

CASTING TEETH

by Graham Holt

Materials --

Alginate

Tin Foil (or tooth trays if you have some)

Plaster

Small paintbrush (it can be a cheap one)

Mixing Bowl

Paper towels or napkins

1. Unless you have tooth trays, use the tin foil to make some temporary ones. Make a "U" shape about the same size as your top teeth and about 1 wide, then set it in your mouth and use your fingers to work it into a trough shape around your teeth. Pull it out of your mouth and pull the trough a little wider so there's room around your teeth when you put it in your mouth. It should look somewhat like a mouth guard does.
2. Mix up about a tablespoon of alginate and drop it into the tray, the tray should be about 2/3 full.
3. Shove the tray over your teeth, making sure that you keep alginate around all the sides of your teeth - especially the bottom of your tray, don't bite down too hard or there won't be any alginate between your teeth and the tray bottom. Work over a sink and lean forward a little so excess alginate doesn't run down your throat. You can spit out some excess as long as you don't move the tray around much.
4. Let the alginate set. It only takes a few minutes and you should be able to feel it go rubbery with your tongue. Then carefully pull out the tray (over a sink because you'll probably drool some). Spit out any globs and rinse out your mouth to get any little bits, alginate isn't dangerous at all but it's slimy feeling.
5. Carefully rinse out the tray and dab the water out with a paper towel.
6. Mix up about a tablespoon of plaster and use the paintbrush to coat the inside of the alginate mold, getting into all the cracks and crannies. Fill the mold with plaster and gently tap and rock it to get rid of any air bubbles. Let the plaster dry.
7. Carefully peel out the plaster copy of your teeth. It will be very exact replicas of your teeth. If the alginate is still ok, we suggest making another 1 or 2 plaster copies (they break easily).

A Tray Tip --

Impression plates can be made easily out of matboard. Custom fit the trays to your jaw by simply measuring your jaw by biting the surface and tracing. Then measure the distance from bottom of your teeth to about a fourth inch above gumline and add that to the edges of your tracing. You can make a tray that is very similar to what you see in the dentist's office.

Quick Fake Gold Tooth --

Materials:

Gold Candy Wrapper ("Kisses" work great)

Spirit Gum

Mechanical Pencil with an Eraser

1. Take your candy wrapper and smooth it out, the smoother it is the better it will look later. If it has one side that's paper you have to try to pull a small square of the metal part off. Usually the easiest way is to burn the paper off with a lighter. Kisses work great because they don't have any paper and are ready to go.
2. Cut a small square piece out of the metal wrapper a little bigger than the tooth you want covered.
3. Dry the tooth and brush a little spirit gum on to it, brush some spirit gum on the duller side of the square you cut as well and let both dry a little until tacky.
4. Center the square over the tooth and push it into place. Use the mechanical pencil to fit it over the tooth exactly - the eraser to smooth any flat edges and the pencil end (with no lead) to push it down around the edges and gums. When it's all smoothed on you're done. The tooth is pretty durable and should last a few hours (or you can peel it off) but don't eat with it. If you want a different colored tooth use a different colored wrapper.