

FAQ

belly casting troubleshooting

1. Can I reuse the plaster bandage belly mould?

If you remove the bandage carefully without tearing or stretching the overall shape, and especially with belly only, you can pour twice. However, this isn't possible for bellies with hands on it.

2. How can I fix a hole or air bubble in the belly cast?

The undercoat will fill small air bubbles. After cleaning the edges and smoothing the front, make a small amount of plaster mix in a cup and paint it into any large air bubbles over 3mls. Use this second mix to thicken any thin spots on the back of the cast (you may need to put a bit of bandage across a hole on the front, to keep plaster from falling through. You can strengthen balance points for standing it up.

3. How can I repair a broken belly cast?

Plaster is the best glue for this job. Fit the pieces back together. Paint water on both sides of the join. Mix up a small amount of plaster. Paint plaster on one side and quickly fit the pieces in place holding steady until it grabs - helps to have another pair of hands or a bean bag to support the shape. If it doesn't work, wash off the wet plaster and try again. When its set hard (20mins) paint and smooth thin plaster over the joins at the front and reinforce the back of cracks with a layer of thick plaster.

4. How do I make the belly cast stand up by itself?

If the bandage mould includes the top of the mums legs, it should stand up by itself or be easy enough to balance when your shaping it after the peel. You can build up bandage on the sides missing the hip bones. Shaving a few millimeters off the belly at the front may be enough to tilt it forward enough to stand steadily.

5. How do I seal the belly cast for painting?

2 or 3 coats of flat plastic undercoat or ceiling white should do it, it will even up the plaster surface, filling any small air bubbles.

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6. If the mum only wants a plaster bandage belly mould, how should I finish it?

Cut around the edges of the bandage mould to make a sweet outline shape. Add more bandage on the inside where it feels flimsy, try to even up the outside as much as possible. Cut 5 cm strips of bandage and fix around the edges 2.5cms inside and out. Mix up a cup of plaster and paint it over the outside to make it as even as possible. Smooth it over before it fully sets, then let it completely dry before you undercoat it.

7. How should I advise clients about storing their belly casts?

Belly casts are best displayed out of the way of little hands, on top of a cupboard or on a high shelf, propped up if they won't stand. The poured plaster type is too heavy to hang, but the finished bandage type can be hung if you pierce the sides for ribbon, string or wire. Put a piece of wood across the back between these holes to stop it pulling inwards. Seal it in a plastic bag to store without moisture getting to it.

8. Is the plaster set time affected by weather?

Yes, it can be very unpredictable, slow on cold days, fast on warm humid days and using warm water in your mix can speed it up.

9. How should I store plaster bandage, bags of plaster and alginate?

They should be sealed in a plastic bag so moisture in the air won't get to them. Bags of plaster and alginate do have a use by date on them.

10. How do I dispose of sludgy plaster cleanup water?

DON'T POUR IT DOWN THE DRAIN. If you can leave the sludge bucket overnight it will settle out, then drain off the excess water. The plaster bags are lined with plastic so you can pour drained off sludge back into these bags and throw them in the bin with the other plaster scraps. You can throw it out on the garden, but it might take some time to disappear!