

How to Copy Sasquatch Footprint Casts

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Posted by Kathy.Strain

by **Cliff Barackman**

klyph@bigfoot.com

Introduction

I started collecting sasquatch casts several years ago. I would occasionally copy them by impressing them into a sandbox and filling the impression with plaster. The results generally fell far short of my desires, so I asked a good friend to teach me how to copy the casts in a way to preserve the details that could be found on them, including dermatoglyphics. This paper is a short description of the process that he taught me, with some refinements I have made through experience.

The following procedure is relatively cheap, not very time consuming, and most importantly, captures all the details that can be found in the originals.

The cast I used to illustrate this paper is the left foot of the PG Film subject. It was cast by Roger Patterson on October 20, 1967 shortly after the film was made.

All of the casting materials I used were purchased through Laguna Clay. They can be found online at <http://www.lagunaclay.com/>

Materials

Artist paintbrushes
Water-based latex
Plastilube (release agent)
Several feet of 2x4's
Plastilina clay
Hydrocal, Ultracal, or other plaster material
Hammer and nails
1 foot wide board
Vaseline
Rubber mallet

Process

1. Put the cast on the wooden board, with the flat side down. Try not to have large gaps between the sides of the cast and the board. Small gaps can be worked with, but any gap larger than 1/2 inch should be dealt with by filing down the lumps on the back of the cast that prohibit the cast from lying flush on the board.



2. With one of the brushes, paint a coat of Plastilube or other release agent over the cast. Be sure to paint this on the wood around the cast as well. The release agent should extend at least 1 or 2 inches on the wood around the cast in all directions. Let the Plastilube dry before proceeding to the next step. If using Plastilube, clean the brush with water.



3. Using one of the brushes, paint a thin layer of latex onto the cast surface. If your cast has dermatoglyphics, sweat pores, or other minute details you wish to capture, the first layer of latex should be slightly watered down (a little water goes a long way). This will ensure that the latex gets into these small crevices and will faithfully reproduce the details into the mold. Please note that this might only work with water-based latex, but having never used the ammonia-based stuff, I don't know. The latex should extend at least 1 or 2 inches onto the wood like was done with the Plastilube in step 2. Let the latex thoroughly dry before proceeding to the next step.

4. Paint six or eight more layers of latex onto the cast, allowing the latex to dry between each coat. You do not need to water down the subsequent layers of latex. In fact, the later layers can be painted on rather thickly. The gaps around the edge of the cast between the plaster and the board should be visibly sealed with the latex. The smaller the gaps, the less latex will be needed to fill them. It is better to thinly paint the latex over the gaps, rather than to glob it in. These globs will later overhang the cast and/or the copies which could cause difficulties.

5. Using the 2x4's, hammer, and nails, make a rectangular frame around the cast. Seal all gaps between the various pieces of wood with plastilina clay to make the frame water tight. Plastilina clay can be reused and doesn't readily dry out, but any similar material can be substituted.

6. Build a dam of plastalina clay halfway down the cast's length. Mold a sphere from a separate piece of clay and cut it in half. Attach each half sphere to the dam, both on the same side.



7. Apply a layer of Vaseline to the insides of the 2 x 4's, the wooden board, the plastalina dam, and the latex covering your cast. Make sure the Vaseline extends as far up the 2 x 4's as the plaster will go in step 8.

8. Fill one half of the frame with plaster material. Let it dry.



9. Remove the plastalina dam. Coat the other half of the cast and boards with Vaseline as in step 7. Fill this half with plaster material and let dry.



10. Remove the 2 x 4's by gently tapping them outwards with the rubber mallet. Separate the two pieces that make up the mother mold. You may need to pry the two pieces apart with a screwdriver or other tool. Be very careful when removing the mother mold from the latex mold. This is the step where I have cracked several of my original casts. If there are overhangs, the chances of breaking the original greatly increase.

11. Peel the latex off the original.

To make copies, simply lay the latex mold into the mother mold and fill the latex mold with plaster. After drying, peel the latex mold off of the new copy. No release agent will be necessary.

I am hoping that by writing this paper, more people will copy the casts they have and trade them with other enthusiasts, such as myself.