

Appendix A

Some Hints on Creating and Maintaining Whiteboards

(Edited from the <http://modeling.asu.edu/modeling/whiteboards2002.doc>)

An inexpensive whiteboard is Marlite, kitchen/bathroom tileboard, or economy board. Whiteboards can be purchased at building materials stores, hardware stores, and home improvement stores like Home Depot or Loews. It comes in 4' x 8' sheets, for about \$12 per sheet. Have them cut it into 6 equal pieces, each 24" x 32".

Marlite boards last a couple of years (using them for 5 classes daily) before they get too scratched up and stained to use. If you wax the boards after you buy them, that preserves them. Use Endust, Meguiars Mirror Glaze #26 or liquid car wax (Turtle Wax). You can clean stains with brake fluid. (Your school custodian may know these tricks.) Wipe them with a rag, paper towel, or whiteboard eraser, and don't leave writing on them over the weekend. Clean them occasionally with whiteboard cleaner (\$1.50 from Sanford Expo), window cleaner, "Simple Green" (it's non-toxic & biodegradable; buy a gallon, dilute it 5-fold, and dispense it in small spray bottles from the craft store), or isopropyl alcohol (from grocery store: 70%) on a paper towel. Isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol) is the main ingredient of the commercial cleaners that you can buy. A modeler said, "I always have to leave my whiteboards overnight with writing on them - I use 409 to clean them and it works great! My whiteboards are 8 years old and still look good." A modeler said, "When the dry erase marks get difficult to erase, clean the erasers with a hose vacuum cleaner." Wax them occasionally to guard against scratching.

A handle is nice but not essential. Have the shop class use a router to make a hole that's 6" long x 1 1/2" wide, placed 1" below the top. Or drill a hole and use a saber saw (jig saw) with the highest quality size 18 blade. The high quality fine blade is needed to prevent tearing.

Instead of making the hole (or in addition), you could use an easel to place the boards on when the students do their presentation. Make an easel - it's easy. Art stores have wooden ones. Or drill a small hole and hang the whiteboard from a hospital IV stand; these can be obtained in thrift stores or from people who have had long-term illnesses requiring IVs. (When you do circle whiteboarding, you can have the students set them upright on the floor, resting on their legs.)

You'll probably need from 12 to 36 whiteboards and 18 to 36 dry erase markers. For example, Larry Dukerich, our workshop leader, buys 2 Marlite sheets (that's 12 whiteboards) every couple of years; he finds that 12 whiteboards are enough for his 5 classes.

Excellent quality whiteboards, with handle on the long side and rounded corners, can be purchased in multiples of 6 for \$7.95 per board + approx. \$2 per board shipping/handling from:

PLAYSCAPES, INC., 2600 Daniels Street, Madison, WI 53704 (800) 248-7529, (608) 222-9600; fax: 222-8100. Jennifer Newcomb, jnewcomb@playscapes.com.

These whiteboards are very durable; they don't scratch easily, they don't discolor or stain easily. Indications are that they will last for 10 years or longer. The trick is not to leave stuff on them for days; wipe with a rag or w/b eraser. Commercial cleaner or alcohol takes off stains.

Dry erase markers cost about \$10 per dozen, wholesale. Sanford EXPO work the best. Don't use black; it stains! Blue and green leave fewest stains, blue, black, and red show up well - get broad or chisel point. If you can, have each student buy their own marker; it promotes responsibility (i.e., they replace the cap!). One teacher buys a classroom set of markers and then has each student pay her for one. She gives them the choice of keeping it with their supplies or else taping their name on it and storing it in a coffee can in the classroom. Another modeler suggests making "color coded 'eraser' bandanas for each team. A couple of markers and a small spray bottle of 'Simple Green' cleaner can be tied inside the team bandana."

The "low-odor" markers are difficult to erase. They leave a stubborn residue.

If you accidentally use a PERMANENT marker on the w/b: to remove the stain, use hair spray, acetone, or fingernail polish remover; or write over the permanent marker with a dry-erase marker; wipe as usual.