

Drilling Glass

Stabilize. If you're using a handheld drill, keep it as stable as possible. It's better to use some kind of stationary drill press. If you don't have a drill press, there are units available to adapt a hand drill or Dremel to work like a drill press.

Moderate Speed. If you drill too fast, you will produce friction which produces heat which will burn off the diamonds. It takes time to drill through glass. Be patient and drill at about half speed.

Keep cool. Keep your diamond bit constantly wet. If you drill dry, the diamonds will burn off and your bit is then useless. The ideal way is to keep the glass submerged in water while drilling. Placing the glass in a plastic or fiberglass tray and covering it with water works extremely well. If you're using a glass or metal tray, place a piece of wood or Styrofoam beneath the glass. If the glass is too large to be submerged, build a dam around the drill hole with putty or clay and fill it with water. For small holes, you can place a metal washer on the glass and fill it with water as lubricant.

Use coolant. You can drill without coolant, but using a few drops of coolant in the water will reduce the likelihood you'll crack the glass or burn off the diamonds while drilling.

Bob the bit. If you just start drilling and keep the bit in the hole until it drills through, there's a chance the glass dust created by drilling will create friction. If instead, you bob up and down gently with the bit, you'll swish out any glass dust from the drill hole. A good practice is to drill down for a count of 5 then bob the bit up – then repeat and continue until the hole is through.