

Blacksmith Flower

Start with one piece of steel that is 1 * 2, 1/4 inch thick and one marble.

Use a guillotine fuller to make notches, in the middle, on top and bottom, about 3/16 inch deep. If the edges curl over then flatten them on the anvil.

Hold on the edge of the anvil so the notch is half on and half off. Do not allow the head of the flower on the anvil. Draw out the stem until it is even with the bottom of the notches.

Use the guillotine fuller again to deepen the notches and draw out the stem. Repeat as necessary to draw out the stem to about 1/4 inch thickness and width.

The top and bottom corners of the flower will need to be rounded off. Hold the flower at about a 45 degree angle. Set the bottom corner on the anvil close to the edge and pound on the top corner. Repeat for the opposite corner. Flatten on the anvil if the edges curl over.

Use a 3/16 inch punch to make a hole in the center of the flower. Get an orange heat and pound until you feel it hit bottom. Use a piece of scrap steel to protect the face of the anvil. Don't use aluminum or the steel will bulge out the bottom. Cool the flower and use the same punch over the hardy hole to shear the little plug out of the steel. This hole will be too small for the marble at this point but we will enlarge it later.

Use a veining or slitting chisel to put 8 equally spaced, radial cuts on the face of the flower. You don't need much depth, just enough to help locate the right spot for the next step. Follow up with a small fuller chisel and then a medium fuller chisel.

The hole for the marble will become larger as the steel is spread out by the fuller chisels. Drift the hole out to 3/8 inch.

Place a piece of scrap steel with a 3/8 inch hole over the hardy hole and put the flower on top. Gently pound the 3/16 inch punch down until it stops. It may all be stuck together now so cool in water before separating so the flower is not deformed.

Heat it again, place the flower face down on a block of wood and pound with a ball pein hammer so it will be slightly convex when viewed from the front of the flower.

The basic shape of the flower is now finished. Make the stem round and add a few bends to make it a little wavy. File any sharp edges.

The next and final step is to slowly heat the marble so it melts slightly and settles down into the hole. The marble must be heated up slowly or it will shatter.

Place the marble in the center of the flower. Gently grasp the stem with tongs and hold about 3 inches in front of the forge. Wait 3 or 4 minutes and move to the opening of the forge but not inside it yet. Wait another 3 or 4 minutes and move inside the forge. Check every 30 - 60 seconds for the marble to soften enough to settle into the hole. Allow to cool slowly by setting next to the forge.

