

## LEARNING RESOURCE



### Cast Columns

Create architectural stone effect casts using plaster and paint. This resource is inspired by the ornate pillars and columns associated with classical architecture.

Learn how to mix plaster and create simple casts using plastic cups as found moulds. By casting several component pieces, you will then have an opportunity to play with different combinations of forms and explore balance and composition. Before you begin, why not have a look at images of classical architecture for some inspiration.

### What will I need for this project?

- plaster (500g will give you several casts)
- paintbrush
- black and yellow acrylic or poster paint
- plastic cups
- plaster mixing bowl or large tupperware container
- scissors
- jug of water
- large bucket of water for cleaning
- old sponge or kitchen roll for cleaning up
- dust mask
- apron and newspaper to protect table and clothes

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### Step One

Gather your materials together and protect your workspace. To find the right quantity of water, pour water into each of your plastic cups, filling them about half way up. Now tip this water into your mixing bowl.



### Step Two

Add a small amount of paint to your water and mix this in thoroughly. For a stone effect, try earthy or neutral colours.



### Step Three

Sprinkle plaster evenly over your bowl of coloured water. Keep on adding plaster until a mound of plaster becomes visible just above the water level. Leave the plaster to absorb the water for about thirty seconds.



### Step Four

Mix up the plaster mixture with your hands, using your fingers to break up any lumps. You want to make sure that the mixture is really smooth with a cream-like consistency. Try to work quite quickly at this stage to avoid the mixture setting too early.



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### Step Five

Pour your plaster into each of your plastic cups. After pouring, tap the bottom of each container against a table. This will even out the surface and get rid of any air bubbles in the mixture.



### Step Six

Leave your casts to set for at least half an hour. Then carefully cut and tear away the plastic to reveal your plaster cast. The plastic can be very sharp so children or young artists will need adult help at this stage.



### And finally...

Enjoy playing with your component pieces to create pleasing architectural stacks and columns to display at home.

You could also try using ink to add further colour and drawn lines to the surface.

### Cleaning up

When using plaster, clean your hands and tools in a bucket of water. Let this settle for 24 hours and then tip the water down the sink, throwing any plaster residue in the bin. This avoids a blocked sink!