

# Soapstone Carving Block

---

## Working Soapstone

You can work soapstone with most of the same tools you use for woodworking. Soapstone can be cut on the bandsaw. It can be sliced on a table saw. Chisels and gouges cut it more easily than they will cut most hardwoods. In short, it is very easy to shape.

On the other hand, most soapstone has fault lines in it. These should be studied carefully before you use the piece or you may end up with a flaw running directly across a weak part of a carving (across an arm or a leg, for instance). These are natural faults and are found in all soapstone to a greater or lesser degree. In either case, they can cause a problem if not properly handled.

Using a coarse piece of sandpaper (60x or 80x), flatten at least two adjacent sides and one end of the block, and look for fault lines. Wherever there has been any fracturing, the line will show whiter than the rest of the block. The diagram shows a typical block.

Obviously, this block is best used for a piece that will run the length of the block, so any projections will be in the same plane as the faults.

