



Cheat Sheet

Slab Pot

School Name:
Teachers Name:
Ceramics and Pottery I
Grades 6 - 12
[Dates]



project #3

SLAB POTS

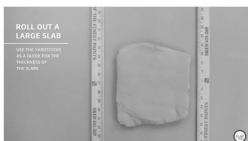
BUILDING THE POT

TOOLS

TOOLS

Tools:

- 3" x 5" Note Card
- 4" x 6" Note Card
- Rolling Pin
- 2 Yard Sticks (or Planks of Wood)
Thickness of yard sticks (or wood planks) determine the thickness of the slabs
- Paint Brush
- Wooden Paddle
- Slip
- Serrated Rib
- Round Rib
- Needle Tool
- Popsicle Stick
- Fettling Knife



ROLL A SLAB USING THE YARD STICKS TO HELP DETERMINE THE THICKNESS

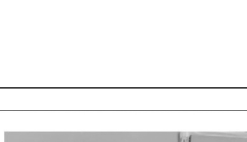
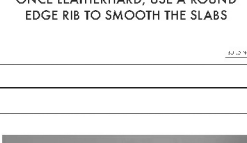
Sticks and a rolling pin work great if there is no slab roller available. The sticks need to be the correct thickness for your project. In this case they are approximately 1/4" thick. Encourage students to flip and turn the slab as they roll especially if they are working on a formica surface. Clay sticks to any non-porous surface but as long as students keep moving the clay it will work fine.



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 CUT OUT 4 WALLS USE THE 3" x 5" OR 4" x 6" NOTECARD TO INTERFERE THE SIDE OF THE WALLS USE THE 3" x 5" OR 4" x 6" NOTECARD TO TRACE & CUT OUT 4 WALLS	Before students start their project they should smooth both sides of the slab. Starting with a smooth slab means less clean up later. Students need to cut out four side walls. An index card works well as a template. Students will need to have a top and base. They can cut these out now or at a later time.
 LAY OUT SLABS ON PAPER ALLOW SLABS TO DRY ON A PAPER FOR A FEW HOURS WRAP IN PLASTIC TO HELP THE DRYING PROCESS STORE THE SLABS ON NEWSPAPER. THIS ALLOWS THEM TO FIRM UP A BIT	Place the slabs side by side on newspaper. The newspaper will wick away part of the moisture from the clay leaving it stiffer. This is a good time to store work for the next class. These “packets” can be stacked on each other for easy storage. It is important to pay attention to how much paper is in the bag – using more newspaper dries slabs quicker.
 LEATHERHARD SLABS ONCE YOUR SLABS HAVE FIRMED UP, YOU SHOULD HAVE THEM TO HAVE A LITTLE BEND IDEAL SLABS WILL BE FIRM BUT STILL HAVE A LITTLE BEND TO THEM	When students unpack their slabs they need to check to see if they are ready to use. If students can hold the slab by the corner and it doesn't slump over it is usually ready to use. An easier way to check is to gently bend to see if it has some flex. If slabs are too wet they can be dried with a hair dryer, fan, or setting it outside for a few minutes. Moving air dries clay better than heat. If slabs are too dry, students must re-moisten them. Squirting with water may be their first instinct but that does not really make the clay moist. It is best to have students wrap their stiff slabs with wet newspaper or paper towels. The more newspaper or paper towels and the wetter they are, the faster the clay will soften. Remind them to keep an eye on it – it only takes a few minutes.
 SMOOTH SLABS ONCE THE SLABS ARE LEATHER HARD, USE A ROUND EDGE RIB TO SMOOTH THE SLABS ONCE LEATHERHARD, USE A ROUND EDGE RIB TO SMOOTH THE SLABS	It's a good idea to smooth both sides of each slab and to re-trim them. Now that the slabs are stiffer students will get a better cut. If a student cuts one slab slightly smaller than the rest, they can cut all slabs to the size of the smallest one. It doesn't matter if the slabs are slightly smaller than their index card as long as all slabs are the same size before they begin.
 BEVEL SLAB EDGES ON THE LONG SIDE OF THE SLAB, USE A FETTLING KNIFE TO CUT THE LONG EDGES OF THE SLAB AT A 45° ANGLE CUT THE LONGEST SIDES OF THE SLABS AT AN ANGLE	Have students use a fettling knife (shown in the video), carving tool, or other similar tool to cut a 45 degree bevel on the long side of their slab. Moving the slab to the edge of the table and using it as a guide will aide your students. They may still ask “How can I tell it is exactly a 45 degree angle?” – As long as they cut an angle they can usually score it well and make it work. Remind them to cut the angles on the long side of their rectangle. If they cut the shorter sides it will work but it creates a large top and base which is sometimes hard for them to construct.



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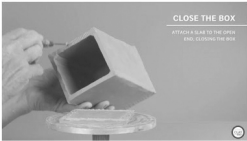
 SCORE & SLIP ATTACH THE BEVELED EDGES OF 2 SLABS BY SCORING & SLIPPING SCORE & SLIP THE BEVELED EDGES OF 2 SLABS THEN ATTACH ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE WATSON	It is very important that students score these cuts well because the clay is slightly drier and does not want to bond as easily. Some potters use vinegar or vinegar mixed in with their slip. Since vinegar is a mild acid it will quickly soften the clay so it will bond securely. Slip should work fine if the clay is not too dry.
 JOIN THE SEAMS FOR REINFORCEMENT, ADD A SMALL COIL INTO THE SEAM JOIN THE INSIDE SEAM WITH A SMALL COIL ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE WATSON	Slab pots need to have coils added to the inside of every seam. This will ensure seams stay together throughout the process. It is difficult to get a pin tool inside to score, but any scoring they can do will help the coil attach. Students can pick up their work to attach the coil from both ends.
 ATTACH THE 2 REMAINING SLABS FOR REINFORCEMENT, ADD A SMALL COIL INTO THE SEAM ATTACH THE OTHER 2 SLABS AND JOIN THE SEAMS WITH SMALL COILS ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE WATSON	Once the four walls are assembled students need to cut and prepare a slab for the top and base (if they did not do this earlier). This is another good place to stop. They can wrap the four assembled walls in one plastic bag and the two smaller top and base slabs in another (place these on newspaper if the clay needs to stiffen).
 CUT OUT A BASE SLAB FOR REINFORCEMENT, ADD A SMALL COIL INTO THE SEAM TRACE & CUT OUT A BASE SLAB ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE WATSON	Smooth the base slab, then place the four assembled walls on it. Trace around the outside of the four walls onto the base slab. Have students note which walls meet which side of the floor before they remove the pot, so they can assemble their pot with the sides matching the floor. This is important because student work is not always square and sometimes only fits one way. It is better if students trace around their pot, remove it, and then cut, rather than place the pot on the base slab and cut around it. Cutting with the pot left on the base usually results in an uneven cut which will distort the shape of the pot.
 SCORE & SLIP BASE FOR REINFORCEMENT, ADD A SMALL COIL INTO THE SEAM SCORE & SLIP THE BASE SLAB THEN STITCH THE BASE AND BOX TOGETHER ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE WATSON	Score and slip the base to the four walls. Once the base is firmly attached, students need to score and add another coil on the inside. Roll a small coil, dip it in slip and drop it into the bottom. The coil can be moved to where it belongs and smoothed in. If they can't get their hand in to smooth the coil they can use a popsicle stick. They can clean the inside better at a later time after they have cut the lid off.



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 CLOSE THE BOX ATTACH A SLAB TO THE OTHER SIDE, CLOSING THE BOX CUT OUT ANOTHER SLAB, SCORE & SUE, THEN STITCH THE SEAMS THUS CLOSING THE BOX 11.2 10.4 14.5 501	Students should repeat the last step on the opposite side to close up the box. Obviously they will not be able to place a coil on the inside of this seam. Leave it for now.
 WRAP UP STORE YOUR WORK IN PLASTIC WRAP THE NOW CLOSED BOX IN PLASTIC SO THE CONNECTIONS CAN MARRY OVER NIGHT 11.2 10.4 14.5 501	This is a good time to stop and wrap the box until the next class. The joined seams will have time to create a stronger connection.
 CLEAN THE EDGES ONLY THE BOX HAS FORMED UP, THE SEAMS HAVE NOT YET CURED THE CORNER OF THE BOX CLEAN UP THE SIDES WITH A ROUNDED RIB THEN LIGHTLY PADDLE THE SIDES TO CREATE AN EVEN SURFACE 11.2 10.4 14.5 501	Once the top and base are attached and the air is trapped inside, it is time to clean the exterior. The first step is to scrape away extra clay at all of the corners. Once that is done use a paddle to gently tap along every seam. Students should not paddle the entire pot because it will leave creases they have to smooth out. Just a couple of light taps at every corner will clean and straighten them. Take some time with this part because it will make their work look great. You want them to do all the clean up before they cut it open.
 MAKE THE LID THE YARDSTICK IS USED TO TRACE A LID AROUND THE TOP OF THE BOX USING THE YARDSTICK, TRACE A LID AROUND THE TOP OF THE BOX THEN CREATE A KEY 11.2 10.4 14.5 501	Before students cut their project open they can turn it upright or long way on its side (put the worst side to the bottom). A ruler helps students mark a straight line and keeps them from cutting too close to the top. One side should have a “key”, a change in the cut that is a quick reference to how the top and bottom fit together.
 CUT OPEN THE LID THE FETTLING KNIFE IS USED TO CUT ALONG THE MARKED LINES TO CUT OFF THE LID USE A FETTLING KNIFE TO CUT OPEN THE LID 11.2 10.4 14.5 501	Have students use a fettling knife to cut along their marked lines to cut off the lid. Now they should be able to get their hands inside to clean up and add the last coil.



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 CREATE THE FLANGE Cut strips of clay from a slab about the width of a wide popsicle stick (a ruler is too wide). Let the clay stiffen slightly before cutting the strips to fit the inside of the lid. Attach the flange all around the lid. If students are confused by the side with the key, they can skip placing a flange on this side. Three sides will still keep the lid from slipping. After the flange is attached, bend it in slightly for it will help the lid go on easier. CREATE FLANGES USING SMALL SLAB STRIPS, THEN SLIP & SCORE THEM TO THE INTERIOR WALLS OF THE LID EE-2-10 AT-AS-101	You will notice that even with the key, the lid no longer wants to stay on the pot. It will slip around and may fall off. To rectify this, students should add a flange. Make the flange by cutting strips of clay from a slab about the width of a wide popsicle stick (a ruler is too wide). Let the clay stiffen slightly before cutting the strips to fit the inside of the lid. Attach the flange all around the lid. If students are confused by the side with the key, they can skip placing a flange on this side. Three sides will still keep the lid from slipping. After the flange is attached, bend it in slightly for it will help the lid go on easier.
project #3 SLAB POTS UNDERGLAZING SLP	
 3 COATS OF UNDERGLAZE Sponge on three coats of the lightest value underglaze on two sides and the top. Let dry between coats and before the next step. SPONGE ON 3 COATS OF A BASE UNDERGLAZE ON 2 SIDES AND THE TOP OF THE LID SLP-101-102-102-101	Students need to select three colors of underglaze: a light, medium, and dark value. They will be applying them in this order to create their design. This can also be limited to two colors if necessary. Sponge on three coats of the lightest value underglaze on two sides and the top. Let dry between coats and before the next step. We used V-325 Baby Blue as the base color on this piece. TIP: AMACO Velvets offer a variety of colors with a nice, velvety finish. The Velvets fire true-to-color as a Cone 05/06 underglaze or fired to Cone 6. Some colors remain true as high as Cone 10.
 CUT OUT STENCILS FROM NEWSPAPER BASED OFF A DESIGN OF YOUR CHOICE LIGHTLY DAMPEN THE STENCILS SO THEY ADHERE TO THE POT SLP-101-102-102-101	Spend time cutting out paper stencils with students. You may want to work on the paper stencils before they add color to their project. This is a good time to talk about motif, repetition, and pattern. This may become a design project for student journals. It is important to cut out shapes that relate and are a variety of sizes. How many to cut? Have them cut out more than they think they will need because it is easier to cut them all now than later. Once the first color is dry to the touch, dip the newspaper in water, shake off the extra water, and apply to the surface.



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AFTER APPLYING THE FIRST LAYER OF STENCILS, SPONGE ON 2 COATS OF A SECOND UNDERGLAZE.

While the newspaper is still wet sponge on the second color. Let dry then apply a second coat.

We used V-343 Chartreuse as the second color on this piece.

TIP: AMACO Velvets offer a variety of colors with a nice, velvety finish. The Velvets fire true-to-color as a Cone 05/06 underglaze or fired to Cone 6. Some colors remain true as high as Cone 10.



APPLY ANOTHER LAYER OF LIGHTLY DAMPENED STENCILS TO CREATE FOR EXTRA DETAIL

When the second color is dry to the touch, dip more newspaper shapes into the water, shake off the excess, then apply to the surface.



APPLY 1 COAT OF THE FINAL UNDERGLAZE

While the newspaper is still moist, sponge on the last (darkest) color of underglaze. Apply only one coat of this color.

We used V-332 Teal Blue as the final color on this piece.

TIP: AMACO Velvets offer a variety of colors with a nice, velvety finish. The Velvets fire true-to-color as a Cone 05/06 underglaze or fired to Cone 6. Some colors remain true as high as Cone 10.



ONCE THE FINAL COAT IS DRY TO THE TOUCH, CAREFULLY REMOVE THE STENCILS

Carefully remove all the newspaper before the last coat of underglaze dries. Dried newspaper is difficult if not impossible to remove.

SUGGESTION: If this doesn't work with your class schedule you may want to have students apply wet newspaper, sponge on a color and then remove the newspaper. The next class they can use other shapes and another color. The project will look different than what is pictured on this video so practice the technique before doing it with all your students.



ONCE ALL THE STENCILS ARE REMOVED, ALLOW THE POT TO DRY, THEN BISQUE FIRE TO CONE 04 & GLAZE

Once all the stencils are removed students can clean the edges with a scraper or clean-up tool. After projects are bisque fired, apply a clear glaze to the underglaze patterns and a colored glaze to the un-coated sides.

Be VERY careful that students do not glaze where the lid and box touch or they will never get them apart after the glaze firing.



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