

Ceramics Vocabulary

Mrs.Estoch

Tools

Cutting tools: Needle tool, wire, Wood ends angled for cutting.

Shaping tools: Wood and metal kidney, rounded wood tools, throwing stick.

Bat. A thin slab of wood, plaster, or plastic used to support pottery forms during throwing, attached to the head of the potter's wheel by clay body or "bat pins"

Calipers, A tool used to measure and ensure that thrown pots are of uniform size or shape.

Kidney A kidney-shaped tool made of flexible steel for finishing thrown pots, or made of stiff rubber for pressing and smoothing clay in a mould.

Pottery Terms

Plastic Clay is clay that is wet and pliable for forming pieces of pottery

Leather Hard clay is still wet but not plastic. At this stage it can be trimmed or scored and slip joints together. The condition of a clay or clay body when it has been partially dried to the point where all shrinkage has been completed.

Burnishing The ancient rubbing process of burnishing polishes the outside skin of a clay pot while greatly reducing its porosity. This finishing is done by hand, using a stone or a metal piece.

Body. The structural portion of a ceramic article, or the material or mixture from which it is made.

Bone-dry The final stage of **greenware** dried to a completely dry state and ready to be fired. In this stage, the clay is very fragile, non-plastic and porous.

Chuck - A piece used to aid the potter in trimming. A chuck is a form that can hold a pot upside-down above the wheel head while the potter trims it. Chucks are thrown and bisque fired clay cylinders which are open on both sides.

Clay - Alumina + silica + water.

Coiling A hand method of forming pottery by building up the walls with coils of rope-like rolls of clay

Greenware. Unfired clay articles

Slip A suspension of clay, clay body or glaze in water.

Throwing The term used when referring to forming or shaping on a potter's wheel.

Glazing Terms

Crazing. A glaze fault, cracking of fired glazes and due to high tensile stresses. Can be caused by cooling a fired piece too quickly.

Dipping. Glazing pottery by "dipping" into liquid glaze

Dry-Foot - To keep the foot or bottom of a pot free from glaze by waxing or removing the glaze.

Underglaze Decoration applied to bisque pottery and covered with a glaze.

Matte glaze A dull-surfaced glaze with no gloss.

Iron oxide. A common oxide in glazes and some clays that generally gives a reddish color.

Scrafito. This is a decorating technique where a slip is applied to a leather-hard piece of clay and left to dry. Once the slip is dry a host of different tools are used to carve into the clay to remove the slip and leave an embedded decoration behind.

Wedging. A procedure for preparing clay or a clay body by hand: The object is to disperse the water more uniformly, to remove lamination and to remove air by kneading the air out of the clay.

Firing Terms

Bisque. Pottery that has been fired but not yet glazed.

Bisque Firing Preliminary firing prior to glazing and subsequent firing again.

Earthenware. A pottery created by low temperature firing.

Kiln A furnace for the firing of ceramics

Kiln furniture Refractory shelves and posts upon which ceramic ware is placed while being fired in the kiln.

Pyrometer a temperature indicator linked to a kiln

Pyrometric Cones or Cones Used in the kiln during firing to check the temperature as to know when the kiln has reached the desired temperature. The cone will slump over at the correct temperature.