

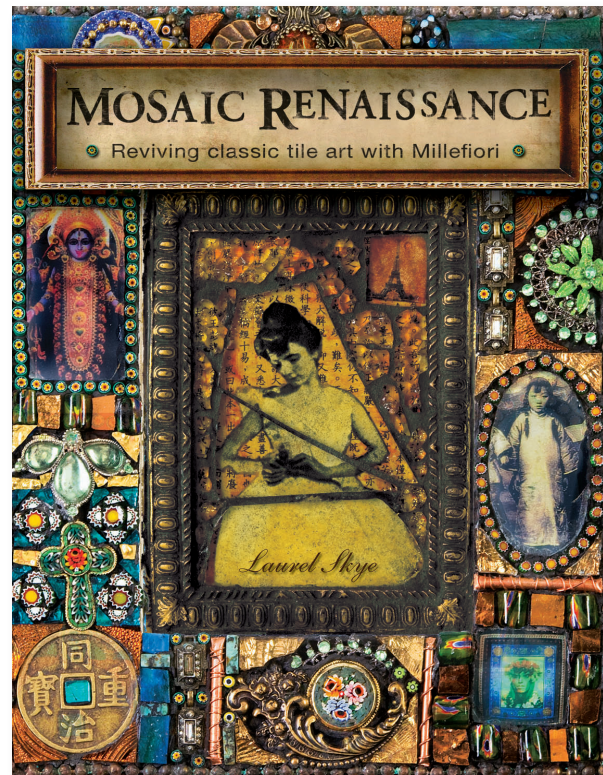
Mosaics: Working with Grout

Working with grout – sounds kind of intimidating, doesn't it? Well, it doesn't have to be scary at all. In fact, Laurel Skye thinks it's messy good fun, and she aims for you to think so too.

Skye, author of *Mosaic Renaissance*, will teach you all you need to know about working with this great medium, a necessity when working in mosaic. From mixing to applying to finishing, soon enough you'll have the skills to step up and create beautiful and versatile mosaic works all your own!

To learn more about or purchase *Mosaic Renaissance* by Laurel Skye, [click here](#).

www.CreateMixedMedia.com



Mosaic Renaissance is published by North Light Books, an imprint of F+W Media, Inc.

Working With Grout

Grouting can be fun. It can be messy, too. The process of grouting is reminiscent of making mud pies in kindergarten. Grouting helps stabilize a mosaic and also provides a background to accent your design.

Mixing Grout

Grouting will always be the last step of a project (well, right before admiring your work!). You'll need to whip up a batch of grout before you actually start to do the dirty work.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

bowl
dry grout (I use charcoal colored most of the time)
sponge
water
latex gloves or plastic knife



1. ADD WATER

Start by squeezing a wet sponge over the dry grout, adding a bit of water at a time. (This gives you control over the amount of water added.)



2. MIX

Using a gloved hand, mix the grout with the water, with the objective of making a consistency of peanut butter or a brownie mix. I know some people are grossed out by putting their hands into this mix, so if you would rather use a disposable putty knife, that's fine.

Troubleshooting: Grout that's too thin

When starting out, many people don't add enough water and get grout that's too dry. They overcompensate by placing the container of grout under the tap and running too much water into it. The result is a mixture like miso soup. So, to avoid too-thin grout, stay away from the tap!

Applying Grout

Now it's time for the fun part!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

Grouting Kit
wet grout dry grout
latex gloves sponge
grouting elf



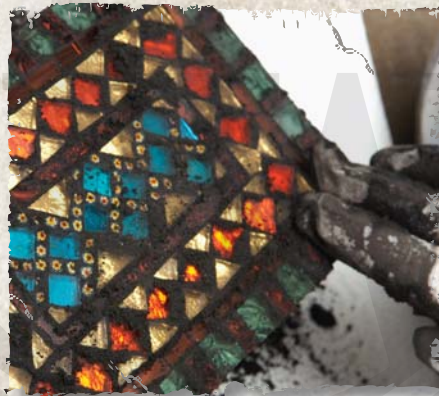


1. WORK GROUT INTO SPACES

Drop a lump of grout onto the mosaic piece. Wearing gloves, massage the grout into the spaces between the tiles.

2. PULL OFF EXCESS GROUT

Use your fingers to feel for unfilled spaces. Pack in more grout as needed, working over uneven tile areas carefully. After the piece is covered, use your finger or grouting elf to pull off the excess grout.



3. COVER WITH DRY GROUT

While grout is still wet, cover the wet grout with a pile of dry grout. Rub the dry grout into the wet grout with firm pressure in a circular motion using your fingertips. The dry grout helps eliminate air pockets you may have missed. The abrasion also removes excess grout, shortening messy sponging time.

4. BUFF OFF GROUT MIX

Buff off the bulk of the wet/dry grout, then continue cleaning off clumped grout residue with the grout elf.

5. SPONGE OFF GROUT

Wet a sponge and wring out the excess water before swiping it across the surface to remove any remaining grout. Rotate your sponge to a clean side each time you wipe.



Finishing Touches



To make for a grout job that is picture perfect, follow these tips:

- Wipe one section with the sponge only once or twice at a time. Repeatedly sponging over the same area will remove grout from the spaces and spread a layer of film over the surface.
- When the piece is almost done, dry it carefully with a soft cloth.
- Check your dried mosaic to see where some "excavation" might be necessary. Use a craft knife to clean unwanted grout off the surface of the tiles.
- After about 72 hours, clean your piece with white vinegar, buffing the surface to a beautiful shine.