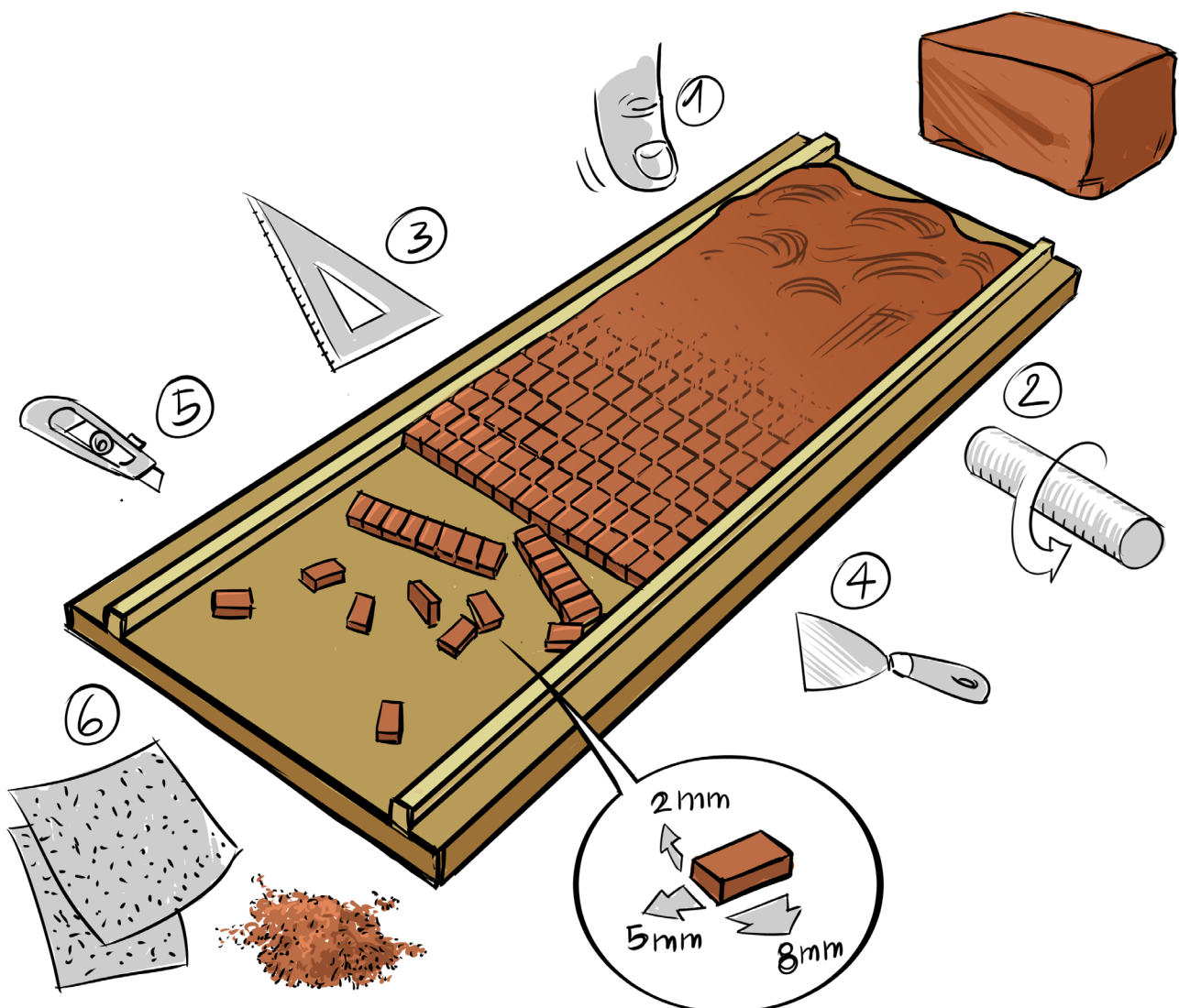


## Construction 002:

### *Homemade miniature bricks with DAS clay*

The picture inserted in this chapter are taken from several “batches”, but I combined them in a natural sequence to show you step by step the making of my bricks, resumed in the sketch below. The raw material is **DAS clay** in *terra cotta* color. Besides this, I used some basic tools like a **square**, a **cutter**, a **slice**, a **wooden board** with two thin runners (about 0,2 inch), a **rolling pin** (actually a segment of an old sun umbrella pole), a **hand sprayer**, **sandpaper** and a **metal file**.



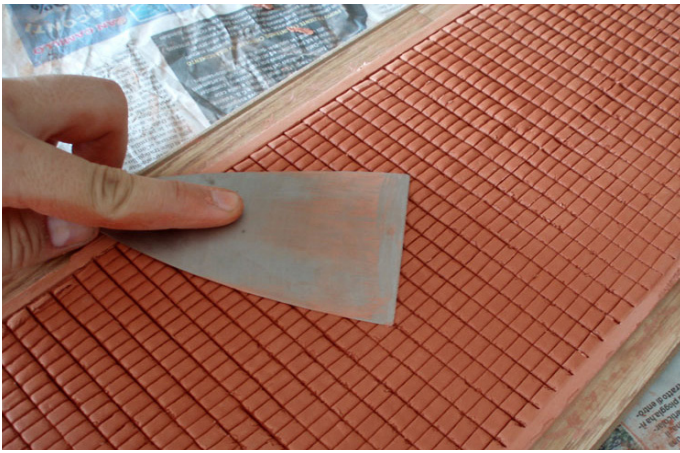


I start cutting the clay into slices and placing it on the board. Then I press it with my fingers to fill all the surface between the runners. A wet rolling pin allow me to extend the material until the surface is plain and thin enough.

The next operation is the carving of the surface using the slice. I cut horizontally the clay all along the board into strips. Is important to keep the slice perpendicular to the board an moving it downwards and not sideways because that would alter the shape of the bricks.



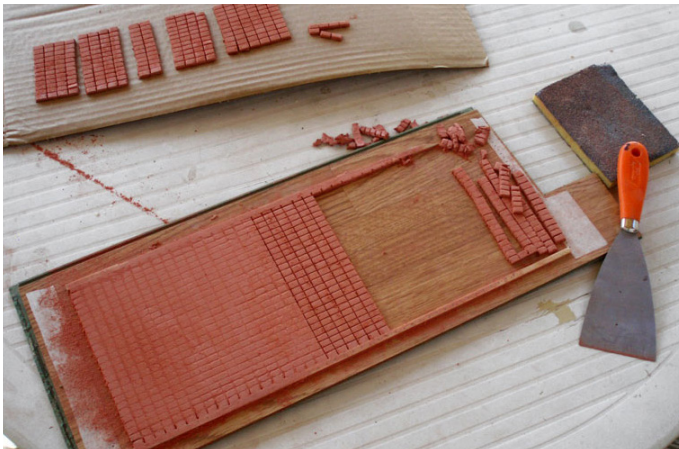
After making the horizontal cutting I proceed with the vertical ones, in stripes of 0,30/0,40 inch, depending on my needs. Before the material is totally dry I apply a light pressure on the surface to limit the smoothness caused by the slice during the cut.



After a few hours (or the day after, in case of high moisture) I proceed to a further polishing of the surface with sandpaper. Then I check again the lines between bricks with the slice and finally I can cut off my bricks.



In this stage I try to separate the bricks in slices of at least 4 pieces, as you can see in the picture below. That's because the little bricks still need to be polished with a file to be finished. On a board like this you can produce more than 1300 bricks at a time, so you can see the advantage (in terms of time) to polish them in groups of 4 and not one-by-one.



The finished bricks will not be all perfectly alike. Some will be shorter, some will be thicker... Fortunately the DAS is an easy material to work on even when it's dry and you can modify every piece before placing it. This feature will be very useful to build walls and vaults, where bricks does not come all in the same shape and need to be modified depending on their position.

Ok, now we have our bricks ready. It's time to build!

#### MATERIALS:

DAS modeling clay, water

#### TOOLS:

square, cutter, slice, wooden board and slats, rolling pin, hand sprayer, sandpaper, metal file, patience.

#### SIZE:

bricks: 5 x 8 x 2 mm

runners section: 5 x 2 mm

board available surface: 15 x 42 cm

