

Placing a Hinge on an Egg

Hints & Tips from Maureen

Which way should a hinge go?

A hinge can be used in two different ways depending on how far you want the door or lid to open. If you look at a hinge you will see the hinge post is prominent on one side and flat on the other side. If you hold the hinge with the post facing in, you can fold the hinge closed. If you fold it back the other way, it will only fold part way back.

To determine which way you should place the hinge for your design, make this simple test. Hold one side of the hinge (with the hinge post towards the shell) against the egg and open the other side. You will notice that the hinge will only open back to 90 degrees. Use the hinge this way when you want to restrict how far the lid of a trinket (jewel) box will open.

Now turn the hinge over (still holding it against the shell) so the hinge post is facing out. Again open the hinge. You will notice that the hinge will open right back against itself. Use the hinge this way when you want a door to open right out without the risk of breaking it off.

How do you get a door to open evenly?

When you mark up a design make sure you place the hinge on the fattest part of the egg. (Unless you want the door to open at an angle on purpose) This will ensure that the door or lid opens straight to the body of the design.

If you are hinging two doors on an egg, mark a girth line around the egg on the fattest part of the shell to ensure you get both doors hinged on the same level.

Reinforce Hinge Area

When you put a hinge on an egg this becomes the weakest part of the shell due to the opening and closing of the hinged parts. You should always reinforce behind the shell to prevent the piece of shell breaking under pressure.

To do this tear a small piece of paper (ordinary printer paper is fine) approximately 1" long x 1/2" wide - you will need two pieces for each hinge. Adjust the size of the paper according to the size of the hinge. Use a brush and thin white PVA (Aquadhere, Sobo etc) to glue the piece of paper on the inside of the shell (longest side going around the egg, narrow side is the depth of the hinge flange) behind the hinge on both pieces of shell. Brush another coat of glue over the top of the paper (if I'm making a trinket box I coat all the inside of the egg for added strength to the shell)

Other hints

Although some of these are personal preference, don't dismiss them out of hand until you try them - you may find it fixes some problems you have been having.

When applying a hinge (with the hinge post in) cut a slot for the hinge post, extending the cutting slightly past either side of the opening. This needs to be at least the width of the cutting wheel you are using and will ensure that you don't cut into the hinge pin when you come back to cut the egg in two.

Score the side of the hinge that will attach to the shell with an old craft blade. This gives the glue something to grip to rather than the slick surface of the hinge. Do the same on the shell.

Preference #1 - Initially, only glue one side of the hinge to the shell.

Use Micropore or Magic Tape to hold the hinge in position on the larger portion of the egg and place another piece of tape across the other side of the hinge to make a flap. Apply glue to the side of the hinge which will attach to the small portion (the lid or door) of the shell. Close the hinge against the shell and press the tape down to hold the hinge secure while the glue dries.

Advantage of this method (as opposed to hinging on both sides)

This way you are able to work with two separate pieces without having to worry about breaking the hinged portion off when lining the inside of the shell. Once you have completed all the interior work you can then glue the other side of the hinge into place and complete the outside decoration.

Preference #2 - Use more hardener (red tube or container) than resin

...It is advisable to use slightly more hardener than resin when mixing epoxy for a hinge (or stand) to ensure better adhesion. Do not apply epoxy right up to the post on the hinge or the glue may ooze into the hinge post.

Preference #3 - Vaseline on the hinge post

Apply a tiny amount of Vaseline (petroleum jelly) on the hinge post to avoid the possibility of glue getting into the hinge post and gluing the hinge shut. (If this does happen, use heat to remove the hinge)