

Bottle Cap Tutorial

By Christi Calvert Brogan

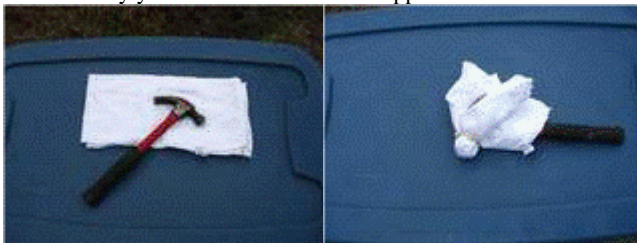
To start decorating and using bottle caps in your LOs, you'll need only 2 tools. A rubber mallet and blank bottle caps. The bottle caps need to be unused, uncrimped ones like you get from a beer/wine making supplier. Here's a pic of what you need:



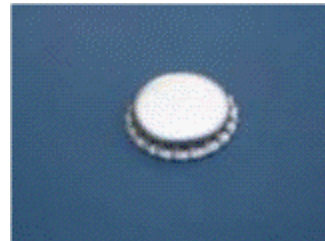
And here's another picture, closer, of the bottle caps themselves. The one on the right is "crown up". This is the way you will need it to be to start the "smashing" process.



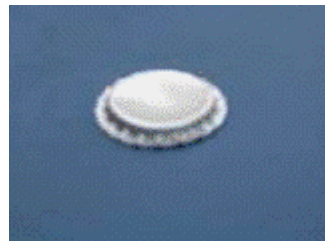
Alternatively you can use a hammer wrapped with a towel for cushioning like this:



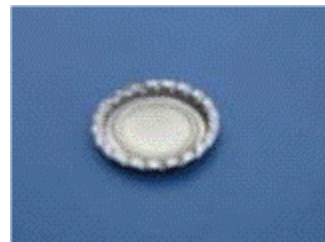
You can crush bottle caps with your Sizzix machine if you have the Sizzlets adapter bar. To do that you just place your bottle cap on the white cutting mat, crown side DOWN, and then slide it under the adapter and pull. This works VERY WELL!!!



Ok, first step to non-Sizzix smashing is to put the bottle cap, crown side up, on a hard surface. I do this outside on the concrete, but you can use a wood block, your cutting mat or eyelet setting mat if you prefer:

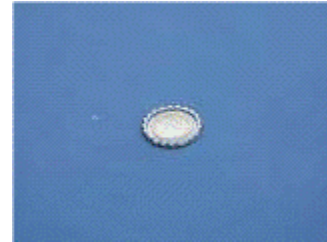


With your rubber mallet or padded hammer, give the cap a couple of light taps on the crown to flatten it slightly like this:

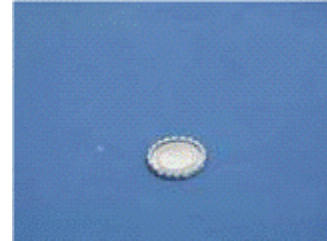


Now flip the cap over so it's crown down, like this:

Now give it several good whacks with your mallet or hammer which will curl the sides and help to remove the sharp edges. This is partially done:



It will look like this when complete:



Now for the fun part! Decorating!!!

There are several things you can do with bottle caps. You can decorate either the front (crown) or the underside of the cap. You can punch holes and attach charms or fibers. You can even punch holes in them and use them to make jewelry!

Ok, in this picture are three different ways that you can decorate caps.

The bottom two are done with UTEE or Ultra Thick Embossing Enamel. The one on the left is done with gold UTEE and has two layers, although you can do as many layers as you want. The one on the right is with black UTEE. You can also use regular embossing powder for this technique.



To begin, you will need to sand the bottle cap surface like such:

This allows the cap to better accept the versamark ink you will use for this technique. Once sanded, make sure you take a damp cloth and wipe them down so that any metal shavings are removed. After that, you'll want to take a paper towel or sponge applicator or even a cotton ball and dab versamark embossing ink onto the crown part of the cap. Once done, sprinkle with UTEE and heat. Make sure you put the cap down on a heat-proof surface and heat with your embossing gun or hold with heat-proof tongs. This way you don't burn your fingers! You can apply a second layer (or more) once the first one is melted to make a thicker enamel coating. For the first cap, this is where I stopped.



For cap #2 (the black one) seen better here:

I took another step. Using a metal seal stamp (normally used for stamping wax seals on letters) while the second layer of enamel was still hot, I placed the stamp into it. Leave the stamp in place until the enamel cools and then remove. It leaves the initial impression in the enamel creating a sort of wax seal cap. You can also use rubber stamps for this process.

The third cap in this picture is done with ultramarine StazOn ink. In the next picture are four caps, including this one, which has been further embellished with a sharpie marker.



To add the StazOn, just use a paper towel or other applicator to dab the ink onto the cap after sanding. You do not HAVE to sand if using StazOn ink, just be careful when applying because the caps are a little slippery...

In these four caps, the three new caps are done with stickers of various kinds. The bottom two are done with homemade stickers. For these two, I took a sheet of scrapbooking paper and used a 1" circle punch to punch out the faces and then applied them to the caps. You can send them through your Xyron to apply adhesive or use thin glue dots, or even glue sticks to apply them. I also have a template for Microsoft Word that allows you to create your own "labels" for the caps. If anyone wants that template just let me know and I'll be happy to email it... The top right cap has a texturized "leather look" sticker from Marah Johnson on it.



Other ideas include using Crystal Lacquer or epoxy resin to cover items within the caps which gives them a sort of snow dome look. Or to put air dry clay inside the cap and then stamp or etch it and let dry. You can also make teeny tiny shakers out of the flattened caps by using microbeads or very fine glitter and then attaching the plastic to the back of the cap before adhering to your page.

The best way to apply caps to your pages include glue dots or pop dots, or, if you've flattened them correctly, even a glue stick will work.

As far as punching holes in your caps, the metal of the caps is pretty thin, so you can use any regular piercing tool, a small nail or even your eyelet hole punch to create the holes. Then you can add fibers, ribbons, or charms to the caps. You can also string the caps together to create your own photo or other style bracelet.

Hope these directions help someone with using the bottle caps. Lots of fun and thanks to everyone who participated in the crop!