

# Molding 101

This has been prepared as a basic overview of molding tips and tricks. When we refer to a mold we will be referring specifically to classic chocolate molds made of rigid plastic. While there are new flexible silicone molds available, we have found that the classic type molds are less expensive and more readily available in more shapes and sizes at this time.

You can purchase molds from most craft stores, or you can use a larger company. We have used Tomric with consistently good results. Their website is easy to use, and includes photos of finished products (much more helpful than a picture of the mold itself), and their customer service is also very good.

When deciding between commercial and hobby grade you should know that the hobby grade is still quite heavy duty (we have used hobby grade molds for years at the Kitchen with excellent results), and the only downside is that Tomric asks that you order hobby-grade molds in multiples of three.

Molding is relatively simple, and as long as you have tempered chocolate available you can do as many or as few pieces in a batch as you wish. Your customers will enjoy seeing you pour the molds and turn out the finished product, plus there's the "It Was Made Right Here" factor.

We have three recipes for Miscellaneous Molded items – milk chocolate (91120), dark (91140) chocolate and white (91180) chocolate – as well as three corresponding open-weight labels should you wish to package your molded products in CPC bags. At this time we do not have labels for bi- or tri-chocolate molded pieces.

To begin with a new mold, carefully wash the inside of the mold and allow to air dry. It is critical that there not be a drop of water anywhere on the mold, as this will cause your chocolate to harden. After your mold is dry, wipe the inside carefully with a lint-free cloth – you are essentially polishing the interior of the mold, so the chocolate is being poured into a very smooth surface.

To gauge the weight of your chocolate molded pieces, lay the mold on your scale and tare to zero. Take a dropping funnel and drop chocolate into the first cavity. Check your scale and see what the weight is and make a note of it. Typically, if you are using a multi-cavity mold the amount of chocolate each cavity holds is about the same. However, you may tare back to zero after each cavity is filled to get the precise measurements of each piece.

Using a dropping funnel and working quickly, deposit chocolate evenly into each cavity of the mold. After filling all cavities of a mold gently tap your filled mold against your countertop to bring the air bubbles out of the chocolate (do not use your scale for this!!!) Do this three to four times for small cavity molds, and more for larger molds. This tapping prevents air bubbles from marring the surface of your molded chocolates. If you are molding suckers you will insert the sticks after removing the air bubbles

Set aside in a cool area to cure. The curing time will vary by the size of the individual pieces. Stay tuned for Molding 201 – An Introduction to 3-D Molds.