



ComposiMold presents alternative to RTV molds for casting

This one-part system is easy to use and reusable

Modelers cast resin when they need multiple copies of a converted or scratchbuilt part. That way, they can concentrate on getting one master right rather than having to make several identical parts by hand.

Two-part room-temperature-vulcanizing rubber has been the go-to product for making molds for this process, but it can be time-consuming, a bit messy, and, if you don't get the mixture quite right, frustrating. Plus, it can be expensive to make a mold you use only a few times.

ComposiMold aims to change that. It is a one-part, easy-to-use molding compound that can be reused.

FSM received a couple of 20-fluid-ounce containers, so I thought I'd give it a whirl.

I needed to modify the engines on a Hawk 1/96 scale Vickers Viscount to represent the Dart Mk.510 engines carried on the later V.700Ds. I made a master by building up the diameter of an assembled kit engine with strip styrene. Putty and super glue blended the profile.

After checking the engine for problems and brushing on mold release to keep the master from sticking, I secured it inside a paper cup with modeling clay.

Heating the ComposiMold proved easy enough. I removed the lid and popped the container straight into the microwave. With the unit on full power, I heated the amber-colored solid for 3½ minutes, stirring every minute. The time will vary depending on the microwave and the size of the container, so check it often. The instructions mention that the container can melt if the stuff gets too hot, and that you shouldn't get it hotter than 200 degrees Fahrenheit.

Wearing gloves, I slowly stirred the thick liquid a final time. Then, I carefully poured the ComposiMold into the cup around the master. I noticed a few bubbles in the mix as it was pouring, but they all but disappeared as it set. The one issue I encountered was that the modeling clay got too soft and the master threatened to fall over. I was able to prevent that and leave the material to harden overnight.

You can speed the process by placing the material in the refrigerator or freezer, or by surrounding it with ice packs. The website warns against placing it in cool water.

The next day, I popped the master out of the mold cleanly and set about casting a copy using Alumilite two-part resin.

A few minutes later, I was rewarded with a copy of my master that, aside from a couple of bubbles in the resin, resembles my hurriedly-built master. The mold reproduced even faint panel lines. The surface seems a little rough, but it's nothing light sanding can't fix.

I plan to refine the master and redo the mold, so it's nice to know I haven't wasted the ComposiMold. I can melt it in the microwave and return it to the container.

For more information, including tutorials, hints, and tips, and to order the compound, visit www.composimold.com. It is available in several sizes: A 10-fluid-ounce container costs \$20; a 20-fluid-ounce, \$29.95.

