

Accu-Cast Head Casting Kit

Difficulty Level: 1 2 3 4 5 **6** 7 8 9 10

This kit includes:

- 1 pound alginate 590-IBG alginate
- 8 rolls plaster bandages (3" x 5 yd)
- 25 pounds LiquiStone
- a big plastic trash bag
- complete instructions

IN ADDITION, YOU WILL NEED:

- a Bald Cap and adhesive, shaved models don't need one.
- a dull knife
- a pencil or marker
- a 5 gallon bucket and some old newspaper
- an electric drill
- a Jiffy Mixer or similar paint mixer attachment
- an assistant- if possible



The entire procedure should take no more than 30-40 minutes.

This technique uses a solid plaster bandage rear section and the “perimeter frame” alginate technique. You must put Vaseline on any skin that will touch plaster bandages, especially areas with any hair on them. Do NOT put Vaseline or any oil based product on the skin which will be covered in alginate. A good quality water based face cream is acceptable, but really not necessary.

This model had a shaved head, but you should apply a “bald cap” over the hair before doing this procedure. Remember, plaster bandages stick like thunder to exposed hair. Your model will NOT be happy with you. ***You have been warned.***

The BACK HALF OF THE MOLD-

Cut one 36 inch piece of plaster bandage and set it aside. We will need it later.

We begin by establishing our parting line with a perimeter frame of plaster bandages. Top of the shoulders up over the top of the skull, then back down to the other shoulder.

We fill in behind the ear with several short pieces of plaster bandage. Try to just “support” the ears”, not distort them. In this mold, our parting line will be just behind the outer ring of the ear.



We also establish the bottom edge of the casting with a line of plaster bandage.

Then we fill in the back of the frame with several layers of bandages. In most cases, the form and volume of the back of the head is sufficient and detail is not needed.

If you need to get a mold of the actual hair, it is a more difficult procedure- not covered here.

Put on at least 3 layers of bandage. Four would be better. Some straight up and down, some sideways. Remember, this shell must be quite strong because it needs to support the weight of the casting stone that will be poured into it without distorting.

Keep the parting line (front edge) of the plaster bandages smooth.

The FRONT HALF OF THE MOLD-

When you're done with the back shell, draw a line about 1 inch back from the front edge of the plaster shell. Make it dark so you can see it well.

Draw the line from shoulder to shoulder. Then put a thin coat of petroleum jelly (*Vaseline*) on the rear shell from the front edge to slightly past the line you just drew. **THIS IS REALLY, REALLY IMPORTANT !!!!!**

We're going to put more plaster bandages over this area and we don't want the front shell to stick to the rear one. If it does, we won't be able to separate the two halves and your model will not be happy. **Again, you have been warned.**

Next we start establishing the front perimeter. Put a plaster bandage across the chest from shoulder to shoulder. Make sure this strip overlaps the rear shell by about 1 inch- right up to the line we drew.

Then finish the front perimeter up and over the head, overlapping the rear shell just to our line. Now's the time to mix your alginate. Remember, it is better to have a little EXTRA alginate than "not quite enough". We're using about 1 pound of our 590-IBG formula alginate for this job. *Mix the 1 pound with 7 cups (56 fl. oz.) of water. Use room temperature water (~70°F) and you will get over 6 minutes of working time to apply the alginate.*

We're mixing with a power drill and Jiffy Mixer in a large Tupperware container. With this method, you will get a smooth, homogeneous mix in about 40 seconds so you'll have more time for application.



BIG TIP: Run your drill in reverse (anti-clockwise) to avoid whipping in a lot of air bubbles. The drill should be pulling UP from the bottom, not sucking down from the top.



We use a catheter tip syringe (no needle- AVAILABLE on our website) to squirt alginate into the folds of the ear. This type of syringe is available through veterinary supply stores or we can sell you one. We use a 35cc model, but a 60cc model will also work.

Once the ears are done, we plop a big handful of alginate right on the subject's head and work it down around his face.



Pay particular attention to the inner corners of the eyes. Tell the subject to close their eyes tightly and use your thumb to push alginate into these areas. Also very important is to keep the nose clear so they can breathe.



A good suggestion is to work from the outside- inward toward the nose. Do the nose last so you can concentrate on it.



When the alginate is set (no longer sticky on the surface), trim back the edge of the alginate so about 3/4 of an inch of the front perimeter frame is exposed. Please use a dull knife and/or be extremely careful.



Now we fill in the front perimeter frame with bandages. We make sure to adhere these bandages to the 3/4 inch we just revealed, but not to any part of the rear perimeter frame. Again, 3 or 4 layers of bandage are usually sufficient.

In this way, we are "pinching" the alginate between two layers of plaster bandage all the way around the perimeter which keeps the alginate securely "trapped" in the plaster bandage shell.



Do the nose last. Put one thin strip down between the nostrils.

Make sure your subject is comfortable along the way. Most people report being very relaxed by this point. It's quiet, dark and a little warm- almost time for a nap.

During this photo shoot, someone got the bright idea to make a hand print on the outer shell. There's nothing wrong with a little horseplay as long as the model isn't bothered or freaked out by it. Also it's pretty unfair to try to make the model laugh. It won't be funny at all if the mold gets ruined.



OPENING THE MOLD-

When the plaster bandages are completely set, pry open the joint between the two shells. It shouldn't be difficult if you've done it right. The handle of a spoon makes a great tool.

When its loose all the way around, have the subject lean forward and wiggle his facial muscles (squint, purse their lips, raise and lower their eyebrows, etc. This will help loosen the alginate from the skin.

Also important is to tell them to keep their eyes closed for a few seconds because it can seem very bright.

Examine your mold. Use clay included in the kit and a short piece of plaster bandage to seal the open nostril holes. Cover all exposed interior plaster surfaces with petroleum jelly (Vaseline). Reassemble the two halves and glue the joint with the piece of plaster bandage you set aside at the beginning.

POURING THE MOLD-

Put the mold head down into a bucket, with newspaper padding in it. Mix up your Gypsum Cement or LiquiStone and pour. You might want to put a pipe into the neck- sticking out- so you can mount the head on a wood base. Metal pipe or Schedule 40 PVC work just fine. If you drill a couple of holes in the pipe where it will be submerged in the Gypsum, you will get a stronger attachment between the stone and the pipe.

It IS possible to do a "hollow pour" by sloshing the LiquiStone around inside the head mold to form a coating. You will have to do this several times to build up a sufficient thickness. Burlap or chopped fiberglass fibers can be used on your second and subsequent layers to help strengthen the shell, but this is beyond the scope of these instructions and we cannot take responsibility for your results.

LiquiStone reaches 85% of its final strength within 1 hour and it is safe to remove the mold from your casting at that point. In any case, please do not wait more than 8 hours to remove the alginate mold.

Wait about a week before attempting to put any kind of finish on your head cast. There is a lot of water in the stone at first. It needs to come out through evaporation. If you seal the surface before the water comes out, it will come out anyway- right through your beautiful finish.

ALWAYS REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN WITH LIFECASTING

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