



Ultra Mache Instructions & Tips

Item # 432131; 12 lb.

Item # 432134; 24 lb.

Ultra Mache is a fast-drying paper mache that mixes easily with water and dries to a durable finish!

Mixing

Ultra Mache can be mixed with water in any kind of container. Warm water is best, as it allows for faster activation of the product. If working with cold water, wedge the Ultra Mache mix adequately to allow for a smooth working consistency.

Tip: For clean, easy preparation, use a plastic storage bag for mixing. Measure out the desired amount of dry Ultra Mache and place in the bag. Add the recommended amount of water to the bag.

- For FIRM Ultra Mache (for building structures without armatures and for slab techniques): Mix 7 parts dry Ultra Mache to 2 parts water. This firm consistency will require extra effort to mix. This mixture yields $\frac{1}{3}$ the volume of the original, dry Ultra Mache.
- For AVERAGE Ultra Mache (for armature work, such as layering/building up, finishing detail, push molding, and adding details to masks and other surfaces): Mix 3 parts dry Ultra Mache to 1 part water. This mixture yields $\frac{1}{2}$ the volume of the original, dry Ultra Mache.
- For VERY PLIABLE Ultra Mache (for soft and exceptionally malleable Ultra Mache, for uses such as smoothing surfaces, texturing, layering, impressionist style bas-relief work, or general surface design): Mix 2 parts dry Ultra Mache with 1 part water. Ultra Mache will stay softer for a longer amount of time. This mixture yields $\frac{2}{3}$ the volume of the original, dry Ultra Mache.

With the dry Ultra Mache and water in the mixing container or sealed bag, work together with hands until the ingredients are generally combined. Then, switch to a kneading/wedging motion until activated Ultra Mache forms a cohesive "ball".

Ultra Mache that is stiffer than desired can be made more malleable by adding a bit more water and wedging to a desired consistency.

Drying

As Ultra Mache shrinks ever so slightly when drying, it is important to use strong attachments when adding pieces and to keep the thickness as even as possible to prevent cracking while drying.

The drying time is dependent upon the weather (heat and humidity), as well as the initial firmness of the clay and the thickness of it. Generally, a hollow Ultra Mache piece made from about a "fist sized" amount of product will take about an hour to harden and 24 to 36 hours to dry. A piece is dry when it no longer feels cold to the touch.

Slow drying will be less stressful to the piece than fast drying. Slow drying can be accomplished by covering the piece loosely with a damp cloth. Drying can be accelerated in a low temperature oven, with the door cracked open to allow for moisture to escape.

Finishing

Ultra Mache can be painted, dyed, or otherwise surface colored after it is formed and dried. Painting a "wet" sculpture can cause the paint to not dry or to peel off.

Ultra Mache can also be colored in its wet form, if desired. For a solid color throughout, add paint or fabric dye to the mix in the plastic bag when initially activating. For a stone-like, somewhat mottled color, add the colorant at the mixing and wedging stage. Additives, such as large flakes and other glitters or sand, will enhance the stone-like appearance of Ultra Mache, and can be added in amounts up to 50% of the volume of dry Ultra Mache. Additives can also be wedged in, using less, as the visual effect is generally apparent only on the surface.

General Techniques

For easier control and best results, it is recommended that you work from large general form to finer details. Pay attention to the desired surface texture as you go. It is easiest to establish a smooth surface while wet, refining the degree of smoothness as the material dries. However, Ultra Mache can be sanded smooth in the leather hard or dry-formed state.

- SLAB: The easiest way to form slabs with Ultra Mache is to roll activated Ultra Mache between sheets of plastic. Use thickness strips to ensure a consistent depth. Slabs can be used for construction and tile work or as an economical material for draping over cut and formed shapes.
- ARMATURES: Wire mesh, newspaper, formed and coiled wire, and balloons all provide easy and affordable ways to add support to a sculpture. Constructions of paper or board, flat or tubes, are also effective. If making parts that are extended, be sure to provide an inner support, wire or chenille stems work well.
- PUSH MOLDS: Ultra Mache can be formed in any non-porous mold. Prepare the mold with a dry release agent such as cornstarch or baby powder. Push in an amount of fairly stiff activated Ultra Mache. Allow it to semi-set up, then unmold. It is recommended that molded pieces be formed hollow - with an open bottom to ensure even drying, conserving both weight and material.