

# CERAMICS DEFINITIONS

**ABSORBENCY-** THE ABILITY OF A MATERIAL, CLAY, TO SOAK UP WATER.

**BISQUE FIRE-** FIRST FIRING AT LOWER TEMPERATURE TO MAKE POTS LESS FRAGILE  
GLAZING; UNGLAZED; FIRED POTTERY.

**CALIPER-** A MEASURING TOOL FOR CHECKING SYMMETRY AND FITTING LIDS TO POTS.

**CERAMIC-** A CLAY OBJECT MADE INTO A PERMANENT SHAPE BY FIRING IN A KILN.

**CRAZING-** VERY FINE CRACKS WHICH APPEAR IN A GLAZE DUE TO IT NOT FITTING  
THE BODY. UNEQUAL SHRINKING OF GLAZE AND BODY. USUALLY CAUSED  
BY UNDERFIRED BISQUE.

**BONE DRY-** UNFIRED CLAY THAT IS FREE OF WATER, ONLY CONTAINS THE AMOUNT  
OF MOISTURE IN ATMOSPHERE.

**CLAY-** A MOIST EARTH OF DECOMPOSED ROCK; USED IN PRODUCTS SUCH AS POTTERY,  
BRICKS, TILES, AND SCULPTURE.

**CLAY BODY-** A MIXTURE OF TWO OR MORE CLAYS TO OBTAIN A DESIRED COLOR,  
PLASTICITY, STRENGTH, OR FIRED DENSITY.

**COILING-** A METHOD OF CREATING POTS BY BUILDING BOTTOM AND WALLS WITH  
EVEN, ROPELIKE COILS.

**DECORATING WHEEL-** A WHEEL THAT WILL TURN TO ALLOW FOR EASE IN DECORATING POTS.

**FIRING-** HEATING CERAMIC CLAYS AND GLAZES TO MATURITY.

**GLAZE-** A COATING OF GLASS WHICH IS FUSED TO THE SURFACE OF A CLAY BODY  
DURING FIRING. IT SERVES TO PREVENT THE PENETRATION OF LIQUIDS, PRESENT  
A GOOD WEARING, EASILY CLEANED SURFACE, AND DECORATE. CAN BE SHINY OR MATTE.

**GREENWARE-** UNFIRED, BUT DRIED CLAY PIECES.

**KILN-** A SPECIAL FURNACE THAT REACHES HIGH TEMPERATURES USED FOR FIRING CLAY PRODUCTS; ELECTRIC,  
GAS, OR WOOD-FIRED.

**KILN FURNITURE-** SHELVES AND POSTS USED IN THE KILN FIRING CHAMBER TO ENABLE  
LOADING PIECES ON MORE THAN ONE LEVEL.

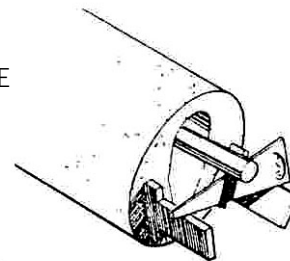
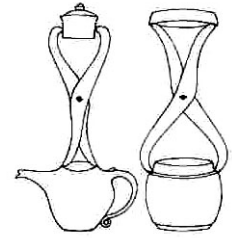
**KILN SITTER-** A MECHANICAL DEVICE THAT WILL SHUT THE KILN OFF WHEN A SMALL  
PYROMETRIC CONE MATURES.

**LEATHER HARD-** THE DAMP BUT STIFFENED STAGE IN DRYING CLAY. HANDLES AND  
OTHER ADDITIONS APPLIED AT THIS POINT.

**LOOP TOOLS-** TOOLS WITH RIBBONS OF WIRE FOR SHAPING AND TRIMMING CERAMIC OBJECTS.

**MAUTRING POINT-** TIME AND TEMPERATURE NEEDED TO COMPLETELY FIRE A GLAZE OR  
CLAY OBJECT.

**NONFUNCTIONAL-** CREATED MAINLY FOR DECORATION RATHER THAN PRACTICAL USE.



**PLASTICITY-** THE QUALITY OF CLAY WHICH ALLOWS IT TO BE MANIPULATED, SHAPED MOLDED WITHOUT CRACKING OR CRUMBLING; WORKABILITY.

**PINCHED METHOD-** A METHOD OF MAKING POTTERY IN WHICH A BALL OF CLAY IS PRESSED, PULLED, AND PINCHED INTO A SHAPE WITH THE HANDS. THE THUMB IS USUALLY USED TO OPEN THE CENTER.

**POTTER'S RIB-** SHAPED PIECES OF WOOD OR METAL FOR SHAPING, SMOOTHING WET CLAY WHILE HAND BUILDING OR THROWING.

**PYROMETRIC CONES-** SMALL CERAMIC PYRAMIDS FORMULATED TO MELT AT SPECIFIC TEMPERATURES, USED TO MEASURE KILN HEAT.

**SCORING-** MAKING MARKS ON THE EDGES TO TWO PIECES OF CLAY BEFORE JOINING WITH SLIP.

**SGRAFFITO-** SCRATCHING DESIGNS ON POTTERY.

**SLAB METHOD-** A METHOD OF MAKING POTTERY IN WHICH A THICK, FLAT PLATE, OR SLICE, OF CLAY IS CUT INTO SHAPES WHICH ARE JOINED TO FORM AN OBJECT. THE JOINED EDGES ARE SCORED AND SLIP IS USED.

**SLIP-** CLAY DILUTED WITH WATER TO THE CONSISTENCY OF CREAM, USED FOR JOINING PIECES OF CLAY.

**THROWING-** CREATING VESSELS ON A POTTER'S WHEEL.

**THERMAL SHOCK-** BREAKAGE OF A CERAMIC PIECE CAUSED BY SUDDEN TEMPERATURE CHANGES.

**UNDERGLAZE-** COLORS THAT CAN BE PAINTED ON GREENWARE OR BISQUE THAT WILL SHOW THROUGH A CLEAR OVERGLAZE.

**VISCOSITY-** THE RELATIVE RUNNINESS OF A GLAZE.

**VITRIFY-** TO HARDEN; TURN TO STONE. A GLASSY, NON-POROUS STATE CAUSED BY HEAT OR FUSION.

**WEDGING-** TO FORCE AIR BUBBLES OUT AND ALIGN CLAY PARTICLES TO FORM A GOOD WORKING TEXTURE (WET CLAY). KNEADING MOIST CLAY.

**WHEEL-** FOR MAKING POTS; DRIVEN BY HAND, FOOT, OR ELECTRIC POWER.

