

SECOND SATURDAYS FROM HOME: MOLD-MAKING



Ever wonder how the giant works of art at Laguna Gloria are made? Learn how sculptures are cast in metal and other materials through this fun and easy mold-making activity. See how you can take a toy or other object in your home and duplicate it with simple art supplies!

MATERIALS:

- Playdoh (Don't have Playdoh? Check out our DIY clay recipe and the clay PRO TIPS at the bottom of this lesson)
- Crayons
- Muffin tin or Baking tray
- Toy (that has smooth and shallow details)
- Over/Toaster oven

HOW TO:

1. Gather your materials! When you choose your toy (or other object), be sure to choose an item that is smooth with shallow details. If your object has deep crevices and details, the clay will get stuck in them and ruin your mold.
2. Next, make your mold.
 - a. Take a piece of clay large enough to cover your object while remaining at least a quarter of an inch thick (about as thick as a pencil) all the way around.
 - b. Roll the clay into a ball, then flatten that ball into a pancake.
 - c. Gently press your toy/object into the clay disk, making sure to press the clay into all the details.
 - d. Use your hand to carefully curl the edges of the clay pancake up around your toy/object. This will create a bowl shape that will be important in our next steps.
 - e. Finally, gently remove the object without changing the shape of the clay.
3. Set your clay mold down in a safe place and allow the clay to dry overnight.
4. Next day: Preheat the oven at 200°F.
5. Prepare your crayons. Find all the unused, broken and worn down crayons in your crayon box, removed the paper label and place crayons in a bag. Use a rolling pin or hammer to carefully crush all the crayons everything is about the size of a pea or smaller.
6. Fill your mold with the crushed crayons. Make sure to pile the crayons into a little mound inside your mold. Once melted, the wax will sink into your mold details and the crayon mound will flatten.

7. Once your oven is pre-heated, place your mold onto a baking tray or in a muffin tin and pop it into the oven for 30-40 mins.
 - a. Watch it closely and once your wax is completely melted, pull the tray out of the oven.
8. Let the mold completely cool. Place it into the refrigerator to help it cool more quickly.
 - a. Moving onto the next step before allowing your mold to completely cool will ruin your wax copy, so be patient!
9. Finally, pull your clay away from your wax copy. Use your fingers to gently remove all the clay from the surface of the wax. Once you have removed as much as you can with your fingers, run hot water over the wax copy to help remove the last little bits of clay left!

CLAY PRO TIP: If you are using our DIY air dry clay recipe instead of playdoh, all the steps to making a mold are identical but there is an extra step right here at the end! If the clay is not releasing from your wax copy easily, remove as much as you can with your fingers. Once you have done that, drop the wax into a cup of water and let it soften for a few hours. Once you pull it back out, rinse it under some hot water and any remaining clay should come away.

10. Share what you made! We can't wait to see your creations! Post a picture and tag us @contemporaryATX or use the hashtag #SecondSaturdaysAtHome so we can see your amazing artwork!

DID YOU KNOW:

1. You could use lots of different materials in your mold? Pour some water in your mold and freeze it and you will have an ice copy. Use some hot glue from a hot glue gun to fill your mold to make a plastic copy. Melt down some chocolate and pour it into your mold to make a chocolate copy. You could even just use an extra piece of clay to make a clay copy!
2. We see examples of artists using the mold-making process to create their sculptures at Laguna Gloria all the time. An artist would use a mold to create a sculpture for a couple of reason.
 - a. First, an artist may want to create a sculpture out of certain material because of how it looks, or because it is easy to sculpt with, but those materials aren't very strong. The artist uses a mold to make a copy of their sculpture in a stronger material. This is especially important for artwork that lives outside!
 - b. Another reason an artist would use mold-making is to create many copies of their sculpture! With stronger molds made from plaster and foam, the same mold can be used over and over again to make many copies.
3. One artist at Laguna Gloria that used molds to create his sculpture is Tom Friedman. His sculpture *Looking Up* was originally created using aluminum foil baking pans. Friedman knew that aluminum foil is not a very strong material so he used molds to create a copy of his sculpture in stainless steel! Here are some pictures of his sculpture *Looking Up*:

