

Design Resource

## Idol Making - Aligarh

Making of PoP Idols

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Lija M. G.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/idol-making-aligarh>



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## Introduction

Plaster of Paris (POP) idols have unique and distinct position in Indian tradition and culture which are generally used for worshipping. Plaster of Paris is normally known as POP, as per the Indian tradition it is observed that it is widely used for the making of ranges of Idol products. POP is a white powder which consists of Calcium sulphate and Gymsup that are also used for home decors. The technique of POP idol making has been practiced from long generation in India which has huge demand during the festivals of the particularly named God/ Goddess.

Aligarh is known as one of the commercial center of Uttar Pradesh which is generally known as the center for statues and brass hardware. This city is known as a center where manufacturing and processing is considered to be of importance. It is also known as the big center for zinc die casting where thousands of inflatable hot chambers machines are present. The district is famous for the traditional handmade crafts practiced from long generation.

The religious figures of the traditional classical style are usually seen in sculptures and in small sizes such as dolls. Mouth and eyes are generally drawn with black lines that put life into eyes and expressions with mouth, it also has its share of jewellery. These dolls are secular as well as religious that represent the different Hindu deities with diverse postures and symbols with different characters.



Demand for these idols are majorly at Ganesh festival season.

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Plaster of Paris (POP) Ganesha idols made in different sizes and forms.



Idols are painted with bright colors to highlight the details of the product.



All the products are made using POP and rubber mold.



Wall decorative made of POP.

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Craftsmen displaying pop idol of Lord Ganesha.

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## Tools and Raw Materials

Some of the tools and raw materials essential for the PoP Idol making of Aligarh are as follows:

- Plaster of Paris: It is used to make paste with water as the base material.
- Water: It is used as a solvent to dissolve plaster of Paris to make the paste.
- Oil: Locally available oil applied on the surface to obtain a shining surface.
- Rubber Mold/ Fiber Mold: It is generally used to support material to the mold for making.
- Coir/ jute Support: It is used as a support to hold the rubber mold firmly.
- Tire Tube/Rubber Strip: It is used to tie the mold firmly.
- Paint Brush: It is used to apply water to the surface of idol and also to color the surface.
- Enamel Paints: It is used to obtain glossy finish on the surface of idol.
- Sparkles (Glitter): It is used to give a decorative appearance on the idol.
- Vessel: Locally available vessel is generally preferred to make the paste of plaster of paris and water.



PoP and rubber mold is used to make the articles.

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PoP is the main material used to make PoP idols.



Big flat brush is used to paint big idols.



Small brushes are used to paint colors on small idols and to paint details.

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## Making Process

Locally available rubber mold of the required pattern of design are selected and washed thoroughly in the drum of water to wash the surface evenly and obtain a clear surface so that the Plaster of Paris paste made is poured to the cavity of the rubber molds formulated (structured) to the shapes from within.

The sheets of rubber are punched to the required shapes by engraving and it is collected from the people who specially know the technique of doing the engraving on it. The masterpiece of the idol carved is generally used as a reference for the preparation of mold/form. Sheets of the idol are usually held together along tightly to make the structure of the mold erect, by the support of coir/jute with plaster of Paris made to the required length, sizes and shapes designed. It is tied with black rubber tape tightly to avoid the overflow of the Pop solution. After the mold is tied firmly the craftsmen pours water into the cavity and gives the final washing/cleaning to obtain the right postures (detailing) of the Idol.

Generally to 1 kg of Plaster of Paris, half the quantity of the water is taken and made to paste of the required flow. Mixture is poured within the allotted time by mixing with hand to get the right mixture and before it Hardens it loses its property of plastering. After POP solution is poured into the rubber mold it is wobbled evenly all through so that it reaches every corners of the mold and kept for drying. After it is dried completely the rubber mold is removed from one part of the idol to avoid damages.

The stands for the Idols are made separately either through rubber or fiber molds. For the fiber molds locally available oil is applied on the mold surface to obtain a smooth finished surface of Pop idol.

Water is applied on the surface of the idol to make the surface smooth by giving a good finishing. It is dried completely and the enamel color paint as per the pattern of design is applied on the different sizes of Idol made. Eyes of the idol is generally painted with black color to highlight the eye features, glitters are applied on the portions to decorate the idol to enhance the appearance of the Idol.

Other aspects of POP is that it doesn't soften easily in water therefore the idol floats on the surface of water without immersing. Plaster of Paris also pollutes the river, sea, lakes etc can have an adverse effect of the health of human being.

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Mixture of POP and water is prepared in a ratio.



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The rubber mold is first washed in the water to remove dust particles.

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Rubber mold of desired design is used to make the idols.



Rubber mold is placed between PoP molds.

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The mold is tied firmly with a rubber strip.



Mixture of pop is poured into the mold.



Excess mixture is poured back to the container and the mold is kept in the sun to dry.

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Once dried the formed idol is removed from the mold.



To make wall decorative the mixture is poured in a plastic mold.



The mixture is kept to dry.

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Once dried the article is removed from the mold and the edges are sanded to smoothen and level the edges.



Dry articles are brushed with water once to remove the dust particles.

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Articles are then painted with required shade of poster color solution mixed with adhesive.



Articles are then embellished with glitters to make them look eye catching.

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## Products

Idols of various sizes are made which are distributed throughout India. The size of the idols are about 1ft. to 7 ft. in length and cost of the idols varies from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 250/-. The products of Aligarh made of plaster-of-Paris (POP) are generally Ganesh, Lord Shiva and Pots for flower vases. During the festivals like Shivaratri, Ganesh Chaturthi more of Idols of Lord Shiva, Ganesh, Krishna Idols are sold out.



Small idol of lord Shiva and Ganesha colored and embellished with glitters.



A wall hanging or decorative shaped wheel with floral motif.

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Big size Ganesha idol made of POP.



Verities of Ganesha idols are prepared and colored to make the look colorful and eye catchy.



A wall hanging depicting Lord Ganesha.

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Pillar base made of PoP.



Modern art idols are also made according to customer's choice.



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## Panorama



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## Contact Details

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You can get in touch with

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You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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