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Fangs and Teeth

Have you ever wanted a neat set of fangs for that Halloween costume, play or home made monster movie? Well it's not that hard to do and hopefully this page will give you the basic steps to create your own.

Below are some photos of some of the things you may need. The dental acrylic is the major item along with a cast of your teeth. I purchased some of my acrylic from Monster Makers, Lang Dental and Pro Tech but there are other sources out there.

One thing to keep in mind about dental acrylic and that is the monomer is considered a hazardous material so you will have to pay an extra \$23.00 to have it shipped. If you can get it locally from an orthodontist it will save you some money and might even be cheaper. Something else to remember that tooth acrylic comes in various shades so you might have to match it to your teeth to get a good match.

Also, if you want to do gums then you will need some pink acrylic. This is a common stuff but if you plan to do teeth for yourself and friends you might want to invest in a few different shades. A word of ***CAUTION*** You should work with the dental acrylic in a well ventilated room and always use latex gloves while handling it. This stuff smells bad when it's mixed together.

You can probably get almost any alginate but I purchased mine from Pacific Rim Dental because at the time they had a good price and it was prosthetic grade. I got it in unflavored (don't believe that) and bubblegum flavor and according to my daughter don't believe that one either!. All in all the alginate does not have a pleasant taste no matter what kind you get. I also picked up some blue dental stone too but Ultra Cal 30 will work just as well and I have found Ultra Cal 30 to be cheaper than dental stone. Pacific Rim sold me some stuff called De-Bub which you spray in your alginate mold to stop bubbles from forming when pouring

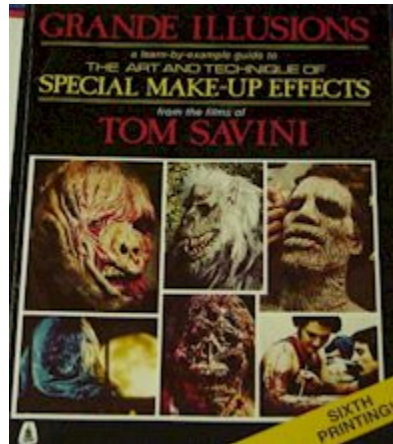
the stone. It seemed to work pretty well for me but I don't think you will actually need it unless you want the extra expense. Lang Dental has some Glow in the Dark monomer that I have used to make some fangs and they look pretty sharp. They have a sealant that puts a shine on the finished product if you want that.

Some things are optional but when I started this I wanted to make sure I was setup correctly so I got everything to include the kitchen sink. It doesn't hurt to do a little looking around for the best price on a lot of this stuff. I'm not trying to knock the special effect supply houses but sometimes their prices are high for stuff like this and if you go right to the source (Dental Supply House) you can save some money. I used Tom Savini's book "Grande Illusions" and the Monster Makers "Fantastic Dentistry Volume 1" video for references. The video is really a great help! Sometime you can read and read and never quite get the picture until you see it being done.

A list of items below:

- Alginate
- Dental Stone (Ultra Cal 30)
- Impression Plate (Optional but I prefer it)
- Rubber base form (Optional but makes things a bit nicer)
- Small paint brush
- Small scoop (The alginate came with one)
- Dental tools (Any small pointed tool will work... tooth picks will work in a inch)
- Dental acrylic (polymer and monomer)
- Sculpey clay or sculpting wax
- Eye dropper or plastic pipette
- Sheet of aluminum foil
- Latex rubber gloves
- Alcote separator or petroleum jelly
- Popsicle sticks or something to stir the alginate and dental stone with
- Acrylic teeth (if you want to make "Billy Bob Teeth")
- Pressure pot (just nice to have to get a great finished product)
- Dremel drill





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I'm going to show you how to make a couple different kinds of teeth. The best thing for you to do is pick the set you feel comfortable making and make them then try a different set. You may be a natural at doing this BUT I wasn't and it took a few times to get it right. I'm going to show you how to make the Billy Bob Teeth and several different kinds of fangs. Also if you have props and you want some mean looking teeth you can use the dental acrylic to create those too and put them in your prop.

In order to make any type of fangs or teeth we will need a cast of your teeth to work with in order to mold the fang. So you need to get out the alginate, dental stone, impression plate, cups or bowls, and something to mix with. The alginate should come with a scoop and a little measuring cup or vial to measure the water. If not hopefully there will be some instructions on what ratio of alginate to water.



With my alginate it was 1 scoop of alginate to 1/2 vial of water. If there are not any instructions you can still get it pretty close by eyeballing it. The temperature will greatly

affect the setting time of the alginate. Cold water will extend the time and hot water shortens the time. I have found that running the water so you can just feel the warmth is about right but you might have to experiment a bit. Also you want to get the right consistency because you don't want this be so runny it runs down your throat and will not stay in the tray. If the water is too cold not only will it take longer to set but you or your subject may get to feel a little uneasy as this stuff sets. Nothing better than a mouth full of cold alginate!!!

I know it sounds stupid but brush your teeth and just before you put impression tray in rinse your mouth with warm water. Mix up the alginate and water. One thing to remember is as you start to mix, the alginate will look very dry and you might even be tempted to add more water. DON'T!



Keep on mixing and the water will soak through and you should end up with a nice smooth paste. I normally use the large tongue depressors to mix and I can pick up some of the alginate and it will not fall off the tongue depressor when I turn it up side down. Remember, you want it to stay in the tray while it's in your mouth.

I have seen some web sites that say you can use the bottom of cups or yogurt containers in place of a regular dental impression tray but I used a regular tray. The trays come in three sizes and to be honest I don't know what the average mouth size is.

Whatever you decide to use make sure when you put it in your mouth it will capture all of your teeth and gum area. Normally all you need is the six front teeth. Before you put the alginate in the impression tray, it's a good idea to test the fit to make sure you have the right size and you will get all of your teeth. Once you mix the alginate you don't have a lot of time but you don't have to rush either.

The alginate should start to set in about 2 minutes so that gives you a bit of time to work. The instructions on your alginate should tell you how long it takes to setup. Remember, the less time the alginate is in your mouth means less discomfort. You should do this over a sink or trash can just in case some over flows or if you should have a gag reflex and have to remove the alginate FAST! Don't do it in the living room on the new sofa unless your wife is that forgiving... mine isn't! Load up the impression tray like the picture below.



Press your teeth into the alginate and make sure your upper lip comes over the tray to ensure your gum area is captured. Don't bite down hard but enough that your teeth get pressed into the alginate. Depending on the type of alginate and the temperature of the water that was used the alginate will start to setup. This is easy to check by either testing the leftover alginate in the mixing bowl or by any alginate that leaks out of the impression tray. It will get to be like rubber in a bit and that will mean you can remove the tray. Be careful

removing the tray as the alginate probably has built up a suction so you will have to wiggle the tray loose. Even though it may feel rubbery the alginate is still sort of "fragile" and will tear if you pull to hard. It is better to let your subject put the tray in than have you try because they will hopefully get it to fit correctly.



Inspect the impression the best you can. If there is an air bubble or something didn't get captured correctly you will have to do another one. While you want to get the best impression you can, if all you plan on making are fang caps then just make sure the two canine teeth are correct. Fang caps basically slip over your two canine teeth and do not have

any gum area added. I just like to have a good all around impression to work with when I do this so I try to make sure all the teeth are correct.

You want to work fast but don't rush. You do have time but alginate will shrink as it dries out BUT normally you will be done way before this will happen. Should you have to set the impression aside for an extended period of time (hour or so) wrap it in a damp paper towel and this should slow down the drying process. Any longer than 2 hours and I would make another impression because if it shrinks then the teeth may look fine but won't fit your normal teeth and unless you are EXTREMELY lucky your impression will be ruined when you remove the stone so you will have to make another one.



Now let's mix up the dental stone or Ultra Cal 30. For the cast you really won't need much. Just like the alginate the water temperature plays a big part in the setting time. The warmer the water, the faster the set and visa-versa. You probably won't need but a scoop or two of dental stone. All you want to do is fill in

the teeth area. The stone should be like mud. You want it runny but not watery and you don't want it so thick you have to scoop it out of the bowl. Put the alginate impression on a flat surface and on top of something like a paper plate to catch any run off of the stone.



If you got any De-Bub spray it on the alginate if not you can start pouring the stone. Pour a little stone into the impression and rotate the impression so the stone flows through all the teeth and then pour it out. I take a little brush and sort of sweep it through all the teeth to pop any bubbles that may have occurred. Pour the stone back in filling the teeth like the photo below.



Take the brush again and gently push it down in the teeth to pop any more bubbles. Also you can tap and bounce the tray to help get the bubbles out. Don't swoosh the stone as this will probably cause more bubbles but just lightly and gently push the stone down into the teeth. Don't worry about over run provided it is

off the back but you want to try to prevent it from over running on the front. Once you have all the teeth filled the stone should start to set and will get like sludge.

Set the tray so that the dental stone doesn't run out but once it starts to set you shouldn't have to worry. In the Monster Makers video he only fills the teeth and gum area with stone which makes it easier to put in the form but covering the whole area like I did will work too. I normally just fill the teeth and gum area but my daughters impression was so small I wanted to make sure I got everything covered.

You may be tempted to unveil your cast but you want to make sure the stone has fully set. I have found that the stone is very fragile while it is still setting and it will crack and break. I'll let mine sit for 30 to 45 minutes if not longer. Longer is much better than not long enough. Once it is fully set you can de-mold your cast. Again, be careful not to pull too hard because you could crack or break the cast.

Gently peel the alginate away from the stone. You can actually break off any over run off the back and trim off any excess with a utility knife. Just be careful not to nick the cast. Again inspect the cast for any bubbles or holes. Tiny imperfections can be filled with some more stone if needed but if you had a massive bubble in the front tooth you are out of luck unless all you plan on using is the canine teeth for fang caps. Hopefully your cast will look like the good cast below. The first cast did not capture enough of the gum area so I had my

daughter do another one. She just loved that idea. Even though we used a small impression tray it was almost like the tray wasn't small enough but on the second cast I got something I could work with. If I was just going to make fang caps the first impression probably would have been fine.



<-- Bad Cast



<-- Good

Cast

This next part is not required but it sure gives you a nice base to work with and makes it much easier to hold the cast as you sculpt your fangs. If you don't have a rubber base form you can use any type of small container. You want it big enough to lay your cast in side but it doesn't have to be real deep. Anything greater than 1/2 inch will be fine.



Mix up some more dental stone or Ultra Cal 30. Fill your form container to the top. Let the stone sit until it starts to set. Flip your cast upside down (teeth pointing up) and lay it on top of the stone. You don't want them to sink to the bottom but just enough so they will adhere to the form.



You might have to hold them a bit to prevent them from sinking as the stone sets. If you using one of the rubber form bases, try to keep the teeth towards the front of the form. If you set them to far back they will still be fine but it's easier to work with when doing the gum area if that part is close to the edge of the form. I try for about 1/2 inch. Once the cast is set and will

stand on it's own, let the stone harden all the way. I would give it another 30 to 45 minutes.



Now let's start to make those fangs.



So we have our cast and now we need to sculpt some fangs. I usually make my fangs large but if you make them too large you won't be able to close your mouth and you will look like something is wrong with your mouth when it's closed. You can put a sharp point on these but I don't recommend it as you could puncture your lip.

On mine, I have a dull point but in my opinion it looks good. Get out your wax or scupley and go to work. You won't need much. Make sure you push it on the back of the cast too so that it covers the whole tooth. If you have a modeling knife I trim up the clay a bit on the sides between the teeth and then cut the clay right where the tooth would meet the gums. You can have the fang extend past the normal tooth area and into the gums but I think it might look a bit strange. Smooth it out the best you can but it doesn't have to be ultra smooth.

Now we are ready to make a second mold of our teeth. You'll need to get more alginate again and some sort of container big enough and deep enough to hold the cast. If it's not deep enough, when you put in your mold you will flatten the tips of your teeth. You could probably use a small cup or something and just get the first 6 or 8 teeth but if you do the whole cast you don't have to hold it in place and also makes sure you get a firm even seat.



Mix up enough alginate to fill your container the required amount for your cast. When it starts to get tacky gently push the whole cast into the alginate. Make sure the alginate comes all the way to the top of the cast or the end of the gums. If it goes in farther that isn't a problem but just be careful when you remove it.

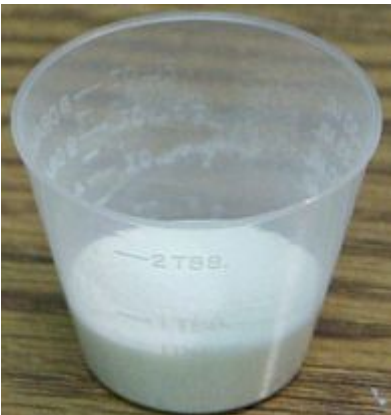


Your clay or wax might stick in the alginate when you remove the cast so you may have to dig them out but again be careful not to damage the alginate. Once the alginate is set remove your cast gently. Inspect the alginate to make sure you didn't trap any bubbles in the fangs only. If you did you will need to start over again and re-sculpt a new set or if the clay came out without any problem you can use it again..



Before you start using the dental acrylic, clean up your cast and remove the clay. Coat the cast with either Alcote or petroleum jelly. If you don't, good luck trying to get your fangs off the cast! Alcote is red in color and feels waxy when it's dry. I've used both Alcote and petroleum jelly but I prefer Alcote.

Since these are for my daughter I'm using the glow in the dark polymer for her fangs. If you can get your hands on some polypropylene cups like the little medicine cups that are great for mixing this stuff. You can get these at Monster Makers, Burman's, FX Supply, and other supply houses. For this set of fangs I mixed up a bit to much but it's better to have enough than not enough.



The first cup is just the polymer powder. The second cup is after I've added some monomer.



I add enough monomer to the dry powder so that there is a little monomer on the top of the polymer. I then take a popsicle stick and start to mix it. Remember, this stuff smells bad so make sure you have plenty of ventilation. Mix it until it is the consistency of thick pea soup.



There is a lot of room for error here but I found that this consistency gives you good results. Once it's mixed you can pour it into the fangs. Since I had extra I let it over run into the other teeth. Again, this isn't a problem because you can trim this off when you are done. Now take your coated cast and push it back into the alginate.



Don't force it, but make sure it sits in it's original position and press it down. This glow in the dark polymer takes longer than normal polymer so I had to let it sit for about 20 minutes. The regular polymer cures in about 10 minutes but follow the directions that comes with yours.



Don't try to take them out early because if they haven't cured you will ruin them and start all over again. After the allotted time gently remove the cast from the alginate.



If all went well you should have some fangs hanging off your cast. If for some reason they are messed up you might still be able to get another set from the alginate.



If you have a pressure pot put them in some warm water in the pot for about 20 minutes at 20 psi. If you don't have a pressure pot then about 35 to 45 minutes they should fully cure.



Once they have cured you can trim them up using your Dremel drill and a utility knife. You could use plain sand paper but if you have a lot of over hang it might take you a long time and probably won't get it as smooth as you want.

Make sure you smooth down the back so it is about even with the front of the tooth. You shouldn't have to actually sand the fronts of the fang because it should be rather smooth. Wear a mask when you sand as the dust is very fine and could pose a health hazard. Keep a small bowl of water to wash the fangs off every once in a while since there will be quite a bit of dust.



There you have the fang caps I spoke about. I myself don't care for these type of fangs but if this is all you need you are done. You can use some denture adhesive to keep them in place. I've never wore my fangs like this so I don't know well they stay on. So on to the next part of this fang making class.



Well now we have our fang caps and want something a bit better. These will fit in your mouth and provided you have a good cast they will not fall out and you can eat, drink and talk with them PROVIDED you didn't make a Godzilla set of fangs.



You will need your cast and the pink polymer and monomer for this part. Open the window because this stuff will smell bad just like the first time. Coat your cast again with either the Alcote or petroleum jelly even if it still has some on it from the fang caps. You don't want to go through all this work and then find out you can't remove them from the cast.

You will need an eye dropper for the monomer because you can't just pour this stuff on. For the polymer chances are it will come in a plastic bottle with a Yorker top as seen on the first page of this tutorial. This will work fine but sometimes you want to get a bit more precise when putting down the polymer so I went to Wal-Mart and picked up a Plaid Fun to Paint Tip-Pen Craft Tip Set for about \$2.00. It comes with about 2 extra plastic tops which wouldn't fit the bottles I had but it also comes with 3 metal tips that just thread onto the plastic tip. This was great because I could get the polymer powder right where I wanted it.

The normal tips work fine too but if the hole is to big sometimes you can get to much polymer where you don't want it. Although I didn't wear gloves for this part you might want to the first couple of times as the monomer will run off a bit and it could get on your hands.

I start with one side and sprinkle some polymer around the base of the fang and up on the gums. You don't want to get the powder on the teeth but just around the base of the tooth. Now take an eye dropper of monomer and put a few drops on the powder until the powder is wet. Add more powder and add more monomer.

Keep this going until you have covered the whole gum area from fang to fang. Don't worry if you get some on the front teeth because we will grind that away but don't get to sloppy. Since I will grind some of this away I try to make sure that I

put a good build up around the fangs and along the top of the gum line because this is where a lot of the support is come from.

Once you have the front done start working along the back. This is another support area so make sure you get a good coverage and a good buildup. If this is to thin it will break very easy and if it's to thick you will have a hard time speaking with these in. On this set I made them thin but I could have made them thicker without a problem. While you are doing the back occasionally check the front. You may have to put some more monomer on certain spots that didn't get enough. A good sign of that is the white blotches will appear in the gums. It will look like powder that wasn't mixed so when applying the monomer make sure you put on enough so you will get a good cure and your gums will come out looking great.

Once you have finished with the gums let them set until they cure a bit. While they are drying if you see some spots appear that look like they didn't get enough monomer you can try to apply some but at this point it may be to late. Once the gums are hard you can remove them. They probably won't just lift off so you will have to work them off.

I take my utility knife and run it along the front of the base of the cast. If when you try to remove them the gums are still gooey then push them back on and let them cure. Once you break the seal start working them off gently. They are not fully cured so be careful not to break them. In my experiences once I run my utility knife along the base they will come loose and then I can even use the blade of the utility knife to life them off. Don't worry about any of the gum area past the fangs because that will be ground off so if you need to use that to pry a bit, go ahead and use it. Now is not a good time to remember to put Alcote or petroleum jelly on your cast because it's WAY to late.



Hopefully you will get them removed without a problem. They will need to cure longer and if you have the pressure pot drop them in again for another 20 minutes at 20 psi. If you don't have a pressure pot then wait about 35 to 45 minutes.

As I stated the pressure pot is not required but the fangs and gums seem to have a better color and are smoother if you use one. I got a 2 1/2 gallon paint pressure pot from [Finish Systems](#) because the ones the dentist use are smaller and a lot more expensive but they both do the same thing plus I figure as I do other things with molds a larger one will come in handy.

Now you can start trimming up the fangs. Some tiny parts you might be able to snap off or trim with the utility knife but be careful not to break the appliance. For the most part you will need to grind most of this away. Remember to wear your

dust mask! Don't grind anything off the inside of the gum area just yet. I just trim off any excess and smooth out the edges. I then have subject put them on and let me know where the fangs are causing discomfort if any. Grinding away without checking may cause you to grind to much and the fangs will be loose and will not stay in place.



When trying to get a good fit, just take a little off at a time. Remember if you take to much off you can't put it back on. Any excess that came over the front teeth can be trimmed off. I didn't try to grind this pair off to actually match the teeth but you could although it would take much more time and when they are ground like the ones below you don't really notice this. If you are going to get some close up photos then I would grind them to match the front teeth but just for a Halloween costume there is no need in my opinion.

Once you are finished trimming and making the fitting changes you are just about done. If you did happen to purchase some acrylic sealer you can apply it now. I like using this stuff because it gives the teeth and gums a wet look and seems to bring out the color a bit more

plus I put some on the very edges of the appliance. The edges can be sort of sharp so this just dulls them a bit. If you don't have the sealant don't worry. Remember it's an option.

Don't be discouraged if they don't come out right the first time. Remember practice makes perfect! Below are several examples I made for myself and you can see or at least I hope you can, how they start to look better after a few tries. Also, if I had to do this tutorial over again I would use an adult subject instead of child since the teeth are larger and easier to work with but if you attempt to do this for child who is very hyper or impatient you will probably have problems getting a cast. My daughter was very understanding and we had to make two casts for her. The first two photos I used dental acrylic to hand mold the fangs and the last two were made from clay sculpted on my cast. The last set is the Glow in the Dark acrylic so they have a green tint to them. One day I'm going to make a piece to fix that space in my teeth <grin>. Even though the fangs are large I can close my mouth with them, talk and eat. If you make the back of the fangs to thick and go up to much on the palette you will find it hard to talk or will talk with a lisp.



The next page will show you how to "roll" your own fangs and make the "Billy Bob" type teeth.

Obtained from
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