green on one side.



### Step 8 – Cut and stack the fronds strip

Cut the long strip roughly into squares and stack the squares on top of each other until you have stacked them all.

**NB.** The gold to green stripes on the side of the stack is what will show in the cane slices.



### Step 9 – Bevel the edge of the stack

Turn the stack on its side with the gold to green striped showing on top.

Cut through the stack with a sharp blade cutting off a wedge shape across gold end of the cane.

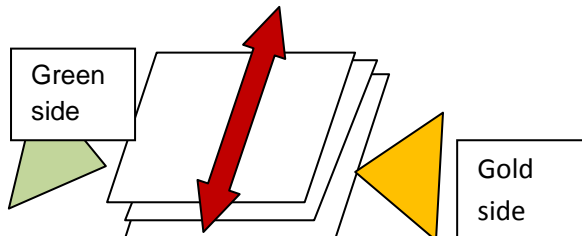
**NB.** This is to create the rib of the feather below the eye (Confused yet? See step 10 for clarification)



### Step 10 – Bend the stack

Bend the stack round with your hands so that you have a flat part where you cut off the wedge. See the picture to the right to see what it should look like.

When you have done this gently start to pull the stack to stretch it out so you can cut it in half to make 2 fronds stacks one for each side of the eye cane.

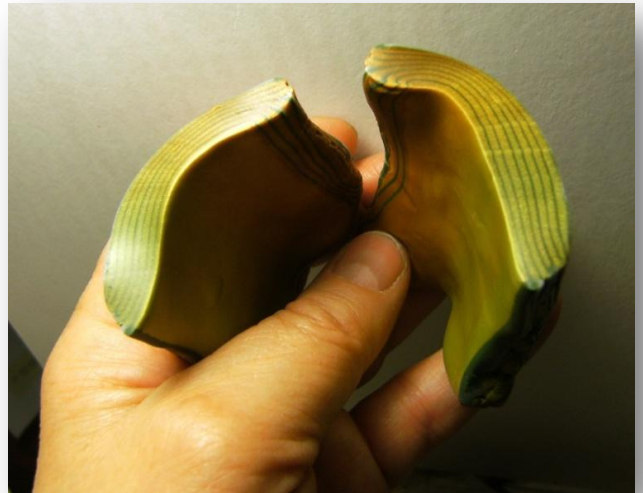


### Step 11 – Divide the Fronds cane in half

You should end up with 2 halves that look like the picture on the right.

With your thumb make a shallow trench along the middle of each piece of the frond cane in which the eye cane will sit.

Butt the 2 cut edges of the fronds canes together below the eye cane to form the central rib of the feather.. The back of the C is the top of the eye cane and should be at the opposite side to the rib of the feather.



### Step 12 – Assembling the Peacock Feather cane

Wrap the 2 halves of the fronds cane around the eye cane bringing the ends of the fronds together into a point.

Close your hands around the cane and warm it applying gentle pressure to expel any air pockets.

The finished cane should be slightly pointed at the top (green) and rounded at the bottom (gold).

