

# PMC+

The scientists who created Precious Metal Clay originally in 1993 have later produced a specialized version that has a higher proportion of metal-to-binder. More than simply a new recipe with the old ingredients, PMC+ (PMCplus) uses differently shaped metal particles and a slightly different binder. Here is a summary of its benefits and drawbacks.

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## Pros

Stronger after firing  
Shorter firing time  
Several possible firing temperatures  
Same 100% silver assay after sintering  
Can be combined with Original PMC

## Cons

Slightly sticky consistency  
Less easy to model details  
Slightly coarse surface after firing  
Lower shrinkage rate (doesn't shrink as much)

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## Do I need two kinds of PMC?

No. Artists and craftspeople have been making exciting work with standard PMC for years and that's not going to stop. The new material is especially useful for repairs, making rings, and setting certain stones. If your work includes these, PMC+ could become an important part of your studio. Like adding a new spice to your kitchen supplies or a new tool to your workbench, personal experience will be your best guide.

## Using PMC+

PMCplus is handled exactly like standard PMC. Lubricate your hands and tools with a thin film of olive oil and avoid working in a draft or under a warm lamp to minimize drying out the material as you use it. Standard PMC and PMC+ can be intermingled so there is no problem with using the same tools, even if trace amounts of one type is left on the tools.

Dry PMC+ in air, with a hair dryer, or in a kitchen oven. PMC+ can be fired like standard PMC (2 hours @ 1650° F) but it will reach maturity much quicker. In fact, PMC+ can be fired in three ways, all creating the same dense material:

- 900° C (1650° F) for 10 minutes
  - or 850° C (1560° F) for 20 minutes
  - or 800° C (1470° F) for 30 minutes
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This lower temperature option makes it possible to fire in place certain gems that cannot withstand the higher temperatures of standard PMC. Sterling elements and findings that will melt at 1650 F can now be implanted safely. Here are a few examples...

A) Make a pendant from standard PMC, taking advantage of the shrinkage to provide detail and the handling for its ability to model smoothly. Dry, then fire for 2 hours at 1650F/ 900C. Make a loop from sterling wire and attach it to the back of the piece with PMC+. Allow this to dry overnight then set it into a kiln at 800C for

a half hour. The pendant loop will be firmly attached without risk to the piece or the sterling.

B) You have tested some beach glass and found that it often loses its color during a standard firing. Make a piece from PMC+ and include the glass. Allow it to dry overnight then set it into a 900o C kiln for 10 minutes. Turn off the kiln and open the door, allowing the piece to cool slowly. The shorter duration of high temperatures might make the difference between a washed out lump and a rich color. There are hundreds of types of glass, so experimentation will be needed.

Provided by the

