

How to Make Bas-Relief Dino Models

1. The first step is to make articulated skeletal drawings of the specimen, in scale and in the desired pose. This entails research into existing ideas about the specimen and into its morphology.
2. Next a drawing is made of muscles as they are attached to the skeleton. Research may need to be done into similar animals, both recent and fossil, to determine how muscles are being used.
3. This drawing is photocopied and mounted to a board.
4. Clay, softened under a heat lamp, is applied directly on top of this photocopy. Chavant P-50 clay was used for its low sulfur content, and for its stiffness when hardened. The hard surface worked well for stamped textures and detailed modeling, but because of the rigidity of this clay minimal armatures are needed. Latex and silicone were unaffected by this clay.
5. The clay is smoothed with WD-40, Vaseline, or oil. The oil from fingers works well, too.
6. The models are molded in either latex or silicone, cast in polyester and painted with oil paints.