

I have seen some of the cutest things made with buttons for quarter inch scale, surprisingly I never imagined I would find some I wanted to use. I needed to make something for table exchanges. I knew I wanted to do something that had a seashell or similar theme. I looked my local hobby store over for any and all ideas. Finally, I came home with some seashell shaped plastic buttons.

These instructions cover making a side table, but other pieces of furniture can be made using similar steps, just adjusting the size of button(s) used.

Materials needed:

Shaped plastic buttons – I used sand dollars and starfish approximately 1/2 inch wide
Wood, cardboard or plastic disks – I used 3/8 inch wide by 1/16 inch thick wood ones
Paint – I used white and pearl white

Tools needed:

White glue
Super glue
Tweezers
Wire Side cutters
Sanding tool: I used a multi-purpose tool
Craft knife

Steps

1. Cut off the shank of the button if present. I used side cutters – like for wire – to cut away most of the shank (I could have used a cut off wheel tip on my multi-purpose tool.)
Figures 1 and 2
2. Using a multi-purpose tool, I smoothed the back flat, Figure 3. I used a tip that has rings or drums that are pushed onto the tip, Figure 4. Other tips can be seen in Figure 5. Other options are sandpaper, files or a manicure tool that is battery operated, Figure 6. The latter being a tool that requires the button be pushed to work so may be less intimidating, but still much faster than sandpaper or files.
3. For my tables, I choose a sand dollar shape for the middle and a starfish for the base. To make these fit together better, I sanded a groove into the starfish, Figure 7. I used the end of my multi-purpose tool sanding drum to this.
4. I also sanded the top and bottom of the sand dollar to help my tables be level and for better gluing surfaces, Figure 8. A different shape of button might not require as much or may require more.
5. Use a craft knife to scrape away any flashing or excess plastic left behind by the button manufacturer or from when the sanding is done. Figure 9
6. Glue the sand dollar to the starfish base. I used super glue to do this gluing but a good tacky glue will work.
7. I used my multi-purpose tool to sand a dip in the underside of my wood disk. Figure 11
8. Glue the wood disk to the sand dollar top. I used a dot of super glue on the sand dollar and a dab of tacky glue on the wood. Figure 12

1-48 scale button side table Instructions by Preble McDaniel copyright 2013
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9. Paint the entire table white. I had to do 3 coats to cover the color of the buttons. Spray paint would have been another option. Since I was making more than one set, I did mix my colors. I could have matched the buttons and not had to paint them, but stained or painted the top.
10. Paint entire table with pearl white.

My finished tables are little over 1/2 inch tall.



Figure 1. Wire side cutters – old ones are fine



Figure 2. Button with shank and after cut with the side cutters



Figure 3. Multi-purpose tool



Fig 4. Sand down the shank until back is flat.



Figure 5. Other multi-purpose tool tips that sand



Figure 6. Nail file tool (battery operated) and other tips

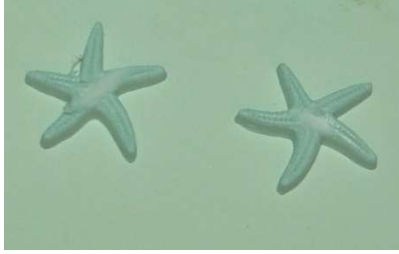


Figure 7. sand a groove to help pieces fit together better



Figure 8. sand the top and bottom edge of the sand dollar so it is flat

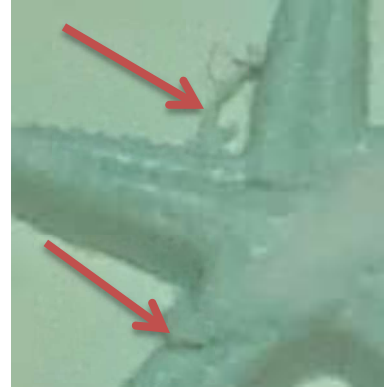


Figure 9. use craft knife to remove any excess bits from edges or where sanded down



Figure 10. Glue sand dollar button to the starfish button



Figure 11. Sand a groove into the back of wood disk



Figure 12. Glue sand dollar to the wood disk.



Figure 13. Paint the entire table white – took 3 coats.



Figure 14. Paint the table with pearl paint.