

# Tibetan Stupa

Stupas are tower-like structures which carry great meaning and significance in Buddhist teaching and practice. Since the time the historical Buddha Shakyamuni taught, the basic shape of a bowl on top of a square base has evolved into a variety of different shapes, some of which have taken on more or less of the local style when Buddhist teaching spread to other countries from India.

The word stupa supposedly comes from the syllable „stup“, which means heaped up in Sanskrit. This is related to the supposed origin of the stupa as having been developed out of ancient tumuli, artificial hills heaped up on top of graves. According to tradition, the body of Buddha Shakyamuni was burned after he entered Nirvana. The ashes were then kept in eight stupas at important places where the Buddha had taught. From this evolved the practice to build stupas as representations of the Buddha and his teachings and as a treasure trove for Buddhist treasures, such as relics, scriptures and ashes of great masters. In some way they can be described as memorial structures that serve as tombs and a reminder of the teaching and its goal of enlightenment.

A typical Buddhist practice involving the stupa is circumventing it clockwise from 7 to 108 to however many times. Constructing or repairing a stupa is also considered a practice to accrue merit to the practitioner. The Indian Emperor Ashoka who was a devout Buddhist is said to have sponsored the construction of 84.000 stupas.

In the early days of Buddhism, no images of the Buddha himself were made

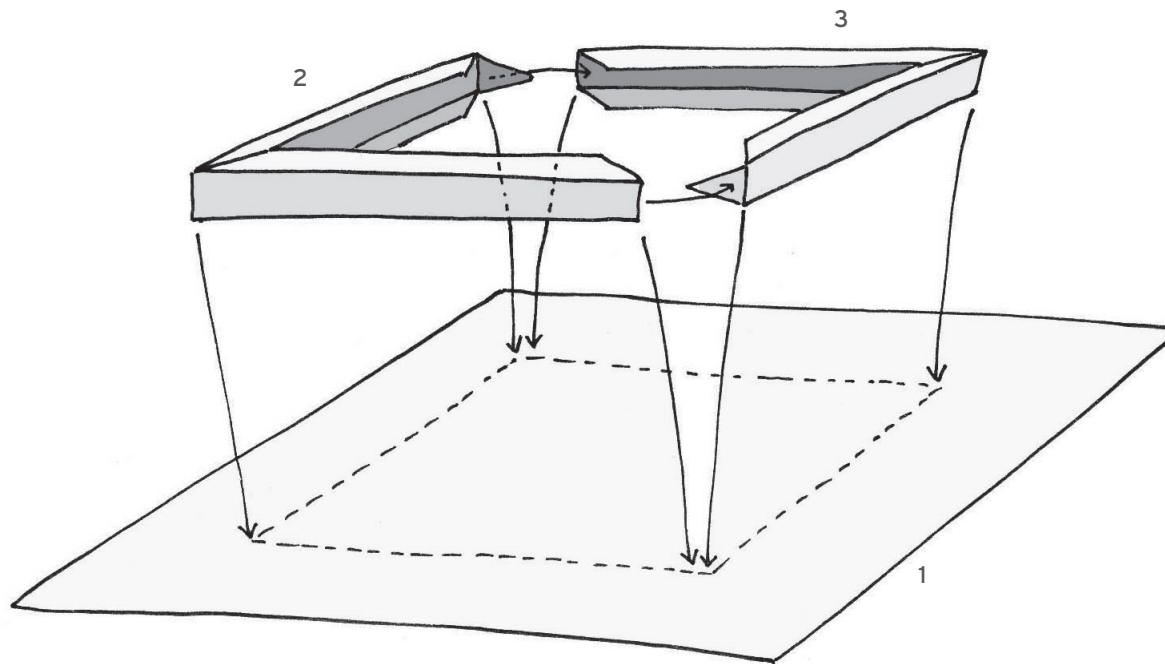
and stupas became an abstract visual representation. The body of the stupa is described as to representing the Buddha: The upper spire represents the crown. Under it is a usually squared section which represents the head, which is why this section sometimes has eyes painted on it. It is also called the harmika. The round section shaped like a bottle or vase is called the bumpa and represents the body of the Buddha. The four steps or stairs under it are the legs of the Buddha and finally the actual base is his throne or seat of enlightenment.

Depending on the region and the branch or school of the Buddhist teaching, additional symbolism is included into the structure of a stupa. The Stahlhart Tibetan stupa depicts a typical Stupa as it can be found in all sizes and at all places wherever Buddhists following the Tibetan branch are present. The **version with doors and windows** stands in Oslo, Norway. This version of the model has an estimated scale. For all other versions, the scale is irrelevant, as such stupas exist in all kinds of sizes from tabletop to multi-leveled tower. The Tibetans also assign other meanings to aspects of the stupa, such as the five elements plus space to the legs, body, head, crown and tip. The 4 steps - considered the legs - also stand for the 4 immeasurables of loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity. There are also 8 major variants of the Tibetan Stupa, which differ slightly in their structure, representing different stations in the life of a Buddha. The Tibetan Stupa from the Stahlhart model is the most common one, representing enlightenment.



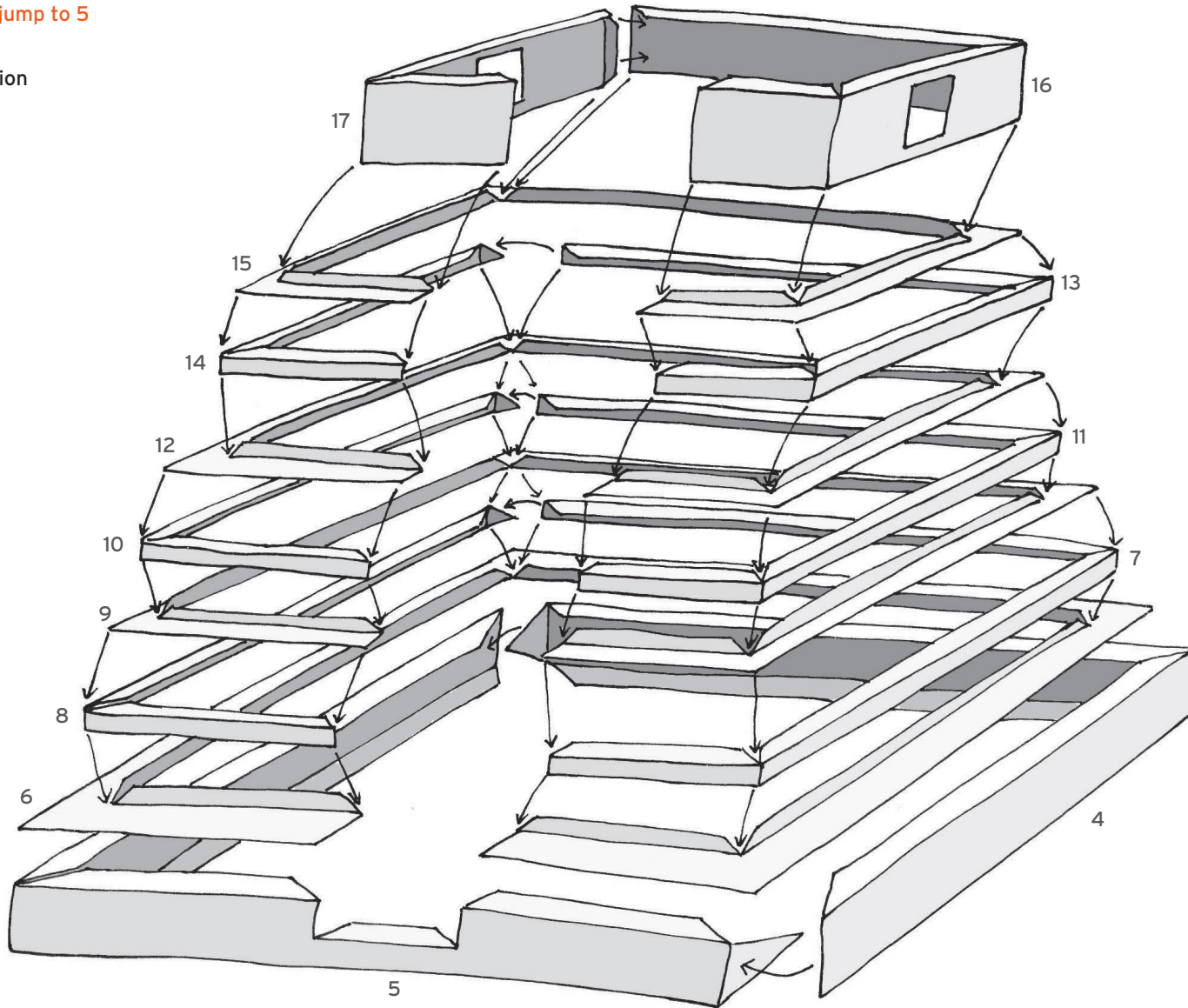
**Important Note:** Glue tabs drawn with black lines are bent outward (mountain fold) while glue tabs drawn with blue lines are bent inwards (valley fold).

1. Glue the floor supports on the base plate



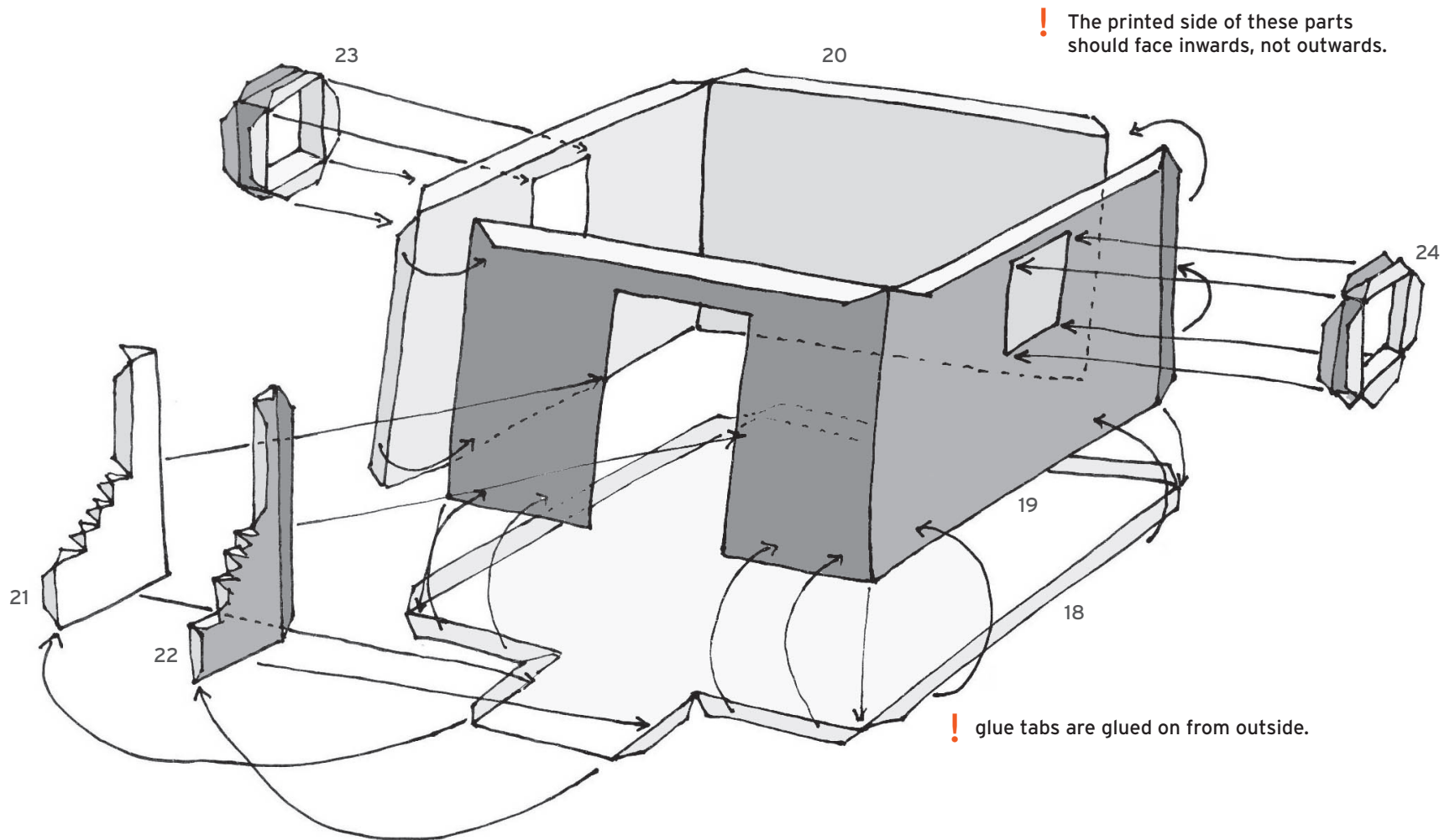
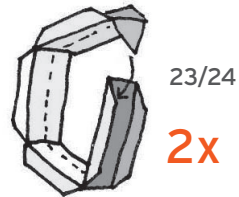
This is for the **Version with doors and windows only**.  
For **all other versions**, jump to 5

## 2. Build the lower section



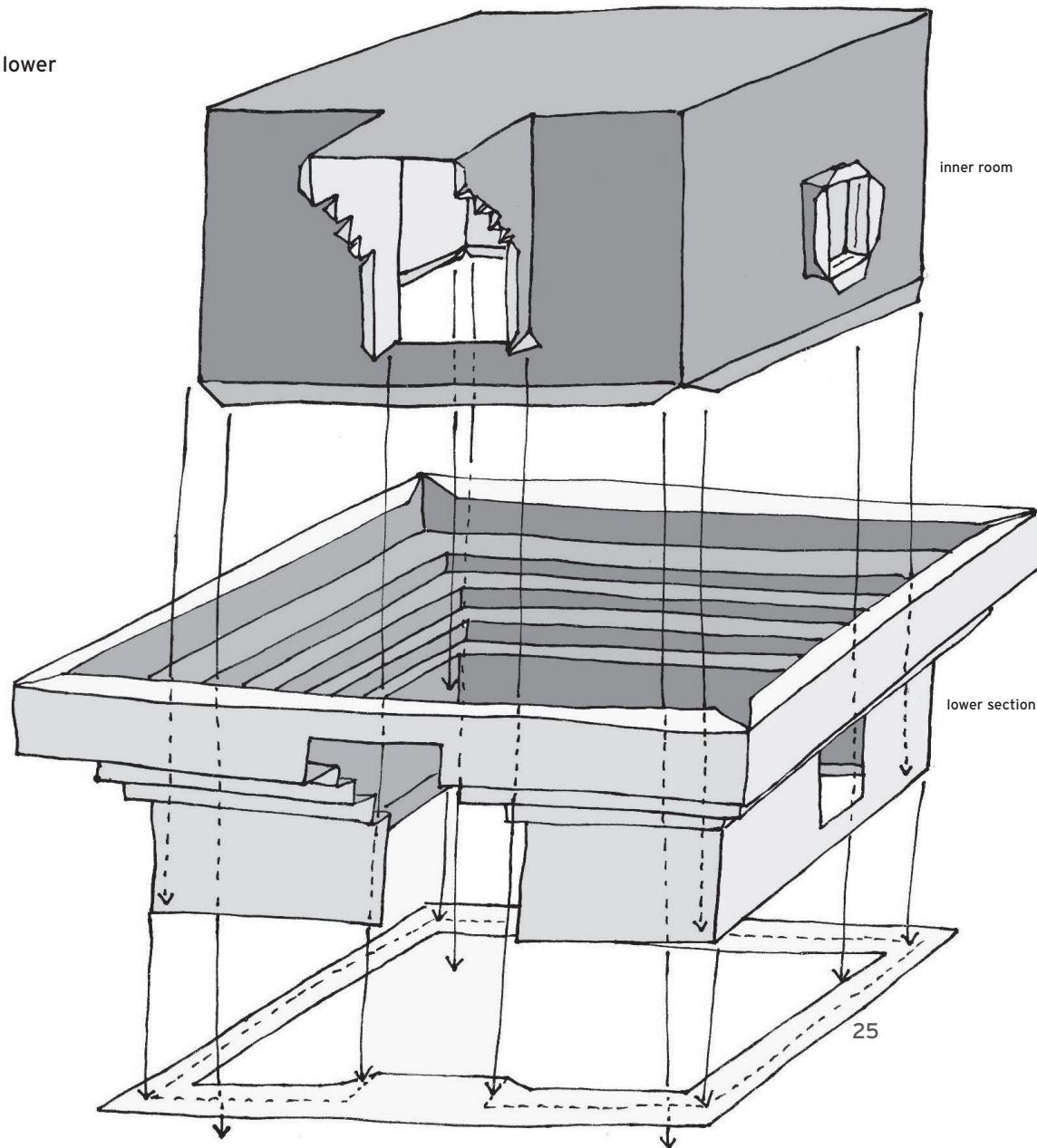


3. Build the inner room and add the recesses for door and windows.

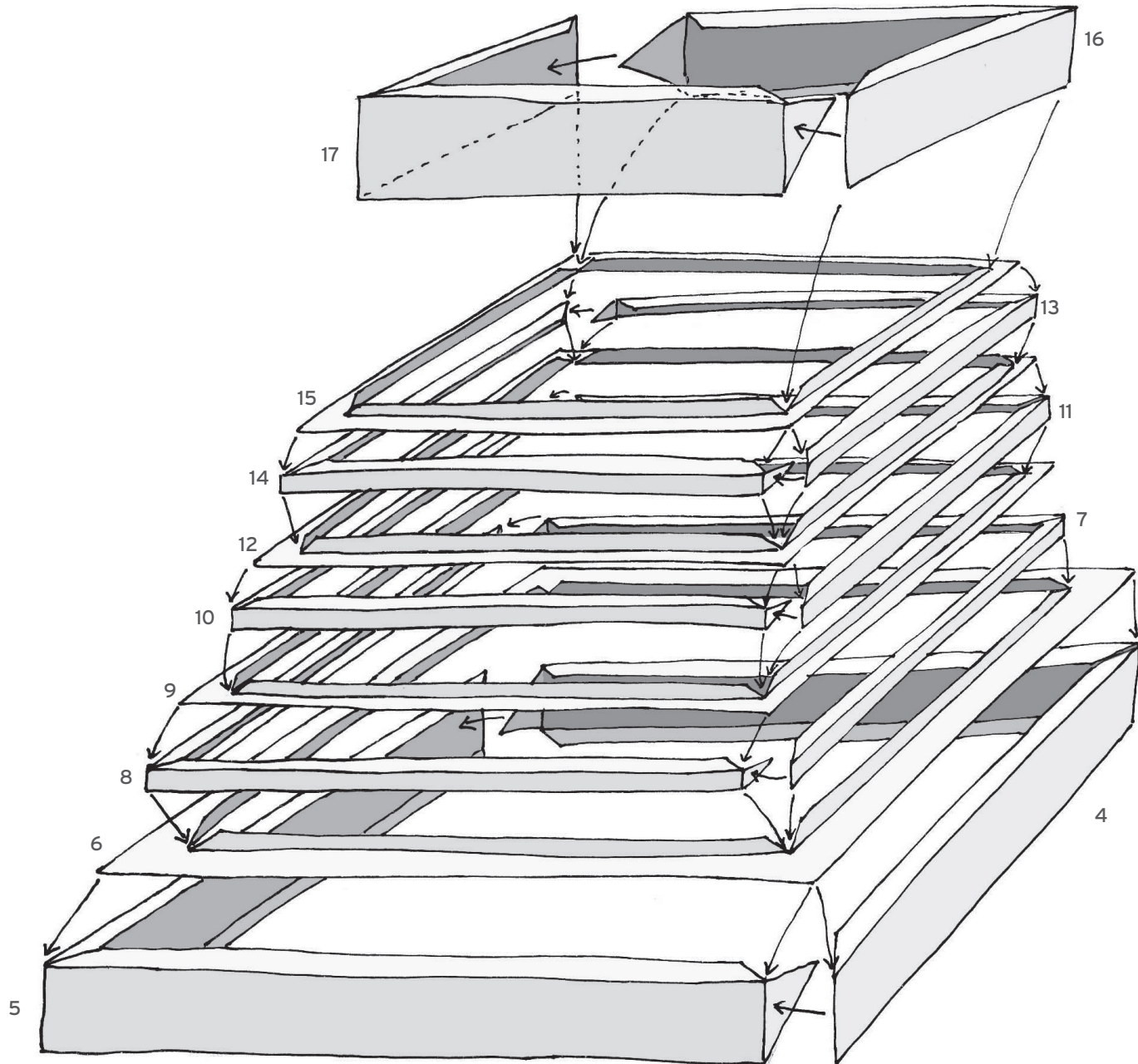




4. Install the inner room into the lower section.  
Then [jump to 7](#).



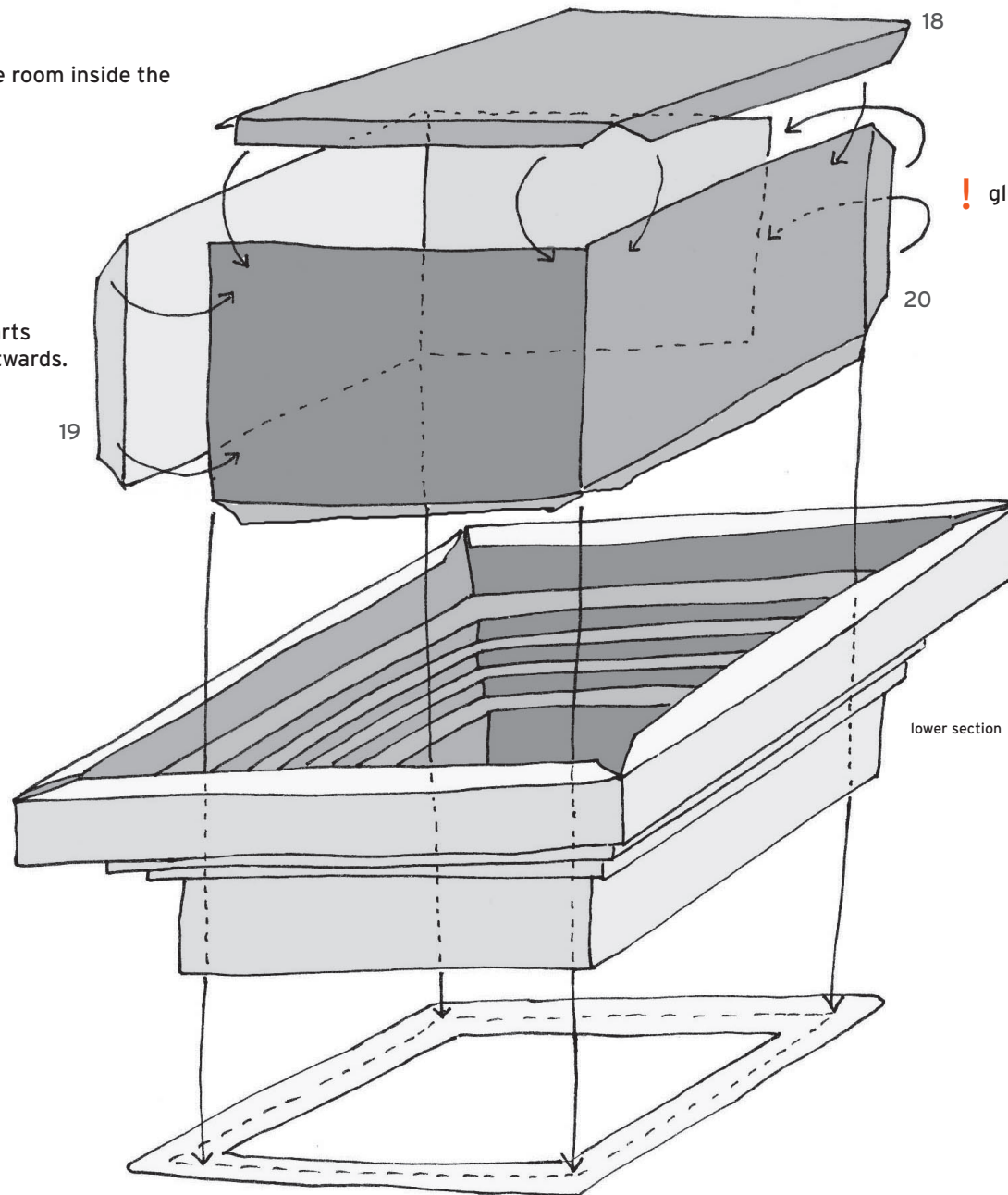
5. Build the lower section.



6. Build the inner room, then install the room inside the lower section.

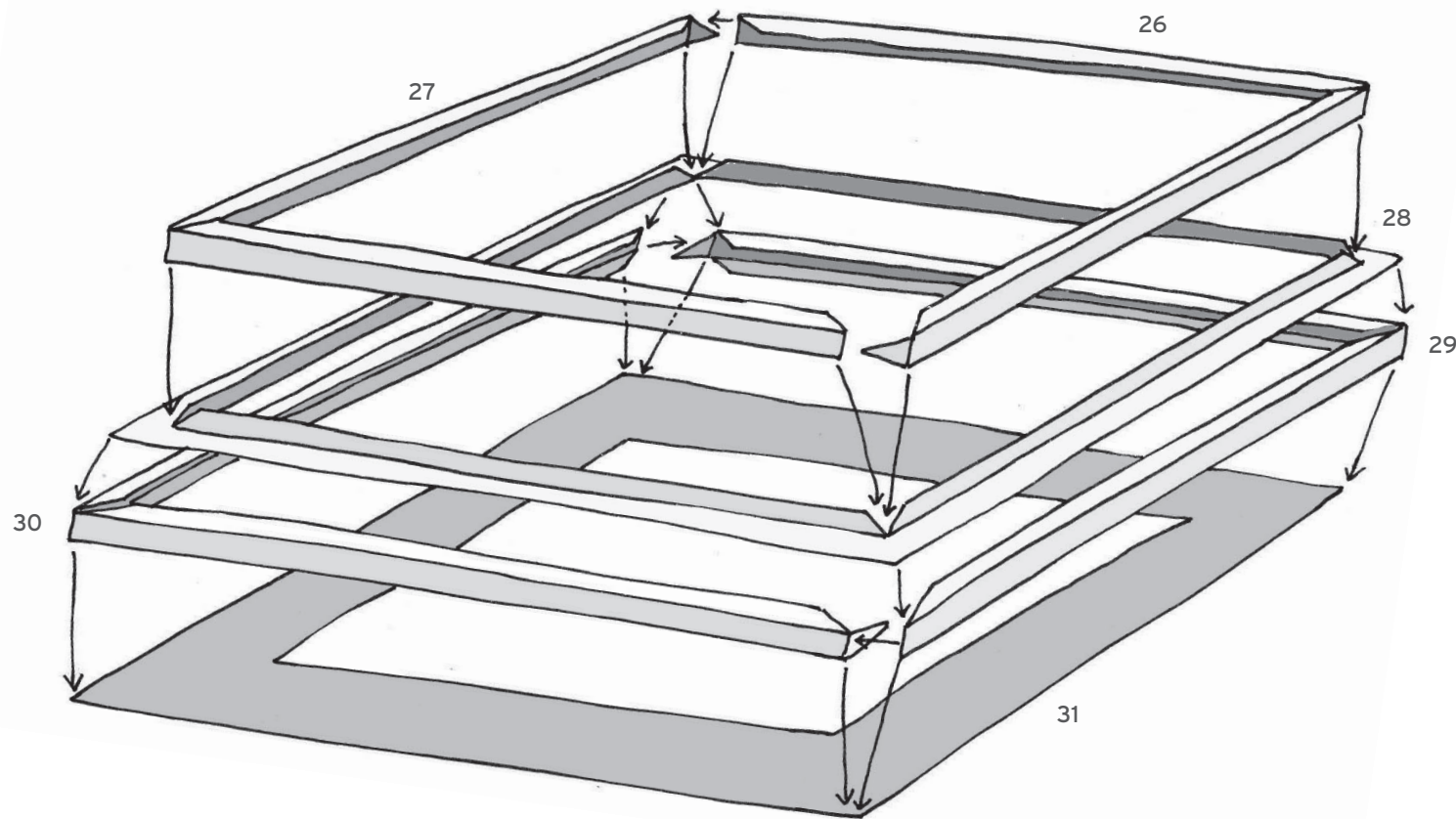
! The printed side of these parts should face inwards, not outwards.

! glue tabs are glued on from outside.

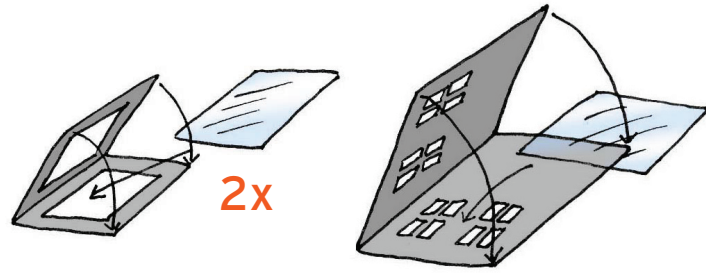




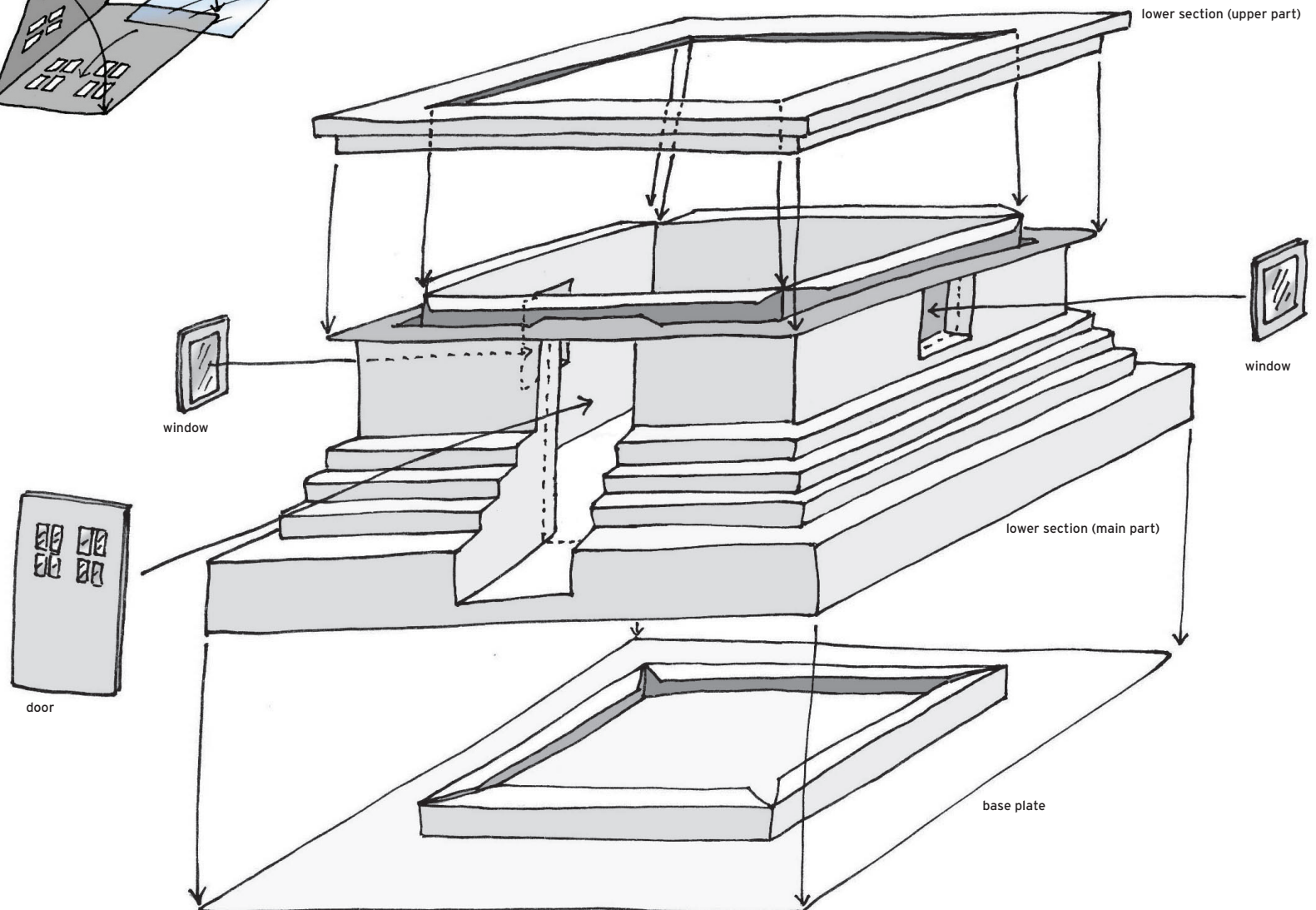
7. Build the upper part of the lower section.  
If you are **not** building the **version with door and windows**, jump to 10.



8. glue transparent foil into windows and door.

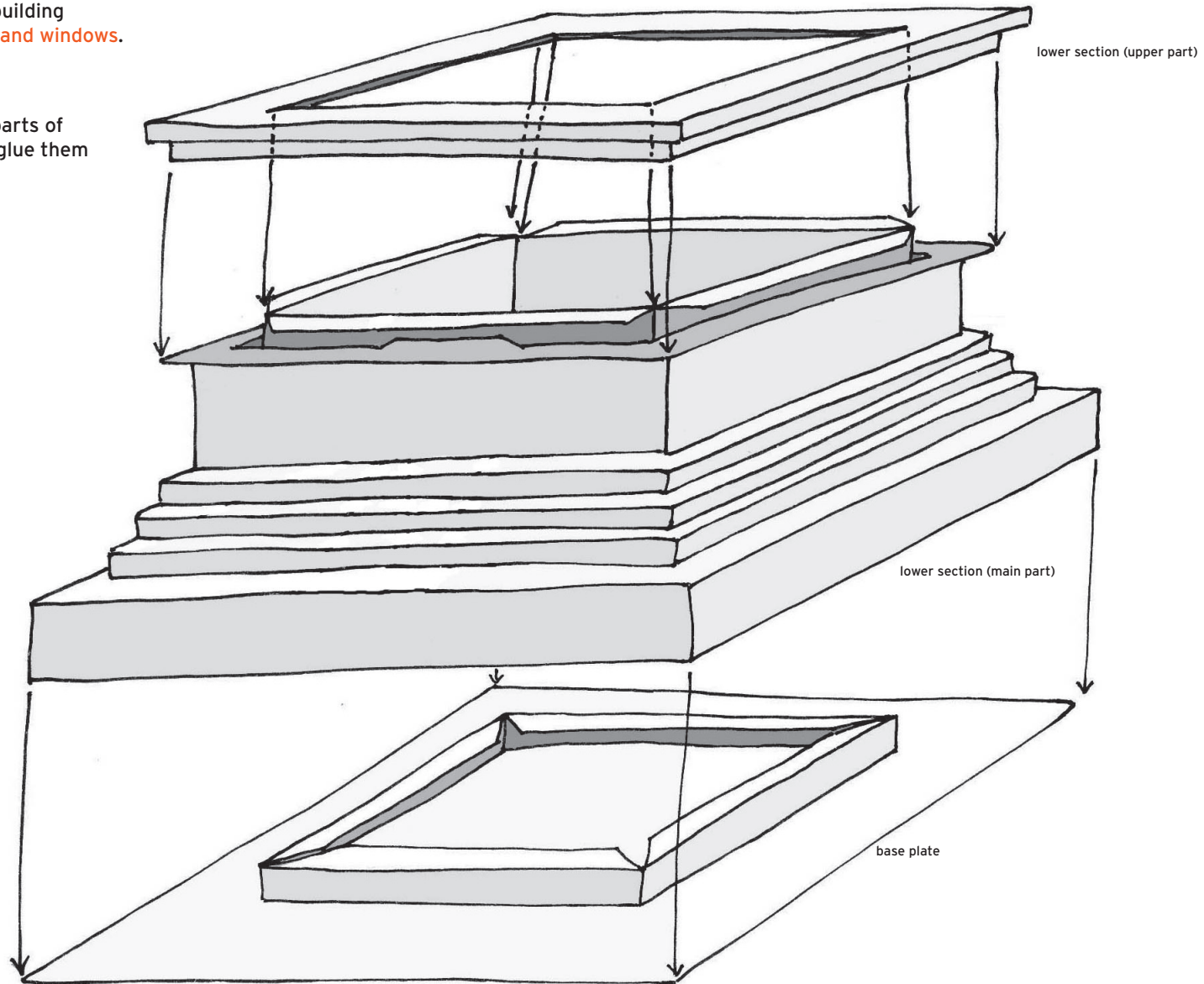


9. Glue together the parts of the lower section, glue them on the base plate, install the windows and door into the recesses.



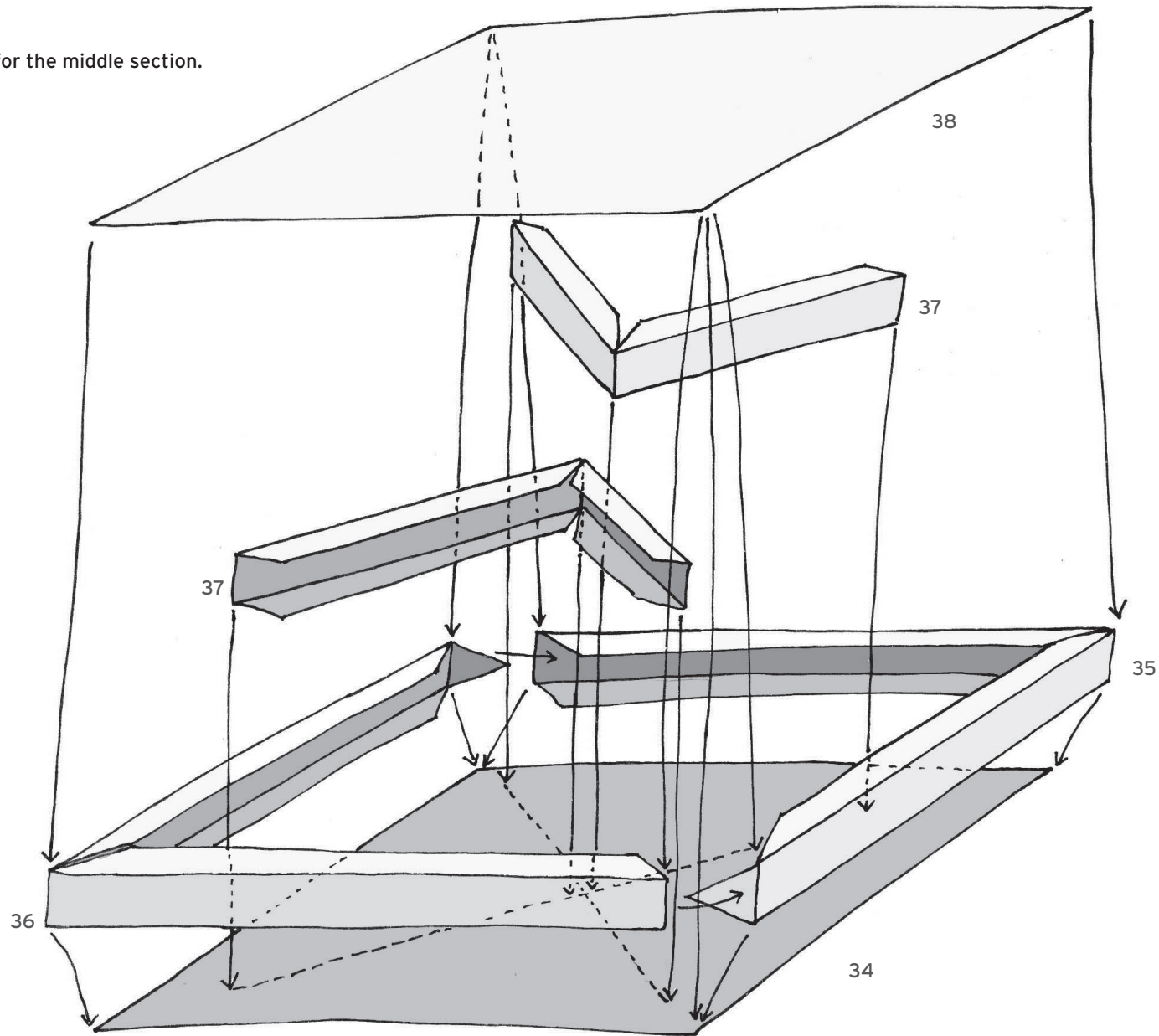
Ignore this step when building the Version with doors and windows.

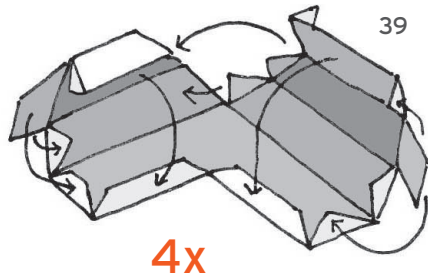
10. Glue together the parts of the lower section and glue them on the base plate.



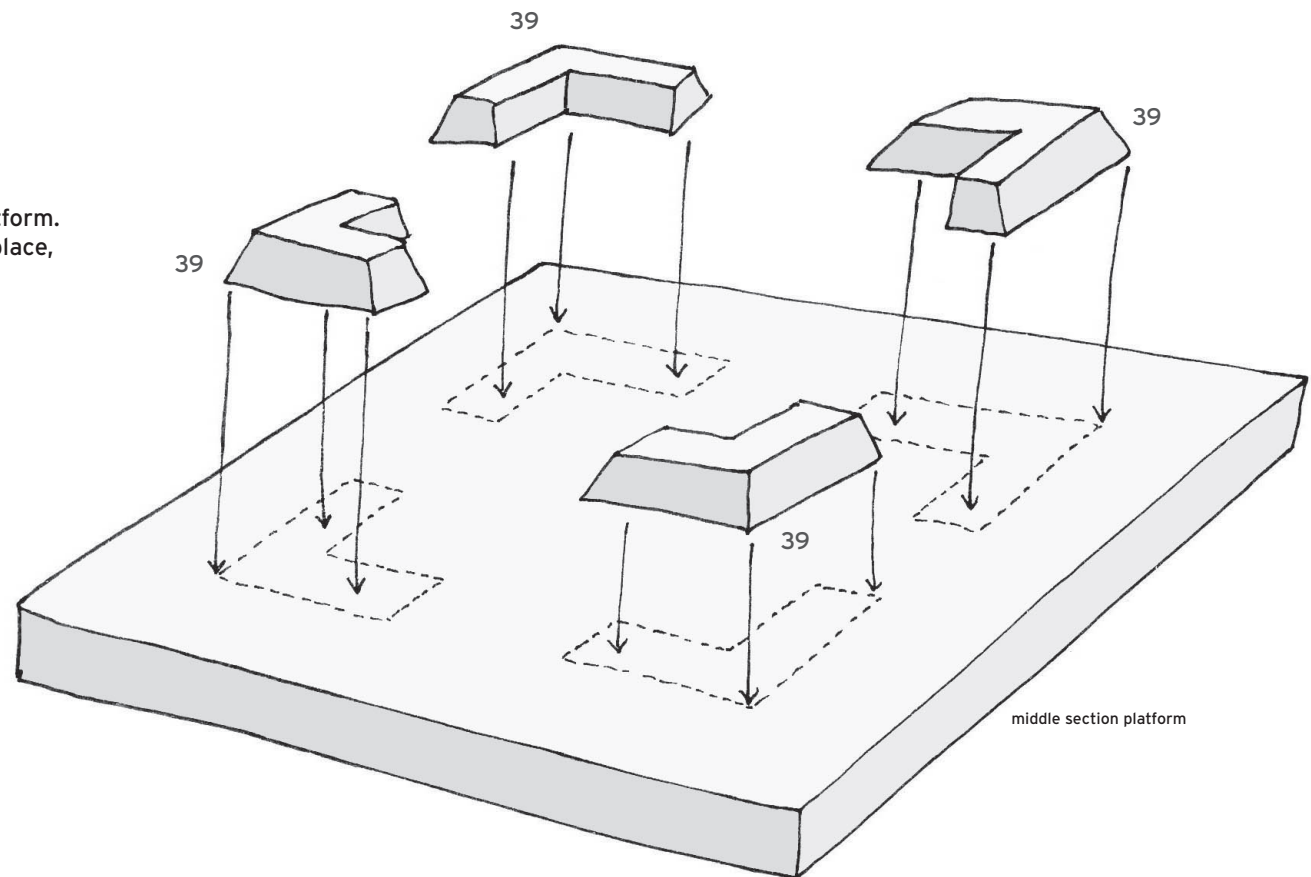


11. Build the platform for the middle section.

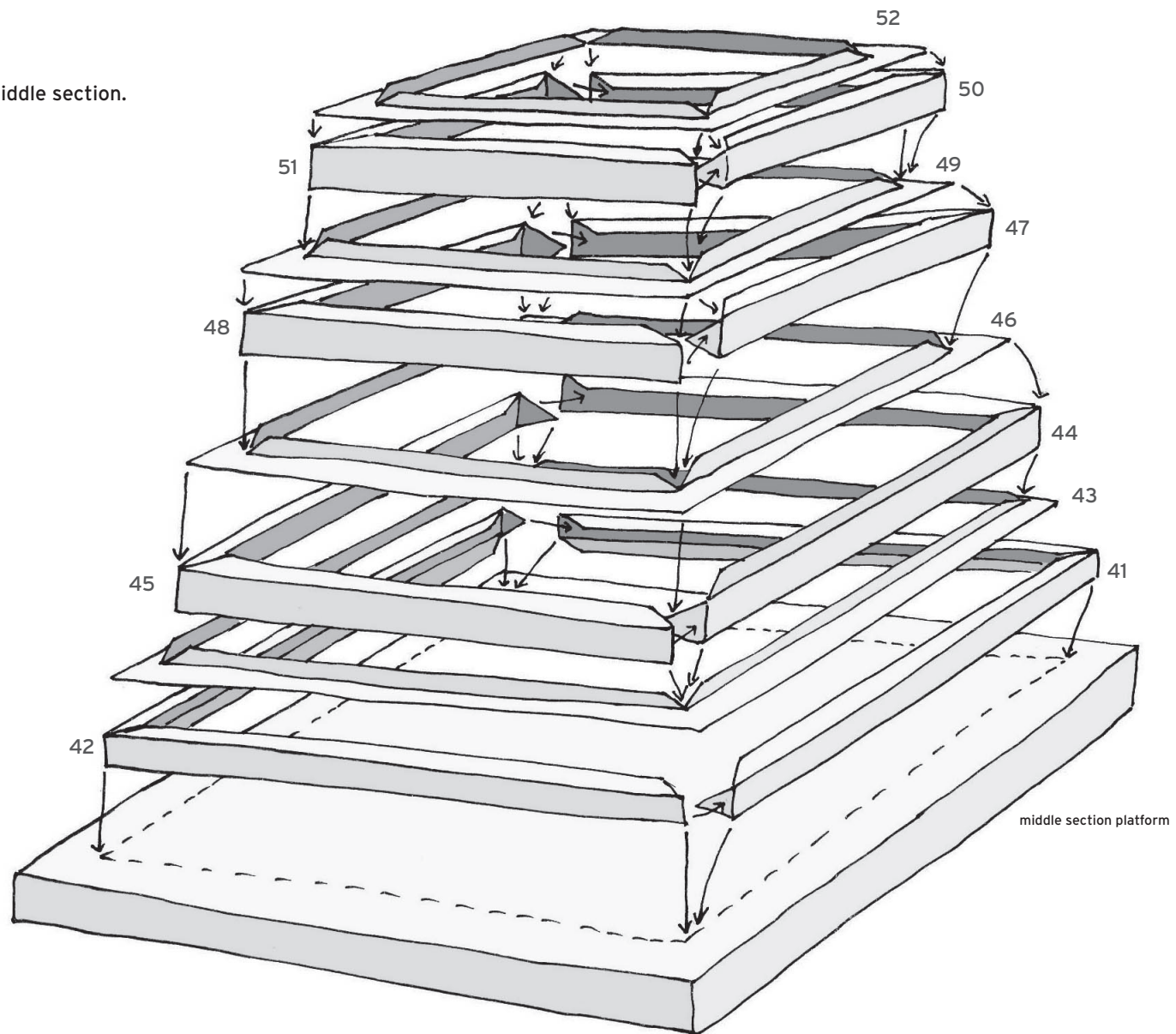




12. Build the corners for the lower side of the platform. These are to hold the upper part of the Stupa in place, so the upper part can be used as a lid.

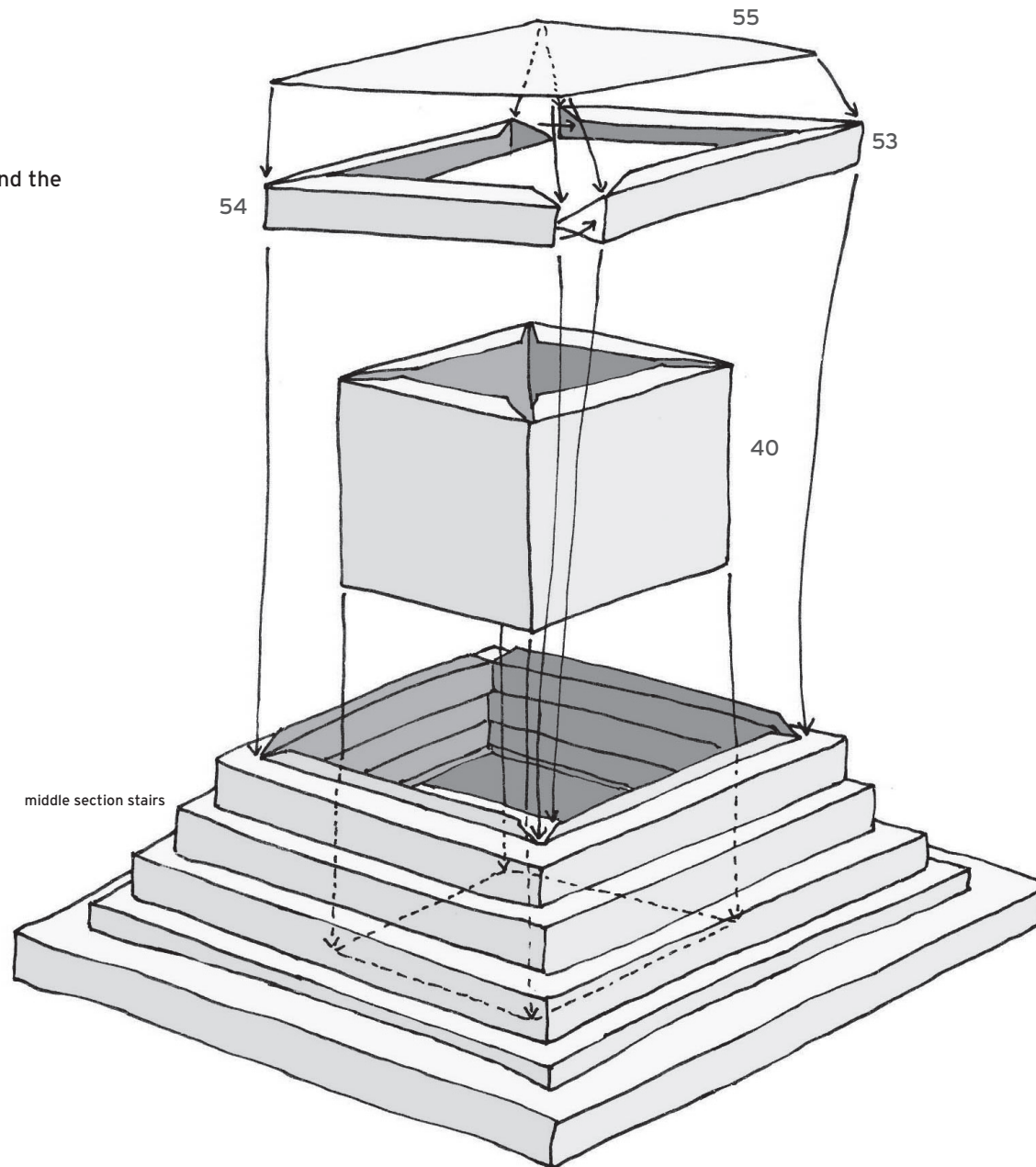


13. Build the steps of the middle section.



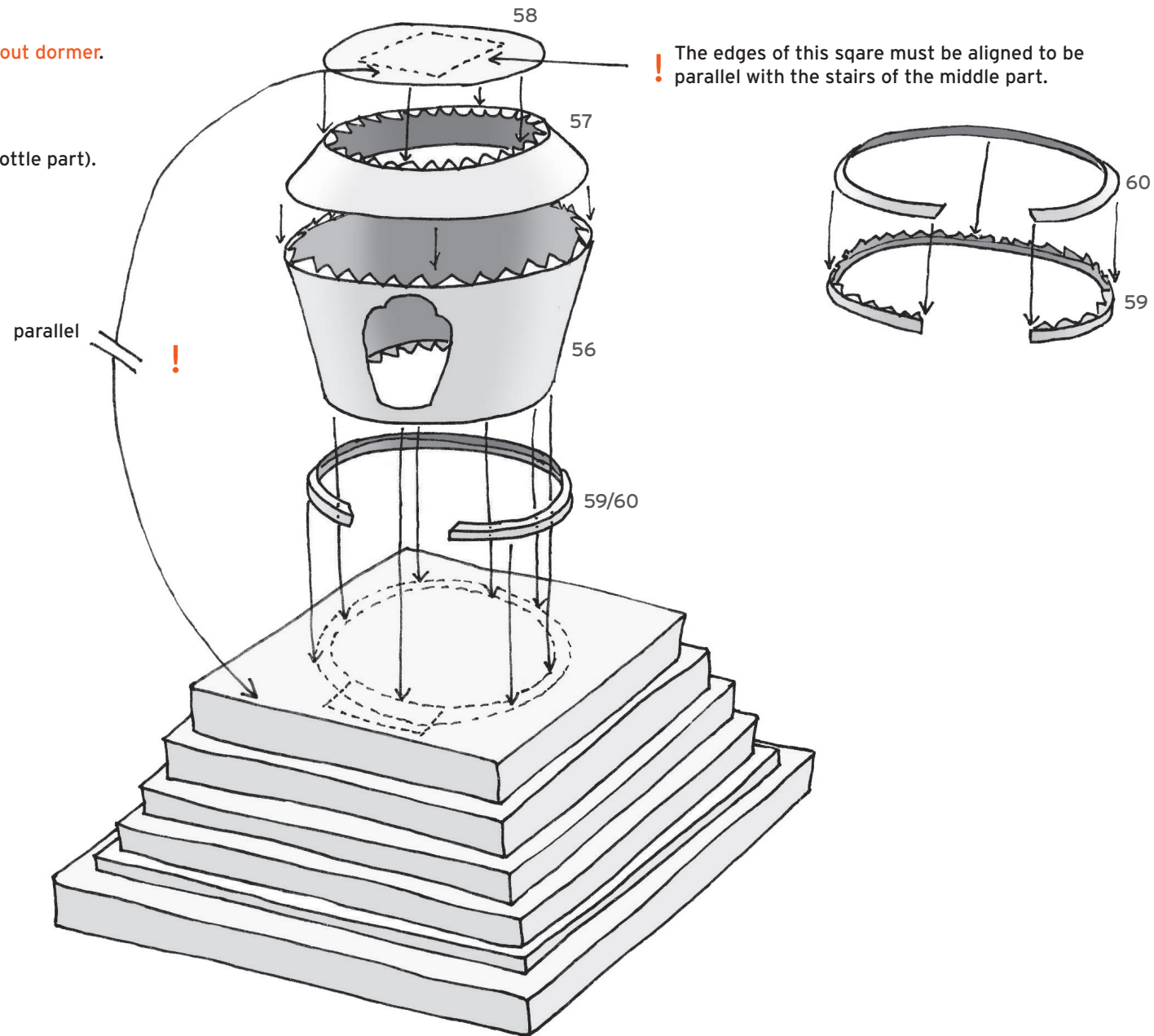


14. Add the top internal support wall and the top step.

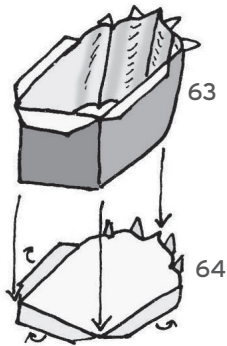


If you are building the **Version without dormer**,  
jump to 21.

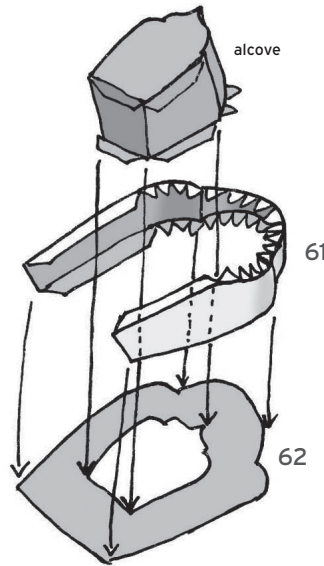
15. Build the bumpa (the rounded bottle part).



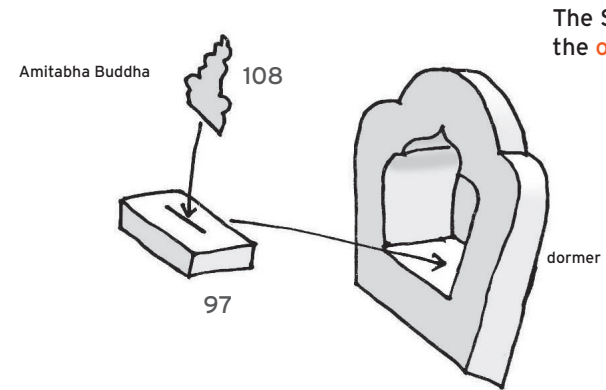
16. Build the alcove.



17. Build the rest of the dormer.

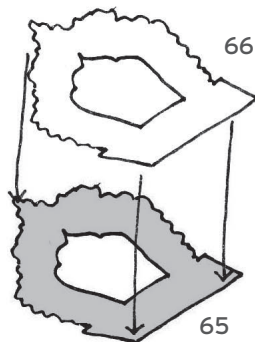


18. Place the Buddha Statue in the alcove.



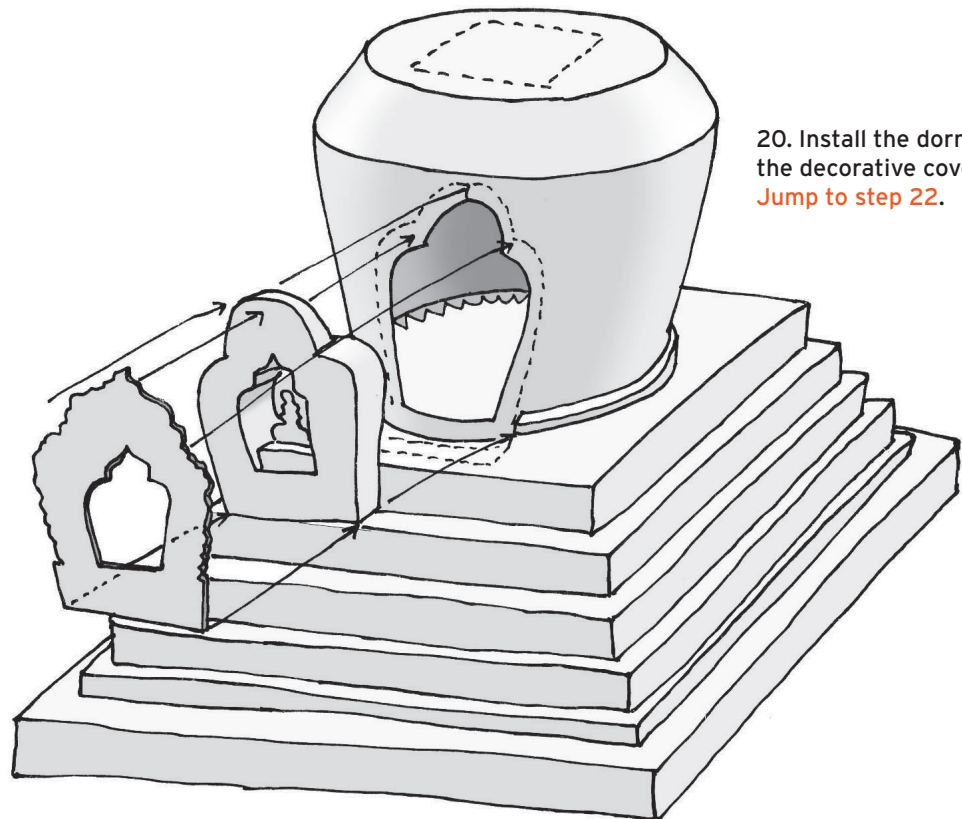
The Statue is optional on the **ornamented version**.

19. Glue together the decorative cover



These parts look slightly different on the **ornamented version**, but are built the same.

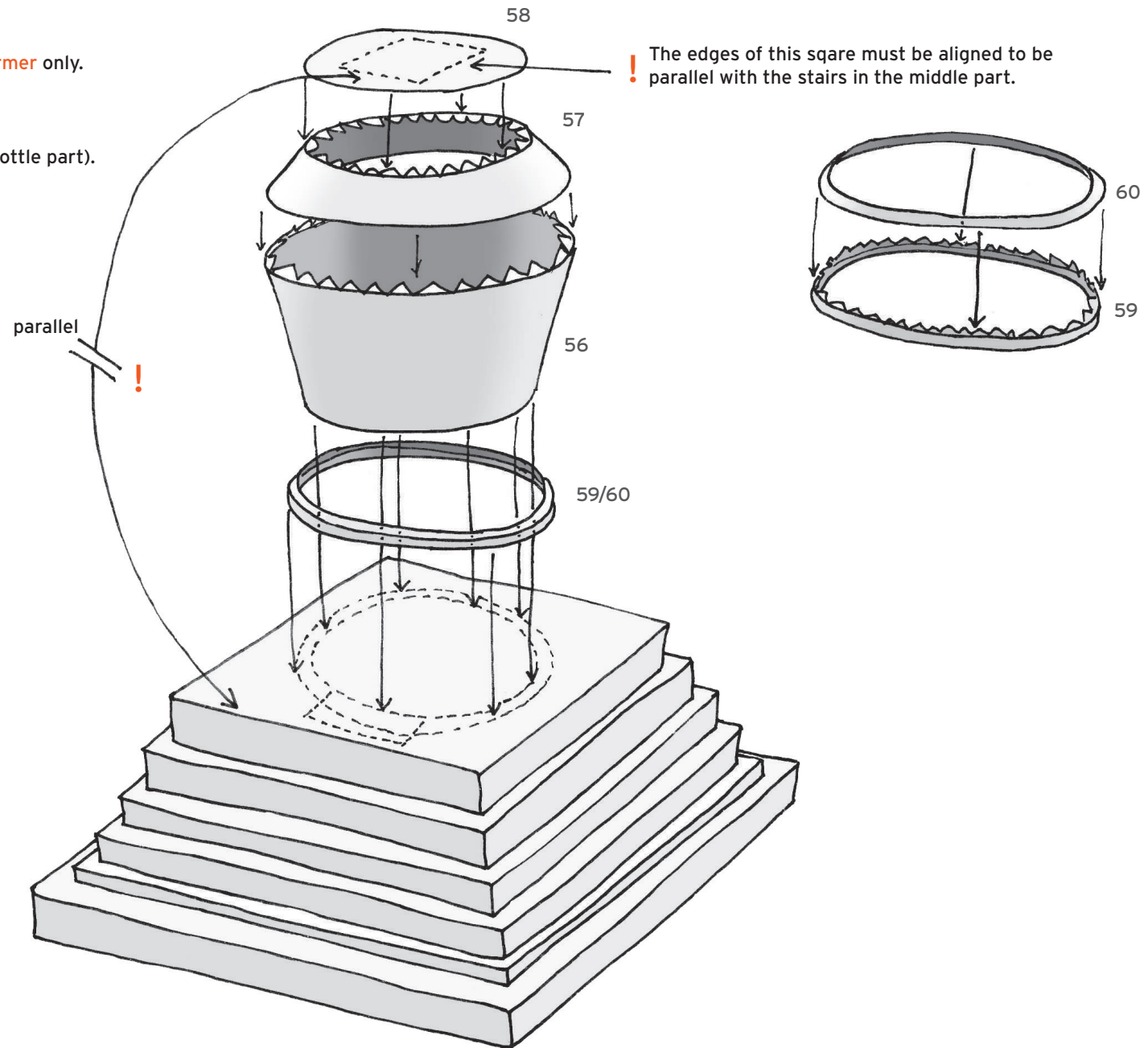
20. Install the dormer and the decorative cover.  
**Jump to step 22.**



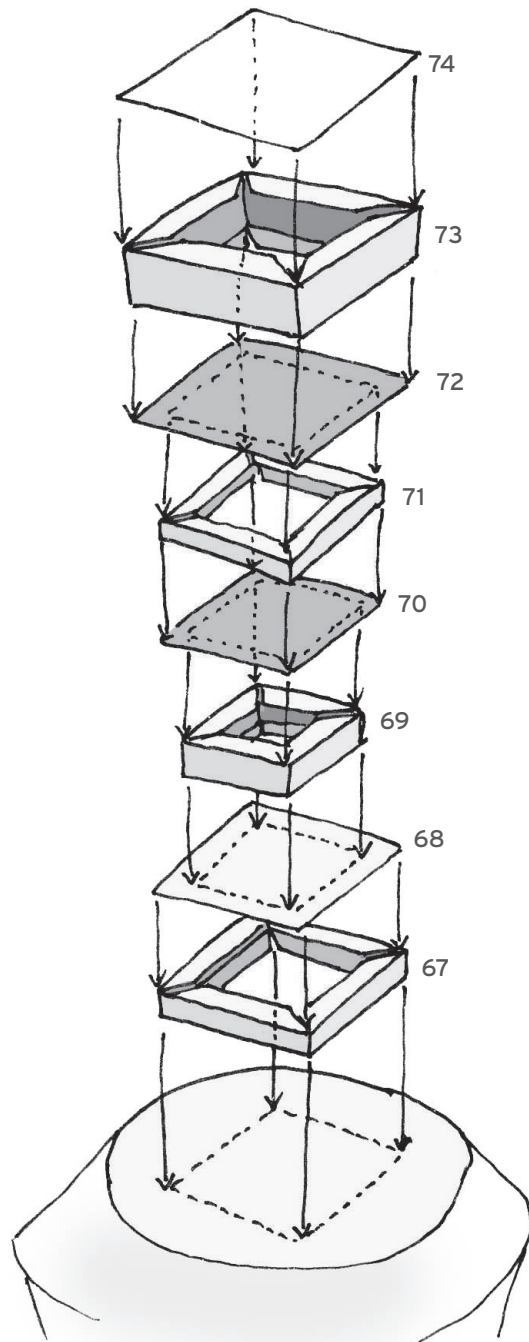


This step is for **Version without dormer** only.

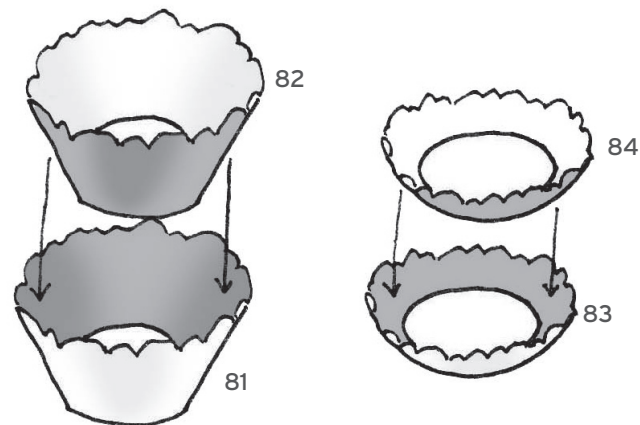
21. Build the bumpa (the rounded bottle part).



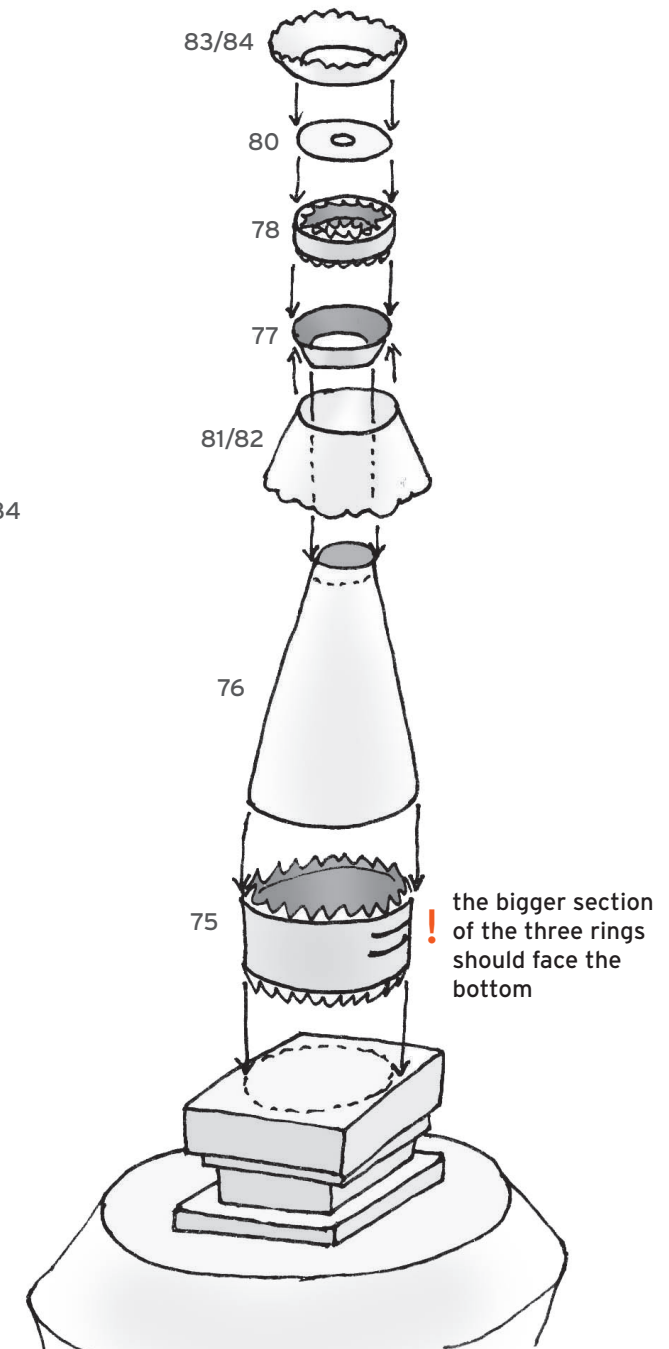
22. Build the harmika (head) part.



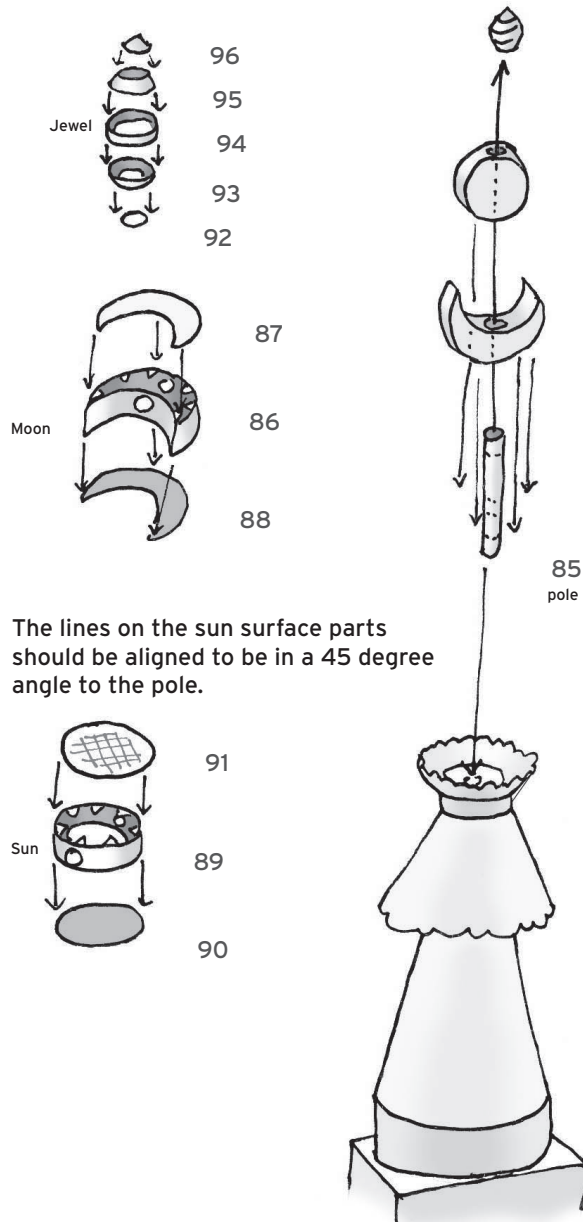
23. Build the two crown rings.



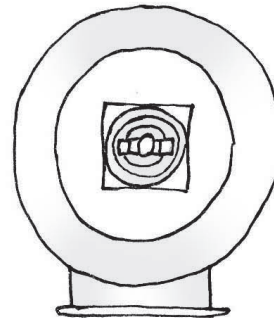
24. Build the upper section.



25. Build the sun, moon and jewel.  
Glue the pole through them and  
add the pole on the top of the stupa.



The sun and moon should be parallel to each other and parallel to the harmika and the dormer.



26. The middle and upper section can now be loosely placed on the lower section.

This step is the same for all versions.

