

Design Resource

## Glass Decor - Vellore

The Art of Glass Decoration

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Rakshitha

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/glass-decor-vellore>



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## Introduction

Vellore district of Tamil Nadu is considered as one of the oldest cities of South India that is renowned for its cultural impact and historic legacy. It is also one of the leading districts of the state in the aspect of educational development by providing the professional education. Earlier the economic condition of the district was very weak due to the absence of major industries. But in later days as the leading industries by government have been set up, besides them the small scale industries have also gained a remarkable growth. This industrial growth produced employment opportunities in the town and also contributed in the growth of district's economy.

Vellore not only renowned for its history but also popular for the handicrafts that enabled to withstand the challenges successfully through ages and some of the artistries are still flourishing. Some schemes introduced by the state government not only preserved the traditional handicrafts but also promoting their growth. As far as culture and traditional art is concerned Vellore is fortunate enough to possess some highly skilled artisans who have increased the recognition of the handicrafts across the country. Still today quite a lot of people earn their livelihood from their creative pieces of art. One among the much known craft is glass decor.

The history of the glass decoration dates back to the ancient Egyptians. It is said that the Egyptians are the ones who used dark glass for making small vessels and decorated them with contrasting colors of glass threads. Sometimes these glass vessels were also engraved. The art of glass making and engraving spread to Romans. They discovered the methodology of glass blowing which quickly resulted in freedom for craftsmen and developed the different techniques of glass engraving. They used some sort of sharp tools to produce glass engravings which could be enameled or gilded. Romans produced variety of colored glass and also tried out some of the beautiful glass works by blending the glass mosaics.

In Western Europe as the dark ages closed in, glasshouses were appeared. The love for glass decoration of Venetians made them try out new techniques by manipulating the glass in such a way that till then no one had ever tried before and Venice highly developed trading Venetian glass since then. Venetians painted the glass in all the ways by combining several colors in one single object. It created an amazing work of art when the glass and color were combined. It was a great luxury and decorative glass material used for windows and Venice was regarded as the home of art making exquisite glassware and art objects.

The excavations done in different places in India produced several glass objects of different colors like glass beads which belong to Indus valley civilization or Harappa culture. So it seems that the history of Indian glass industry dates back to three- four years before and after Christian era. But Indian glass makers had developed technological skills in the manufacture of beads, bangles and few other articles. But once the Persian craftsmanship of glass making was brought to India, from then they were engaged in the production of glass vessels, glass tiles and other glass decorative objects.

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Today the ancient art of decorating the glass continues to embellish among crafters with the combination of artistic beauty and skilled craftsmanship. One among such crafters is Mohamed Alif, he possess a shop at Vellore for glass decoration. This shop is run by 5-6 workers who are well skilled in glass decorating works. They import the glass slabs in bulk from Chennai and Bangalore. Nearly 20 catalogues for designs they own and also imports the mural designs from Delhi and Chennai. The work is done on orders taken from customers and they provide home delivery.



A group photo of the artisan with his family members.

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Different sizes of brushes used for painting.



Glass bottle on which traditional designs are drawn.

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## Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw materials used for the process of Glass Decor:

- **Glass Slabs:** Glass slabs are the chief material used for glass painting.
- **Diamond Cutting Tool:** The tool that is used in cutting the glass according to the required measurement.
- **Vinyl Sticker Sheet:** Vinyl sticker sheet is used for preparing the stencil.
- **Reference Design:** Reference design is taken to create the designs/paintings on the glass slab.
- **Color Pencil:** Color pencil is used for making the initial sketch for the design on the glass.
- **Cutter:** Cutter is used for etching out the vinyl sticker for creating the stencil.
- **Stain Glass Color:** Stain glass color is used for painting purpose on the glass.
- **Thinner:** Thinner is mixed with the stain glass color to make the color consistency thin.
- **Gas Gun:** Gas gun is used for spraying the color for painting and also used in spraying the sand for frosting the glass.
- **Sand:** Sand is used for frosting the glass.
- **Compass:** Compass is used for measuring the distances.
- **Scale:** Scale is ideal for professional usage. Used in measuring and drawing purpose.
- **Hammer:** Hammer is used in breaking the glass pieces.
- **Circle Template Ruler:** Circle template ruler is used for drawing circular designs.
- **Clear Solution:** Clear solution is applied after the painting is completed for retaining the shining quality finish and durability.

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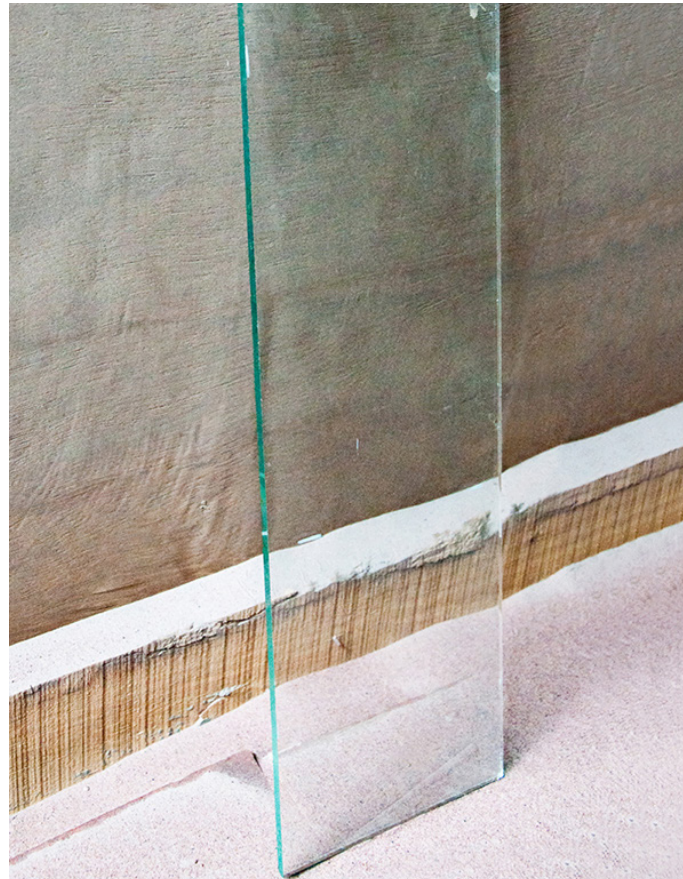
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- **Paint Hardener:** Paint hardener is mixed with the clear solution and painted over the glass on which the painting is made. The key ingredient of the paint hardener is the crystalized salt product which is known as 'sodium polyacrylate'. This crystals quickly absorbs the moisture and turns the paint into solid substance. Sodium polyacrylate needs watery substance to produce this chemical reaction so the hardener is mixed with clear solution and applied.

- **Plier:** Plier is used in holding the glass pieces and cutting out the excess piece of glass.

- **Scrub Sponge Pad:** This is a customized scrub sponge pad used is removing the air bubbles from the vinyl sticker sheet while sticking it on the glass slab.



Glass slab is the basic material used for glass decoration.



Air compressor machine that is attached to the gas gun, which is the main functioning motor.

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Gas gun is used for spraying the color on the glass.



Sand is used for frosting the glass.



Vinyl sticker sheet that is used as a stencil.



Customized scrub sponge pad.

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Compass is used for measuring the distances.



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Cutter is used for etching out the vinyl sticker.



Hammer is used for breaking the glass pieces.

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Diamond cutting tool used in cutting the glass according to the required measurement.



Scale used for measuring and drawing purpose.



Color pencil is used for drawing on the vinyl sheet.

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For drawing circular designs, circle template ruler is used.

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Plier is used for holding the glass pieces.



Stain glass color is used for enameling on glass.



Thinner is mixed with color for making the color consistency thin.

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Hardener is mixed with clear solution and applied on painting as the final treatment of glass painting.



These are air-cured enamel used as glass paints that are scratch resistant and durable.

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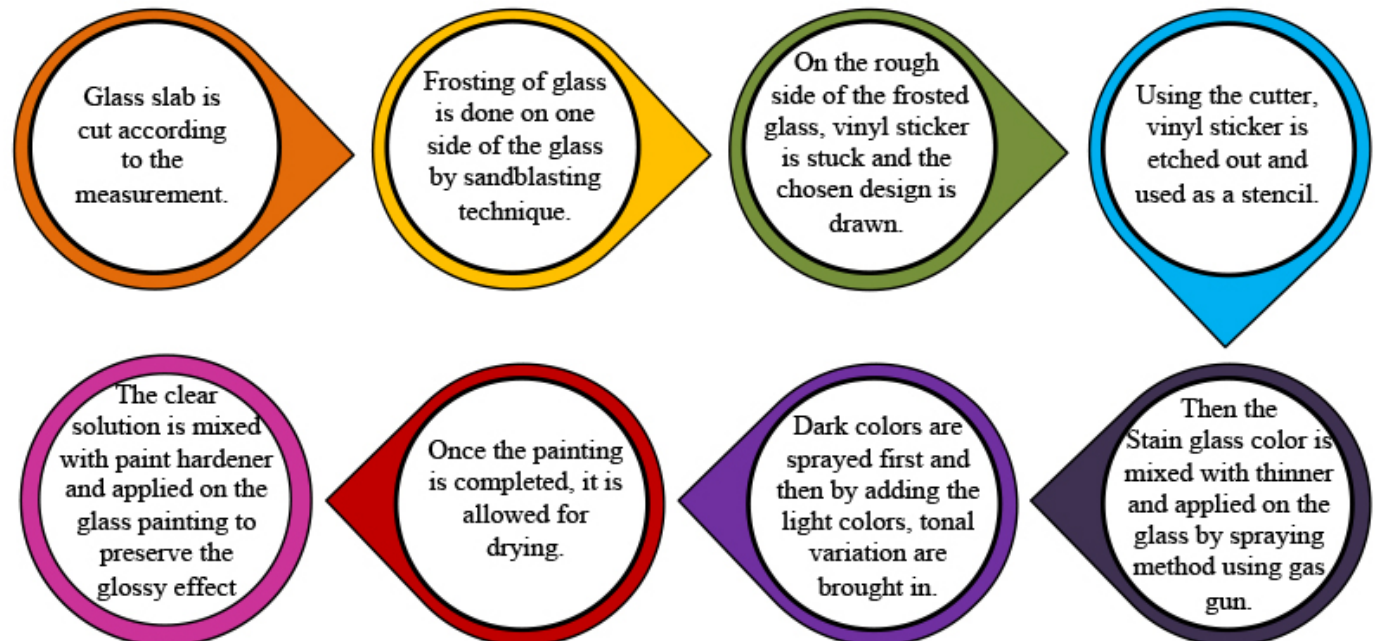
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## Making Process

Glass slabs are bought in bulk and are cut according to the required measurement. Initially frosting of glass is made on one side of the glass. This is done using gas gun by pouring the sand into it and the sand blasting is done, which renders the entire glass slab translucent. Sometimes frosted glass effect is also done by the application of the vinyl sticker that is used as a stencil on the surface of the glass. By frosting the glass, the surface of the glass slab turns into rough outward that enables the paint to withstand easily.

On the rough side of the frosted glass the vinyl sticker sheet is stuck and the chosen design is drawn on the sheet using color pencil. Later by using the cutter, vinyl sticker is etched out and used as a stencil. Then the color is applied on the glass by spraying method, on the required area by rendering the beautiful colored design. Before applying the colors, the stain glass color is mixed with thinner to get the required consistency and sprayed through the gas gun. The glass colors used for painting is the chemical paints. Initially the dark colors are sprayed and then by adding light colors to it the tonal variation of the painting is brought in. Every time when the color has to be changed, the nozzle of the gas gun is cleaned and next color is used. Once whole of the painting is completed by spray painting, it is allowed for drying. In the finishing phase of decorating the glass slab, clear solution is mixed with the paint hardener and applied on the glass painting to preserve the glossy effect and to sustain the durability for longtime.

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Artisan is frosting the glass slab on one/single side.

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Completely frosted glass slab.



Vinyl sticker sheet is spread on the glass slab.



Sticker sheet is cut according the measurement of the frosted glass slab.



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The sticker sheet is separated from the tracing paper that is stuck.



And the Vinyl sticker is stuck on the slab and by using scrub sponge pad air bubbles are removed.



The design is selected from the catalogue.



Artisan draws the design on the vinyl sheet as per the chosen design.

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Close-up of the drawing sketched by the artisan.



The glimpse of the design that is drawn completely on the vinyl that is stuck on glass slab.



By using cutter the whole of the design is cut.



Circle template ruler is used while cutting out the circular designs whenever necessary.

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Vinyl sticker sheet is etched out and used as a stencil.



Required color for enamelling the frosted glass is poured in the gas gun.



Thinner is added to the color to make the consistency thin.



The color and its consistency are checked initially in a corner.

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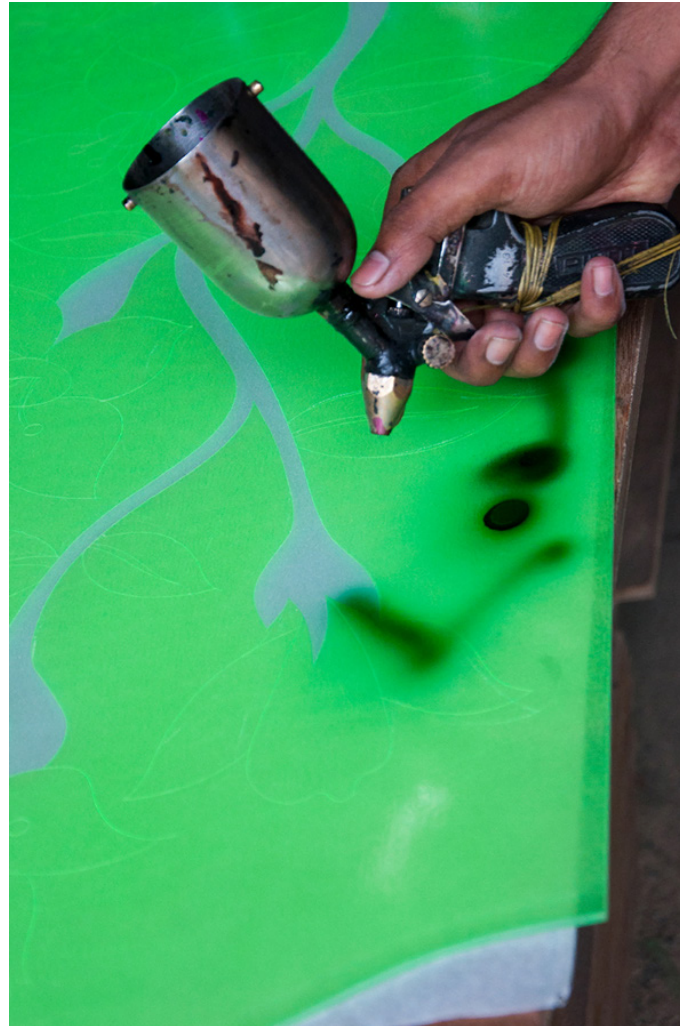
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The first layer of dark color is sprayed on the slab by using gas gun.



One by one in different areas of same design, the vinyl sticker is taken out to spray a different color.



The second dark color (red) is sprayed for the flower.

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Lighter color is added to the design to bring in the tonal variation.

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After completing the coloring, Clear solution is taken.



Paint hardener is added to the clear solution.

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The mixture of clear solution and paint hardener is sprayed all over the painting.



After spraying the mixture of clear solution and hardener, the painting is allowed for drying.



The extras of the vinyl sticker used as the stencil is taken out.



The glimpse of the completed glass painting.

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The impression of the translucent effect of the final product after cleaning.



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## Products

The glass slabs that are decorated by spray painting is sold as per the sq/ft. Designs for these glass painting is either chosen from the catalogue or as per the demand of the customer is made. These glass decorations are done on order basis. Sometimes the glass is decorated by creating designer frosted glass effect using stencil and sold. These decorated glasses are used in making doors, windows, cupboards, mirrors, shelves and for making any of the room of the house, office, schools, place of worship and other commercial buildings, to make them look attractive.



Some of the traditional motifs are also used for decorating the glass pieces.

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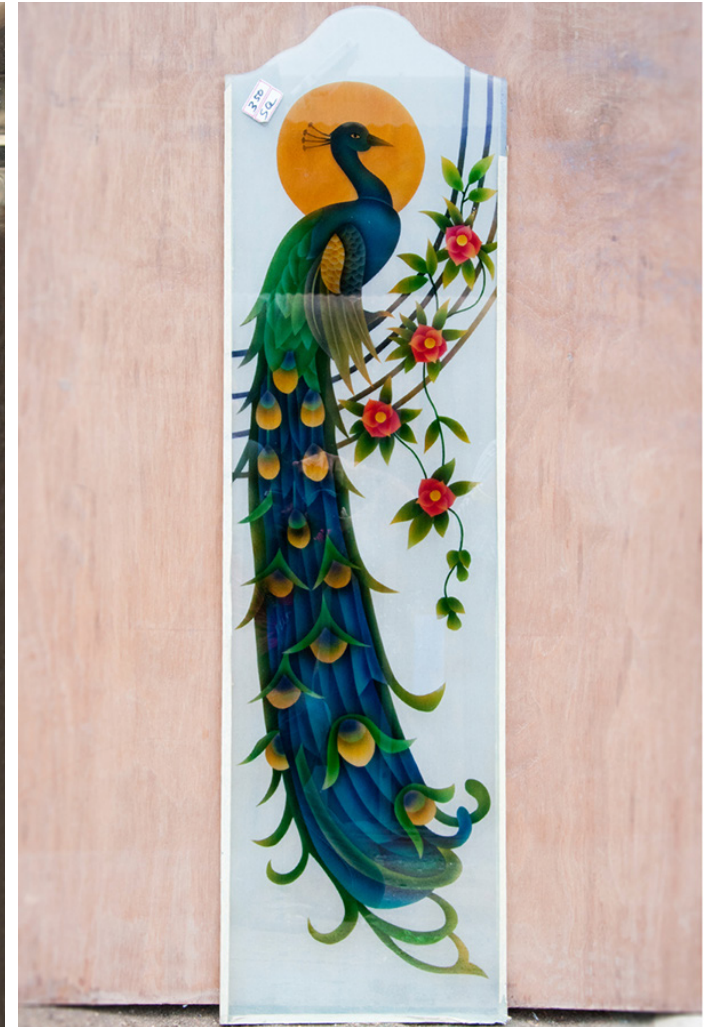
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Glass slab decorative by using embossed technique.



Attractively designed peacock image on the glass slab.

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Charmingly enameled designs on the glass portions.



Beautifully engraved glass door.

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## Video



Frosted Glass Decor Vellore, Tamil Nadu

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## Contact Details

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