

**Press-molding Instructions:**

1. Wedge nylon fiber into clay.
2. Lay out large piece of fabric onto work board.
3. Begin squeezing clay into rope-like coils.
4. Cover the board with clay coils; spiral the coils or lay them out parallel, in a row.
5. Tamp the coils to desired thickness (3/4").
6. Smooth the surface with a rolling pin, rolling over the clay in two directions.
7. Wet the surface of the slab by misting with water; roll lightly with the rolling pin.
8. Lift the slab of clay still backed by the fabric, and flip the slab into the plaster mold. This step often requires two people working together.
9. Bend the slab of clay into a concave form, forming it generally, against the plaster mold.
10. Cut off any clay overhanging the edges of the plaster mould.
11. Press mold the slab into the plaster mold; add extra clay where needed for deep undercuts (nose and chin). Then press deeply into those areas.
12. Add a coil of clay to the edge of the seam-line to create a 1/2" joinable face. Smooth this additional clay in well.
13. Repeat this process for all sections of the form. It is important that this be done immediately so that all of the parts can be dried similarly and assembled in sequence when they all are leather-hard.
14. Dry until each section is leather hard. The clay will visibly shrink in from the sides of the plaster mold. If drying seems too slow, you can speed it up by placing an oscillating fan in the studio to create indirect air circulation. If the outer faces of the clay are drying too rapidly, they can be slowed down by placing damp paper towels on the seam-lines.
15. Before removing the press-molded sections from the plaster mold, be sure the center of the slab form is leather hard.
16. Before removing the clay, score each seam line.
17. Invert the plaster mold and shake out each section. It is best if the section is dropped onto foam-rubber pad.
18. Place the sections into a vertical position and join; align the seam lines carefully. Wiggle the seam lines slightly to gain optimal registration and melded joint.
19. Add a coil of clay and compress into the entire length of the seam line, inside and/or outside. The coil should be only large enough to fill in any visible gaps. It is not necessary to use a large coil, since this creates extra residue to be removed and cleaned.
20. Re-carve details like the hair, ears, deeply undercut areas. Finish the surface.
21. Carefully wrap in three layers of light weight plastic in between work sessions and/or for final drying.
22. Fabricate any additional pieces. Allow to dry to the same stage as the press molded form before adding.