

# Giraffe Box

Combine function with decoration

By Marcia Roullard

**Step 1:** Begin by wedging the clay.

**Step 2:** With a rolling pin on canvas, roll out a piece of moist clay  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick between wooden slats.

**Step 3:** For the box construction, cut strips of clay 2 inches wide for the sides. Cut the two longer box sides  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, then stamp with the spiral square stamp. Re-cut if the clay rectangle moves out of shape. Cut two short sides  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long and stamp with the spiral stamp. Cut a bottom piece 5 inches by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

**Step 4:** Set the pieces aside to allow the clay to firm up some before putting the pieces together, otherwise they will warp out of shape.

**Step 5:** Cut a  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inch by  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inch slab for the lid and texture with the Jumbo Swirl stamp. Cut a lip for the lid  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch shorter on both the length and the width. Set the pieces aside.

**Step 6:** Roll out the leftover clay a little thinner than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch for the neck and legs. Wrap a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wooden dowel with paper and then roll the clay over the dowel, thinning out the edges for attaching so that it looks seamless. Wrap the Animal Print stamp over these parts to add the texture. When the clay is ready to remove from the dowel, it will slide right off the rod, usually with the paper. Remove the paper and then cut four 3-inch tubes of clay for the legs. The neck is an 8-inch tube made the same way.

**Step 7:** When the clay is firm enough to assemble the pieces, score the edges where the pieces will contact each other and use slip or clay slurry made from the clay body that you are using to "glue" the pieces together. The two long sides will project  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch on each side of the bottom. Start with a long side, then attach the two short sides, and finish with the other long side.

**Step 8:** Once all the sides are attached, flip the box over and score and attach the four legs, making sure they are all cut to the same length.

**Step 9:** Attach the lip section to the top piece for the lid.

**Step 10:** Place the lip on the box body; it should fit, but if any adjustments need to be made, make them at this time.



## Objectives

- Hand build a giraffe incorporating a clay box
- Use stamps to add textures and patterns
- Layer and shade with fired colors

**Step 11:** Cut the long tube made for the neck at a sharp angle on one side to fit against the side of the box — you may also need to cut out part of the lid to accommodate the neck. Score and slip attach the neck to the box body. If there are any gaps between the neck and the box body, fill them in with a clay coil and smooth to the neck.

**Step 12:** For the head of the giraffe, start with a roughly triangular piece of clay and work it with your fingers to shape the nose and make dents for the eyes. Hold the shape to the neck and make adjustments to the head and the neck so that they'll fit together. Cut two oval shapes for the ears and roll coils for the antlers. Attach all the pieces with slip. Vent the head to let any air out during firing.

**Step 13:** Drill small holes down the back of the neck. This will allow you to glue in pieces of pipe cleaner for the mane after glaze firing.

**Step 14:** Roll a small coil for the tail and attach to the back of the box by scoring and adding slip.

**Step 15:** Make a small leaf for the handle of the box lid. Score and slip attach.

**Step 16:** Cover the entire piece with a plastic bag and allow it to dry slowly, with the lid on the box.

**Step 17:** Once the piece is completely dry, bisque fire to shelf cone 04.

## Painting

**Step 18:** Moisten a clean sponge and wipe down the bisque to remove any dust.

**Step 19:** Use a #4 soft fan to apply two coats of Vanilla Dip over the entire outside of the box, excluding the inside of the box. Allow to dry.

**Step 20:** Using a #4 pointed round, apply one coat of Crackerjack Brown to the spots on the legs and neck. Apply two coats of Crackerjack Brown on the body, avoiding putting color in the stamped areas.

**Step 21:** Shade one side of the spots with slightly thinned Java Bean, using a #4 pointed round. Also shade the box body, continuing to avoid putting color in the stamped areas.

**Step 22:** With the #4 pointed round, darken the head and the ears with two slightly thinned coats of Crackerjack Brown (see photo). Shade deeper with thinned Java Bean.

**Step 23:** Thin some Tuxedo to shade inside the ears. Brush the tips of the antlers with Tuxedo.

**Step 24:** Use the #2 detail liner to apply Tuxedo to the eyes and nostrils.

**Step 25:** Using the #4 soft fan, apply three coats of Java Bean to the inside of the box.

**Step 26:** Use the #4 pointed round to apply two to three coats of Toad-ily Green to the leaf handle. Allow to dry.

**Step 27:** Dry foot the feet and stilt the box lid. Fire to shelf cone 05/06.

**Step 28:** Cut and glue brown pipe cleaners down the back of the neck for a mane.

## Advanced Methods

Create your own design for a functional and decorative animal box.

## Sources

Mayco: [www.maycocolors.com](http://www.maycocolors.com)

## Materials by Mayco

### Colors

SC-14 Java Bean  
SC-15 Tuxedo  
SC-25 Crackerjack Brown  
SC-52 Toad-ily  
SC-54 Vanilla Dip

### Tools & Brushes

CD-1072 4 spiral press tools  
BT-910 synthetic sponge  
Fettling knife  
Needle tool  
CB-202 #2 detail liner  
CB-404 #4 pointed round  
CB-604 #4 soft fan  
ST-346 Animal Print stamp  
ST-353 Jumbo Swirl stamp

### Miscellaneous

Pencil  
½ inch dowel  
Paper  
Moist clay  
¼ inch wooden slats  
Canvas  
Rolling pin  
Slip/clay slurry  
Straight edge  
Ruler  
Plastic bag  
Pipe cleaners  
Glue

