

## Last Month's Demonstration: Making Brick Structures Using Cork

by Mark Fergel

There are many ways to replicate brick in miniature but Mark prefers cork because it provides immediate results, is easy to use and has a random nature. It also works with any paint. You can find cork sheets of various thicknesses at Michael's craft stores or internet based retailers such as Amazon. Here are notes from Mark's demo.

### Tools/Materials

- Cork: get thicknesses based on your scale needs. Adhesive-backed cork is available but not necessary. Texture and grain vary, so shop around.
- Cutter: Mark prefers a rotary cutter for general use, because it doesn't drag on the material. Also handy is a balsa stripper, a tool that cuts perfectly straight lines by using a guide and a sharp hobby knife blade in a secure mount. It is adjustable for various widths.
- Glue: Mark prefers wood glue but white glue and CA adhesives also work. Wood glue provides a stronger bond than white glue and allows time to adjust placement compared to CA. If you do use CA, Mark prefers the black rubberized formula but be aware that it will melt XPS foam.
- Drywall Spackling: use this to simulate the mortar between the bricks. Any type will do.
- Ruler or straightedge: metal is preferred.



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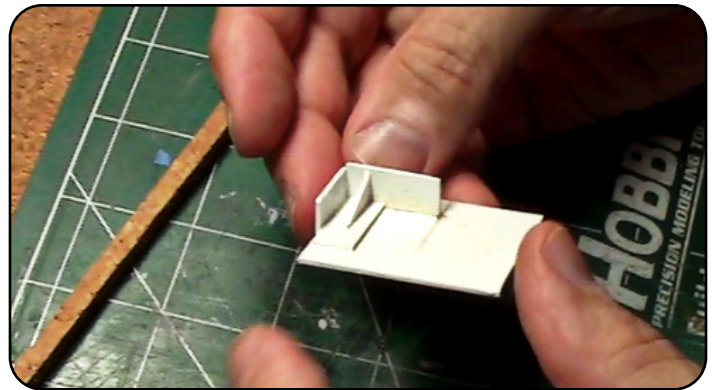
Use a balsa stripper to cut perfectly-straight lengthwise cuts.



Balsa stripper results.



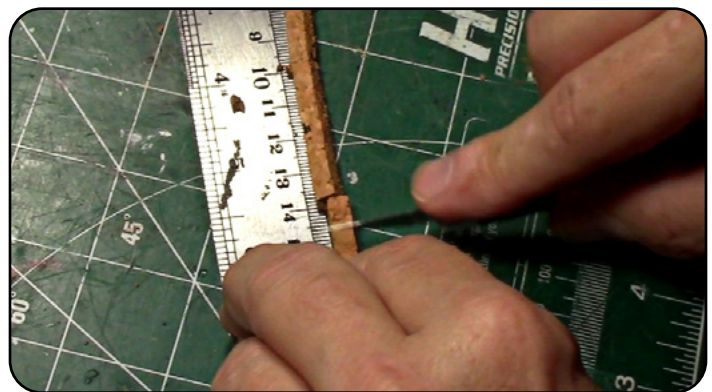
Using a straightedge (ruler) and a rotary cutter also works well.



Cut the bricks from the cork strip using a jig made from styrene sheet.



Push the cork strip up to the stop and cut with a sharp hobby knife blade.

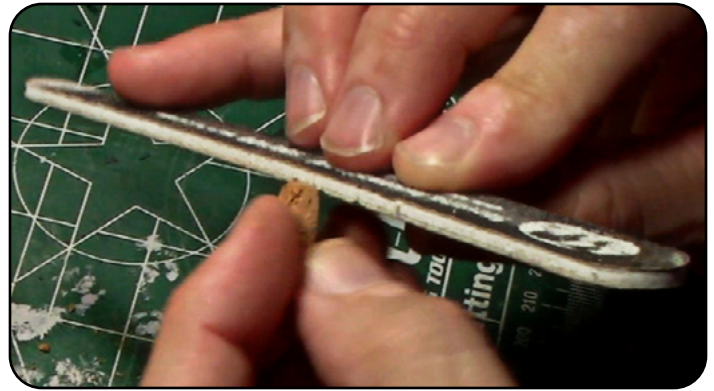


Bricks can also be made using the marks on a ruler as a guide.

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Bricks after cutting. Rough edges or broken pieces are okay!  
Real bricks behave the same way.



Knock off the sharp corners with a coarse sanding stick for the best effect.



Leftover cork dust is useful for debris.



Mark keeps the cork dust in a baggie for future use.

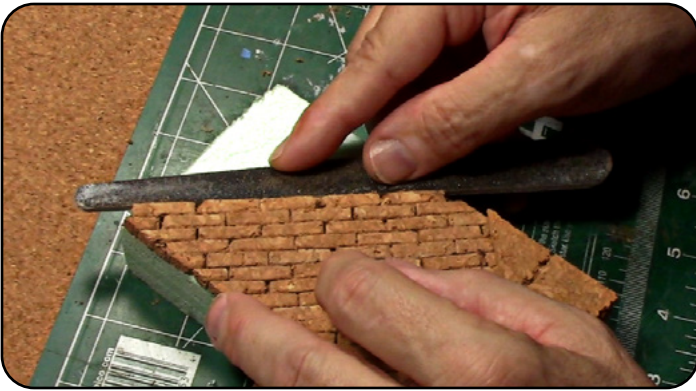


First mark a perfect straight line using a ruler. Then proceed to glue bricks from that line. Do not make brick lines parallel to the base edge.



Keep adding bricks until you're done. Let bricks extend past the base edge (for now).

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Push the bricks against the previous line to keep straight.



Want to simulate a crack in cement? Flex a piece of cork.



It will break unevenly and in a natural way. Lightly scrape the top edge of the break with a hobby knife blade.



Put the two pieces back together and you have a natural crack.



A broken piece can also simulate reinforced concrete by inserting a piece of copper wire to simulate rebar.



Unlike plaster, cork bends. Use CA glue to quickly lock down curves.

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Depict brick mortar by smearing Spackling over the bricks and removing most of it using a wet cloth or sponge.



When the Spackling is dry, cracked or broken areas can be made using a hobby knife.



Extend bricks past the base edge....



...then flip the base over and trim the cork excess with hobby knife.

