

Sea Turtles Four Ways

Two Mandrel Wound Beads and Two Offhand Pendants

By Mary Lockwood

Thank you for your interest in my Sea Turtle Tutorial. There are four variations of construction in this tutorial, and I've also packed it full of useful tips that will make your sculptural efforts easier to accomplish and result in more stable finished pieces. Moving from a basic mandrel-made sea turtle, to building pre-made components, to your first foray into offhand work and right into more advanced construction this tutorial will cover all skill levels and grow right along with you.

Special emphases in this tutorial are heat control and correct joining of elements, as these are the two most important aspects of building structurally sound pieces.

Please read the entire tutorial through once before beginning to work.

Necessities and Materials

GLASS & MATERIAL

5mm rods of 104coe glass:

You can use whatever colors you like,
but the following are shown in the tutorial

Clear
White pastel
Medium Topaz or Amber
Dark Topaz or Amber
Opal Yellow
Nile Green Pastel
Transparent Dali silver glass
Super Silver Michelangelo

Misc:

Raku Stringer (not mandatory)
Size 1 coarse goldstone frit
Size 00 fine frit or enamel in a sandy color
Premade or purchased ocean themed
murrini chips 3-5mm in size

EQUIPMENT & SAFETY

Standard Safe Studio Requirements including but
not limited to:

Fire Extinguisher
Good Ventilation
Lampworking Safety Glasses
Propane Outside
Oxygen Tanks chained securely
Bowl of water on work surface
**Respirator Mask suitable for powdered
glass protection**
***You are responsible for your own
safety!**

Tools and equipment:

Mashers
Graphite Marver or paddle
Hot Plate or Warmer
Your favorite hand tools for shaping



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Fully Mandrel-Built Sea Turtle

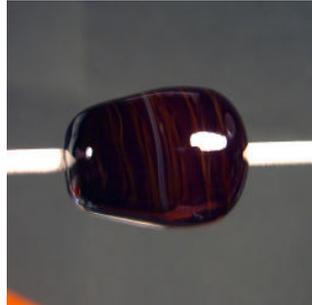
The most basic of the turtles covered in this tutorial will be within most lampworkers' comfort zones. All components and construction happen right on the mandrel.

If you are new to sculptural pieces this is a great place to start. The most important aspects of any sculptural work are heat control and stable joins. Be aware of frequently reheating your bead to protect it from thermal shock. Be sure that anytime you are adding new glass to a structure that the spot where it joins is smooth and without ridges or undercuts where the two come together.



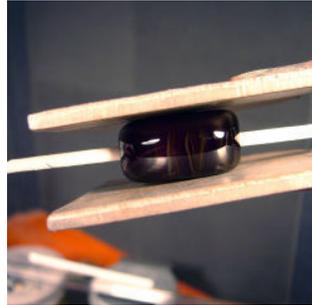
1- Set out:
med. transp. amber
clear
size 1 frit in opaque or
reactive color
white
dark trans. Amber

2. Preheat your dipped
mandrel



3- Apply dark amber to
mandrel in a short, fat
cone shape about 1.5"
long.

***I usually make the
wide part of the bead
be closest to the tip
of the mandrel.**



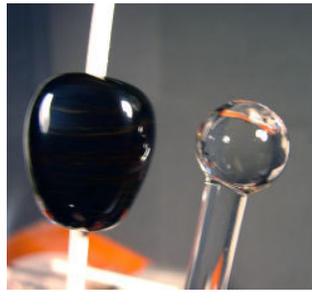
4- Mash with mashers
or marver to form body
shape.



5- This is what your
turtle's body should
look like at this point.

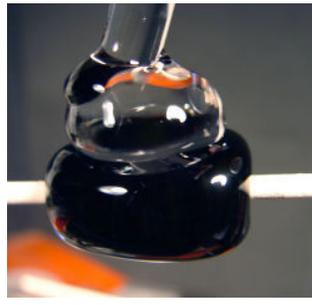


6- Begin a nice large
gather at the end of
your rod of clear.

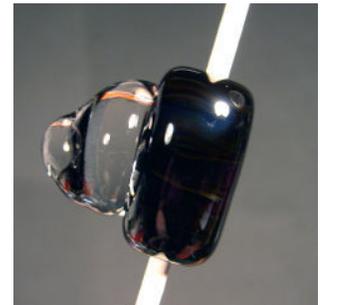


7- This clear gather
should be about half
the size of your base
bead.

The larger you make
this clear gather, the
larger your turtle's
shell will be.



8- Get your clear
soupy hot then apply it
as a large blob to one
flat side of your turtle's
body base.



9- Here is what your
bead should look like
at this point.

Mandrel-Built Sea Turtle w/Pre-made Components

Having that mandrel as a sturdy handle can be comforting and familiar but when you step out of your comfort zone and begin to explore the world of offhand work a whole new set of doors will open for you. This turtle is a combination of both techniques to help you step over the threshold.

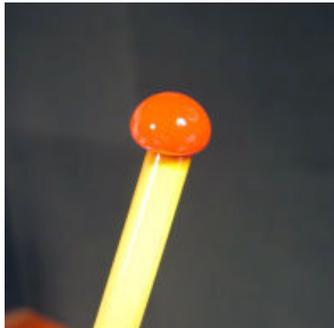
The benefits of making components, in this case the flippers and head, in advance are:

1. You can put more detail into the components because you are able to focus on them more.
2. You don't have to worry as much about your base thermal shocking while you fiddle with component construction.
3. Final construction is faster.



1- Set out the materials:

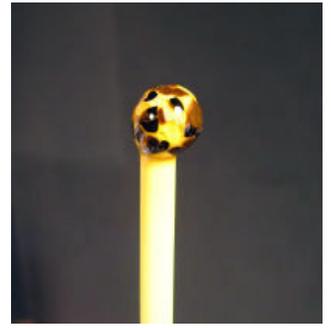
clear
opal yellow
dali transparent silver
glass
opaque green
size 1 opaque or
reactive frit
5 clear stringers
raku stringer



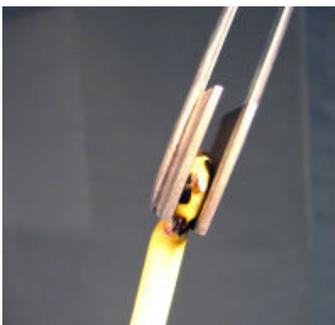
2- Form a gather the size of a chickpea or garbanzo bean at the end of your opaque green rod



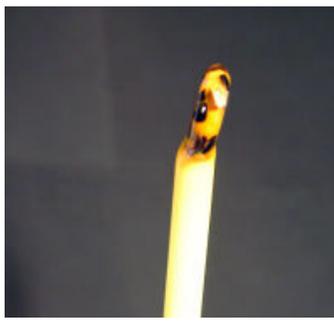
3- Roll your gather in the coarse frit and melt smooth.



4- This smooth frit covered gather will form one of the front flippers.

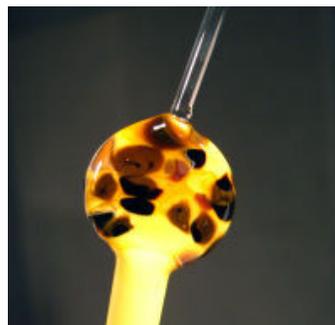


5- Use mini mashers to squish this gather flat into a paddle shape, sometimes called a lollipop shape.



6- Here is what your paddle should look like now.

Use gradient heat to heat this paddle just like you heated the flippers in the previous bead.



7- Preheat the very tip of one of your clear stringers and touch it to the edge of your paddle.

Pull straight out from the paddle.



8- When you feel the glass begin to stiffen, change direction while pulling the stringer to make the flipper curve back toward the green rod.