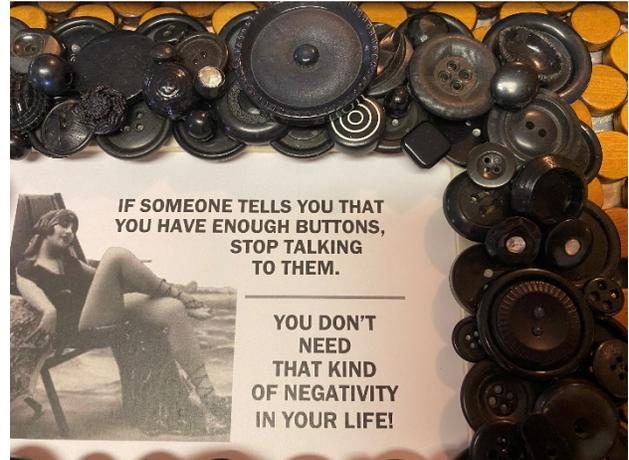


BUTTON FRAMES, FULLY COVERED



HERE ARE SEVERAL COMPLETED FRAMES, TO HELP YOU ENVISION THE POSSIBILITIES.





This creative project was shared by the National Button Society.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 200-500 craft quality buttons
- Small glue gun and about ten LOW TEMPERATURE hot glue sticks—use only LOW TEMP for two reasons: 1) it is easily removed from the buttons, and 2) you won't hear your flesh sizzle when you accidentally drop glue onto your arms or thighs!
- Paper or cardboard to protect work surface
- Needle-nose pliers—to remove wires and hold small buttons, keeping fingertips safely away from heat
- sharp pointed scissors—to cut away threads
- Image on matte board to be framed OR flat frame to be covered with buttons.

1. BUTTON SELECTION

Lay the image you want to frame with sorted button sets to select a color or material that will best compliment your image. I chose the metallic finish buttons to build this frame.

A Word of Caution: You may have sorted buttons that did not fit into your collection. These buttons may be damaged or corroded, plain, cheap, or just plain ugly. These buttons can be kept for craft projects or—as you may surprisingly, and often, find—to discover exciting button types as you learn more and more about buttons! Sort buttons by material, color, size, or whatever categories make sense with your craft stash.

2. REMOVE THREADS AND WIRES FROM THE BUTTONS

While doing so, examine your craft buttons once again in case some should move back into your button collection. For this project, I discovered these buttons in the crafts stash and happily retrieved them for cards: an old blued steel, copper with brass flag over a ship's wheel, and a thistle!

3. ASSEMBLE YOUR TOOLS & SUPPLIES



4. SORT YOUR BUTTONS

- a. From your pile of buttons, select all the smallest buttons, 5-10 nice big buttons, and any special designs or colors. Set them aside for later use.

Here are those buttons I set aside for the “final” step. I like to use a group of similar buttons, like those at the far right, to tie the whole composition together.

- b. Sort together buttons with shanks.
- c. Next place together the ugliest buttons you are using, that you don't particularly want seen in their entirety. In this group, I put buttons that are discolored, damaged or corroded on one side, but the other side is good, like the example at right.
- d. Finally, sort the rest of the buttons into three sizes: largest, mediums, smalls



5. LET'S EXAMINE “WHERE WE ARE GOING”

- a. Our most mundane buttons are on the bottom, plus our largest buttons (except for those set aside) are on the bottom.
- b. The medium buttons are the second layer.
- c. Next, those few set aside large buttons are strategically placed around the frame.
- d. Small buttons fill voids.
- e. And, finally, shanked buttons and those small pretty buttons fill in wherever a special touch is needed.



6. PLUG IN YOUR LOW TEMPERATURE GLUE GUN. Have about ten extra glue sticks on hand.

When you put glue on sew through buttons, try to place it to the side so that it doesn't come up through the holes as you push your buttons in place.

If you know that you will like the effect of the little glue mounds in the holes, then go ahead and place the glue on the holes. You can experiment to find your personal preference.

If I am working with white, light plastics or pearl appearing buttons, then I like the glue showing in the holes.





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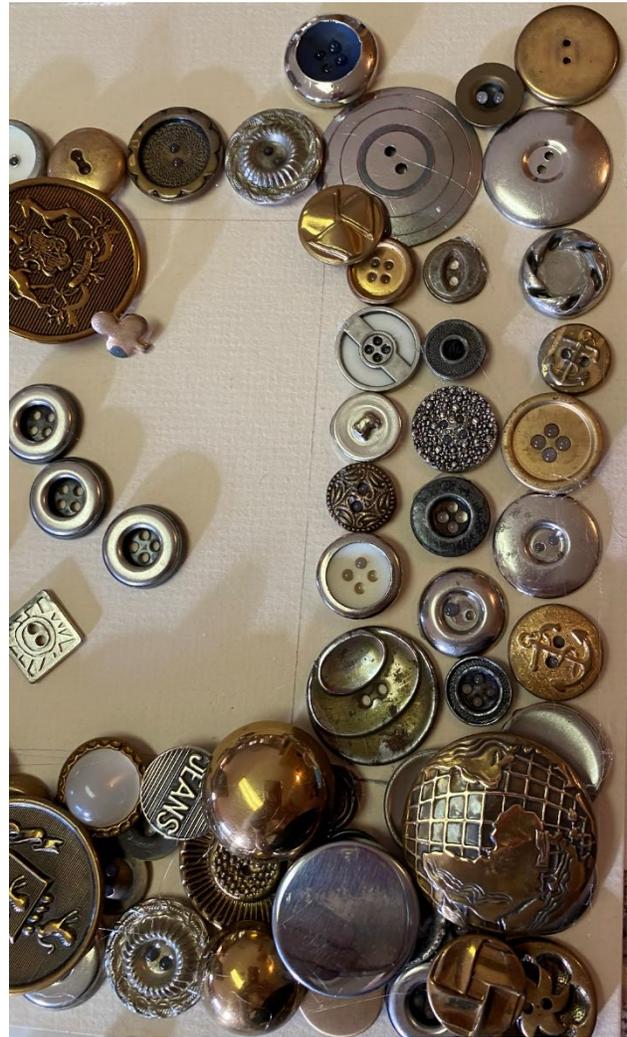
7. PLACING OUR BOTTOM LAYER

Our largest and our most mundane buttons are on the bottom. Only about 10-20% of these buttons will show on the finished frame.

Set a rows of buttons on the outside and inside edges of the frame, filling in the middle with whichever sizes will fill the gaps. Don't worry about tightly filling the gaps as the second and third layers will cover gaps.

NEXT, STRATEGICALLY PLACE 5-6 LARGE BUTTONS (the ones you set aside earlier)

You can group or scatter these large buttons. Just set them in place until you are happy with their placement, THEN use glue to secure them.



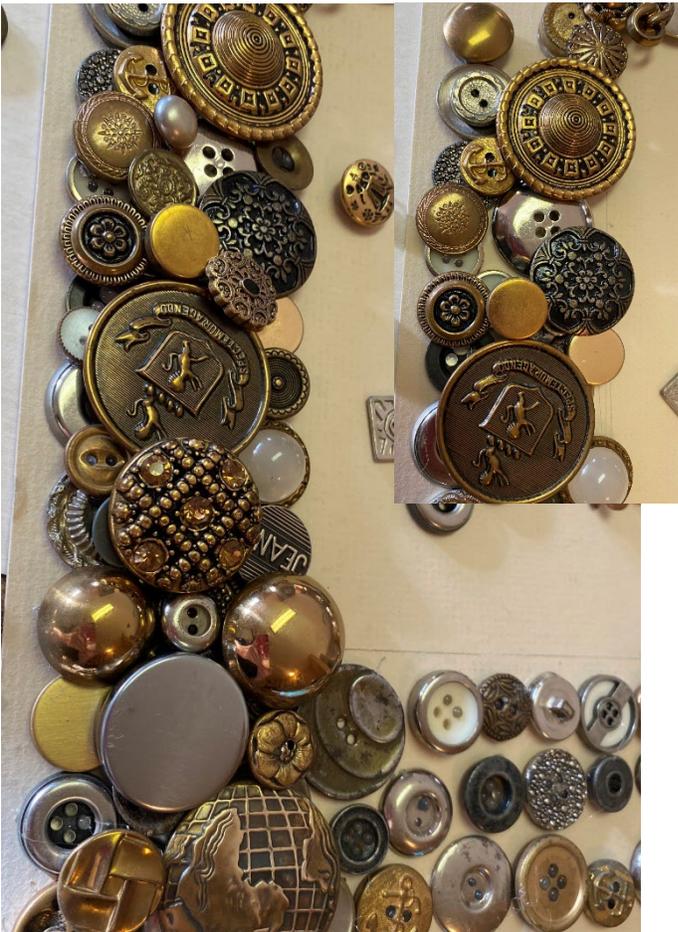


8. NOW COVER THOSE GAPS WITH MEDIUM SIZED BUTTONS.

Use some small buttons and shanked buttons, varying the size, color and texture of the buttons for interest.

It's always helpful to just lay buttons in place until you are happy with the mix, then disassemble them and then glue in place.

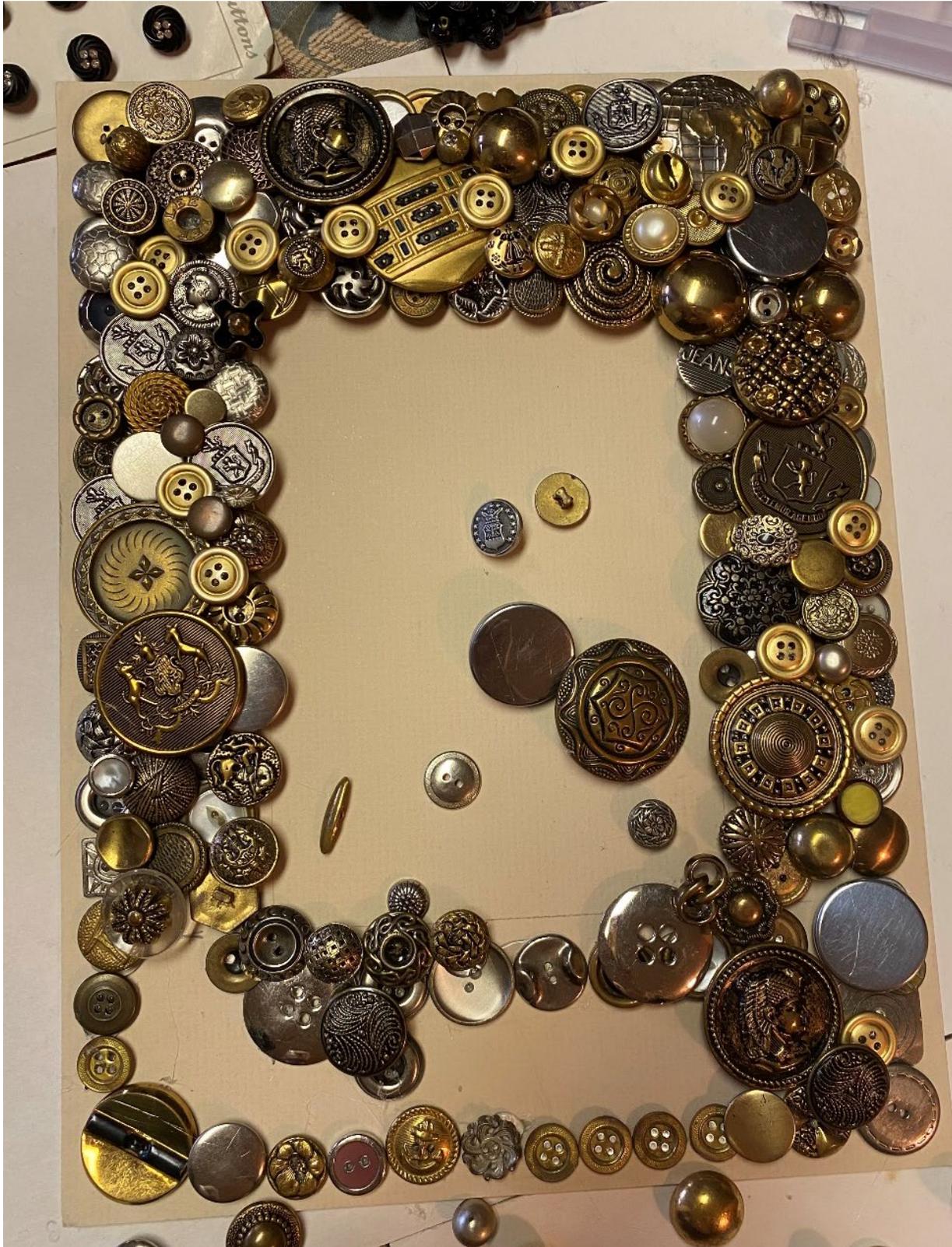
9. You'll see there are still little gaps. The "almost" final step uses those set aside small buttons to put the finishing touch on your creation.





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Here a little more than half the frame is done. Notice that the gold four-hole sew throughs have been placed around the frame on the top, as a way to tie together and give cohesiveness to the frame.



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10. And, an optional step is to fill even more gaps with a few beads.

Look over your frame and see if you identify little trouble spots that just need “a little something.” You can use a few beads to fill these spots. Don’t use too many or the surface gets to looking too cluttered.

I use needle nose pliers to hold beads and place them in place. Be aware that you are using a very little bit of glue, so it will dry very quickly on your bead. Be ready to place it quickly into place.

