Glass to Go: Free Mosaic Glass!

Pittsburgh Glass Center is encouraging you to get creative with glass by offering free mosaic scrap glass packages available for contact-less pick up at Pittsburgh Glass Center. Kit includes instructions for creating your own mosaics at home and up to 2 lbs. of an assortment of glass to get started!

What is a mosaic?
A mosaic is an artwork that is made of tiny parts to create an image, pattern, or decorative motif.

Mosaics are assembled using colorful small tiles that are made of glass, stone, or other materials like stones, pebbles, shells, mirrors, and or other found objects like bottle caps held together with an adhesive.

Mosaics as an art form have been around for thousands of years. Mosaics were first discovered in ancient Mesopotamia, where small pieces of tile were found in a temple about 4,000 years ago! It wasn't until the ancient Greeks and Romans that mosaics began to depict real-life scenes, patterns, and symbols. These ancient artworks laid the groundwork for contemporary artists practicing today!

Modern mosaics are found on everything from park benches and flower pots to windows and guitars. Artworks can be as small as an earring or a large mural on a building. You might have noticed the mosaic on the front of PGC or the artwork in the windows by Pittsburgh artist, Daviea Davis. Mosaics can also be used in kitchen backsplashes, craft projects, gardens, and as fine art or public art.

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Pictured to the right: Contemporary Mosaic by Pittsburgh mosaic artist Daviea Davis

Pictured left to right: Mosaic tree stump, Pittsburgh Glass Center mosaic, and mosaic tires by artist Jason Middlebrook.
Make a Mosaic

Things you'll need:

1. **Glass:** Provided! Yay! We are excited to see how you’ll use this free glass to get creative.
2. **Tray and Craft Stick:** Safety first! Never dig through glass with your hands. It is easier to find the glass pieces you want if they are in a shallow tray or plate. Use a craft stick, a pencil, the handle of a spoon etc. to search through your glass for the pieces you want to use.
3. **Base:** The item you will make your mosaic on. This can be something like a picture frame, glass bottle, mason jar, small piece of wood, ceramic tile, yogurt cup, flower pot, or a stepping stone. It can be anything but usually something hard and flat. Get creative with the things you can find around your house! We’re excited to see what you create!
4. **Adhesive:** How you attach your mosaic to your base. This can be Elmer’s Glue (spread with a paintbrush) or a silicon based adhesive. We recommend: Clear **DAP Alex Plus All Purpose Caulk** available at Home Depot.
   **TIP:** Elmer’s Glue can be used on flat surfaces. If choosing a 3D base like a bottle, silicone must be used.
5. **Grout:** This is a cement-like mixture used to fill the gaps between and unite the pieces of a mosaic. It helps it to be more durable. We recommend **Polyblend Non-Sanded Grout** or **Polyblend Sanded Grout** available at Home Depot. You may also choose not to use grout on your mosaic.
   a. Spreading tool like a rubber spatula, craft stick or plastic knife
   b. Newspaper, sponge, or rag to scrape off excess grout

Optional Supplies:

1. **Other Mosaic Materials:** In addition to your glass pieces you can add in other small things like marbles, small stones, seashells, small tiles, beads, legos, etc. to create and enhance your designs.
2. **Nippers:** If you want to be more precise with your designs and cut pieces of glass we recommend **QEP Glass Tile Nippers** available at Home Depot.
3. **Safety Glasses:** Safety First! Anytime you are cutting glass you should ALWAYS wear safety eye protection.

How to Make a Mosaic

1. **Pick your base and choose a design:** You may want to create a design for your mosaic before beginning your project.
   **TIP:** If working with a wood base, you may want to paint it white and trace your design with a pencil. If working with something glass, you can draw your design on a piece of paper and lay the glass over top of your design.
2. **Attach your glass:** You can either spread a thick layer of your chosen adhesive on your base to attach your glass, or you can attach your pieces by applying glue to the back of each piece.
   **TIP:** If you are using Elmer’s Glue be sure to use a thick layer to hold pieces tight.
   **TIP:** If you are grouting your mosaic, glass pieces should have a space about the thickness of a craft stick in between them. If you are not grouting, try to get your pieces of glass touching/as close as possible.
3. **Grout:** If you choose to grout your piece, allow the glue to fully dry and follow directions on grout packaging for mixing and applying.
   **TIP:** Add small amounts of grout to your water at a time! Mix until you get a consistency like brownie batter. Wipe off any excessive grout with some newspaper, a sponge, or rag and allow to dry completely.
4. **Enjoy and Share:** Please post a photo of your mosaic creations and tag us on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter @pghglasscenter and we might share your creation.

www.pittsburghglasscenter.org