

Results of practice sessions carving on inexpensive black pebbles we found at our local craft store.



## GETTING STARTED: BASIC CARVING

■ **Practice Rocks** It only makes sense to start out by practicing on rocks, pebbles, or inexpensive stone slabs. Sources for raw materials include craft stores, rock shops, or even a walk in a park or near a lake or stream. Experiment with each diamond bur so you become familiar with the cut results of each shape and will know which bur to use to create your textures and designs.

### ■ Silicon Carbide Separating Discs

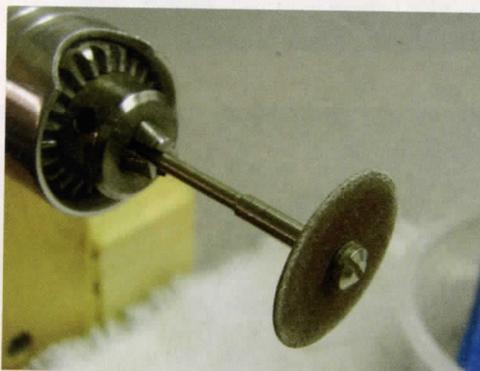
Use caution, because these discs are brittle and can break with undue twisting force. Safety glasses and a dust mask are a must when using these discs.

Mount a single silicon carbide separating disc in your flex shaft to create some practice marks. As you begin to feel comfortable getting into the groove (pun intended), you can experiment with different designs. We chose not to polish the grooves in this gaspeite cabochon, leaving them with a matte finish to add contrast. We also utilized a small diamond ball bur to place a shallow cup divot in the center of the grooves. We suggest you work on softer stones with silicon carbide.

As your confidence builds and you become more in control of your carving skills, you may want to experiment with more complex texturing designs by altering the arrangement and the number of separating discs and spacers on the mandrel.

For that, we recommend seeing the texturing discussion in our project making a gaspeite pendant (April 2010).

*Silicon carbide separating discs are available from many jewelry suppliers. Our discs were sold 100 to a box, and are 7/8" diameter and .023" thick. We also bought screw mandrels, sold in packages of 6, for less than \$15 total.*



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Textured Gaspeite  
and Bronze Pendant

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