



DIY Hanging Planter

By: Tanya Alexander



I am one of those crafters that can't resist a unique find from a thrift shop, estate sale or friend's get-rid-of box. If something strikes me as interesting, I squirrel it away in my studio, with the idea that at some point, I will have a moment of inspiration and know exactly how to make it one-of-a-kind.

While I am sadly not much of a plant nurturer, I did see this plain little ceramic planter, complete with mini macramé cording and wooden beads, and thought to myself, "What a cute plant holder this would make, with a little bit of color!" This is a simple DIY project that only requires a handful of supplies, and is a perfect way to showcase that one plant in your house that has somehow managed to survive... or a plastic one :)

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MATERIALS

- Glazed ceramic planter (can also use a white ceramic vase!)
- Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow paints (for macramé - I used Azure Blue and Magenta)
- Jacquard Piñata Alcohol Inks (I used Pearl, Rich Gold, Baja Blue & Pink)
- Jacquard Piñata Claro Extender
- Jacquard Piñata Clean Up Solution
- Small paint brush
- Water cup
- Paper towels
- Masking tape
- Gloves
- Sharpie® fine point marker (optional, if you want to sign your work)
- Krylon® Kamar Spray Varnish
- Krylon® UV-Resistant Clear Gloss Varnish
- Krylon® Triple-Thick Clear Glaze
- Small houseplant (or decorative faux plant)



PROJECT STEPS

1. Wash your planter thoroughly in hot, soapy water. Then, rinse and dry to ensure a clean working surface.



2. Wearing gloves, paint the top half of your macramé lengths with your darkest color of Dye-Na-Flow (in this case, Azure Blue).



3. With a rinsed brush, paint the bottom half of your macramé lengths with your lightest Dye-Na-Flow color (in this case, Magenta), leaving a small gap between where the colors will blend.



4. Once you've blocked in all areas with your 2nd color, use that color to back-fill the gaps. Then, overlap the first color with the second for 1-2" to achieve a gradation of color. I gradiated the color roughly halfway up the main lengths, as well as where the knot wraps below the top braided loop, as shown.



5. Allow painted macramé to dry thoroughly. Using Piñata Rich Gold, paint the wooden beads (if applicable) that cover the knotted loops holding the macramé lengths to the ceramic planter. Allow to dry between coats.



6. Once the macramé and beads are dry, loop the length into a coil and secure inside of the planter with masking tape. This will keep the segment protected throughout the rest of the project.

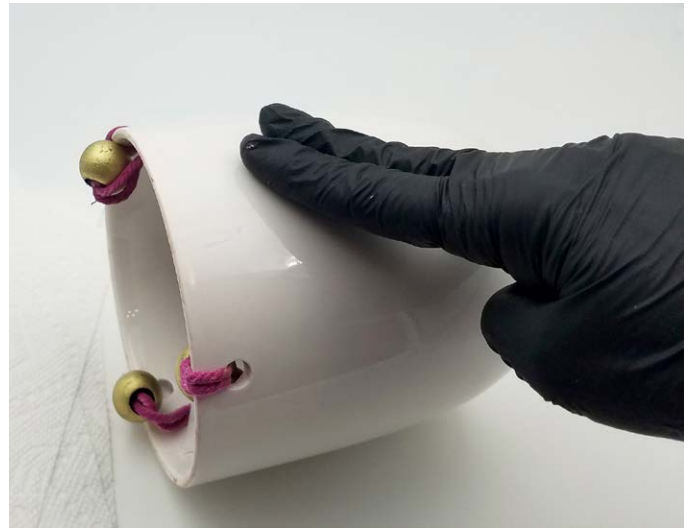


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7. IMPORTANT: Always wear gloves and work in a very well-ventilated area when using Piñata Alcohol Inks!

Working in small areas, drip a couple drops of Piñata Claro Extender onto outside of planter. Using gloved fingertips, rub the Claro Extender into the areas where you want the color to blend. I chose to keep the color mainly in the center band of the planter, leaving white areas at the top and bottom for contrast.



8. Using a non-metallic Piñata color, add a drop to the area with the Claro Extender, and lightly blow on the drop (with your mouth, like "whistling") about 6" away from the surface to disperse it. It helps to tilt the piece as you work to keep the color from migrating out of the intended area. Since this is a curved surface, I found blowing on the drop lightly worked really well; methods like a blow dryer or compressed air pushed the ink around too much, causing unwanted drip effects. Continue working in small areas until you are happy with the dispersed color and placement all the way around the piece.

NOTE: if you want more dispersion, add another drop of Claro Extender and blow on the area to further disperse the color.



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9. Using Piñata Pearl, shake well then add drops on areas of color and lightly blow on them to disperse for pearlescent accents. If an area is too solid, use a drop of Claro Extender to disperse the metallic pigment and blend into the base color.



10. Using another transparent/non-metallic color, repeat the layering color/dispersion process. NOTE: less is more - to retain the watercolor-like effect, it really only takes a couple drops of color and a drop of Claro Extender.



NOTE: Since the Baja Blue is so much darker than the Pink, I found it necessary to go back and add a bit more Pink and Claro Extender to some spots. That helped to soften the harder areas of color and achieve a violet color blend in other sections.

11. Shake well, and apply Pinata Rich Gold as the final metallic accent layer for the piece. Use Claro Extender to disperse color, as needed. Since Rich Gold is such a rich, opaque color, I always add it last - I find it "pops" and blends best on top of the other colors on ceramics (rather than as a base layer).



12. If you notice color runs/drips: add a few drops of Piñata Clean Up Solution to a clean paper towel, and wipe the drip away. I tend to do this as a final step in my pieces, rather than as I go, because sometimes what I think are "mistakes" at the time actually incorporate themselves into interesting aspects of the overall design. In this case, some color dripped well out of the intended center color band area; I used Clean Up Solution to clean off the drip, making sure I also wiped off the other white areas for a nice finished surface. Allow the project to dry for 24 hours before continuing.



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13. Optional: Use a thin-point Sharpie marker to sign your work. You can also add dot or line elements, as well as custom illustrations around your piece if you'd like. NOTE: larger areas of marker designs may run in the final varnishing - use sparingly. Allow to dry for an additional 12 hours before proceeding.



14. Varnishing alcohol inks on ceramic is a 3-part process, and the product type and order of products used really does matter! Alcohol Inks can be easily reactivated by varnishes, so be sure to carefully follow these instructions to avoid a sad blurry mess!



FIRST: Working on a protected surface in a well-ventilated area (outdoors, out of direct sunlight is recommended), spray your overturned planter with 2-3 light coats of the Kamar Varnish. Allow 60 minutes dry time between coats. Cure 24 hours.

NEXT: Spray 2-3 light coats of UV-Resistant Clear Varnish. Allow 60 minutes dry time between coats. Cure 24 hours.

LAST: Finish with 2 light coats of Triple Thick Clear Glaze. Allow 60 minutes dry time between coats. Final cure 24-48 hours.

HELPFUL TIPS:

- Stay 8-10" away from pieces when spraying, and spray in light, sweeping strokes across the piece (not straight on, otherwise you may end up with varnish drips).
- In between spray coats and curing time, protect your planter from dust settling on it by covering with a plastic bucket.

Un-tape your macramé, add your real (or fake) plant and you're done!

NOTE: While the final varnishing process is very protectant, your planter will retain it's color best when hung indoors, away from direct sunlight.



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ABOUT THE ARTIST: Hello, my name is Tanya Alexander. I am a Graphic / Web Designer at Jacquard Products. I'm also a lifelong fine artist working in a variety of mediums, including: traditional acrylic canvas work, pen and ink, ceramics, textile art, face/body painting, large format muraling and artistic neo-traditional tattooing. I've enjoyed experimenting with a wide variety of new mediums while working at Jacquard, including Silk Colors, Piñata Alcohol Inks, Textile Color, Lumiere, Neopaque, Pearl Ex Powdered Pigments, Cyanotype, Indigo and more. You can find me and my work on Instagram: @artbytanyaalexander. —

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