

Textured Mats *made easy*

by Michael Joy

Mold making is the perfect process for chefs looking to create unique patterns and shapes not available to the public market. Textured mats are invaluable for adding flair to your pastry designs, and the good news is, they are simple to make. With the ever increasing demands pastry chefs face to be more creative with less time, this is a great technique to quickly enhance the surface of **chocolate, sugar, fondant**, and many other flavorful mediums.

For this demonstration, we have chosen to make a silicone mold from textured wallpaper. If you have never made a silicone mold before, this is an excellent way to learn basic techniques while creating a beautiful and useful tool for your kitchen.



Michael Joy is the author of *Confectionery Art Casting - Silicone Mold Making for Pastry Chefs* and founder of the Chicago School of Mold Making & Casting for the Arts, Inc.

[1] Materials needed:

Textured wall paper, food grade silicone (GeoPress™ Starter Kit), spatula, ½ sheet pan, digital scale, safety glasses, ruler, razor knife, torpedo level, shims, 3” scraper, and Vaseline™.

[2] Cut wallpaper.

Prepare the wallpaper by trimming it to 11 ½” x 16”. *Important Note:* Use only vinyl based wallpaper. Fiber based wallpapers will stick to silicone.

[3] Use Vaseline™ as glue.

Stipple (*dab in an up-down motion*) a small amount of Vaseline™ (*just enough to create a light texture*) on the back side of the wallpaper. Stipple the entire perimeter and center of the wallpaper. If the Vaseline™ permeates through the front of the wallpaper, you have applied too much and should start with a new sheet.

Too much Vaseline™ can prevent the silicone from curing in those areas.

[4] Lay wallpaper in sheet pan.

In a flat sheet pan, gently press the wallpaper Vaseline™ side down, into the pan. Make sure the corners are well adhered to the pan.

[5] Weigh out silicone.

While wearing gloves and safety glasses, pour 400 grams of GeoPress™ Silicone Base (*white*) into the mixing container. Next, add 40 grams (10%) of GeoPress™ Silicone Catalyst (*blue*).

[6] Mix silicone.

The Base and Catalyst are thoroughly mixed together until uniform in color. Visit www.ChicagoMoldSchool.com for online demos and detailed instructions.

[7] Pour silicone in a thin stream.

This is a very important step. Pour the GeoPress™ from 18”–24” above the wall paper so that it stretches into a thin stream. This is called “needling” and it prevents air bubbles from accumulating on the surface of your mold.

[8] Pull liquid silicone over paper.

Use a wide scraper to lightly pull liquid silicone over the surface area of the wallpaper. Be careful not to lift the corners of the wallpaper up from the pan. *Push them back down if you do.*

[9] Level out the sheet pan.

Level the sheet pan with a torpedo level and shims to ensure the mold cures perfectly flat. Allow the mold to cure for at least 24 hours. *It will be firm to the touch.*

[10] Remove wall paper.

After the silicone has cured, peel the wallpaper from the silicone mold.

[11] Trim silicone mold.

Use a razor knife to trim the excess edges off the mold. *Not shown:* Place the mold in an oven at 100° F. for 8–10 hours to complete the cure. Wash the mold with soap and water before using with food. GeoPress™ is not intended for baking. Do not heat GeoPress™ above 300° F./150° C.

[12] Using your new mold.

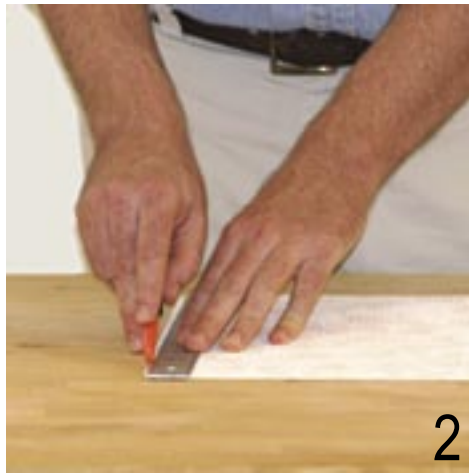
Your textured mat is complete and there are many uses for it! Here are a few ideas:

1. Set a cake ring on top of the mat or cut the mat into strips and line the inside of a cake ring (*or log mold*) and fill it with mousse (*plated serving shown*).
2. Fold the mat in two and use it as a press mold to create double sided pastillage shapes.
3. Press fondant on the mat and use it to decorate a wedding cake.

Resources: To see more ideas for mold making in the culinary field and to find the materials shown in this demonstration, visit www.ChicagoMoldSchool.com. You can also register for a hands on mold making class.



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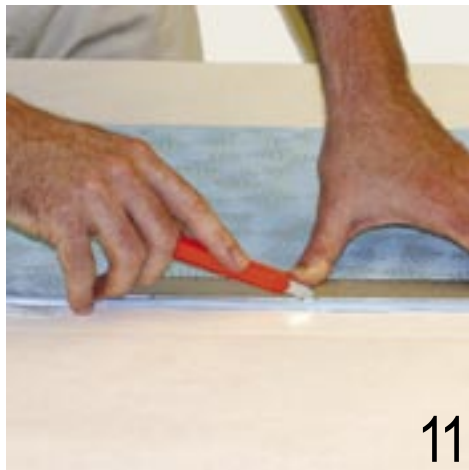
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