Gothic Dungeon Arena

This page contains instructions for building a dungeon arena that can be used for MageKnight™ and many other miniature games.

The type of dungeon layout shown here is best used for a battle arena. This format allows you to make large interconnected rooms easily.

How the Walls Work

For this gothic arena, we're going to use **mold #45** for the wall sections, and **mold #267** for the floor tiles.
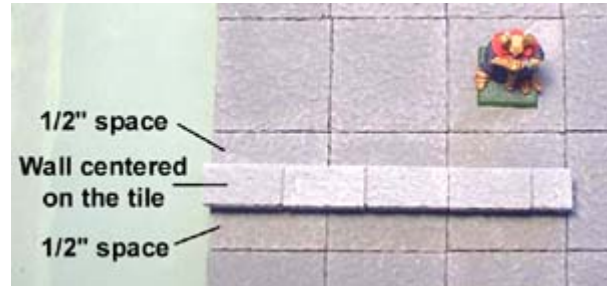
1. To understand how the wall pieces will work, you first need to **make a grid of 1 1/2" floor tiles** (as shown on the right).

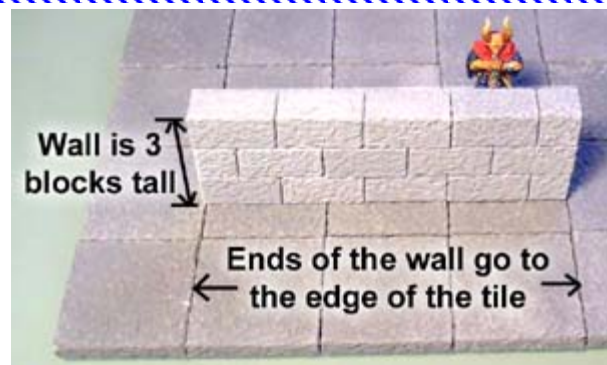   The miniature you see is a Warhammer(TM) 25mm figure.

2. The wall sections of this arena will set in the **middle** of the floor tiles.

   This will give you **1/2" of space on each side of the wall**. This extra space will come in handy later on, when you want to add details that stick out from the wall (such as buttresses and columns).
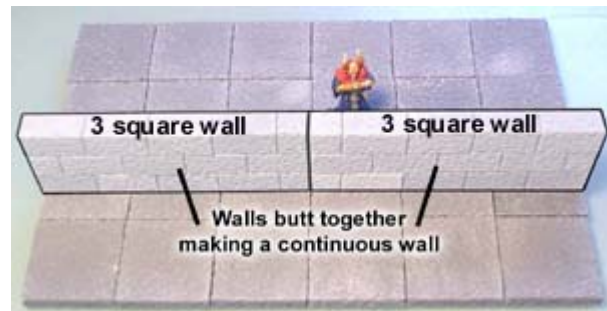
3. The **ends** of the walls will go to the **edge of the floor tiles**.

   Each wall section will also be **3 blocks tall**. If the ends of your walls are always 3 blocks tall, then all of your walls will flow together nicely.

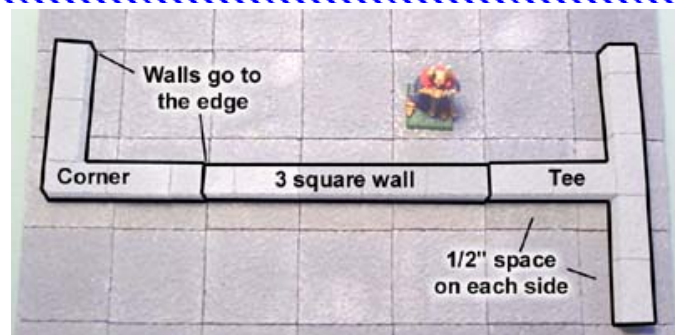4. The **ends** of the walls will **always butt against each other**.

   I'll call this wall section a **3 square wall** because it **spans 3 squares** of floor tiles.

5. Here's what the **corners** and **tees** would look like from the top view. You'll notice that the **ends of the wall** go all the way to the **edge of the floor tile**.

   Also, the **sides of the wall** still have a **1/2" of space** on each side.

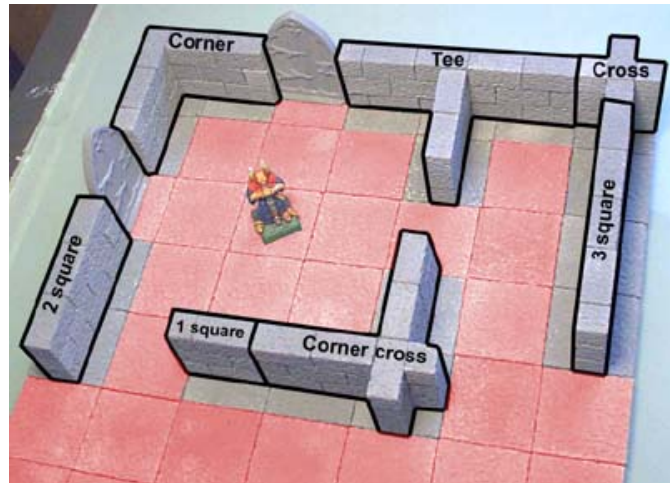6. Here's what a dungeon layout would look like using a **corner, tee, cross, corner cross, 1 square, 2 square and 3 square** wall section.

You'll notice that all of the wall sections ride **in the center of the floor tiles** and also **butt against each other** on the ends to make a continuous wall.

The **red floor tiles** show where your miniatures can move. Since you have extra space on each side of the wall, this will help with miniatures that have arms and weapons that stick out beyond their base.
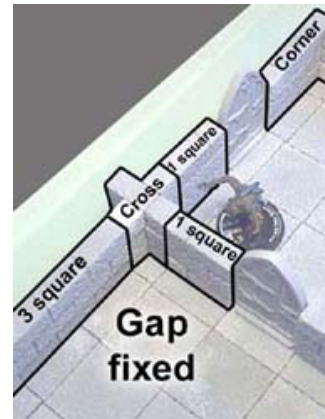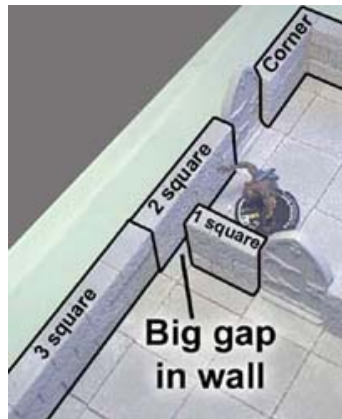

7. Because of the 1/2" space on each side of the wall, **you can't set walls together at an angle**. If you do you'll notice a **big gap between the walls** (first photo).

To solve this problem, you need to use a **cross, corner or tee** when you want to turn or add a wall 90 degrees from another.

The second photo shows how to rearrange pieces to solve the gap problem.

8. Now that you understand how the walls work, the next step is to make **walls that look good**.
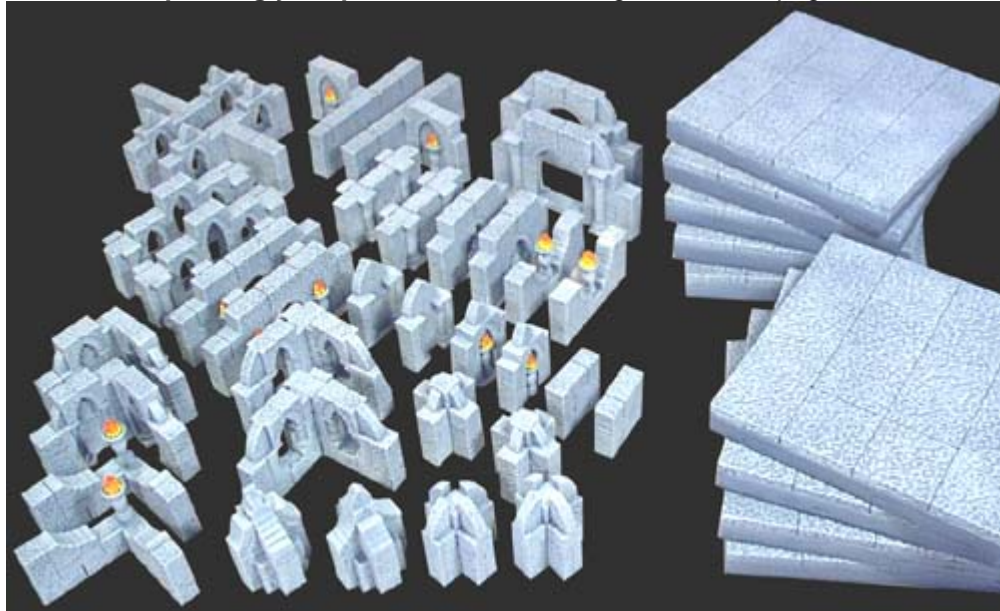
Making a Basic Wall Set

To build the basic set shown here, you will need to **cast the #267 Large Floor Tile mold 24 times** and the **#45 Gothic Dungeon Builder Mold 24 times**.

I know that sounds like a lot of casting, but you are **going to cover a very large area of floor** with these tiles.

For directions on **painting your pieces** visit our Painting instructions page.
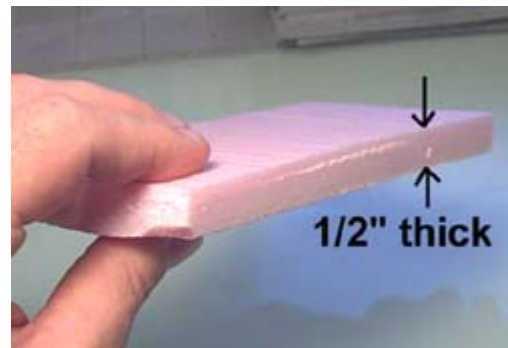
1.

We'll start with the floor sections first. For this example, I'm going to mount the floor tiles on pieces of **1/2" thick polystyrene foam insulating board**.

2. This is the stuff they use for sheeting on houses before they put siding on. You can get it at any lumber yard and usually comes in pink or blue.

I got the idea of mounting the floor tiles on foam from Mitch Michaelson, who had used this method for some of his dungeon pieces.
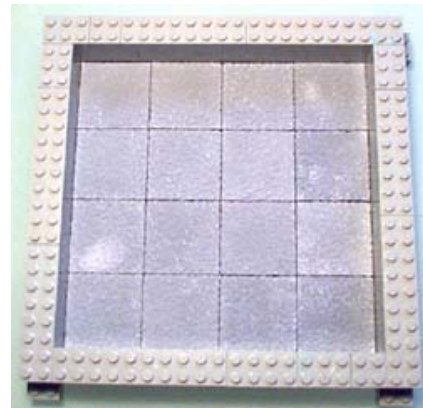
The main advantage is that it's **stiff and doesn't warp easily**. It's also **easy to cut** (with a sharp knife), and you can **make pits and holes** in the floor that actually look deep.

I made one interesting discovery while making the floor sections. **Legos make a perfect frame** to keep your floor tiles square. They fit around the floor tiles fairly tight and keep the floor section square while you're gluing the pieces
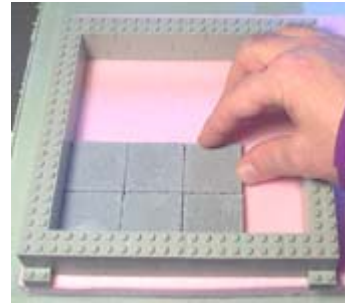
3. I'm making the floor in **4 x 4 sections**. These are small enough to move around easily, yet large enough to cover a good amount of room. However, **feel free to make the floor sections any size you like**.

Many of our **MageKnight players** prefer to make their floor sections in **3 x 5** or **5 x 5** squares.

When gluing the tiles down to the foam, **place glue on the bottom and sides** of each floor tile. This will give your floor some extra added strength.

4. Set the floor tiles down into the Lego frame. If you don't have Legos, just **use a straight edge** to push against each side of the tiles after you glue them down.

Be sure the **glue is completely dry** before you try to trim off the excess. To trim the pieces, run a **sharp** hobby knife straight down into the foam across one side.

5. Then, place the foam along the edge of the table and **snap off the excess** by pushing down. The foam will break easily and fairly clean. If you have any excess foam sticking out, trim it off with the hobby knife.

Make 9 of these floor sections.

6. To **paint the floor sections**, you'll need to look at the Basic Dungeon Painting Instructions.
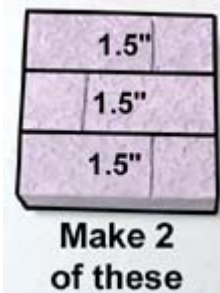
You can also protect the surface with a spray sealer. **Flat lacquer or varnish** works the best. Don't use a glossy sealant because it will look strange to have a glossy floor.

We'll start with the **1 square wall pieces**. They're called **1 square** wall pieces because when you set them down on the gaming board, **they'll cover 1 square floor tile**.

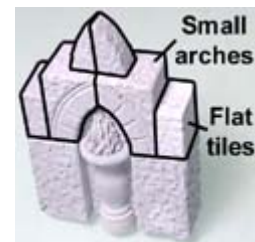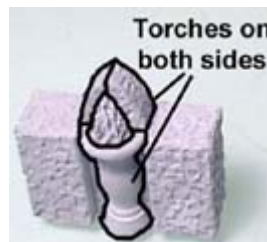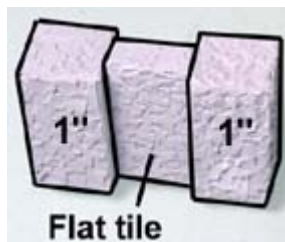**7.** For the first wall section, take 3 of the 1.5" blocks, stack and glue them together.

Make 2 of these pieces

1.5"

1.5"

1.5"

Make 2 of these

8. The second **1 square** wall piece assembles like this. Be sure to glue torches on each side of the wall.

Make 2 of these pieces

Flat tile

1"

1"

Torches on both sides

Small arches

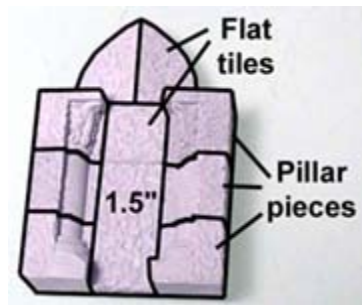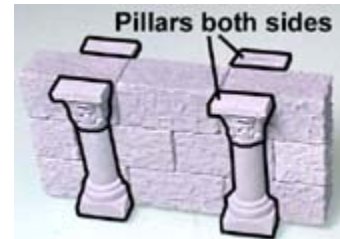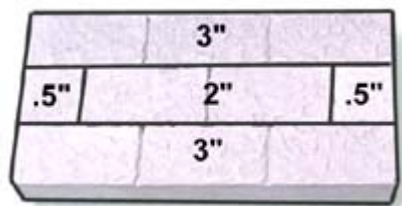Flat tiles

9. The last of the **1 square** wall piece uses these pieces. The pillar blocks stack up on each side of a flat tile. Then you add the **large pointed pieces** on the top.

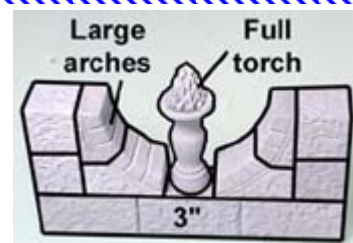### Make 2 of these pieces

Flat tiles

Pillar pieces

1.5"

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10. The first **2 square** wall piece is pretty simple. Be sure you use the **exact blocks shown here**, otherwise you will run out of the blocks you need later on.
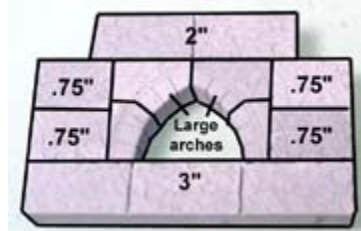
Make 2 of these pieces

3"
.5"   2"   .5"
3"

Pillars both sides

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11. The next **2 square** wall piece assembles like this. Use the **large arches** on each side of the torch.

Make 2 of these pieces

Large arches   Full torch

3"

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12. The last **2 square** wall piece is very simple. Use the **large arches** for the window. You can also **add a bone pile** in the window for more detail.

Make 2 of these pieces

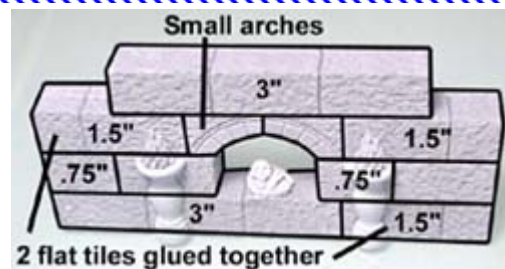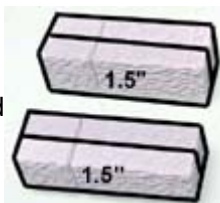2"
.75"   .75"
.75"   Large arches   .75"
3"

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13. Now for the **3 square** wall pieces. Start by **gluing 4 flat blocks together** as shown. The reason we need to do this is because **run out of 1.5" blocks if we don't**. I've used up just about all of the blocks from the 24 castings of mold #45.

Place torches on one side of this wall, and **place pillars** on the other side. Notice that there is an extra pillar piece to make it a little taller.
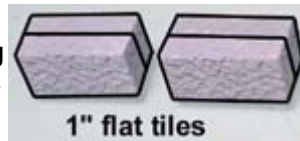
Add the bone pile for a little extra decoration.

Make 2 of these pieces

1.5"
1.5"

Small arches

3"
1.5"   1.5"
.75"   .75"
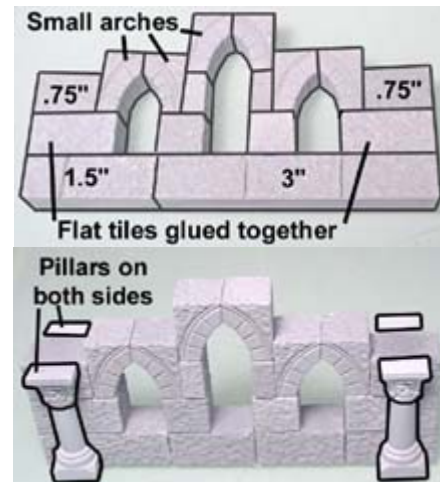3"   1.5"

2 flat tiles glued together

14. For the next **3 square** wall piece, start by **gluing 4 flat blocks together** as shown.

Once again, you don't want to **run out of 1" blocks**, and you will if you don't use the flat tiles here. I've used up just about all of the blocks from the 24 castings of mold #45.
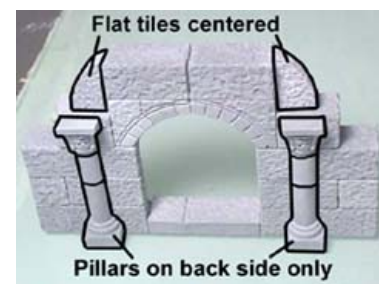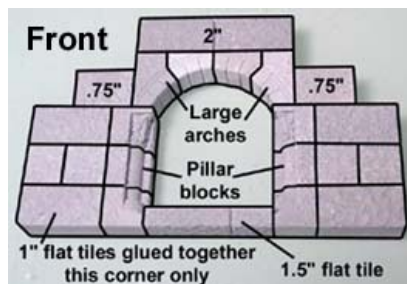
Place Pillars on both sides of this wall.

Make 2 of these pieces

15. The **Entrance** is fairly simple. Glue **2 flat tiles** and place them in the bottom left only.

Make 2 of these pieces

16. Now for the **cross pieces**. First, gather the pieces you see here. For **3 of the sides** we'll use a combination of 1" and .5" blocks. For the **remaining side** we'll use a 1.5" block.

Stand up a 2" piece and glue the other blocks around the outside.

Make 2 of these pieces

17. For the next **cross piece**, start by gluing **8 flat tiles** together to make four 1" blocks.

Stand up a 2" piece and glue these blocks around the outside. Then top them off with square blocks and pointed blocks.

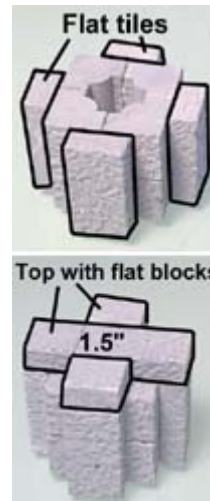**Make 2 of these pieces**

18. For the last **cross piece**, starts with **two 1" blocks**. Next put down **four column squares**. If you don't do this you'll run short of square blocks later on.

Now glue **four flat tiles** around the edges and then **top them off** with the flat tiles shown.

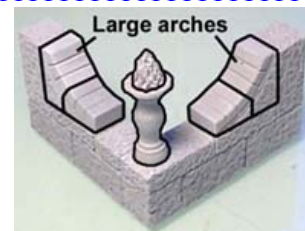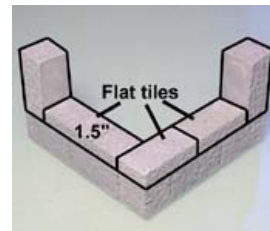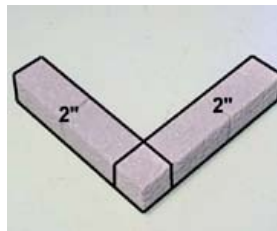The top uses **two small arches** and **two large arches**.

Make 2 of these pieces

Flat tiles

Small arches

Top with flat blocks

1.5"

Large arches

19. Here is one of the corner pieces.

Make 2 of these pieces

2"   2"

Flat tiles

1.5"

Large arches
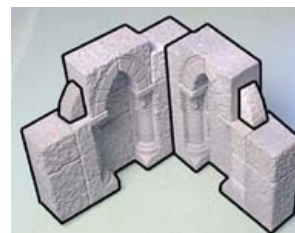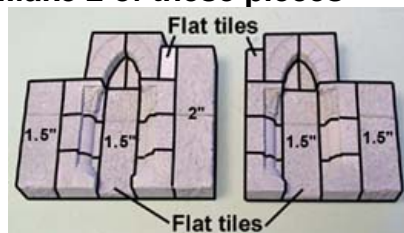
Here the second of the corner pieces. This one uses the flat tiles and arch fillers. The torches go on the back side of the walls.

Make 2 of these pieces

20.

Flat tiles

1.5"   1.5"   2"   1.5"   1.5"

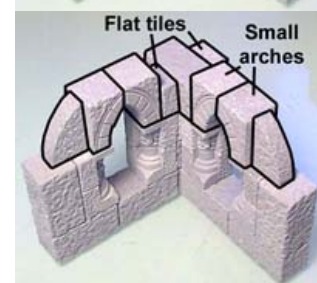Flat tiles

21. The last corner is a bit more complicated

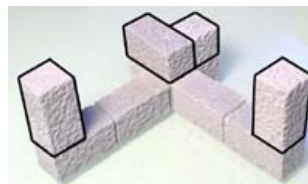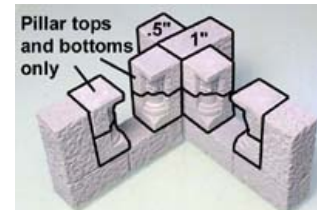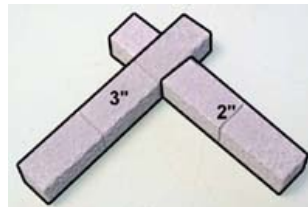For this piece you want to use **only the pillar top and bottom**. You won't use the middle pillar piece.

Use the **small arches** above the pillars.

You'll use the **large arch fillers** to decorate the top sides.
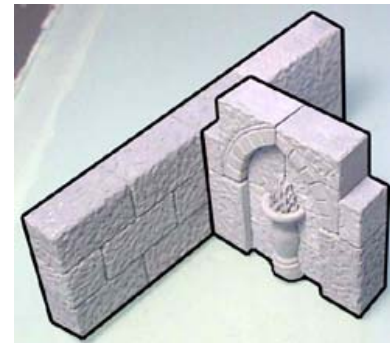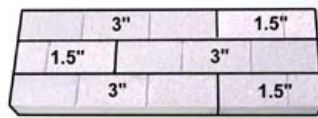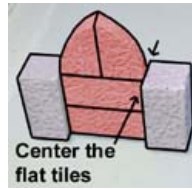
Make 2 of these pieces

3"   2"

Pillar tops and bottoms only   .5"   1"

Flat tiles   Small arches

22.

Here's one of the **tee pieces**.

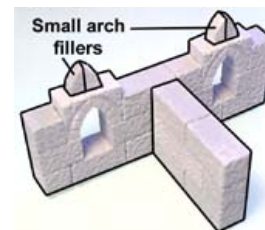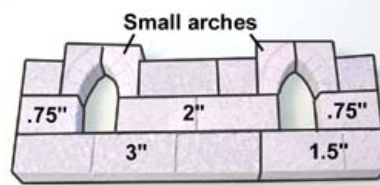The **flat tiles are shown in red**. Be sure to center the flat tiles under the arch.

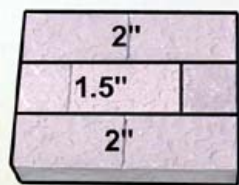Place torches under **both sides** of the arch.

Make 2 of these pieces

Center the flat tiles

Torches on both sides

3"   1.5"
1.5"   3"
3"   1.5"

23.

Here is the last of the tee pieces. **Make 2 of these pieces**

2"
1.5"
2"

Small arches
.75"   2"   .75"
3"   1.5"

Small arch fillers

Here are a **couple of photos of an arena** you can build with these pieces.

For directions on **painting your pieces** visit our Painting instructions page.

The miniatures you see used here are **MageKnight** figures. Each square gives your **model a full 1.5"** to move in plus some extra room for overhanging arms and weapons.

This photo shows a **complete layout**.

Notice that there are a few pieces left over (on the right). These come in handy depending on how you want to arrange your walls.

Of course, you **make as many floor tiles and walls** as you like, and make a much larger dungeon layout.

Making a Decorative Wall Set

1.

To make this decorative wall set you will need to **cast the #267 Large Floor Tile mold 25 times, the #45 Gothic Dungeon Builder mold 25 times,** and **the #42 Gothic Arena mold 25 times**.

For directions on **painting your pieces** visit our Painting instructions page.

The **instructions for making the floor** tiles are in the article above.

2.

There will be many times where you'll need to **add texture to the side of the flat tiles**.

These flat tiles were originally meant to stand on end, so **any time you lay one down**, you'll have a flat side (or scraped side) that will show.
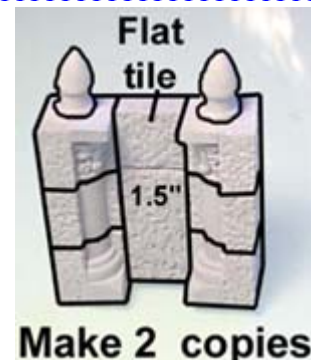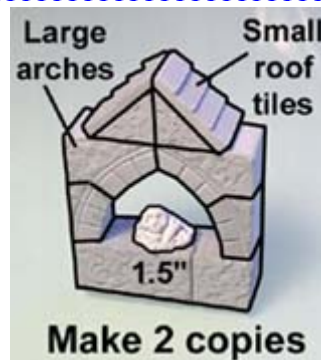
To texture these flat edges, **use a hobby knife to chip and gouge the edge of the tile**. It may not look exactly like the rest of the texture when you get done, but it will be close enough to cover up the smooth side.

3.

We'll start with the **one square pieces**. The first two are very simple to make, so I think the photo pretty much explains the pieces for you.
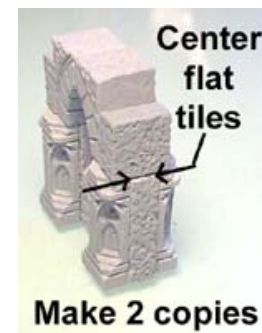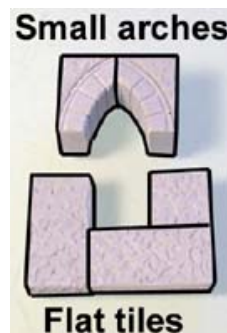
Make 2 each of these pieces

Large arches   Small roof tiles   Flat tile

1.5"   1.5"

Make 2 copies   Make 2 copies

4.

Here's the last of the **one square pieces**. The **flat tiles get centered under the arch** side to side.

The **decorative pieces** under the arch are placed on **front and back** of the piece.

Make 2 of these pieces

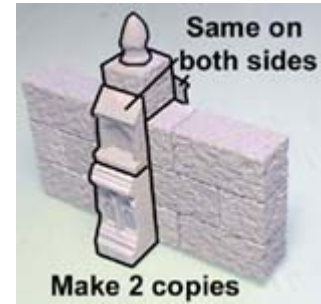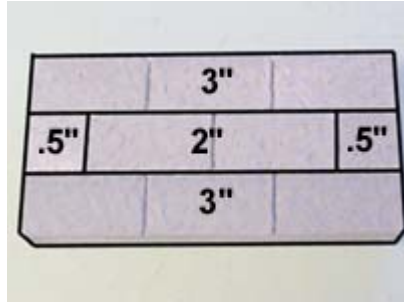Small arches   Flat tiles   Center flat tiles

Flat tiles   Make 2 copies

5. Now for the **two square pieces**. The first is very simple to make. The buttress made out of decorative pieces (from mold #42) is placed on **both sides of the wall**.

Make 2 each of these pieces

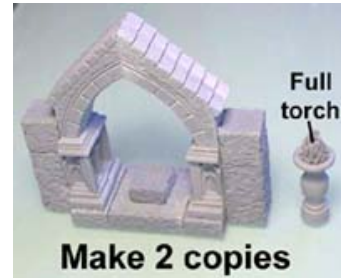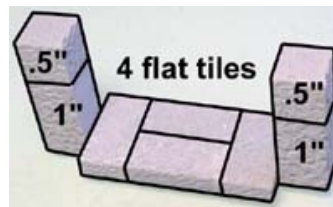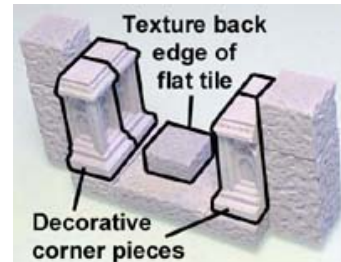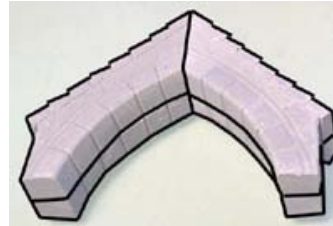Same on both sides

Make 2 copies

6. For the next **two square piece**, glue together 4 large arch pieces from mold #42 as shown.

Next glue the flat tiles together to make the floor and center them between the 1" pieces.

Use the **decorative corner pieces** on the inside, and then glue the large arch on top.

Glue together a complete torch, but **don't glue the torch in** until after you paint the piece. Otherwise you won't be able to paint the inside of the arch.
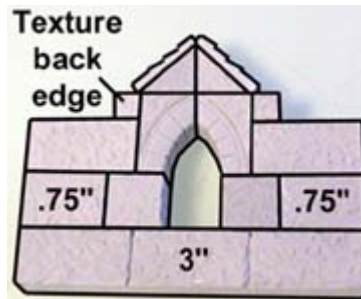
Make 2 of these pieces

Texture back edge of flat tile

Decorative corner pieces

.5"   4 flat tiles   .5"
1"   1"

Full torch

Make 2 copies

7. The last of the **two square pieces** is very simple. The smallest rectangular blocks will need to be textured on one side (because the scraped side of the block will show). Be sure that you put **pillars on both sides** of the wall.

Make 2 of these pieces

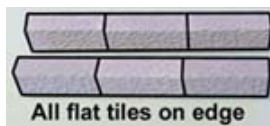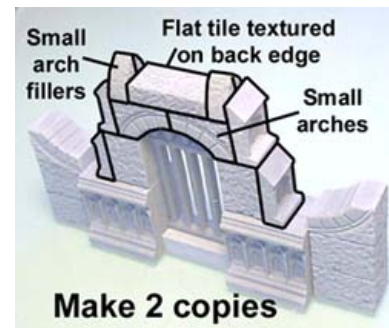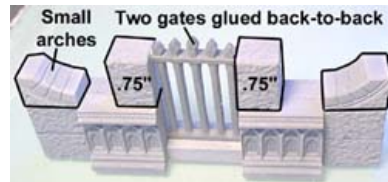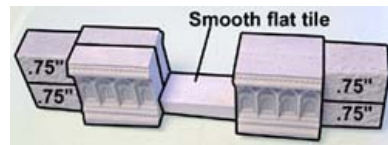Texture back edge

.75"   .75"
3"

Make 2 copies

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8. For this 3 square piece, your gate will hold up better during game play if you **cast it out of plastic**. Visit our plastic casting instructions for more details.
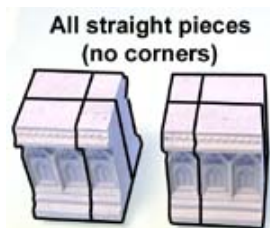
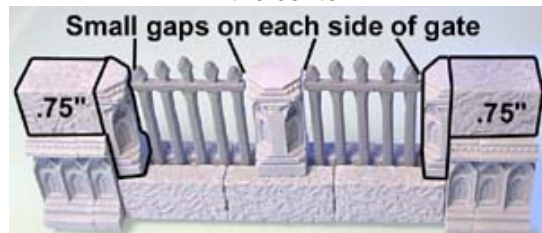Be sure to **glue 2 gates back-to-back**.

Make 2 of these pieces

Smooth flat tile

.75"
.75"
.75"
.75"

Small arches   Two gates glued back-to-back

.75"   .75"

Small arch fillers   Flat tile textured /on back edge   Small arches

Make 2 copies

9.

All flat tiles on edge

Single gate pieces

All straight pieces (no corners)

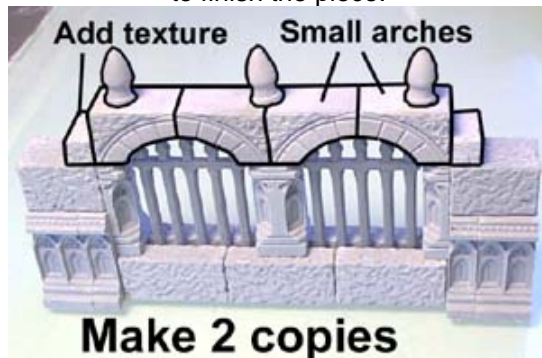**1.** Glue six flat tiles on edge as shown.

2. Glue 2 gates between them and add the short decorative piece shown. I would suggest **casting the gate out of plastic**.

3. Glue the decorative base pieces as shown. These are the straight pieces, **not the corner pieces**.

Glue the additional blocks shown. **There will be gaps** at the top of the gate. Place the gate in the center.

Small gaps on each side of gate

.75"   .75"

Add the small arches, small blocks and points to finish the piece.

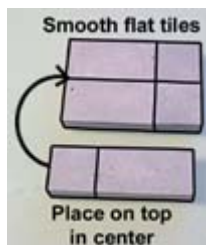
Add texture   Small arches

Make 2 copies

---

10. **The doors** may give you some trouble because they're harder to scrape evenly when casting them.

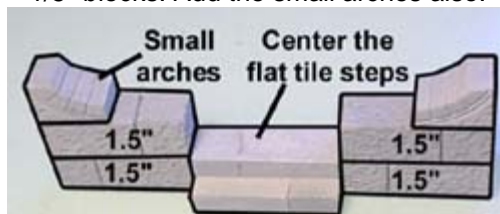To make them fit properly, **sand the edges flat**. Then glue the two halves together for a complete door.
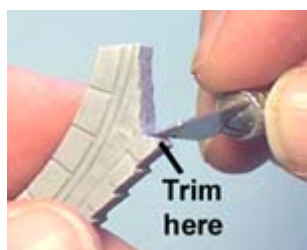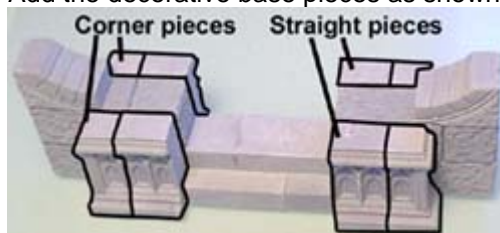
Make 6 complete doors.

Make 6 copies

Smooth flat tiles

Place on top in center

This next piece is the **dungeon entrance**. Start by making the steps from smooth flat tiles as shown.

Place **3/4 pillar caps** onto the roof piece as shown. The green area **needs to be flush** with the bottom of the arch.

Make sure green area is flush

Glue the step piece centered between the 1/5" blocks. Add the small arches also.

Small arches   Center the flat tile steps
1.5"   1.5"
1.5"   1.5"

Glue the pieces of the large arch together as shown.

Place 3/4 pillar tops on all 4 corners

Add the decorative base pieces as shown.

11.

Corner pieces   Straight pieces

Glue **3/4 pillar bases and middles** onto flat tiles as shown. Make 2 of these.

1" flat tiles
3/4 pillar pieces
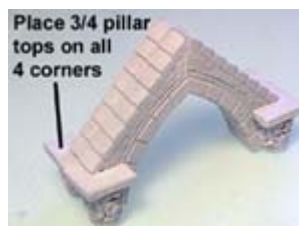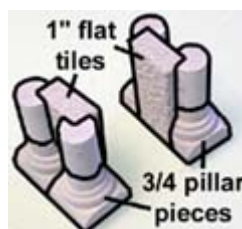
You'll need to trim **4 of the large roofed arch pieces** with a hobby knife so the pillar cap will fit (next photo).
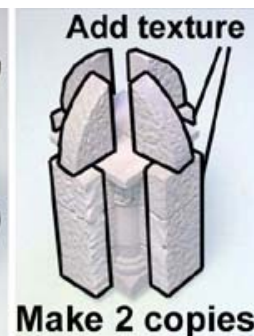

Trim here

Glue the large arch onto the pillars and then onto the base.

The door should move freely in the doorway.

Make 2 copies

Make 2 entrances.

The crosses are next. I guess the first one isn't really a cross piece, but the big pillars look good in the center of large open areas.
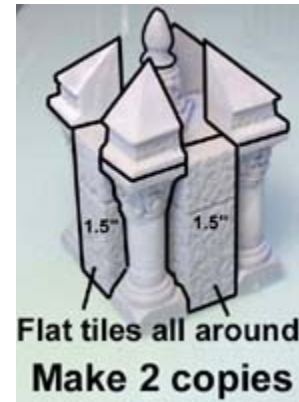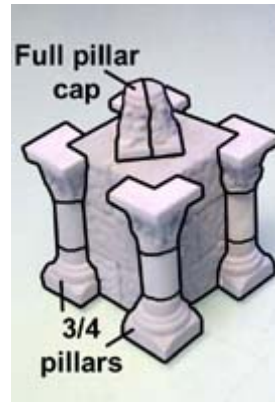
12. For the second one, glue together 4 inside pillar corners. Use the **large arch fillers** on top. You'll have to texture the back edge of the 1.5" pieces.

Make 4 copies

Make 2 copies

Add texture

13. The next **cross piece** starts using six 1" regular blocks. Glue four complete sets of the **3/4 pillars** around the outside of these blocks. On the top add a **full pillar cap** made by gluing two halves together.
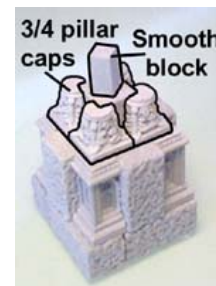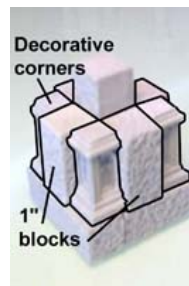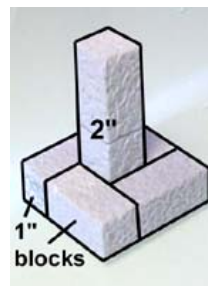
Finish the piece by adding **1.5" flat tiles** on all four sides, then the top spike decorations.

Make 2 of these pieces

All 1" blocks

Full pillar cap

3/4 pillars

1.5" 1.5"

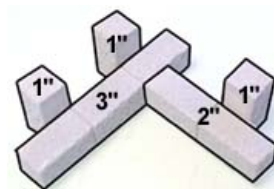Flat tiles all around

Make 2 copies

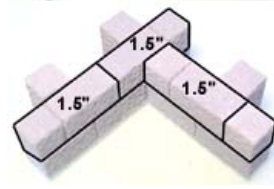**14.** The last **cross piece** starts using a 2" block and four 1" regular blocks.

Make 2 of these pieces

2"

1" blocks

Decorative corners

1" blocks

3/4 pillar caps   Smooth block
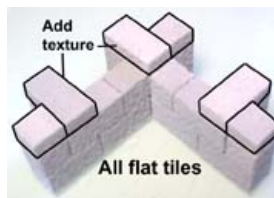
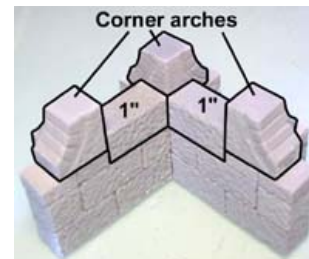Small arch fillers

Make 2 copies

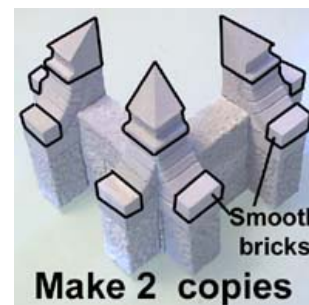**15.** This **corner cross** starts with a 3", a 2" and several 1" blocks.

Add the 1.5" blocks and the .5" block to finish the base.

The next layer is all flat tiles. You'll need to texture the smooth edges of the 1" flat tiles.

1"   1"   1"
3"   2"

1.5"
1.5"   1.5"

Add texture

All flat tiles

Corner arches

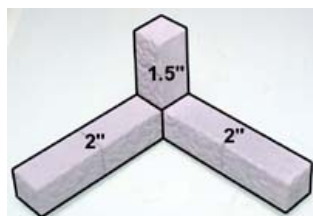1"   1"

Smooth bricks

Make 2 copies

Add the **corner arches** and glue the 1" blocks between them. The corner arches are found on mold #42. Finish the piece by adding the decorative points and the smooth small bricks to the corners.
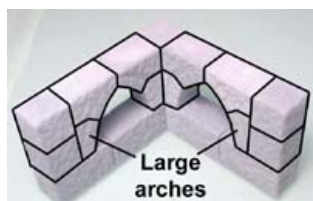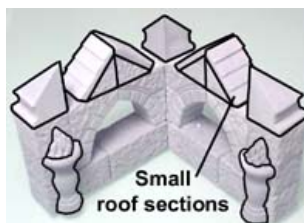
Make 2 of these pieces

16.

This **corner** starts with a 1.5" piece and two 2" blocks.

Add four large arches and four square blocks.

Next add the angle blocks, small roof sections, points and torches to the corner piece.
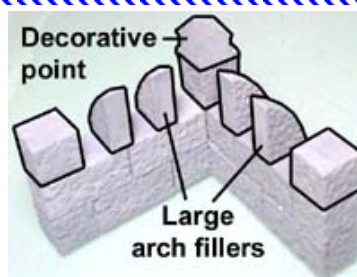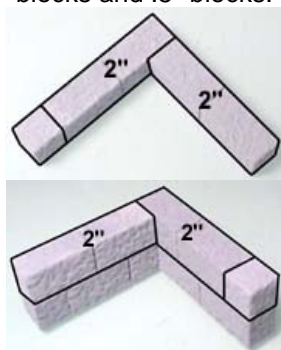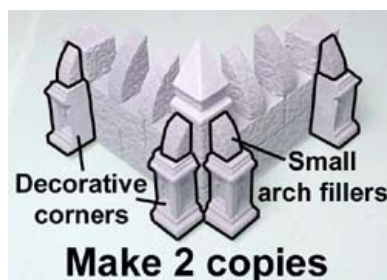
Small roof sections

On the **back side** of the corner, add four pillars.

Make 2 of these pieces

Make 2 copies

17.

This corner starts with 2" blocks and .5" blocks.

2" 2"

2" 2"

Decorative point

Large arch fillers

Next add the **large arch fillers** and the **decorative point**. The smooth sides of the decorative point are facing you in this photo.

Decorative corners
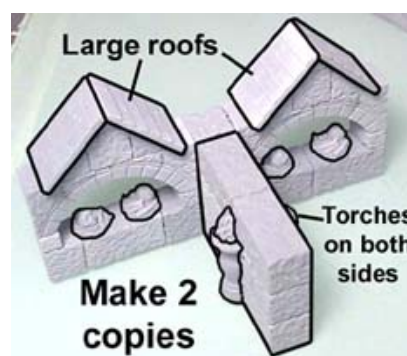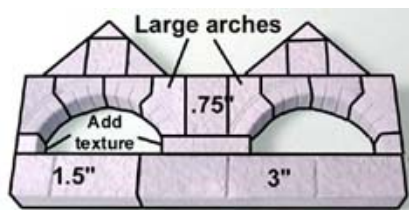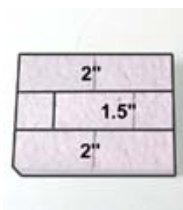
Small arch fillers

Make 2 copies

Finish the piece by using the **decorative corner** pieces. On top of these put on the **small arch fillers** to help join them into the wall.

Make 2 of these pieces

18.

The **tee piece** fits together as shown. Add the bone piles under the arches and add torches on both sides of the plain wall.
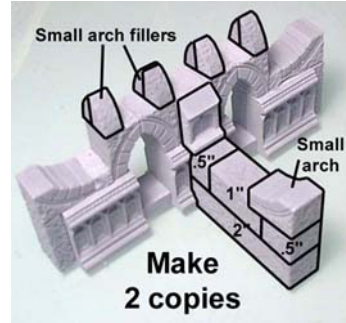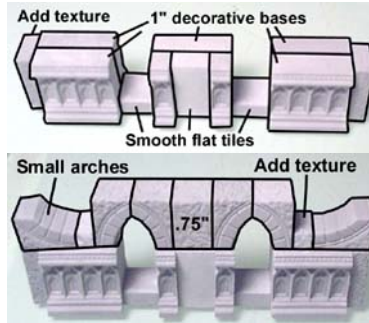
Make 2 of these pieces

2"
1.5"
2"

Large arches

Add texture

.75"

1.5" 3"

Large roofs

Torches on both sides

Make 2 copies

19. The last **tee piece** is more complicated. Be sure you use the smooth flat tiles where shown, but regular flat tiles on the ends.
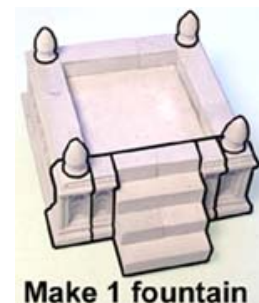
Make 2 of these pieces

Add texture 1" decorative bases

Smooth flat tiles

Small arches   Add texture
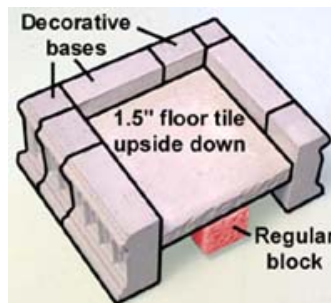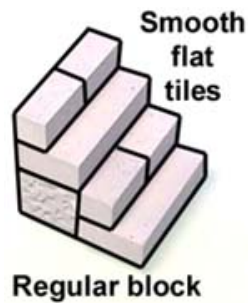
.75"

Small arch fillers

Small arch

.5"
1"
2"
.5"

Make 2 copies

20. Here's **the fountain**. **Don't glue** the block shown in red.

To **add water** to the fountain, see the Tips and Tricks 14 page.

Make 1 of these.

Smooth flat tiles

Regular block

Decorative bases

1.5" floor tile upside down

Regular block

Make 1 fountain

Making the Large Archway

When you build the **decorative wall set** above, you'll have several blocks left over. You can **use these extra blocks** to build this large archway.
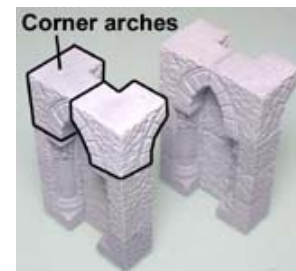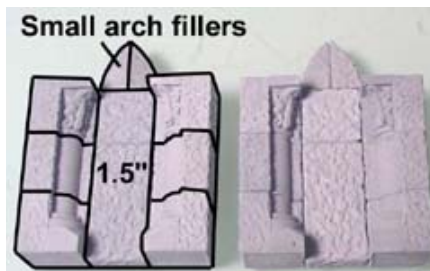
1. If you have not made the decorative set above, you'll need molds #267, #45 and #42 to build this arch.

The archway can be used as an objective for your game, or a place for monsters to come out of onto your gaming board.
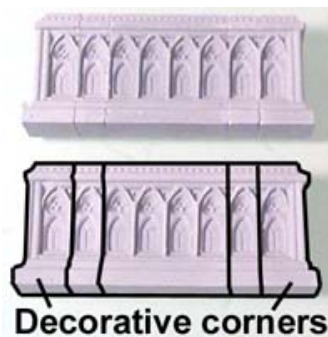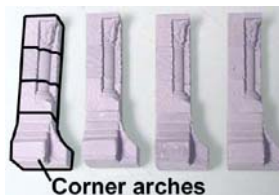
2. We'll start with the base pieces of the arch. Glue together **two of the pieces shown here**. Use the **1.5" flat tile** to go in the middle.

Then add the **corner arch pieces** onto the top of these. Once finished, **set these pieces aside** for the moment.
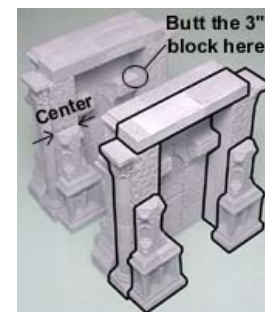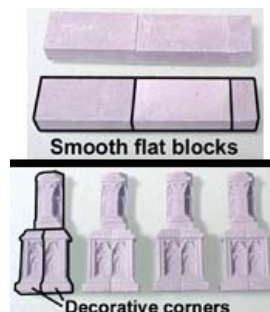
Small arch fillers — 1.5"

Corner arches

3. Assemble the **4 post pieces** as shown.

Next, glue together the **decorative base pieces**.

Finally, you can **assemble all of these pieces** to make half of the large base to support the arch.

Corner arches

Decorative corners

4. Assemble the next pieces and **add them onto the back side** of the arch base.

The 3" block should butt against the corner arch on the inside (as circled).

Smooth flat blocks

Decorative corners

Half pillar pieces

3" long block

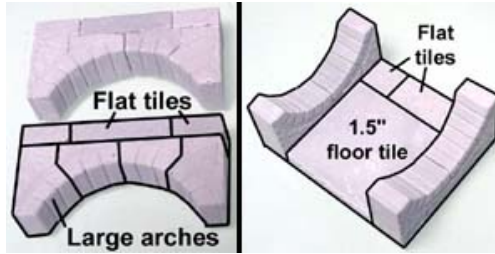**Butt the 3" block here**

Center

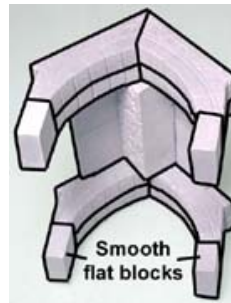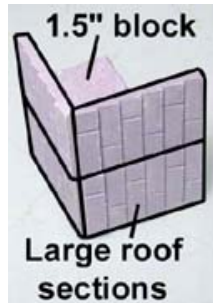To tie the two halves of the base together, we'll **make a platform**.

5. **Do not glue this platform** into the arch. I just set them together so you can see how it fits. You'll want to **paint the pieces separately** before you glue them together. Otherwise you won't be able to paint the inside of the arch easily.

Now for the roof of the arch. Glue some large roof tiles to a 1.5" block and let it dry completely.
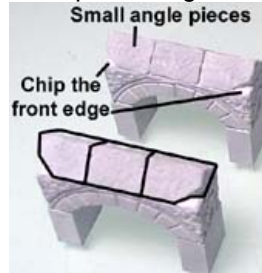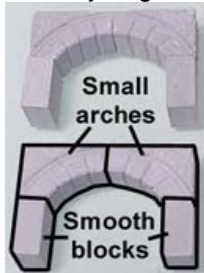
6. Then glue the completed roof section onto **eight large arch pieces** as shown. Once dry, add the **smooth blocks** onto the bottom of the arches.

The remaining pieces to be made fit into the gap on each side of the roof.

Do not glue the roof pieces on the arch! You will want to paint the inside of the arch before you glue the main pieces together. **The large arch is complete**.

7.

For directions on **painting your pieces** visit our Painting instructions page.

Here's a **close-up of the decorative set**. The large arch is in the background where a skeleton is coming out of it.

Directions for making the **large hole in the floor** are on my Tips and Tricks 14 page.

The large hole shows the advantage of making your floor on the 1/2" foam. The hole is deep enough that it really looks like a hole instead of just a missing floor tile.

This photo includes the **painted doors**. The wood texture is painted dark brown and **dry brushed with light brown**. You can even dry brush the black frame with silver to make it look like steel.

Directions for making the **puddle of water** are on my Tips and Tricks 14 page.

The puddle looks good, but would have looked a little better with a darker color, and a little green added.

Here's a tile with an open grave. Directions for making this **open grave** are on my Tips and Tricks 14 page.

In the upper left, you'll also see a loose tile that's actually a secret entrance for enemies. Directions for making this **secret entrance** are also on my Tips and Tricks 14 page.

I **didn't make any river or lava tiles** for the gothic dungeon. They just didn't fit into the theme of a stone crypt very well.