

Tips & Tricks using Part 17

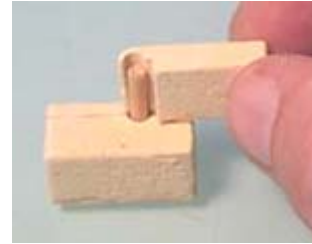
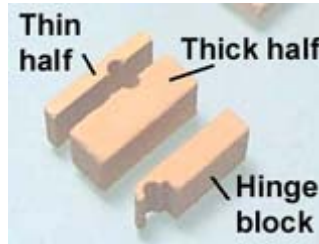
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Making a Secret Door Using Mold #96

The hinge of the **secret door** is made from the 3 blocks shown here. The thin and thick halves go together to make a block with an **1/8" hole** in it.

1.

The **hinge block** is delicate so you will need to cast it out of **dental plaster** or **plastic** if you want it to hold up to much use.



You will need an **1/8" diameter dowel** or kabob skewer for the hinge pin. If the dowel is the wrong diameter the **door will not hinge correctly**.

2.

Now let's add a few blocks to the hinge. The rest of the door will be made from **thin wall blocks**. The top photo shows the door in the **closed position** and the bottom photo shows the door in the **open position**.

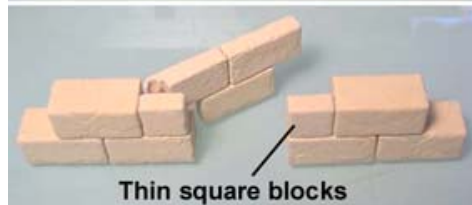
Please notice that the **door is glued onto the dowel**, not into the hole. If you glue the rod into the hole, then the hinge pin cannot turn.



Add a few more blocks to the door and you can see how it fits into a wall section. You will need to add a few **thin square blocks** to finish the job.

3.

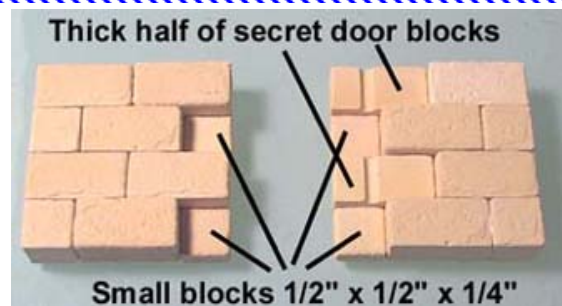
The next part of this article shows how to make a secret door into a wall section. Notice the **door is recessed on the front** so you can put a statue or decoration there.



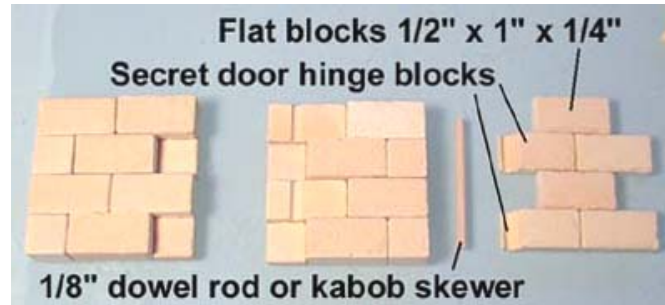
For this test wall section you are looking at the **back side** of the wall.

4.

Stack up regular blocks on each side and glue them together as shown. Leave a 1" gap between the walls (which is where the door will go).

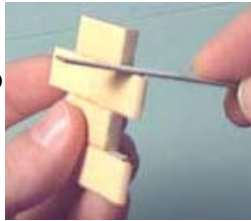


- The **door** (shown on the far right) is made up of hinge blocks and flat blocks.
5. You will also need a **1/8" dowel** or kabob skewer 2" long (or slightly shorter) for the hinge pin.

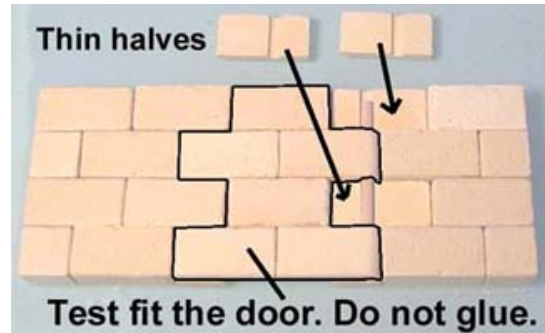


Once the door is **completely dry**, put the hinge pin in and fit it into the wall.

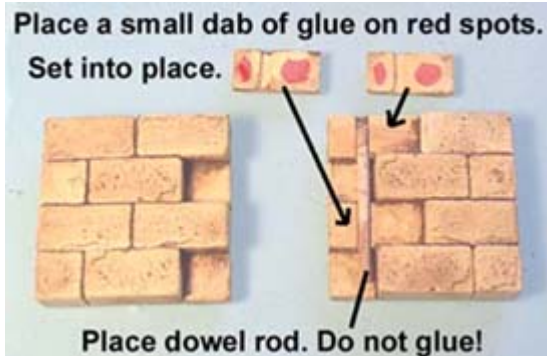
6. You will need to **file or sand** the edges down so it **fits very loosely**. I cannot stress this point enough!



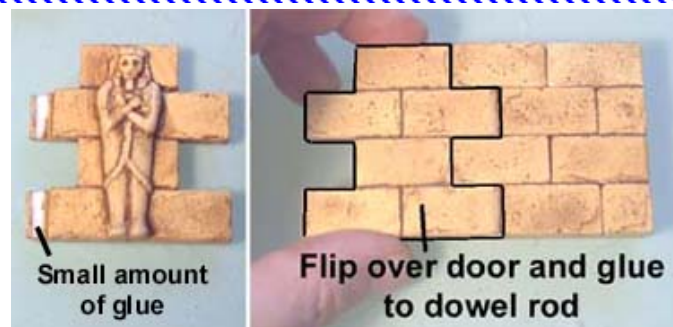
This wall section will have a coat of varnish (or paint) on it that will **add thickness** to the blocks. What begins as a nice fit will **bind severely** when you add a coat of varnish and stain.



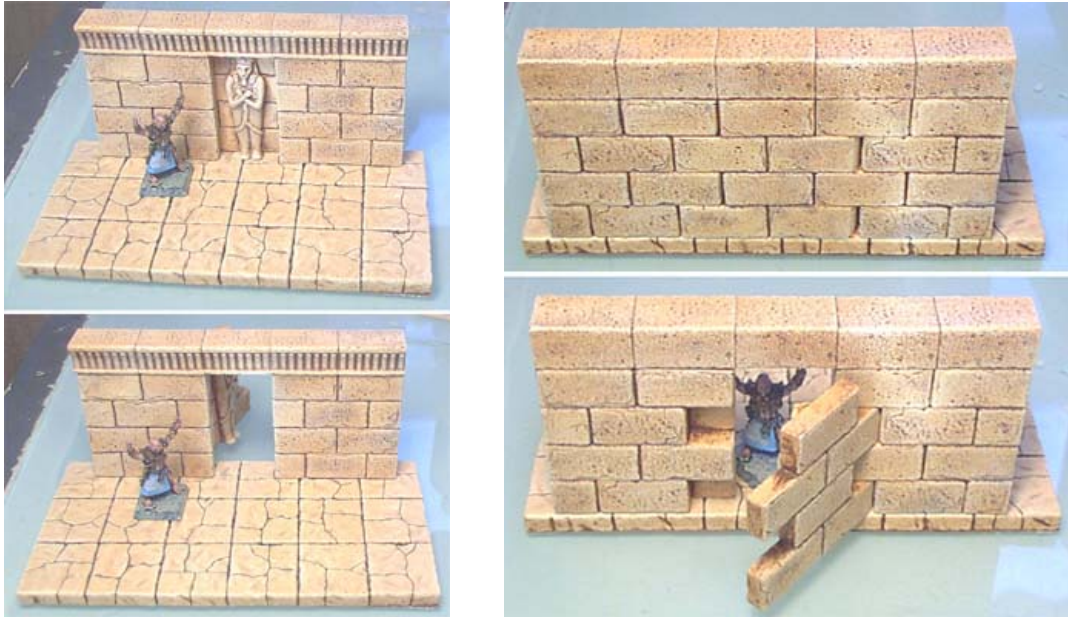
7. **Paint the pieces before you glue them!** These pieces took a coat of varnish and some gel stain (colonial oak) to become the color you now see. Visit the painting instructions page for more details.
- Place the **dowel rod** in the groove and **glue** the thin halves of the hole blocks on top. **Do not use excessive glue!** The wooden dowel **must turn freely** after these blocks are glued on.



8. Now you can **glue the door** onto the hinge pin. Be sure to use **very little glue** or it might squeeze out and glue the whole thing shut.



9.



Here is the wall capped off with decorative stones and placed on floor tiles. I have added the **coffin lid** as a decoration. As you look at the back of the wall, you can see that the **secret door is fairly well hidden**.

You can make a secret door any size you like, or even place it flat on the floor for a trap door that opens upward.

Using Cotton Swabs For Antiquing

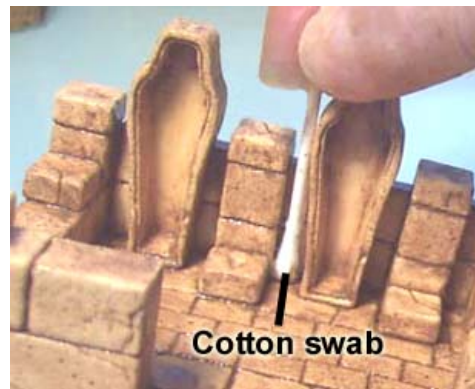
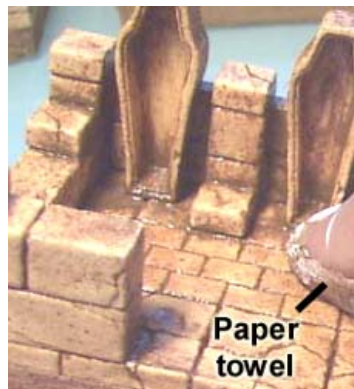
When applying stain to a room using the antiquing method, sometimes it's difficult to **get the brush into the cracks**.

1. For these tight areas a **cotton swab** works very well. Just load one up with stain and **work it around** into the deep areas of the room.



When **wiping off the stain**, a paper towel cannot get into the cracks.

2. Use a **clean cotton swab** to remove the excess stain. Notice the difference inside and between the coffins before and after the swab was used.



The cotton swab is also useful for **statue details**. A paper towel cannot get into the simple recesses around the statues.

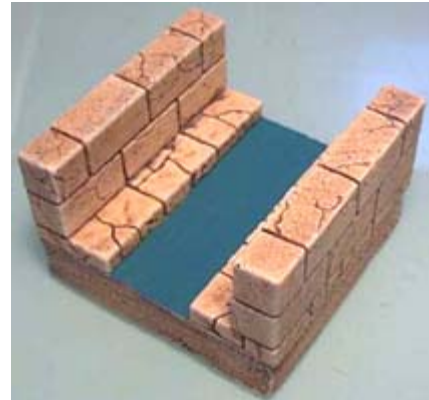
3. The second photo is after using a cotton swab. It can get into the smallest details and bring out all of the shapes of the statue.



Planning Dungeon Waterways

Laying out new waterway tiles is very simple. Just take a regular hallway section as shown in the basic tomb pieces and remove the center tiles. I chose this style for a number of reasons:

1.
 1. The ledge on each side gives you a shelf to place items such as statues or buttresses.
 2. It gives you a visual difference between something shallow and something deep. You can see the edges of the tiles down there, and you can compare it to the dark depths below.



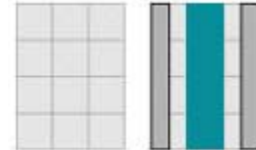
Here you can see the statues and doorway sides **setting on the edge**. Imagine what it would look like if the bottom of the waterway had no edges.

2. The statues would look like they're floating in the water.

For **instructions on making** these waterway sections, go to the Detailed Tombs page.

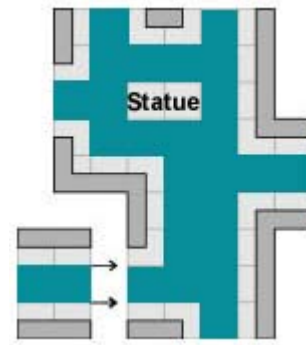


3. The standard waterway width should be **no less than 3 squares wide**. The walls will cover half of the tiles on the outside edge and leave the other half sticking out into the waterway as a shelf. The **center tiles are removed** afterward.



This example shows a piece 4 squares wide. The **opening on each end** should have one square in the center and the squares on each side should be halfway covered to fit in with the other waterway sections.

- 4.



As long as you **leave 1 full square** in the center and **cover the outside squares on each side halfway** with walls, any of your waterway pieces should fit together regardless of what arrangement you put them in.

Pouring and Texturing Water

This article shows how to create textured water for the Egyptian waterways. For instructions on building these pieces, please look at the advanced Egyptian tombs page. The items needed are shown in detail below:

1. **Envirotex lite** is a 2-part resin used to put a thick layer of varnish onto table tops.
2. A **reusable measuring cup**.
3. Disposable **plastic cups**
4. **Foam board** or stiff cardboard.
5. **Clear packaging tape**.
6. **Phthalo blue** acrylic paint.
7. **Mars black** acrylic paint.
8. **Titanium white** acrylic paint.
9. A 1/2" wide **paint brush**.
10. **5 minute epoxy** glue.
11. **Wax paper**
12. Your **waterway piece**.
13. **Blue ink wash**.
14. **Green ink wash**.
15. **Brown ink wash**.
16. Wooden **craft sticks**.
17. **Toothpicks**.



Make a few test pieces! I can't stress this enough. Make **at least two** sections so you can test the color of the water you will be pouring into it.

3. I guarantee that **you will not get the water color right the first time!** It will take at least two times of mixing before you come close to a color that works.

These test pieces also give you a chance to **practice the texture** on top of the water using epoxy and get used to the time it takes for epoxy to set up. For **instructions on making** these waterway sections, go to the Detailed Tombs page.



Mix **equal parts** of the 3 colors of paint. Use this to **paint the bottom strips** of the waterway pieces.

4. You may have to thin the paint with a little water to get it to spread evenly. Try to not get paint on the sides of the stones.

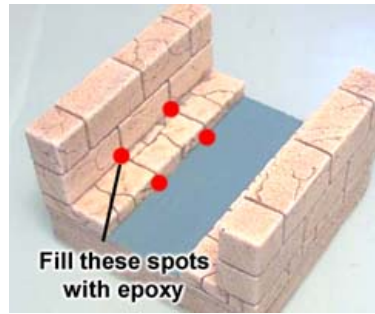


5. Squeeze a **small amount of 5 minute epoxy** on a scrap of paper. Use a wooden craft stick to **stir the two parts together** completely. Once mixed, use a toothpick to pick up



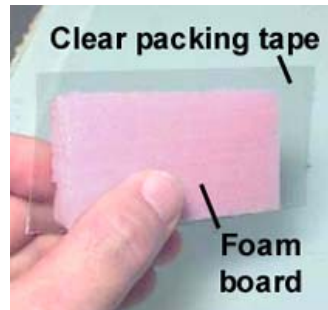
Drip the epoxy into the spots shown here. This will ensure that the resin we pour into the section will not seep between the blocks.

6. The second photo shows where **resin has leaked** through the wall. This is what will happen if you do not seal up these spots.



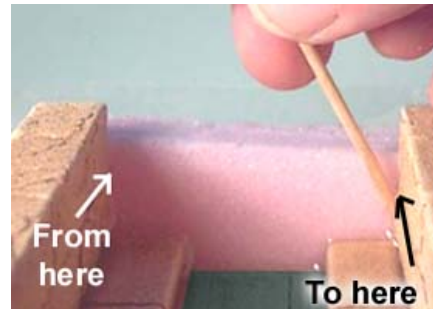
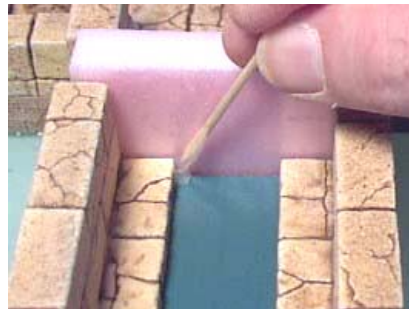
Cut **several pieces of foam board** large enough to cover one end of your waterway pieces. Stick a piece of **clear packing tape** on top of it.

7. Place this on the end of a waterway piece with the **taped side facing the waterway** piece. Push this group against something heavy to **hold it in place** (since the sticky side of the tape is stuck to the foam board).



Drip the epoxy to fill the crack where the foam meets the waterway piece. Be liberal with the epoxy.

8. Fill the crack up to **1 block high** on each side of the wall.



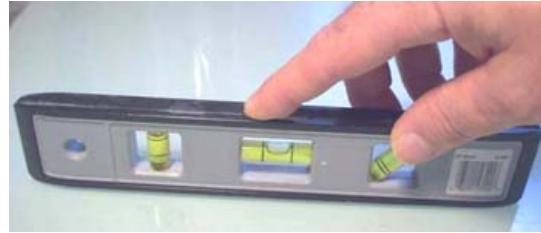
There are a few dungeon pieces where it's **difficult to drip epoxy** where it meets the foam board.

9. The photos on the right are two examples. In these cases, place a bead of epoxy **around the outside of the opening**, then place the foam board against it to dry.



Make sure that the **table surface is level** before you continue.

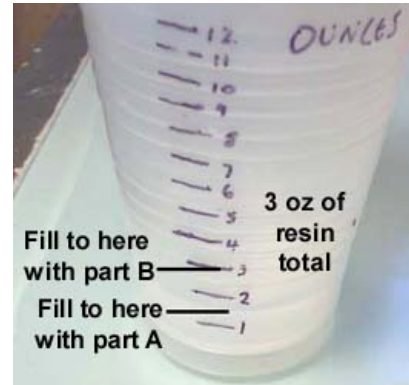
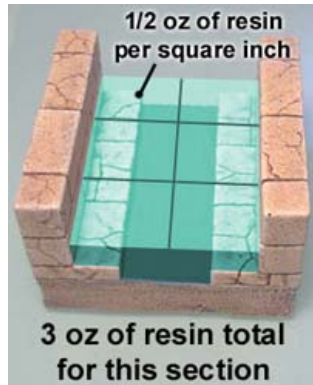
10. If the table is not level, then your water will fill the section at an angle and look very odd.



We'll mix up **3 ounces of envirotex lite resin** to fill this test section.

11. For future reference, you need **1/2 ounce of resin** for every **square inch of water** you want to fill.

Place a clean cup inside your **reusable measuring cup** and pour **1.5 oz of part A** and **1.5 oz of part B** into it.



Mix the two parts completely. Scrape the sides of the cup and mix it for about 2 minutes.

12. You will notice that a lot of air will be mixed in during this time. **Don't worry about the air bubbles.** This product cures so slowly that all of the air will be removed while it sets up.



Now we want to **tint the resin** by adding ink wash to it. I'm using **blue, green and brown** ink wash from Games workshop.

13. For 3 ounces of resin, add **one drop of green** ink wash, **one drop of blue** ink wash and **1/2 drop of brown** ink wash. This recipe is a bit too much color, but it will give you a starting point.

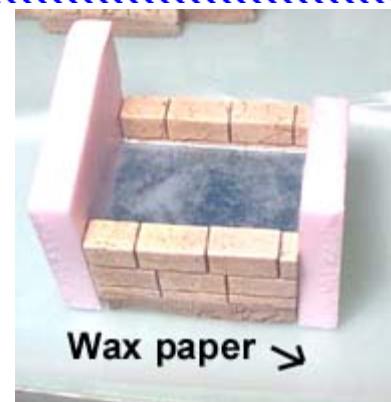
The easiest way to get a drop is to **dip a paintbrush handle** into the bottle, quickly remove it and hold it over the resin cup. **Stir the resin** and mix the color in completely.



Place your waterway section on a piece of **wax paper**. Pour the tinted resin into the waterway. For **instructions on building** these, see the Detailed Tombs page.

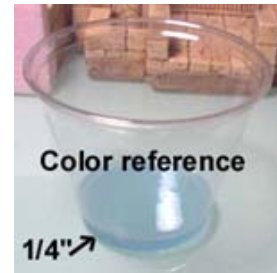
14. It's up to you how deep you want to make it, but I would **not go higher than where you sealed it with epoxy on the ends**. I covered the floor tiles and came half-way up the first block on the side walls (actually, for the test you see here I accidentally filled it a little too full).

You will notice that the resin looks fairly opaque and foamy because of all the air mixed into it. These air bubbles will disappear in a couple of hours.



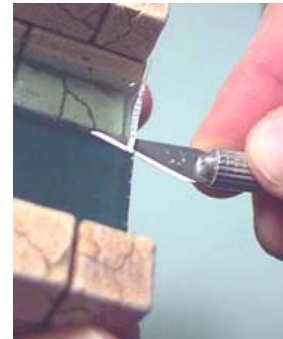
15. Pour 1/4" of the left over resin **into a clear plastic cup**. This will be used as a **color reference** for later on. It's very difficult to mix and match the color of resin, because the **color changes** depending on how thick of a layer you pour.

When you **mix a new batch** of resin, you will add color to it, pour 1/4" into a new cup and **compare it with this color reference** cup.



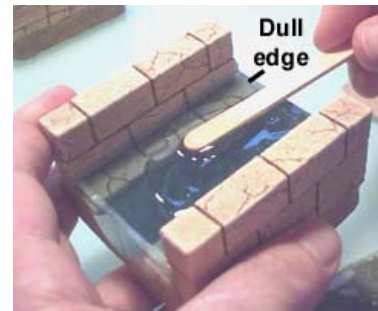
16. Let the resin **set overnight** before you handle the piece. **Pop off the foam ends** and you will see the resin exposed. This method works because **resin and epoxy do not stick** to the slick plastic side of the tape.
- You will also notice the resin will **creep up on the sides** making a sharp edge where the sections will meet. To fix this, use a hobby knife and **carve off the excess**.

Use a sharp knife and be **extremely careful** that you do not cut yourself.



17. Mix up a **larger amount of epoxy**. We want enough to put a thin coating over the whole top of the piece.
- Stir it slowly** and try not to work any excess air into the glue.

Spread the glue on top of the piece. The edge where you trimmed the resin will be dull (not shiny), so be sure to **spread it over these edges**. The epoxy will give it a glossy coating again.



18. After you spread it, hold the wooden stick at a shallow angle and **dab it into the epoxy** in a random pattern.
- After you dab, you will notice that the epoxy will **smooth itself out** again. Continue to dab occasionally until the epoxy starts to leave a trail of fine strings (about 3 minutes).



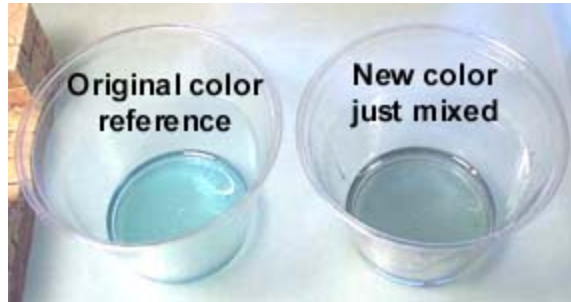
19. Once you are pleased with the test results, it's time to **pour the water** for the rest of the waterways. **Glue the foam board** pieces on all the open ends of the waterway. Then **mix up enough resin** to fill the rooms (refer to step 11 above).
- Add small amounts of ink wash**, mix it up and pour a little into a clear cup to **compare it with the original test color** (photo below). If it's not dark enough, pour it back into the batch, remix and try it again **until you get the color you want**.



Here's where I **compared my new color** to the test color. The cup on the left was from the test piece. The cup on the right is the color we're mixing up now.

20.

I thought the **test piece wasn't as green or muted** as it should be. For the new batch I added more green and brown ink wash. The cup on the right is the new color which I like much better.



Put down wax paper on the table surface in case a few of them leak (and a few will). Pour the resin into the waterway sections.

21.

Try to fill the pieces all up **to the same level** so they will look good butted next to each other. Leave them to set up overnight.

The next day, mix up epoxy and **texture the tops** as you have on the text piece. Your waterway is now finished. For instructions on building these pieces, please look at the advanced Egyptian tombs page.



Making Water for Fountains

This article will show you how to **add water to the fountains**. For instructions on building the fountains, please look at the Detailed Egyptian Tombs page.

1. Mix up a small amount of **epoxy**. **Stir it slowly** and try not to work any excess air into the glue.



Add a large bead of it to each of the fountain pools. **Do not do more than 4 small pools at a time**. The epoxy sets up fast and you need time to spread and texture it.



Use a small paintbrush handle to **spread the epoxy** around to the edges of each pool.

2. By this time, the epoxy should be starting to thicken up. Find where you think the **stream of pouring water** should be hitting the pool below and **add texture to that spot**.

To texture it, dab the paintbrush handle into the epoxy and pull it repeatedly. Continue this on all the pools until the epoxy **starts to string**. Do this as long as you can (but not so long that the epoxy glues your paint brush handle to it).



Pour **larger pools** one at a time. Pour enough epoxy to **cover the bottom** of the pool with a thin layer.

3. Find the **spot** where the stream of water would hit the bottom of the pool and use a paintbrush handle to **work circular ripples** away from that spot.

When the epoxy is starting to set up, then dab the paintbrush handle into the epoxy and pull it repeatedly at the spot where water would splash down.



Once the epoxy is **completely hardened**, you need to **drill a small hole** to insert fishing line into the pouring statue. I used a **1/16"** drill bit, which is large enough to fit **4 strands** of **.023" diameter** fishing line into.

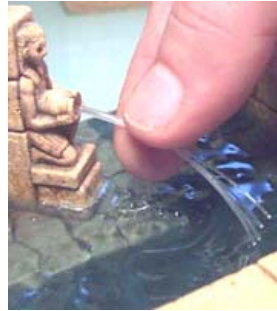
4. You can simply hold the drill bit and **spin it with your fingers**. If you have a pin vise, it will hold the drill bit for you and be easier to use. The **lion and ram** statue heads do not need a hole drilled.



Place a large drop of **super glue** (cyanoacrylate) on the end of the strands and insert them into the hole.

5. Carefully **trim the fishing line** so it makes a gentle arc down and touches the water. I found that it looks better if you have to pull the fishing line down slightly to glue it to the water. **Tweezers** are a big help here.

Use a **drop of super glue** to attach the lines to the center of the water (spread them out a little).



Once the fishing line is secure, mix up a small amount of **5 minute epoxy** and spread it over the fishing line. This will give help the fishing line look more like pouring water.

6. Also **put a little around the bottom** where the fishing line touches the water. This will help secure the fishing line down better.

For instructions on building these fountains, please look at the Detailed Egyptian Tombs page.



Here are a few photos of the finished waterways. The Egyptian miniatures shown here are from www.crocodilegames.com. They have a wonderful selection of Egyptian miniature figures, creatures and accessories.

These miniatures were painted by Robert Sparenberg (aka Imahilus). To **paint the model** look at the antiquing method found on our painting instructions page. For **instructions on how to build these pieces**, check out the Detailed tomb pieces page.

