

Plastering Hawks and Floats

DT Workshop Equipment Reference — D&T / STEM resource for school workshops | Hand Tools

A plastering hawk is a flat board with a central handle that holds mixed plaster close to the wall, while floats apply and smooth the plaster to a flat finish. Together they form the traditional two-tool system for rendering and finishing walls.

Key Features

- Aluminium or wood hawk boards
- Stainless and sponge floats
- Devil floats for roughing
- Screen floats for finish
- Handle and edge details

Typical Uses in the Workshop

- Hold plaster within reach while working
- Apply and level plaster coats
- Finish walls to a smooth surface
- Screed large areas evenly

Safe Operation

1. Load the hawk with a manageable amount
2. Scoop plaster onto the trowel
3. Apply with firm, even strokes
4. Smooth with the float at an angle
5. Clean joints and corners while wet

SAFETY NOTES

- Wear gloves and keep plaster off skin
- Do not overreach - use a trestle
- Keep the hawk level to avoid drops
- Clean tools before plaster hardens
- Dust masks for mixing

Maintenance & Consumables

- Rinse the hawk and floats after use
- Remove dried plaster carefully
- Oil wooden handles
- Store dry and flat
- Replace worn float faces

Specification & Buying Notes

An aluminium hawk with a block float and sponge float covers school plastering practice. Stainless floats stay smooth; cheap plaster faces roughen the finish.