

Kato Blackout & Kato Conditioning Bar - Review by Val Anderson

I was lucky to be the recent winner of a bar of both Kato Blackout and Kato Conditioning Bar and I carried out a small experiment with both.

Firstly both bars had a softness about them but the conditioning bar was extremely squidgy! I had a lump of Kato scrap clay on my worktop which had dried out and wasn't workable. I decided to soften it a little with the conditioning bar first and follow up with the blackout bar. I had decided on this method as the clay was so dry, this would be the best way round it (as mentioned before the blackout bar was not as soft and I would need more).

I only needed the smallest pinch of the conditioning bar to make the clay workable and I did this with my clay roller, rather than using my pasta machine. I did not want the pasta machine to become sticky before the clay was blended. As you see from the photographs, I ended up with a grey sheet.

I worked with the blackout bar, the same way as the conditioning bar, by taking a small pinch. This was not adequate to blacken my clay fully which would be okay if you were, for example, using the scrap for making blanks or using in the centre of a model. This gives you a consistent colour.

I wanted black clay, so I took several thin slices of the blackout and added bit by bit and it worked! Happy with the colour I decided to make some components for making a chain (sorry no photographs) I put the clay in the oven at 150c and cured for the normal Kato timing. When I retrieved the pieces after curing, they were VERY shiny. Kato usually has a sheen after curing and it didn't bother me that my pieces were shinier, although it could have done if a shine was not required. I am not aware of how this works on other clays but I may try on Premo and report back. It could have been caused by the softening agent in both bars.

I am happy with my results, the conditioning bar reduces the hard work significantly and the blackout bar does what it says and makes your clay black or different shades of grey, depending on how much you use. It is stated on the packet that both bars work with MOST clays. The blackout left a lot of residue on my work surface and hands but I cleaned up easily with baby wipes and hot soapy water for my hands.

Thanks to the BPCG for the opportunity to try out this product- Val Anderson



