

# How to Make a Hole in a Glass Bottle

Knowing how to safely drill holes in glass bottles can open up new horizons for your crafting and decorating projects. And it's a lot easier than you might think—in fact, it's just like drilling a hole in any other surface, only with a few ...

## Marking and Positioning the Bottle

1. **Mark the spot where you want to put the hole with masking tape.** Tear off two strips of tape and cross them over your intended drilling site in an 'X' shape. Smooth both strips with your finger so that they're lying nice and flat.<sup>[1]</sup>
  1. You can also use painter's tape, medical tape, or another textured type of tape if you don't have any masking tape on hand. Duct or electrical tape may also do the trick, but be warned that they'll be slicker than other varieties.
  2. The tape will not only help you keep track of where your hole needs to go, but also provide a little traction for the drill bit, keeping it from slipping on the slick glass.<sup>[2]</sup>
2. **Draw a dot at the center of the tape.** Take a felt-tipped marker or ink pen and scribble a bold, dark circle at the middle of the section where the two pieces of tape overlap. Make sure your dot is large enough to be plainly visible.<sup>[3]</sup>
  1. This dot will serve as a kind of bullseye for your drill bit, allowing you to fine-tune the placement of your hole.
3. **Place the bottle on a folded towel or similar makeshift pad.** Any kind of broad, soft item with a little give will work here—it could be a seat cushion, a scrap piece of carpet or foam, or even an old t-shirt. Lay the bottle flat against your makeshift pad with the taped side facing up.<sup>[4]</sup>
  1. You'll have the easiest time drilling your bottle when it's resting on a work surface that's around waist- or chest-high.

**Warning:** If you attempt to drill into the bottle while it's resting directly against a hard-topped table or workbench, there's a chance that it could roll, slide, or shift.

## Drilling the Hole

1. **Fit a power drill with a small spear-tipped carbide or diamond bit.** You'll be using this bit to open up a starter hole, which you can then bore out to the exact size you want. Once you've selected your starter bit, slip the bottom of the shaft into the business end of your drill, pressing down on it forcefully to confirm that it's fully seated.<sup>[5]</sup>
  1. It's important to make sure that the bit you're working with is tipped with either carbide or diamond. Both are very strong materials that will easily cut into the fragile glass without shattering it.<sup>[6]</sup>

2. Spear-tipped bits come in a wide range of diameters, so you should have no trouble finding a set that's just the right size for your project.

**Alternative:** For extra large holes, you can also try a hole cutting bit. These vary in size from  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch (0.64 cm) to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches (3.2 cm).<sup>[7]</sup>

2. **Grip the neck of the bottle firmly with your non-dominant hand to secure it.** For the sake of safety and precision, use this hand to hold the bottle as still as possible while reserving your dominant hand to do the actual drilling. Make sure your bracing hand is a safe distance away from the spot where you plan on making your hole.<sup>[8]</sup>
  1. Tilting the upper portion of the bottle up at a 30-45 degree angle can put it in a more natural position for drilling. That way, you won't have to try to move your drill straight up and down.
  2. Another option is to place your pad on the ground, kneel over the bottle, and squeeze the neck between your knees to hold it steady.<sup>[9]</sup>
3. **Find a way to keep thick glass cool and wet as you drill.** The least complicated solution is to simply pause every 5-10 seconds and spray the bottle with some cold water. You can also set up your materials inside a shallow basin in the sink and turn on the faucet so that the stream flows continuously over the bottle while you work. Yet another option is to fill a 2 litres (68 fl oz) bottle with water, poke a hole in it, and direct the trickle over the spot you're drilling.<sup>[10]</sup>
  1. For a more traditional approach, you can also mold a hunk of plumber's putty into a ring, press it onto the bottle around your drilling site, and pour some water into it to form a 'dam.'<sup>[11]</sup>
  2. The friction of the drill bit on the glass will generate a lot of heat. The warmer the glass gets, the higher its chances of cracking or shattering.
4. **Make a precise starter hole using low speed and moderate pressure.** Align the pointed tip of the bit with the center of the crossed tape and hold the drill so that it forms a right angle with the surface of the glass. Squeeze the trigger of the drill lightly while pressing the bit straight into the bottle. Keep drilling until the tip of the bit clears the interior side.<sup>[12]</sup>
  1. Consider putting on cut-resistant gloves, a safety mask, and some type of eye protection before you begin drilling to limit your exposure to potentially-irritating dust particles.<sup>[13]</sup>
  2. It may take several seconds to get all the way through the glass, especially if it's particularly thick.
5. **Throw on a larger bit and drill again to widen the hole to the desired size.** Perform your follow-up rounds of drilling the same way you did the first, positioning the bit perpendicularly with the bottle and guiding it straight in with light-to-moderate pressure. When you're done, you should have a nice, clean hole to show for your efforts.<sup>[14]</sup>
  1. It shouldn't be necessary to change bits more than 2 or 3 times. If your hole needs to be especially big, it will be easier to simply use a hole cutting bit.

## Smoothing and Covering the Hole

1. **File the inner edges of larger holes to smooth them out.** When you're satisfied with the size of your hole, grab a round file, insert it into the hole, and work your way around the edges. Apply steady pressure and glide the file back and forth in long, fluid strokes. This action will wear down any sharp or jagged edges that could pose a safety risk.<sup>[15]</sup>
  1. Assuming you don't own a file, you can also wrap a sheet of high-grit sandpaper around an awl or similar tool and use it the same way.
  2. This step is optional. There's no need to file or sand the finished hole if you're going to be using your bottle as a hands-off decoration.

2. **Rinse the bottle thoroughly to wash off any lingering particles of glass dust.** Hold the bottle under a stream of cool running water, rotating it to hit every part of the outer surface. Keep rinsing until the water runs clear and there are no visible traces of debris on either the bottle or the hole.<sup>[16]</sup>
  1. Don't forget to flush out the inside of the bottle, as well. The best way to do this is to fill it up about one-third of the way, swish the water around, and dump it out through the neck.
3. **Install a rubber grommet over the hole to prevent wear to other materials.** If you're going to be feeding string, rope, cable, or anything else through the hole in your bottle, it's a good idea to have an additional means of protection in place. Look no further than a cheap rubber grommet. With most basic grommets, all you have to do is align the device with the hole and press it in until it seats securely.<sup>[17]</sup>
  1. You can pick up a 2-pack of rubber grommets for around \$1 at any hardware shop or home improvement center, as well as most craft supply stores. Be sure to pick out grommets that match the diameter of your hole.<sup>[18]</sup>
  2. Curving a small piece of tape around the inner edge of the hole will also do the trick if you're not too particular about looks.

**Tip:** Dab some super glue onto the outside of the grommet half to lock it down for good.

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