



This creative project was shared by the National Button Society.

## BUTTON BOWLS

This series of bowls were made using kitchen bowls as forms. Four to six layers of buttons form the bowls. Below are images of bowls made of bone buttons, vegetable ivory buttons, dark work clothes buttons, and white plastic buttons.

**BUTTON SAVER TIP:** To use less buttons, cover the bowl with fabric, instead of the first layer of buttons, choosing a light to medium weight fabric in a color that will blend with the buttons chosen.





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## BONE BUTTON BOWL

Lo temp hot glue is used as it can easily be pulled off the buttons once hardened. And it's safer for those tender fingertips!

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED

to make a bowl 7-1/2" across and 3-1/2" tall

- 5-6 cup of bone buttons
- 12 short lo temp glue sticks
- Hot glue gun
- Thin metal bowl
- Needle nose pliers to hold buttons
- Sharp short awl to loosen threads
- Sharp scissors to cut threads away
- Vaseline
- Small lazy susan



### PREPARATIONS

1. Remove any remaining threads from the buttons. If too tight to get the scissor tips under, use the awl to lift and loosen.
2. Sort through the buttons and pull out the ugliest for your first layer. If you might not have enough bone buttons, use plastics that are of a similar color for the first layer. (I used at least half plastics for this layer, as they mostly will not be seen.)
3. Plug in the glue gun.



### FORMING THE BOWL BASE

1. Turn your bowl upside down on a lazy susan if you have one. It makes working around the bowl so much easier.
2. Use the Vaseline to smear a light coating on the outside of your bowl. This coating will keep your hot glue from sticking to the bowl.
3. A second benefit of the Vaseline is that the buttons will stick in place, helping as you glue them in place.
4. Starting with a button in the middle of the bowl bottom, place buttons one at a time and glue together by putting glue in the openings between buttons. Most of this layer will be hidden by the next layers.
5. Continue around and around the bowl until you have reached the rim.



### BUILDING THE NEXT LAYER

1. Starting from the rim, now cover the base layer with nicer bone buttons. Aim to place a button across each seam between the base buttons, and try to cover any openings.
2. As you work up the bowl, begin your third and final outside layer, by strategically placing smaller bone buttons to cover any glaring holes or awkward places in your bone buttons. Comparing the two pictures below you can see how some smaller bone buttons cover holes.





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3. Work around the bowl varying the button sizes and coloring until you are pleased with the look.
4. Run very cold water into the bowl and put in some ice cubes, to harden up all the glue and make removing the bowl easier. If you have trouble getting it to let loose, empty the water and wad a towel into the bowl for padding and then tap around the sides and pull the button shell free.
5. Use some tissue to wipe out any residual Vaseline on the bowl interior.



### COVERING THE BOWL INTERIOR

1. Starting at the bowl center, glue on a layer of bone buttons,
2. Using the small bone buttons you set aside in the beginning, cover any holes that result from buttons not fitting together snugly.
3. Now fill in the bowl interior from the center up to the rim with bone buttons.
4. When it's all covered with bone buttons, look back for any holes, and cover with a small bone button.
5. You are done!

