



Page 1

ROCK AND ALTERNATIVE MOULDS

WHY DO WE NEED CASTINGS??

We use rock castings / moulds to quickly duplicate rock faces, cuttings for the track to pass through, tunnel entrances, these all have exposed rock faces or outcrops, wagon loads timber portals. By making your own moulds it is possible to give the layout its own unique look (I personally have over 60 moulds and over the last 3-4 years made over 120 moulds). The single casting is able to be used several times in the same area on the layout by affixing it at different angles.

If the mould is properly looked after, by keeping them in a cool dry location they can be used for several years and many repetitive castings done.

Before beginning to make your own rock castings you will need to make a mould this is possibly the hardest but most satisfying, as after doing your research as in to what type of location you want to model it is necessary to find rocks or strata that can be used to duplicate the location. I have collected over the years a few rocks with varying strata

Materials required

- Several spray bottles
- Throw away 20-25 mm paint brushes
- Muslin cloth (some times called cheese cloth and must have a very open weave)
- Dish cloth (chux type)
- Scissors
- Container with water and detergent in it to soak brush in
- Most important a suitable rock or location site

There are several sources of material to supply the masters for the moulds.

1 / Burnt timber, I had a section of 4x2 burnt timber as this had a strataed texture to see if a latex mould was able to be taken of it. The first attempt failed as the latex formed a reaction with the charcoal, which turned into a black useless mass of black latex. Not to be deterred I painted the other side with thinned down paving paint to seal it this allowed the latex to lift of with out any problems.

2/ Broken cement, This came about by chance as I had a bag of cement which got wet and had set hard. (Not concrete mix with sand or aggregate) When breaking it up to dispose of it I noticed the great strata effect that it had. So painted it with the latex and alas had the same result as with the burnt timber. Painted the cement with paving paint and the result was a mould with very sharp rock outcrops.

3/ Shale, this is very unstable and needs the following procedure to be obtain a satisfactory result. All dirt or residue must be completely removed from the surface to be moulded. Failure to have a totally clean surface can ruin a lot of work. If moulding of a surface which is not stable (breaks up when using a brush) then the latex can be used in a spray bottle, it will need 3-4 spray coats before a brush can be used. Important if using a spray bottle immediately after a coat has been applied pump water with detergent added through the spray nozzle.

4/ Your common every day rock but not sandstone as this will show the grains of sand as small boulders. Any rock which has a smooth textured finish is ideal.

Preparing the Master

Ensure the master/rock is free of dirt etc.

Spray with either wet water (water with several drops of detergent in it) or Slipicone a dry silicoine spray allow the silicoine to completely dry.

Apply the latex I allow the first coat to completely dry so that when applying the second coat it does not disturb the first coat. (Latex has a honey colour finish when completely dry).

Clean brush immediately after use in water & detergent this will help prevent clogging. I usually leave it in the container of water/detergent until needed then rinse with running water and dry brush this will prevent the water from diluting the latex.

After the first 2-3 coats have been applied and allowing the latex to have completely dried between coats (Latex has a honey colour finish).

Apply another coat of latex to the area and before it starts to dry apply a layer of muslin cloth over the area making sure that any hollows especially are covered, where there are deep cavities I apply small pieces of cloth to that area. Then apply full size cloth to the master repeating this process 3-7 times depending on the structure of the master. I have also used Chux as a final couple of layers as this is easier to source than the muslin cloth but needs to be washed first to get the stiffness out of it which gives the mould strength which prevents any fine detail being distorted when the plaster is applied.

Allow the mould to completely cure by leaving it over night before attempting to remove the mould from the rock or location. To remove, carefully start at one spot and start to peel it off (Like a pair of rubber gloves) so that you don't tear the rubber. After removing the mould I prefer to leave it to dry and harden over night before cleaning the surface of any rock or dirt that has stuck to the latex.

Although I have mainly shown how to use latex on rocks I have used it to copy tunnel portals and wagon loads this is where the mould needs to be quite rigid

Drying time of the latex is very dependant on the weather when starting to prepare for this clinic I found it was taking 4-5 hours for it to dry this was in June I have had the situation where when trying to do a mould on the side of the road the rock was so hot the latex was drying as applying.

The mould is now ready to use.

Latex Rubber Suppliers

Barnes Products 6 Homedale Rd Bankstown NSW 2200

Phone: 02 9793 7555 www.barnes.com.au

Fiberglass A/Asia Pty Ltd fiberglass-sales.com.au

563 Willoughby Road, Willoughby NSW 2068 Phone: (02) 9958 5238

2 Lincoln St, Minto NSW 2566 Phone: (02) 9820 1595

Unit 1/ 19 Boden Road, Seven Hills NSW 2147 Phone: (02) 9674 7333

Unit 1, 188 Manns Road, West Gosford NSW 2250 Phone: (02) 4322 0255

Muslin/Cheese cloth Suppliers

Spotlight or Lincraft are a couple

Cork Supplies

Portugal Cork Co.Pty Ltd 2/36 Binney St. Kings Park 9676 8400

Super Glue

Hafix Professional Glues, Swansea NSW Jan 49716067

snappyproducts@optus.com.au