



# Making Memories with Resin: Tips and Tricks

by Joyce Trowbridge

## Materials used in to make the resin charms in the photos:

- 30ml UV Resin
- 5 Silicone Molds to make charms
- 0.18 fl oz E6000
- 2 Small Brushes
- 1 Package of Dried Flowers
- 2 Mini Sample Bags of Mica Powder
- 5 20ss Flatback Crystals
- 10 16ss Flatback Crystals
- 10 12ss Flatback Crystals
- 2 Mini Tassels
- 5 Jump Rings
- 2 TierraCast Pinch Bails
- 1 Faux Leather Cord Necklace

## Tools:

- Bead Mat
- Chain Nose Pliers
- Toothpicks
- Wipes or Damp Paper Towels
- Tweezers
- Piece of Paper
- Sunlit Area/UV Lamp
- Emery Board
- Nitrile Gloves



*Make your own souvenir of a special moment or trip.*

*With a little collection of decorative bits, a silicon mold, and some UV Resin, a personalized charm can appear with magic from the sun!*



## Getting Started:

- Work on a flat surface like a table top or counter. Protect your surface with a plastic sheet or a piece of cardboard/ heavy card stock. A cardboard box with low sides or an old cookie sheet(not to be used for food afterwards) makes for an easy to transport tray. This working space should not be in direct sunlight while prepping and creating.
- Choose your decorative bits. Arrange them in the empty mold to play with design. Once design is how you want it, you can start planning the method of adding your resin. Taking a photo helps reference your design when having to add the resin in layers.
- Crystals and rocks can lose their facets and sparkles under resin. Better to have them at the top layer. Either use a thin layer of resin to just capture the edges but not cover them, or glue the crystals on after.

## Things to consider when working with resin:

- UV resin needs UV rays to cure. If decorative bits are opaque, the UV resin will not cure behind the opaque bits. Try to keep opaque bits to a minimum.
- One way to work around opaque bits is to pour the resin in layers, curing after each layer. Start with a thin layer in the empty mold and cure. Then add the decorative bits on top. Pour a new layer and cure.
- Glue can help keep the decorative bits in place. Use E6000 or similar. Keep in mind the glue's curing time (check manufacturer's suggested times). Glue must be cured before adding another layer of resin.
- Mica powder is a nice way to add color and shimmer. Use a small paper cup or plastic medicine cup to mix some into the resin before pouring. A little goes a long way. Careful not to add too much that may block the decorative bits. It can also be brushed into the mold before pouring the resin to give color to the background. Look for the green charm in our photos to see an example of this.
- Keeping the layers thin can bring the best results since they allow the resin to cure in each layer. Also can bring the decorative bits closer to surface, or make them look like they are floating.
- UV resin is self leveling, but can dip inwards when not enough is applied.
- Too many air bubbles? Popping with a toothpick can work for the bigger ones. Use a flame from a lighter or an air dryer (low setting) to "heat" the bubbles to the surface. Make sure when using the flame or air dryer to move back and forth quickly, don't hover. Don't use direct heat, just bring it near the resin. Too much heat can yellow the resin or warp the mold. Be in a well ventilated area. Wear goggles, face mask, and gloves for your protection.
- Wear gloves while handling uncured resin.
- Have wipes or damp paper towels handy for little drips and spills.



**Curing UV resin:**

- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions when using a UV lamp. Each manufacturer has different settings and suggested curing times. Can be as little as 90 seconds or up to 15 minutes.
- One thing about UV resin is that you can use the sun! Either place the molds near a window with sunlight or take it outside. Using an old cookie sheet or a cardboard box with low sides can help transport them to the sunlight if needed.
- Sunlight takes longer than a UV lamp, but is still fairly quick. Curing times can be between 5-20 minutes, depending on the thickness of the layers, what decorative bits are in it, and how sunny or not so sunny it is. You can always poke an edge with a toothpick to test the hardness.
- Once the last layer is cured you can pop it out of the mold. If the back side didn’t get enough UV rays, it may come out sticky or slightly liquid. Place it back in the surface, front facing down. Let the backside cure.



**Other things to consider:**

- Patience is key, don’t rush!
- Think of your first pieces as practice pieces. UV resin is fun and easy, yet can have oopsies. Maybe make a few before using that favorite decorative bit. Or if you are excited with any result, use it!
- Air bubbles can add fun to the piece :)



**Helpful care tips for silicone molds:**

- Your silicone molds should be stored flat in a single layer to help prevent bending and warping.
- Keep them out of direct sunlight or heat when not in use as too much heat or sunlight can start to breakdown or warp the molds.
- Wash with mild soap and warm water after using. Do not use harsh cleaners. Pat and air dry completely before storing.

