



Heather's Groovy Tool HOLLOW Bead Magic Tricks...

My favorite part of teaching is when students have an "ah ha!" moment.

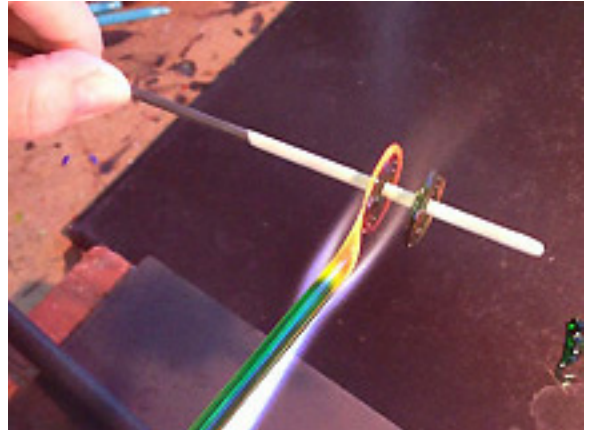
The technique that provokes the most "ah ha!" moments comes when I use my Groovy Tool to demo my method for making a hollow bead. Students who have struggled for years with hollow beads finally find success and I love helping them do this.

My goal is to share a few of my hollow bead magic tricks to put you in control of your beadmaking.

Heather

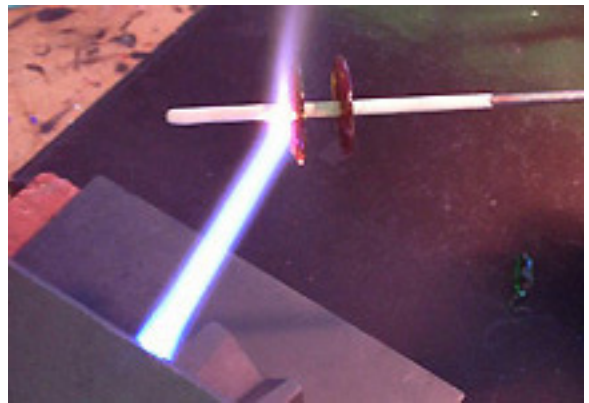
Let the Magic Begin!

Start by making two disks, side by side on one mandrel, spaced about 3/8" apart.

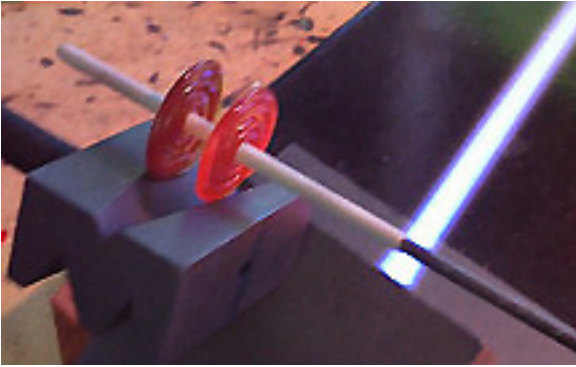


Build the disks simultaneously, alternating between the two disks as you build them. This keeps both disks warm and helps prevent cracking.

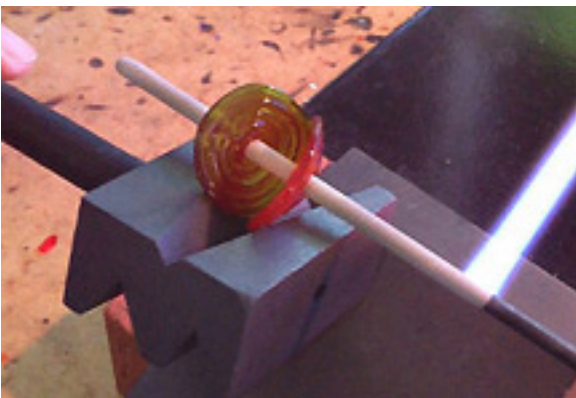
Once the disks are 3/4" to 1" in diameter warm the outside faces/surfaces of each disk and then carefully warm the outside edges.



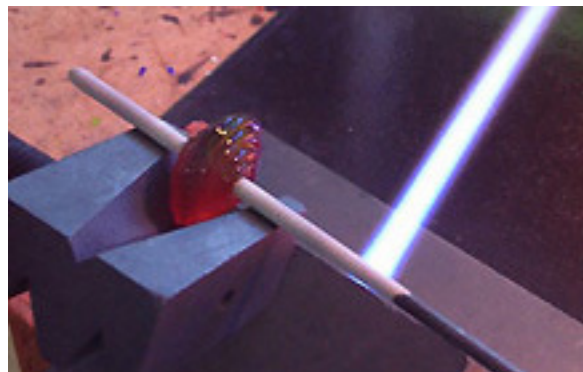
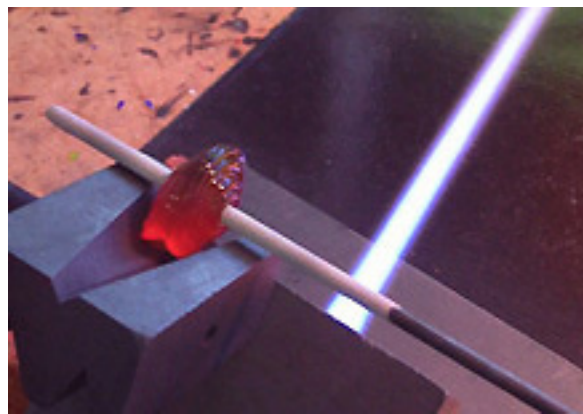
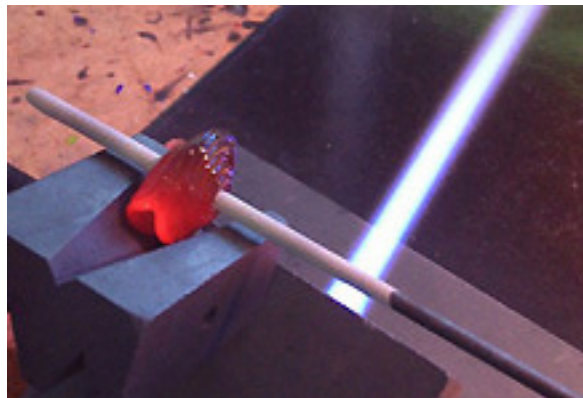
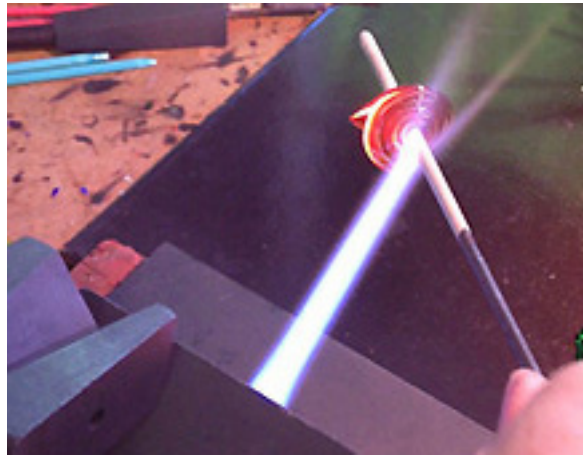
Position the Groovy Tool up near the torch with the largest groove on top.



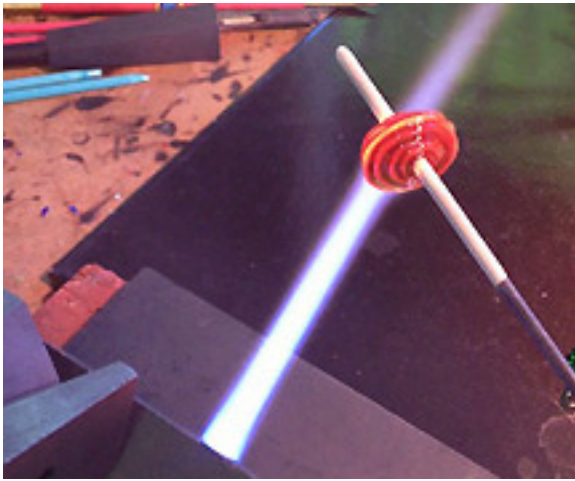
Roll the two warm disks into the groove so they kiss each other and connect. Then keep rolling.



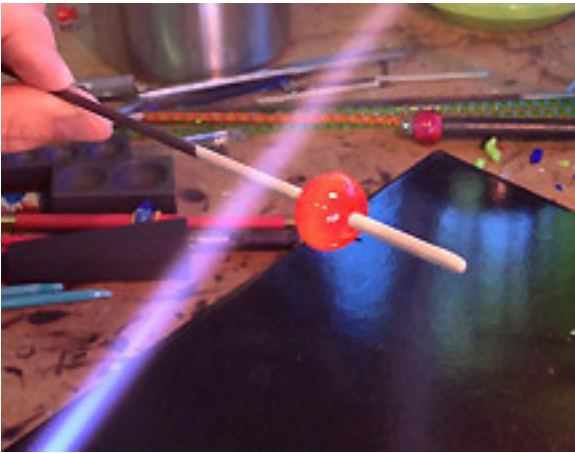
Sometimes this takes more than one try, have patience.



After the two sides connect, evenly heat the entire bead. You can actually see it puff up a bit as the heat expands the glass.



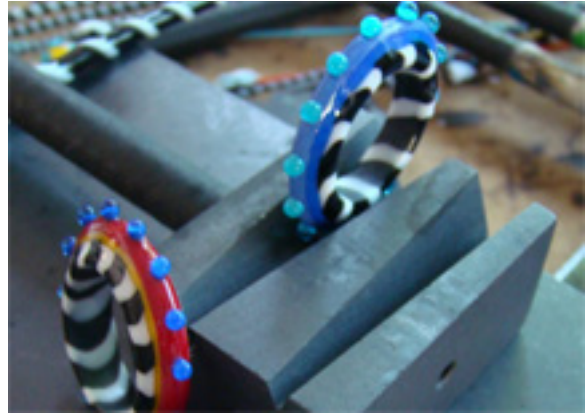
Keep heating to make the glass smooth and you have a hollow bead!



Don't forget, there are two sides to this great tool:

One side is for making great hollow beads but what about the other side of the Groovy Tool?

The second side of the Groovy Tool gives you two width options for making bicone shaped spacers & beads.



Heather's helpful hints for making Groovy Tool spacers:

"When marvering spacers I tend to work in one spot on the tool rather than using the entire length of the groove. As the spacer becomes narrower I move it into the narrower part of the tool to sharpen the bicone edge. It is RARE that I make a perfect spacer in one pass. No wait....I never make a perfect spacer in one pass!"

