How to make a modeling clay mushroom

Materials: Ordinary non-drying modeling clay in three colors and a board. No frame or glue.



1. Prepare three balls

Knead each color separately. Roll a large brown ball for the cap, a smaller cream ball for the stem and a green ball for the base. Make the green ball about the size of the cream one.

Check: There are three soft balls; the brown one is the largest.

Fix: Warm firm clay in your hands and knead it. Add clay to a very small cream ball before rolling.



2. Roll a short stem

Roll the cream ball back and forth on the board with short palm movements. Stop when the thick cylinder is about as tall as it is wide. Gently press both ends against the board.

Check: The stem stands alone, with flat top and bottom; it is not a thin stick.

Fix: Compress a long stem from its ends and roll again with less pressure. Smooth a narrow waist with your fingers.



3. Shape the cap

Set the brown ball on the board and press lightly with your palm. Smooth the edge with your fingers, keeping a rounded top, flat underside and thick rim. Make it about twice the stem width.

Check: The cap is domed with no thin drooping rim. The stem and green ball are still separate.

Fix: Gather a thin pancake into a ball and press less. Pinch a crack together and smooth it.

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4. Join cap and stem

Rest the cap rounded-side down in your palm. Place the flat top of the stem in the center of its underside. Press the stem slightly into the cap. Smooth the join edge with a finger, then turn the mushroom upright.

Check: The cap is centered and the stem stays thick. A gentle sideways touch does not open the join.

Fix: Remove the cap and knead both joining patches. Flatten the broad stem end and press again without stretching the stem.



5. Press a broad base

Leave the mushroom beside you. Press the green ball onto the board with your palm to form a thick round disc slightly wider than the cap. Smooth the rim while keeping the underside flat.

Check: The base does not rock and has a thick intact rim. The mushroom is still separate.

Fix: Gather a thin rim toward the middle and press less. Level the underside against the board.



6. Attach and check the mushroom

Set the stem in the center of the base. Hold the stem at its sides, press it down and smooth its lower edge into the green clay. Do not push on the dome. Move the model by supporting the base underneath.

Check: After moving, the mushroom stands straight, both joins stay closed and the cap does not slip.

Fix: Remove a leaning mushroom, shorten the stem and flatten its ends. Press it back into the center of a level base.

Try independently: Without the pictures, make a second mushroom in another color with a slightly wider cap. Decide how wide its stem and base need to be. Move both models and compare their stability. What did you need to change?