

Making Rings Tana Munuz

I use Craft Supply USA for titanium ring cores and the ring chuck. I don't recommend stainless steel as they are about as thick as the finished ring should be.

Etsy shop OpalRingSupply has black ceramic ring cores I like as well.

Dreamwood rings and ringsupply.com have more of the channel rings for inlays but also have inlay materials and blanks.

I've gotten my wire off Amazon. 26 gauge is good for women's 5-6mm rings and 22 is my preferred for men's 8-10mm wide rings. Be sure the wire is pure and not just coated and I prefer dead soft.

1. After getting the ring core and blank, I pre-drill the blank on my 4jaw chuck with a drill bit around the size of the inside of the core. I then slowly hollow the hole and test the fit constantly until it's snug.
2. Using a flex CA or 5 minute epoxy, I coat the blank in glue and insert the core. I'd recommend gloves for this part.
3. Once cured, I'll use my belt sander to make sure the core is flush with the blank on the flat sides. Be very careful not to be too aggressive or it can scratch the core (unless ceramic as it's very hard to scratch).
4. I'll clean off any glue off the inside of the ring core and will select the correct size of ring bushings for my ring chuck. Or in case you have a ring mandrel, select the correct size and make sure it's snug but not too tight. Ceramic will shatter with too much pressure which is another reason I prefer the ring chuck.
5. The ring is then turned down to about double the final thickness to prep for an inlay. I keep the sides flat to help with accurate measurements.
6. Using a caliper (I use a digital one) I'll determine the size of the inlay and mark where I want to cut a channel for stones or coffee. Remove the material down to the core being careful to take small cuts. If too aggressive, it can cause the walls break.
7. The core can be painted or left alone depending on the effect you want. After cleaning the lathe of shavings, I like to use creased wax paper to catch any inlay material that drops.
8. I'll lay a thin layer of stones (or any inlay) and secure it with CA. I may build the initial one a bit higher and press it lightly to fill any gaps. Using the previous layer as a dam, fill the channel all around the ring a portion at a time and using CA to secure it.
9. I prefer to let the CA cure for a few hours to be sure as it can be fairly thick in some areas and I've had bad luck with the activator turning these areas white or cloudy.
10. I prefer a round negative rake carbide tool to smooth the stone and get the ring down to its final thickness. It's a personal preference on this and a fine line between too thin and

just right. If it's too thin, the core will show if it wasn't painted as there will be minor gaps in the stone.

11. Fill any gaps with either CA or stone crushed into the hole and smooth once it's set with the negative rake.
12. If a wire is going to be between the ring blank and inlay, I'll measure with the caliper again to ensure they are even on both sides as you can cut a bit more on either the inlay or the blank to even them out. I'll use a diamond carbide tool as it has a very fine point to cut a very small channel for the wire. I'll test the fit of the wire constantly. The wire should lay about half in the channel and this will give you the widest point once filed down.
13. I'll use a small file to mark where the wire would slightly overlap and using a clamp and Jewelers saw, cut the wire. I'll use the clamp to file the wire flat so it meets up as flush as possible with the other end of the wire. I'll also use the file to scratch the inside of the wire so the CA has more to stick to. Test the fit of the wire and check for overlap as the ends should barely touch when pressed securely in the channel.
14. With gloves, I'll secure the wire with CA. I try to find a dark point like the dark ring on a wood blank to have as my starting point. I use tweezers to press the wire end down and drop a tiny bit of CA on the wire and blank. I hold it down until it's set without activator. I'll find about the midpoint and drop a bit of CA inside the channel then press the wire around until it meets up with the other end. I'll drop the final bit of CA where the ends join and activator can be used at this point if preferred. Repeat on the other side of using two wires.
15. At the slowest setting (500rpm on mine), I use a fine metal file and lightly press against the wires. Constantly move the file and use a wire brush to clear off any build up. I file until it's pretty much flush.
16. I'll use sandpaper (120) to sand the wire until it is completely flush. At this point I start going through the sanding grits to 600.
17. I use a CA finish. Gloves recommended again. The first coat is with thin CA using a bit of shop towel to apply. After that, I'll use those plastic baggies that come with the pen components to apply the CA. I apply 8-10 layers of thin and 2 thick.
18. Once it's set, I'll sand at 400, 600, then go to zona paper. After zona, I use Hut plastic polish to shine it up to a glassy finish.