

## **ADHESIVES, GLUES AND CEMENTS: are you perplexed by the choices?**

There are so many of these products on the market yet there is no clear statement that helps a lay person to distinguish among them. The word "glue" is derived from the Latin noun "gluten", a protein found in cereal grains but became used for bonding substances derived from natural materials. "Cement", a noun, originally referred to powdered limestone or clay, which when mixed with water would bond bricks together. "Adhesive" is derived from a Latin verb meaning "to stick to". Now all three words are used as nouns and verbs and they are interchangeable so no wonder it is confusing! [Click here](#) to read more.

The best advice we have is to read the package and follow the manufacturer's instructions. They spend a lot of time and money to develop both as they want to make customers happy and they want to minimize problems. But remember, that even though many products say they will bond the same thing eg. a gemstone to some metal, sometimes there are quirky exceptions so make certain that you test the bond. Here are some ideas for successful gluing:

1. Work in a well ventilated area, with no flames and don't smoke!
2. For glues that are labeled "instant bonding", consider wearing plastic gloves. They are clumsy but it is better than your skin being bonded to something.
3. Protect your work surface with plastic, foil or waxed paper. Newsprint is too porous.
4. If you can, try to test the glue on some scrap material that you are incorporating in the finished piece to check the bonding properties.
5. Most glue packages will tell you to make certain that the surfaces to be glued are clean, dry and free from dust and oil. Sometimes you may be advised to roughen surfaces with a bit of sand paper as this helps to improve the bonding.
6. Don't apply too much glue otherwise you will have oozing problems which might be difficult to clean up effectively or the two items may slip out of position.
7. Clean up excess glue before it dries. It helps to have paper towels or moist towels on hand before you start gluing. Make certain that applicators are clean before storing glue.
8. Try to support the glued pieces so that the laws of gravity don't disturb your positioning!
9. Remember to give the glue adequate time to dry. Even instant bonding glues need to cure, in some cases up to 72 hours. This is something that is rarely stated on packaging.
10. Date the glue package. Glues have shelf-lives and old glue will not bond as well.
11. To maximize shelf life, store glue away from extreme heat or cold and away from sunlight.
12. Most of us don't use a lot of glue so end up throwing away a lot. Our recommendation is to consider how often you use glue and then buy the quantity suitable to your needs.

Our favourite adhesives (and our bestselling!) are G-S Hypo cement, E6000, 527 Glue, Super New Glue and Zap Gel. Here are the reasons why:

### [G-S HYPO CEMENT](#)

- Good for precise applications as it has a fine needle type applicator.
- We use it for securing thread in bead tips or bead cups when knotting beads but it is also useful for bonding small pieces of metal.
- It dries in about 45 minutes and is clear when dry. You can reposition items if you don't get them placed precisely the first time.
- It is strong.
- It can be cleaned with rubbing alcohol or nail polish remover.

### [E6000](#)

- Tube end is more suitable for large surface glue applications.
- Excellent bonding properties.
- Glue is thick and therefore can fill in holes or dips in surfaces to be glued.
- It has a strong smell so use in a well ventilated area.
- Dries clear
- Bonding is not instant so you can reposition.

### 527

- The size of the tube opening is in between that of Hypo Cement and E6000
- It is a strong and relatively fast drying glue
- Not too thick when squeezed out of the tube but it can be thinned with acetone.
- Crystal clear in colour.
- It is water-proof

### SUPER NEW GLUE

- Sets and cures rapidly at room temperature.
- Bonds rubber, metal, glass, and plastic.
- Dries clear
- One year shelf life in a cool dark place.

### ZAP GEL

- A thick and strong instant bonding glue, like Krazy glue but already mixed for you!
- Has a tapered tip for fine applications
- Does not run or drip
- It is not recommended for items subject to "great shock" or that are to be immersed in water.
- Especially good for items that "mate well" or, in other words, things that don't require too much fiddling to get them placed correctly. You don't have much play time with this glue but we love it especially for gluing Kumihimo cords into a clasp or cap end.