

POTTERY NOTES:

EXTRA NOTES

AIR DRIED CLAY

Although not ceramic, it's worth considering air dried clay for projects where a kiln is not available. It's easy to purchase and you don't need any special equipment to use it. There are different brands and they vary greatly in their consistency.

You can use air dry clay to sculpt, roll, mold and even throw it on a wheel. It won't behave in the same way as regular clay, however with some experimentation you can get great results.

Benefits: It doesn't shrink... you can embed objects... you can achieve things not possible with fired clay.

The downsides: It won't be fully functional, as durable or waterproof as a ceramic object.

Here are some hints for using air dried clay that might make the process easier:

1. DON'T USE TOO MUCH WATER

You can use water on a sponge or your fingers to smooth the clay, however don't use too much water as your work may become slimy, making it harder to work with.

2. DRY YOUR WORK SLOWLY

Dry your pieces slowly. Drying too quickly can make your pieces crack.

3. COVER YOUR WORK BETWEEN MAKING

Use a damp cloth over your project and then cover with a plastic bag. This prevents your clay drying out. You can then continue working as you please.

4. DON'T MAKE YOUR WORK TOO THIN

Clay that is too thin is more likely to crack. If you do make fine work, dry it slowly.

5. ADDING AND JOINING CLAY

When joining clay, use the usual process. Score both surfaces of the clay and apply slip. Join them together using your finger or another sculpting tool. This ensures a strong bond which is less likely to crack or break.

6. COLORING AIR DRY CLAY

You can color air dry clay with food coloring. Add the required amount of coloring and work into the clay. Use gloves so your hands don't become stained!

7. PAINTING AND SEALING

You can paint your clay pieces with acrylic paint once they are dry. You can also seal your clay piece to make it water resistant. A sealer such as modpodge will make your work more durable.