

Why Slumping Molds Need Holes

When the glass softens, it drops into the mold. The edges drop first and press down against the mold. This traps air between the glass and the mold. If there are holes in the mold, as the middle of the glass drops, it pushes the air out through the holes. If there are no holes, that air has no place to go except to form a bubble dome in the glass. The best place for a mold hole is dead center.

You don't need a big hole. If it's too big, the soft glass will form an impression from the hole and you'll have a small pimple on the glass after firing. About 1/16" or 3/36" is a good size. Widely dispersed small holes are better than one or two large ones. Take care after applying kiln wash to be sure the mold holes are clean and not filled with kiln wash. Also, take care that your mold isn't pressed against the kiln shelf in a way that prevents air from getting out.

A tungsten carbide or masonry bit works great for drilling holes in ceramic. Just take your time or you'll crack the mold. Drill from the inside of the mold. There will be a small crater formed where the drill bits exits. This can be minimized by putting tape across where the bit will exit. Duct tape, masking tape, electricians tape, etc.)