

# Creating A Stippling Tool Kit For Painting Popping Bugs, Divers, And Sliders

## Materials Needed

Brass Rods  
Yarn Darners  
Cotton Darners  
Balsa Dowels (or made from other woods)  
Epoxy

## Brass Rods - For Eyes

Brass Rods are available in lengths of one foot online from Ace Hardware in several different diameters. The 3/32", 1/8", 5/32", 3/16", and 1/4" diameters should be all that is needed for painting eyes on a fly rod bug. I find adding a handle is unnecessary for brass rods and a two inch long rod length is sufficient. The back of drill bits or other metal cylinders in the above diameters could also be utilized.

## Darners

*Prym Creative Yarn Darners* come seven darning needles to a pack in six different diameters and lengths. Four different diameter stippling tools can be made from these by cutting off the eye of the needle at the point where the diameter is the largest and sanding the end smooth.

*Dritz Cotton Darners* come ten darners to a pack and has needles of three different lengths and diameters. Three different diameter stippling tools can be made from these by cutting off the eye of the needle at the point where the diameter is the largest and sanding the end smooth. Two additional stippling tools can be made from the cotton darners by removing different amounts of material from the needle points.

## Handles

Wooden dowels make excellent handles for the darning stippling tools. I punch my two inch long handles out of balsa wood. They are light and with a bit of wood sealer, paint, and a coating of 30 minute epoxy durable. A 6/16" diameter for the handle seems adequate. Secure the needle into place with super glue. Dowels from other woods would of course also work but would probably require the extra step of having to drill into the wood rather than being able to just press the needle into the wood.

## Finishing The Handle And Epoxy

I recommend sealing the wood handle, painting it, numbering the needles according to size so you don't confuse them, and most importantly applying a coating of 30 minute epoxy. Add a bit more epoxy where the needle enters the wood to add strength to the seating of the needle.

## Thoughts And Tips

This document describes creating a total of 14 stippling tools. More tools could be created with more effort by using the other needles and removing material from the points checking the size dot produced until reaching the desired result.

The thickness of paint will change the size dot produced with a tool.

Keep notes on the numbers of the tools used for painting each size popper if you use the same design for different size bugs.