

2013 Update

From my books, *Richard La Londe: Fused Glass Art and Technique an Technique* page 171 and *Richard La Londe & Friends: Book II* page 225. I have eliminated the wired in switch and now use a remote controlled switch.

Build a Vacuum Pen - Richard La Londe

A vacuum pen is a great tool for removing excess frit from a piece that you are building. Instead of the wired switch with accompanying electrical cord that I wrote about in my previous books, now you can buy a remote activated appliance control device. You can find this for about \$18 at a hardware store. I bought mine at Ace. You turn it on and off just like a garage door opener - just don't forget where you put the remote.

Purchase an inexpensive 2 1/2 to 5 gallon shop vac and dedicate it for your vacuum pen. I placed the shop vac permanently outside of my studio where the dangerous silica dust would not get into the room air - it can pass right through the shop vac filter. I located it under my wooden entryway steps where it is shielded from the weather. It also keep the noise outside too, a big plus.



Find a smaller flexible hose which you can secure into the larger shop vac hose with duct-tape. Keep the smaller diameter hose to no more than 8 feet long as this keeps your hose from plugging up. Finally place a tapered nozzle into the smaller hose. I find a glue applicator nozzle or the tapered end of a fountain pen works great.

So there you are. You should be able to build this for about \$50. Don't get too fancy, use duct-tape, a cheap vacuum, an inexpensive remote control and get to work. You can even recycle your excess frit from the vacuum and sift it for size. I make really great, ugly bathroom tiles with it. Go to work and have fun.

