

Decorative Lighted Glass Blocks

Design, Fabrication, and Text by Geneva Perkins



Sometimes the simplest home decor can be the most elegant. Take these lighted glass blocks, for instance. There are lots of ways that they can be changed about to make quick and easy Christmas or holiday decorations, a welcomed remembrance for a teacher or coworker, or a personalized gift for a cherished friend or family member. Any way you look at them, these blocks will light up your life.

Drilling the Block

First prepare your drilling setup. I use a small bathroom garbage can as a handy place to do the drilling, since the block needs to be covered with water during the drilling process. Set the glass block into the garbage can and fill the can with water to 1/2" past the top of the block. You will be using your core drill bit to drill a hole in the block that will cause a 1/2" plug of glass to be removed from the block.

- Materials and Tools Required
- 8x8 or 10x10 Standard Glass Block
- String of 20 Lights
- Drill Drill Press Garbage Can
- 1/2" Diamond Tech Core Drill Bit
- Mosaic Pattern Shears Mosaic Glue
- Scrap Glass for Mosaic Grout
- Assorted Ribbons, Bows, Buttons, and Silk Flowers
- Glue Gun High-Temp Hot Glue

Step 1

Drill a hole into the block a little at a time.

Start the hole, lift the bit out, then drill a little more. Do this until the hole is completed. Sometimes the glass plug will fall into the block, but it will not be seen in the lights.

Step 2

Use a drill press for easier drilling.

The drill press helps to stabilize the block so that it doesn't slip while you are drilling the block. Even if you use a press, though, the block still needs to be submerged in the water while you are drilling.

After you have finished drilling, rinse the block on the inside and let it dry thoroughly.

Step 3

Push the lights through the 1/2" hole into the block.

Take the end of the lights that does not have the plug and begin pushing the lights into the block one at a time. Shake the block to spread out the lights.

Decorating the Block

If you like decor that is simple, then you're done. But you can also let your imagination go free and add your own beautiful and unique mosaic design.

If you'll be using a mosaic, you will need to select a ready-made pattern that will fit whatever size block you are using or design your own pattern. Create your pattern to fit the size of the flat area of your glass block. Cut out the pattern with mosaic pattern shears. Apply your mosaic pattern to the glass, cut, and grind to fit. Then glue the glass pieces down with mosaic glue and finish it by applying grout.

If you prefer, you could decorate your block with bows, ribbon, silk flowers or just about any "found" items that will stay put and be compatible for use with glue gun and high-temp hot glue.



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Geneva Perkins began her love affair with art at an early age as the fifth-generation member of a long line of professional artists, jewelry makers, and restorers of Indian artifacts. Her great-uncle is Joe Grandee, a Texas state artist who is famous for his depiction of scenes of the American Old West. Geneva has been selling her own artwork since she was fifteen.

Geneva and her mother have published twenty-nine pattern books under the name West of the Moon Publications, and Geneva also has written books for Diamond Tech. She began teaching flameworking in 1995 and currently spends anywhere from two to six hours a day at the torch. She offers classes at her son's studio, West of the Moon Art Glass Studio, Inc., and also travels to do shows and seminars. Be sure to visit Geneva's new website at www.westofthemoon.us.