

12 Golden Rules of Ceramics

Clay must be thoroughly covered up with a plastic bag to keep it from drying out. This applies to new, moist clay and works in progress. Store in your box unless the project becomes too large to fit.

When working with clay, always cover your desktop with your canvas cloth and build projects on your 8" board. When painting or glazing, do not use the cloth or the board...use newspaper to cover the desktop.

When building a clay project, always have water and handy paper towels on your desk.

Trapped air/heat can cause clay to explode. Hollow out forms and put holes in their ends so air/heat can escape. Any part of your clay project that is thicker than your thumb cannot be left solid.

Because clay shrinks as it dries, pieces that need to fit together must be made at the same time and dry at the same time to keep their size and shape. Thin clay will dry faster than thick clay.

Parts of clay must be joined together by scoring and using slip whether both of the clay parts are moist or both parts are leather-hard.

Always handle projects that have not been fired with extreme care. Do not lift anything by its handle or other parts. Use 2 hands. It's your hard, precious work!

Clay dust can be harmful if you are exposed to it for long periods of time, SO spray and wipe off your work areas when necessary and keep clay scraps off the floor.

Sand fired projects, but not for overly long periods of time to avoid dust, and then rinse them under the faucet before applying 3 coats of glaze.

Never, ever glaze the very bottom of a project because it will become welded to the kiln shelf when fired. Exceptions are sometimes made for certain types of projects, but only with Mrs. H's permission.

Always keep your clay tools and brushes clean and stored in your box. Clean class rollers, rulers, bowls, etc. before returning them to cupboards. Keep your plastic palettes clean, especially when switching between ceramic glazes and acrylic paints. Keep palettes covered tightly when storing glaze or paint in them.

Never handle another person's work even if it looks temptingly COOL!