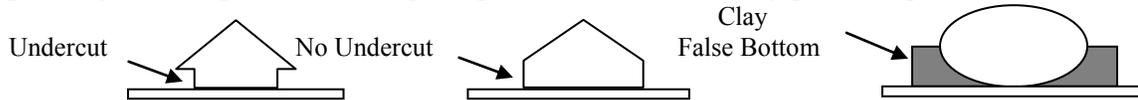
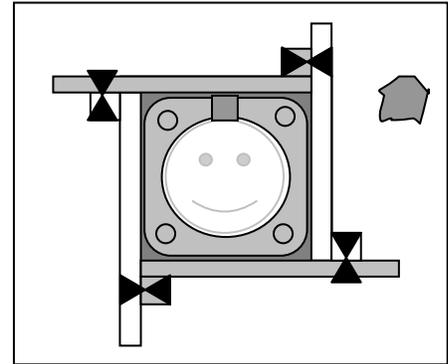


Mold Making and Plaster Mixing 101

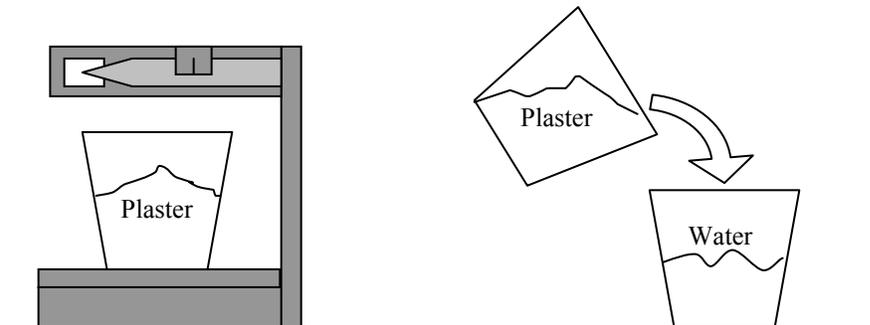
1. **Choose a “pattern”, the original form you are duplicating, without “undercuts”.** Seal form down with clay to table, board, or into “false bottom” (slab of clay that an object is partially submerged). If making a 2-part mold mark halfway point on pattern with marker.



2. **Set up form and coddle boards.** Seal corners with clay. Be sure to soap everything with “mold soap” (Murphy’s oil soap) that the plaster needs to release such as the “coddle boards”, your object, first half of a plaster mold, etc. to keep them from sticking to your plaster. Use at least 3 coats on plaster allowing soap to dry between coats. Be sure the soap is dry and smoothed, brush strokes and puddles will create texture in your mold. Be sure to keep a lump of clay handy to seal leaks. Include a pour spout and key marks if making a 2-part slip-casting mold.

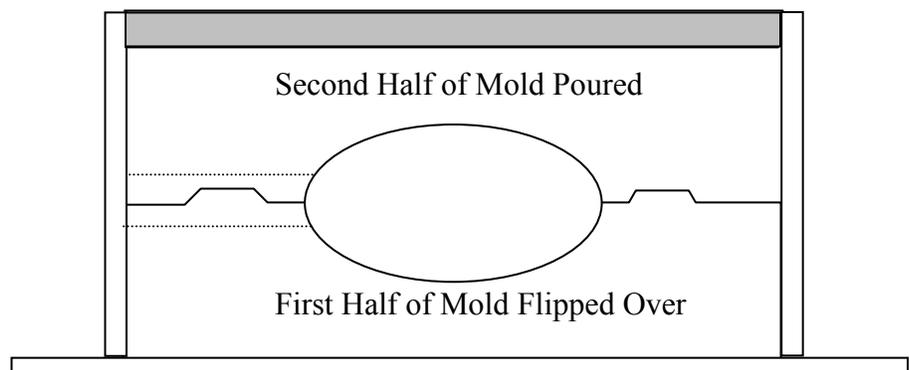
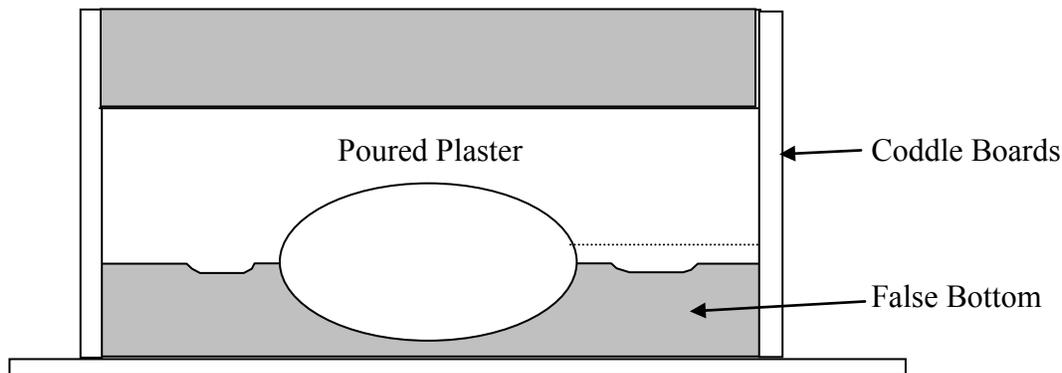


3. **Hot, warm, or cold water?** Hot water makes the plaster set up quickly. Cold water may cause your object to contract, making it harder to release from the plaster. Lute warm water would be the best compromise.
4. **Weigh plaster and water.** Weigh plaster in bucket marked “Plaster weighing bucket” and weigh water in bucket marked “Plaster mixing bucket”. This keeps the bucket for weighing plaster dry for the next person. This will require measuring the size of your mold and doing some math. (See “Plaster Mixing Calculation Chart”) Weigh each in the proper bucket remember to subtract the weight of the bucket or “zero” the scale with the bucket on the scale.



5. **Gently pour dry plaster into bucket with water in bucket and mix.** Try to break up as many lumps as possible as you pour. It is easiest to mix by hand; rubber gloves are available if you have sensitive skin.
6. **Once mixed, pour mixed plaster into mold.** If you have mixed plaster left over pour excess into trashcan with liner and rinse out plaster residue. If you rinse immediately the plaster will wash away easily and look as if it were never used for plaster. **Do not pour leftover plaster into sink!** The small bit of residue can be rinsed out in the sink with stand pipe.

7. **Let plaster set for aprox. 20 to 30 minutes.** You will feel the plaster heat up. Let the plaster cool to warm and then remove coddle boards and false bottom.
8. **Once the plaster and pattern are completely cool you may attempt to remove the pattern.** Removing it too soon will damage your mold. **Do not remove the pattern if making a 2-part mold.**
9. If making a tile mold you are almost done. **Round or bevel the outside edges to keep them from chipping.** Skip down to “Clean Up Your Mess!”
10. **For two part molds, pour second half of mold.** Flip plaster over. Leave pattern in first half of mold. Double check to make sure the pattern isn’t embedded to far into the plaster. If it is you have a chance to carve away some plaster to remove the undercut and allow the second half the mold to fill in the carved away area. Be sure to use mold soap on 1st half of the mold as mentioned in #2. With the first half of the mold now face up, put coddle boards back on, seal all seams with clay, and pour second half of mold. Repeat steps for plaster mixing.



11. **Pry mold apart.** If all procedures are followed the mold will separate easily. Try to use hands only. If there is an undercut or not enough mold soap used it will be difficult to impossible separate without damage. If it is stuck you may pry at seem with a putty knife or wood wedge. Be patient and gentle. The plaster is very fragile. Your object may have expanded from the heat of the plaster, so give it time.
12. **Clean up your mess!** Scrape up spilled plaster off table, coddle boards, floor, etc. Put tools, unmixed plaster, clay and coddle boards away. Put mold on shelf to dry with fan on. **Do not put plaster contaminated clay back with clean clay or into Slake Barrels!** **Keep plaster contaminated clay in plaster mixing area or just throw it away!**