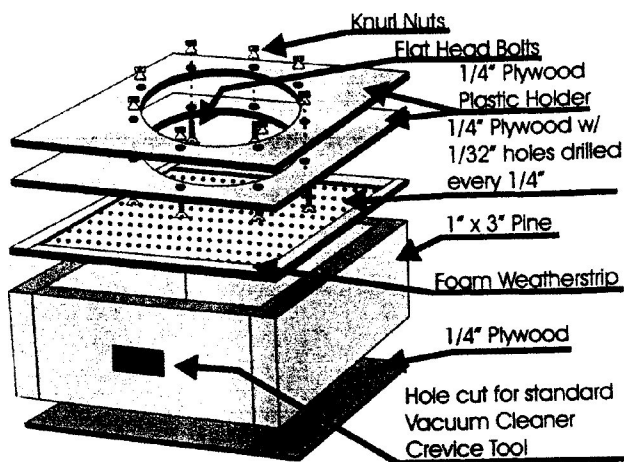


VACUUM MOLDING....

An Article published in the July 2004 Issue of the Windy Sock, the Newsletter of the Alamo Escadrille, Joe Joseph, Editor Chris Boehm is sold on vacuum molding. Here's what he says. "I tried plunge molding, and personally I think it is harder than vacuum molding. I put off building a vacuum former for about two years after I got into modeling, and I think now, 'What took me so long to try this? It is easy.' I was under the impression that the vacuum had to be super powerful; some guys said it had to be a two-stage pump, all hoses sealed air tight - sounded like something that I had to buy, not build. Boy, was that wrong. Maybe I would need all that if I was molding some super thick plastic or some big item like a complete car or fuselage, but for what we use it - canopies, wheel pants, air scoops, nose blocks - you can't beat this. Once I tried it, I liked it. Just a plain Hoover vacuum with a hose attachment. Shove the hose into the box, heat the plastic till it sags, turn on the vacuum, set the plastic over the form. I know it sounds too easy. And it is; the only thing different than plunge molding is the vacuum. But the vacuum allows you to mold with much greater detail. Go ahead and try it. I guarantee you will be converted."



The "ART" of Vacuum Forming, Made Simple !

1. Build your vacuum forming tool like the above drawing. Make it whatever size you think you will need for the parts that your are going to make. Mine is 6" x 8" x 3". Be sure to seal the inside of the "box" with silicone or glue.
2. Find some thin plastic. Keep all of the vacuum formed boxes that your tools and the kids toys come in. If it was vacuum formed once, you can use it again. Also the plastic party plates work great.
3. Lay one part of the plastic holder, on the plastic, mark all eight holes, then punch the holes with a normal paper hole punch.
4. Place the plastic between the two plastic holders, and secure with the bolts and knurl nuts.
5. Place your mold onto the vacuum former.
6. Plug the Vacuum Cleaner Crevice Tool into the hole. Don't worry, it does NOT have to be air tight, just snug.
7. Hold the plastic holder with a pair of pliers over the kitchen stove burner. Heat until the plastic sags. It will shrink first, and tighten up a lot, which is why you have eight bolts. Then it will sag. When it is sagging good — then;
8. Turn on the vacuum cleaner, then place the plastic holder and plastic onto the box. Turn off vacuum cleaner, turn off the burner.
9. Play with it, you will get very good, very quickly.
10. Admire your work, and feel good, and fly FAC.. Question or comments contact Chris A. Boehm - merlin236@comcast.net

