

The Nelson Home and Haunt



<http://cassie7.googlepages.com/tombstoneappliquehow-to>

Tombstone Applique How-To



You can really dress up your tombstones with appliques. Appliques are basically just molded forms that you can glue to your tombstones to dress them up to add a classy or creepy touch.

You easily produce the appliques by pressing clay into molds.

You can pick up candy/soap molds from any craft store or search for an online store. I like candylandcrafts.com. Their selection is HUGE.



Here's the mold I'm using for this tutorial:

THE CLAY I USE...



I found a fantastic product by Crayola called Model Magic. You can find it at most craft stores like Hobby Lobby, A.C.Moore, JoAnne's and such.

The beauty of Crayola Model Magic is that it dries within 24 hours and is extremely lightweight. When dried, it feels and weighs much like an extremely stale marshmallow. And you can sand it too. It's non-toxic, no odor, non sticky, non crumbly and easy to work with.

Here's your parts list:

- ***A bag or tub of Crayola Model Magic clay***
- ***A candy or soap mold***
- ***PAM no-stick cooking spray***
- ***Wire (or stickpins)***
- ***Wire cutter (not needed if you use stickpins)***
- ***A cotton ball***

Lets begin...

Take your mold and spray it with Pam cooking spray. This will prevent the clay from sticking to the mold when you want to remove it.

Daub the sprayed mold with a cotton ball to spread the spray around and remove any puddles of oil. Puddles will cause bubbles in your finished product. All you need is a light coating of Pam.

Take a ball of the clay and roll it into a ball. Be sure to avoid fold lines. Smooth it out as much as you can.

In your hand, squish and roughly shape the ball to the shape of the mold (avoid making clay folds, keep it smooth).

Then press the Model Magic clay into the prepared mold. The trick is to avoid air bubbles between the clay and mold. Just keep looking from underneath the mold...you can see if/where air bubbles are. Work them out.



Then I cut wire into roughly 2 inch lengths (see the bottom of the page for an alternative to the wire handles, stickpins may work) and bend them into an L shape. I insert them into the Model Magic taking care not to go too deep. These will be little handles to use to pull the Model Magic out of the mold when it dries.



The next day, I gently (using my wire handles) tug the Model Magic out of the mold. It comes out pretty easy.

Once it's out, I gently pull the wire handles out of the back of the Model Magic (they pull out easily as long as you pull them out from the same angle you placed them). And you end up with your applique.

Don't worry about imperfections. They just add to realism. If you look closely at any marble/concrete tombstone carvings, they are never perfect so it just adds to realism.



Just glue it to your tombstone and you have a great looking stone that stands above any generic hand made tombstone that your neighbors would make or buy!

Once you paint your tombstone, the appliqué blends right in and looks like its carved on.

Alternative to wire...

An alternate to using wire as a pull is simple stick pins. I used wire first because this mold was thick. But I've since used thinner molds and after it dried, all I had to do was slide a stick pin in it at an angle and managed to lift the dried clay right out of the mold with no problem. After discovering this trick, I think stickpins would work with even thick molds too.

Watch for page updates to see our stones painted (we're waiting for calm weather outdoors to paint them).

As always, check back for updates. Our webpage is a constant work in progress.

Obtained from
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