

Lily Earrings



The Lily Pin (page 84) uses a full-size sheet of metal clay. These little earrings each use one-fourth of a sheet. Working with a quarter sheet is very similar to working with a full-size one—just smaller. The delicate earrings can tolerate fewer folds before they become too thick to work with, so they have fewer and simpler moves than the pin.



Materials & Supplies

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10 inches (25.4 cm)
of 20-gauge, round,
sterling silver wire

4 inches (10.2 cm)
of 24-gauge, round,
sterling silver wire

1. Begin by folding the quarter sheet of metal clay into a Frog Base (see page 12). Position the base with the open end away from you.



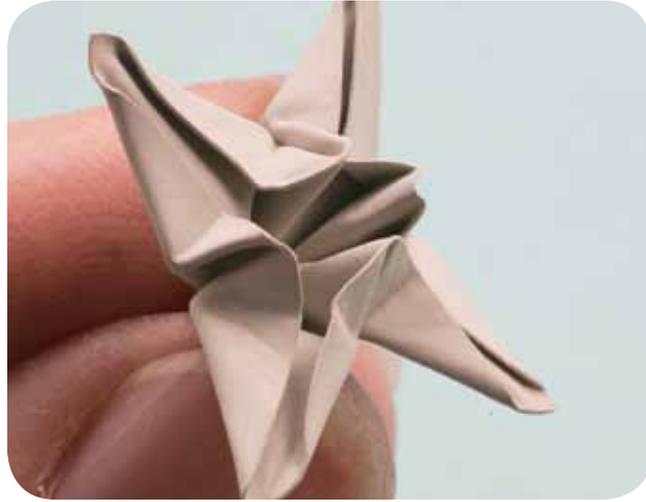
2. Fold over all four vertical flaps so that only smooth, unbroken surfaces are visible.



3. Fold each petal back.



4. You may need to give an additional pinch to the inside points of the smaller triangles, which need to stay folded in half. The flower petals will radiate around a square cone.

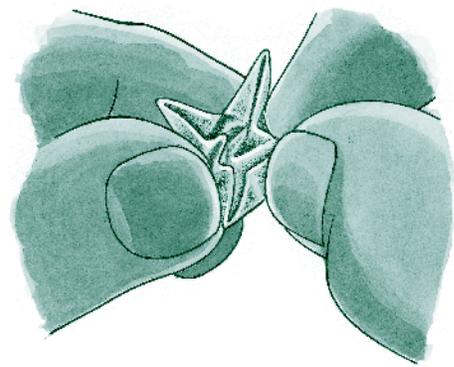


5. Make a hole for the stem in the base of the lily, using a needle tool.



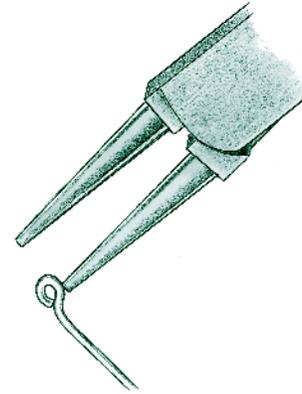
6. Fire the lily facedown on the removable kiln shelf.

7. Make small adjustments with your fingers after the piece is fired, if necessary—easy to do with the delicate sheet.

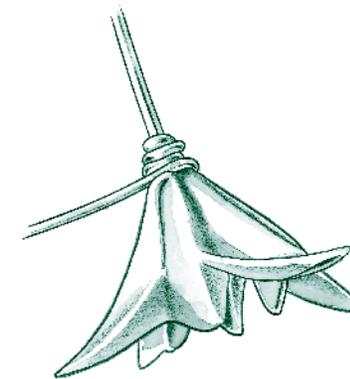
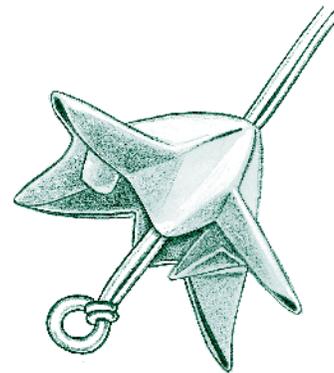


8. Finish as desired. I like a bright silver finish for this earring, so I tumbled it for 20 minutes before assembling the earring. If you prefer, you can add a patina.

9. To make the ear wire that is a continuous part of the design, first cut both pieces of the wire in half. Make a small loop in one end of the 20-gauge wire with the round-nose pliers; this will be the stem. Hook the 24-gauge wire through this loop, and wrap it around the stem several times, close to the loop.



10. File the hole in the lily to an oval shape, and run both wires through the hole so the loop is tucked inside the lily. Wind the smaller wire around the stem and up onto the flower. Trim off the excess, and tuck the end into the wrapping.



11. Decide how far you want the earring dangle from the ear, then bend the wire into an open oval the appropriate length. Trim off any excess. File the end of the wire that will go through the ear so there are no rough edges.



pieces, lending an organic feel to the straight folds. Because metal clay sheet is made without water, the individual layers of the folded piece will remain separate after firing, allowing minor adjustments to be made.

Fired metal clay sheet is a thin 26-gauge fine silver that has little strength. When selecting a project, try to choose an origami design that folds back over itself, and don't leave any protruding single layers unsupported. Since the metal clay sheet is pure silver once fired, fragile areas can be reinforced using lump metal clay or traditional metalworking techniques. You can attach a fired piece of clay sheet to a heavier piece of metal by soldering or using cold connections.

Supplies You'll Need

For the beginner projects in this book, you'll be using metal clay sheet and sterling silver wire with ready-made findings. I used the 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-square (6 cm) PMC sheet for the projects in this book; however, there is a rectangular size (1 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches [2.6 x 12 cm]) that is good for projects that use quarter sheets.

NOTE: Unless otherwise specified, the projects in this book use one metal clay sheet. Projects that call for half or quarter sheets require you to cut a full sheet to the desired size. For easy cutting, leave the sheet in its plastic packaging, and use a metal ruler and utility knife to cut through both the plastic and the sheet.



Basic Supply Kit

Besides your metal clay sheet, for any project in this book make sure you have the items on the following list.



Smooth, hard surface of nonstick silicone

Needle tool

Metal ruler

Utility knife

Kiln or butane torch

I can't overemphasize the importance of a smooth, hard work surface. This surface is your first folding tool. A sheet of smooth, nonstick silicone that can be cleaned between projects is good to cover your workspace. Any lint or grit on the work surface will be picked up in the metal sheet, leaving impressions on the unfired metal clay. When the clay shrinks during firing, those imperfections will really stand out.

TIP: If you work on a plastic or acrylic sheet, you can slide the piece off the sheet onto the kiln shelf later, without disturbing it.

The needle tool is a blunt needle on a wooden handle. It's useful for when your fingers won't fit into a tiny space. You'll need a utility knife and a metal ruler to ensure straight, accurate cuts.

Additional Supplies Kit

The advanced projects will incorporate PMC+ in lump, slip, and syringe form as well as fine silver wire. In addition to the tools listed for the beginner projects, you'll need the tools listed below.



Reusable flexible nonstick sheet

Olive oil or olive-oil-based hand balm

Fine paintbrush

Distilled water

Rubber-tipped shaper

Salon file (fine)

Cotton swab

Wire cutters

Chain-nose pliers

Round-nose pliers

Round needle file

Cup warmer (optional)

Attaching Findings, Other Types of Metal Clay, & Embellishments

After you have some experience working with folding metal clay sheet, you may choose to attach lump clay to the unfired origami piece. Items you may decide to attach include wire for beads, stones wrapped in metal clay, or a formed metal clay bail. All added metal clay will have to dry thoroughly before firing, but the metal clay sheet does not.

Lump Metal Clay

Metal clay in lump form can be joined to metal clay sheet before the sheet is fired or after, with an additional firing. This lets the individual with no metal working experience make complicated multistep pieces. Developed before metal clay sheet, lump clay looks and performs much like a piece of potter's clay—it can be molded, carved, and stamped.

I can't stress enough that when using water to glue lump clay to sheet, use very little, as the unfired sheet will dissolve if it gets too wet. Because of that fact, I like to fire the metal clay sheet and then add clay and details in a second firing.

ATTACHING TO UNFIRED SHEET

The lump metal clays that work best with sheet clay are the low-fire Art Clay 650, PMC+, and PMC3. These metal clays also come in slip and syringe forms that can help you produce an innovative piece of origami jewelry.

To keep the damp metal clay from sticking to you or your work surface, put some olive oil or a balm that contains olive oil on your hands and, if you don't have a nonstick sheet, a little on your work surface. When using metal clay in lump form, pinch off only as much as you'll need for the project. Keep the rest from drying out by returning it to the resealable package. Place the folded sheet on a nonstick surface so it won't need to be moved before the added lump clay is dry; this will avoid tearing or loosening the join.

FROG BASE

The Frog Base is a classic base that begins with the Preliminary Base. The Frog Base is the building fold sequence for the frog, lily, and other traditional origami models.

1. Begin with the Preliminary Base placed so the open edges are facing you.



2. Lift one flap and open the pocket.



3. Push down, spread, and flatten the pocket.



4. Fold the lower flap over so its lower edge rests on the center.



5. Unfold the last step.



6. Lift the center of the edge that was made in step 3.

