

PMC3

The newest product in the PMC family is PMC3. Working with PMC3 is much like working with PMC+, however there are some distinct advantages.

- It can be fired with a butane torch and Sterno (see Flower Pot Firing System). This is a great way for people to get started with PMC at a limited investment.
- Lower firing temperatures increase the viability of sterling implants, natural gems, and glass.
- Higher density makes soldering easier, makes objects more durable and improves shine.

Hints

1. When you are firing 925 silver (a.k.a sterling), or 950 silver along with PMC, bury the pieces in alumina hydrate to minimize firescale.
2. When embedding sterling silver elements, cut slits behind the pieces to allow for the 10-12% shrinkage rate. Otherwise the shrinkage will force the sterling object out, a phenomenon we professionals call the Slippery Banana Effect.
3. I use the PMC3 in the syringe to attach sterling findings. Sterling silver earring posts should be fired at 1110°F (600°C) for 2 hours. At higher temperatures they become brittle and break easily. It is possible to fire the two part sterling silver pin backs at 1560°F for 2 hours.
4. PMC3, in any form, fired on top of unfired standard PMC will create concave pieces. The difference in the firing time and shrinkage rate causes this effect. It's fun!

PMC Extender

If you have trouble with your PMC drying out while you are working you'll be happy to hear about a new product called PMC Extender. This inexpensive liquid works best if you add one or two drops and knead it into the clay between plastic. Let the PMC sit, preferably overnight. The next day you will find a noticeable difference on the extended working time. There is also reduction of surface cracks. Extender works with all versions of PMC.

PMC Paper

PMC paper was developed in Japan to blend the modern technology of metal clay with the traditional art of origami. The potential of this stuff has yet to be realized. Chris Darway fires it around glass (very cool) and Celie Fago has developed a way to make thicker sheet of PMC paper. Here is her method:

1. Set a single sheet of PMC paper on a Teflon ironing sheet or Teflon baking sheet.
2. Use a spray bottle to create an even mist of water on the surface.
3. Count to 10 to allow the water to soak in.
4. Carefully place a second sheet of PMC paper on top and cover it with another sheet of either Teflon material.
5. Set something heavy, like a steel block, on top for at least an hour.
6. Additional layers can be added, and Celie suggests weighting for about 20 minutes.

Meet the New Products — CeCe Wire

page two

Torch Firing

It is possible to fire PMC+ and PMC3 with any jewelry torch. I'm demonstrating with a small butane torch, which is compact, easy to carry, and uses a commonly available fuel (butane is sold in drugstores to refill cigarette lighters). Torch firing is especially good for small pieces and has the added advantage of immediate gratification. As a production technique it leaves something to be desired, but to get a crowd at a craft fair, there's nothing like it!

Take note: Because a torch doesn't have a temperature gauge it's up to you to be sure you don't melt the piece. I learned to watch the character of the material as it goes through the firing stages and to pay close attention to the color changes so I can recognize when the piece is solid metal.

- Stage One The binder ignites and burns away.
- Stage Two The piece starts to glow dimly red.
- Stage Three The piece glows brightly red.
- Stage Four The piece glows a brilliant red-orange and the surface is almost reflective. Do not heat beyond this point or the piece will begin to melt – first around the edges and then the entire piece.

- > For PMC+ start timing at stage three and hold for at least 5 minutes.
- > For PMC3, start timing at stage three and hold for at least 1 minute.

Flower Pot Firing System

On first appearance this may look doubtful, but it works! You must use PMC3 for this technique. The hottest temperature I registered with my pyrometer was 1175°F, a temperature approved for PMC3 but well below the recommended firing temperature for PMC+ and original PMC. Start timing to 25 minutes after you see the piece glowing red. Look from under the screen, not above! Remember safety first!

The piece needs to be 1 inch away from the rim of the Sterno can.

Flower Pot Firing Supplies

- small can of Sterno
- steel mesh
- tripod or bricks
- aluminum foil
- 6 inch terra cotta pot and saucer
- hot pads
- tweezers
- heat resistant surface
- cooking timer

