Finding the Volume of an Object

How do you find the volume of a regularly shaped object?

When an object is regular, you can figure out the amount of space it takes up pretty easily. You measure a regular shaped object using cm rulers. To find the volume, you measure the length, width, and height of the object, and multiple them together. (With an object that is fairly regular but has concave sections, you can figure out what it would be without the concave sections, figure out the area of the concave sections, subtract them and come up with the volume.)

How do you find the volume of irregularly shaped objects?

To find the volume of an irregularly shaped object you can put it in a graduated cylinder or beaker, and note the change in the water level before and after the object is submerged. Demonstrate this for the students.

To find out how many milliliters of water the object displaces, put the object in the beaker or cylinder. If it's a sinking object, drop it in, and then measure the amount of water the object displaces in an overflow container, or how many milliliters the water in a graduated cylinder rises. If the object floats, hold it just under the surface of the water and make the same measurements. Demonstrate each case for the students. An irregularly shaped object *must* be measured by the water displacement method.