

WHEEL-THROWING CLASS SYLLABUS

WEEK 1

Studio orientation, cleaning procedures, assignment of personal shelf, bag of clay.

Demo: CYLINDERS

WEEK 2

Demo: CUPS and HANDLES

WEEK 3

Demo: BOWLS

WEEK 4

Demo: VASES

WEEK 5

Demo: OFF THE HUMP. Week 5 is the last week for wet clay.

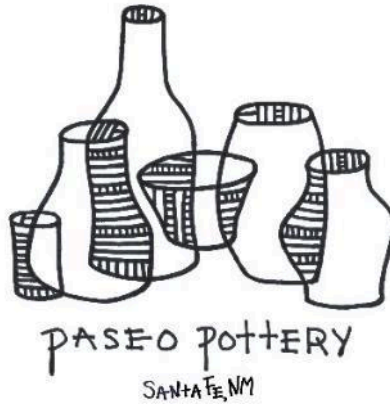
WEEK 6

Demo: GLAZING

WEEK 7

Demo: POTLUCK, SHOW AND TELL, CLEAR OUT PERSONAL SHELVES

(unless you have signed up for another class)



**1273 Calle de Comercio
Santa Fe, NM 87507
www.paseopottery.com
(505) 988-7687**

Thanks for signing up for a 7-week wheel-throwing class at Paseo Pottery! We are delighted to share our studio with you. Wheel-throwing classes are designed to teach students basic to more advanced techniques on the wheel. Over the course of the next 7 weeks, your teacher will guide you through the entire process of making pottery, from throwing various shapes and sizes of pots on the wheel, to trimming, decorating, and glazing your pieces, which will be fired by our staff. The cost of the class includes 25-pounds of recycled clay (or \$12 off a bag of new clay) all materials, and glazes. Firing fees are payable in the form of tickets that can be purchased on our website.

Students will also have access to sign up for open studio hours outside of class. After your first class, you'll be able to sign up for studio time (\$5/hour) on our studio calendar (www.paseopottery.com/studio-sign-up). We recommend signing up for as many studio hours as you can between classes. There's only one way to hone your skills. Practice, practice, practice!

Classes meet 1 time per week, for 7 consecutive weeks. During the 2.5-hour weekly lesson, the first 30-45 minutes the instructor will give a demonstration, followed by individualized guidance as you create with clay. The first weeks you will work with wet clay, followed by learning to trim and shape the semi-dried ("leather hard") clay. After the piece has gone through its first kiln firing (the "bisque" firing), you will learn surface decoration methods. Our final class is a glaze session and potluck where we celebrate what we have made and finish glazing the pieces you've made throughout your session. Continue challenging your throwing and design skills with an intermediate or advanced

class on the wheel, hand building, making your own materials and more! Push your creative limits with us by your side to help.

In the event of missed classes, students are welcome to attend other classes during the session they are registered for to observe demonstrations they may have missed. As other classes may be full, we can NOT guarantee wheel or workspace to students making-up. Students registered for the class will have priority on the equipment and workspace during their scheduled class time.

Students in our 7-week classes receive a discount for bringing in friends for one of our Pottery “Experiences”. See description hereafter and use promo code 10%OFF! when you sign up on our website.

JauntTV recently featured Paseo Pottery naming our pottery classes among the best things to do in Santa Fe! We couldn't agree more. Thanks also to HBO Max, Santa Fe New Mexican, Radio Free Santa Fe, The Santa Fe Reporter, The Richard Eeds Show, and New Mexico Magazine for their recent coverage of our pottery experiences and our charitable mission!

Paseo Pottery has been a vital part of the Santa Fe art scene for over three decades. We are a pottery-powered charity embracing a radical form of conscious capitalism: cover costs, then donate the rest to improve society. 100% of net proceeds from pottery Throw Downs are donated to local charities each year, as selected by our customers, and we've donated over \$75,000 thus far! Thanks for being part of the magic

PASEO POTTERY EXPERIENCES

Did you know that Paseo Pottery also offers pottery “experiences”?

Are you entertaining out of town friends or family? Organizing a girls’ night out? Corporate team building experience? Sign your group up for one of our pottery experiences, and bring them in to play in the mud with local ceramic artists! Our pottery experiences are one-time, two-hour sessions geared toward travelers, groups, families, newbies, and anyone looking for a fun introduction to pottery. Students will enjoy a locally-crafted beverage while learning to use the potter’s wheel and may also get to try out hand-building with the guidance of Paseo Pottery’s teachers. **Students in our 7-week classes receive a discount for bringing in groups. Use promo code 10%OFF! when you sign up on our website.**

Pottery experiences prioritize touching, forming, and manipulating clay into expressions of art and are experience-based, meaning that at the end of each session students recycle their work back into the clay mound. Students do not, however, walk away empty handed as they get to choose a piece of pottery from the gallery, which is full of pottery handcrafted by local Santa Fe artists.

We start each pottery experience by doling out drinks (we’ve got a variety of beverages to choose from, and you’re welcome to BYOB as well). Then we take students on a tour of our studio where over a dozen Santa Fe ceramic artists come to create. Paseo Pottery has been part of the local art scene for three decades, and our space includes both a working ceramics studio and a retail gallery. In the studio, artists feverishly design and create—think muddy mayhem, whirling wheels, fiery kilns, and sundry clay-coated potting paraphernalia—while in the gallery finished pieces are displayed and available for purchase.

There’s a long tradition of ceramic arts in New Mexico, and the process of making pottery is often viewed as a spiritual practice. Pottery is among the most ancient forms of art and is perhaps the most fleeting. Chards of ancient ceramics are scattered on bluffs and foothills throughout New Mexico and are a constant reminder of the transitory nature of our particular form of art and of our very human existence. For millennia, ceramic artists across New Mexico have transformed clay into vessels to be held between hands, to be filled with nourishment, to be brought to lips, and after serving their purpose, to be returned to the earth.

At Paseo Pottery we embrace this rich history, and we present our classes for travelers in the form of pottery “experiences.” During each experience, students have two hours to create their own works of art using the tools at their disposal in our studio, all the inner creativity they can muster, and a raw lump of clay. Our teachers start with a demonstration to give students basic pottery-making techniques, then act as guides while students unleash their inner artists and tap into the creativity they may find bubbling to the surface given the artistic energy that abounds in Santa Fe. Each student creates their own unique and beautiful expression of art. At the end of the experience, students present their masterpieces to the rest of the class, take photos if they wish, and then—in the spirit of embracing the ephemeral nature of art and of humanity—students ceremoniously recycle their masterpieces, deconstructing them, kneading them back into the lump of clay from which they came.

Similar to monks on the other side of the earth who spend days, even months, creating sand mandalas, only to then blow them away in an instant, ceramic experiences at Paseo Pottery encourage students to learn our craft, to create, to appreciate, and then to let go. One might think of our experience-based classes as “mud therapy.”

Experiences are led by our professional ceramic artists who volunteer their time. Cost includes a two-hour experiential class complete with libations, clay, materials, and tools.

WHAT'S WITH ALL THE RACKS?

WEAR RACKS

On your first day of class, please choose a shelf where you will keep your personal clay, tools, and works in progress. Label your shelf with your first and last name **and the date of your final class**. Please keep your works in progress on your personal shelf until they are “bone dry” and ready to be fired. Then take them to the kiln area where you will find multiple racks...

GREENWARE

When your piece is bone dry, place it on the GREENWARE rack so we know it's ready to be fired.

BISQUEWARE

After the piece has gone through its first firing, the “bisque” firing, we will place it on the BISQUEWARE shelf. You can then glaze your piece and place it on the appropriate shelf, depending on the type of firing you want.

GLAZED FOR CONE 6

After your piece is glazed, place it on this shelf and it will be fired to Cone 6 oxidation in the electric kiln. We recommend Cone 6 for most students since these firings happen more frequently and you'll see the results more quickly.

GLAZED FOR CONE 10

Cone 10 reduction firings happen less frequently, since the gas kiln is much larger, and these firings are generally reserved for volunteers, studio members, and students who plan to sign up for multiple classes in a row.

GLAZEWARE

You'll find your finished piece on the GLAZEWARE rack when the final firing has been unloaded.

Happy Kiln Christmas!

Studio Stuff

Basic Etiquette

- Treat the people, studio, and equipment with care and respect and kindness.
- Help each other out and be nice; please do not offer criticism unless it is solicited.
- Be considerate of others work, do not touch, move, or bump work that does not belong to you.
- If you use the studios tools, be sure to clean them properly and put them back.
- Use our multiple bucket wash system to help to conserve water and keep clay out of the sink:
Bucket #1 SCREEN—pour throwing water and clay scraps onto screened can (to be recycled)
Bucket #2 RINSE—splash pans, tools, bats, buckets, hands in large water-filled garbage cans
Bucket #3 RINSE AGAIN—by the time you get to the sink for the final rinse, all tools, splash pans, and hands should be free of clay.
- After use, everything needs to be cleaned and returned to its correct place.
- Clean as you go, always make sure your last wipe is with a clean wringed-out sponge, and MOP ANY AREAS YOU USED.
- No 'holding' of pottery wheel while you work on something else.
- If you are done in one area, do not move to another without cleaning up first.
- After you are done on the wheel, clean wheel, splash pan, table, wheel legs, chair, water bucket
- Place pedal, cord, and stool on top of wheel, then mop floor around your wheel.
- Place clay scraps & slip/slop in recycle BUCKET #1; nothing from the floor or sink goes in the recycle bucket. Put it in the trash instead.
- Rinse out any sponges you've used and put them away clean
- Label personal tools, clay, and greenware with your name and keep them on your shelf.
- Make sure all greenware is signed on the bottom before putting on the GREENWARE shelf
- Start cleanup at least 20 min early so you're totally finished by the end of class or studio time.
- Cone 10 clay only! No outside clay or glazes are allowed unless you can prove it is cone 10. (Please show it to studio manager for approval before using in the studio.)
- No foreign objects allowed to be fired in clay without permission of the studio manager.
- No glazes, slips, tools or studio equipment of any kind should be removed from the studio.
- We do not have the facilities to accommodate production work (in this case the definition of production is high-volume work). More than 1 cubic foot per month requires permission.
- Please take your finished work home with you within 7 days
- Abandoned, dried out or not labeled pieces will be discarded after 7 days

- Regular studio purges occur at the end of every class. Everything must be taken home within 7 days of your final class, unless you have signed up for another class. If the latter is the case, label your shelf with the end date of your next class so we know not to purge your shelf.
 - The studio is not responsible for pieces that break during the firing process or get thrown out if abandoned for more than 7 days.
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Storage

- Clearly sign each of your pieces with your name and place on appropriate shelves
 - Work or clay not properly labeled may be discarded
 - No storage space is currently available; please take clay/tools/towels/etc. home with you if it does not fit on your personal shelf
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Glazing

- We fire our electric kilns to cone 6 oxidation for glazing.
 - We do not do any single firings. All work must be bisque fired first.
 - Thoroughly stir all glazes; improperly mixed glazes result in altered glaze composition over time
 - Do not cross contaminate glazes; if a glaze is accidentally poured in another glaze, let studio manager know.
 - When finished glazing, wipe down glaze counter and any excess glaze you've spilled on buckets or floor.
 - Keep bottom ¼" of each piece glaze free, make sure to wipe any glaze off bottom with clean sponge or, preferably, use liquid wax on the base.
 - Clean and return glaze buckets to their places when you are through, with the labels clearly visible for the next person.
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Safety

- If you are injured, inform an assistant immediately
- Any accidents/broken items need to be reported to studio manager asap.
- Keep dust down. This is imperative for everyone's safety. No sweeping/sanding in the studio, it raises silica dust which can stay airborne for days. Instead of sweeping, mop twice.

Basic Steps for Throwing on the Wheel

1. **Wedge clay** well, form into a round ball.
2. Throw the clay onto center of a bat on the wheel. Seal base, pat into cone.
3. **Center clay**: Brace arms on legs, have wheel speed medium-fast.
Place hands around base of clay, slowly squeeze clay to center and cone up.
4. **Push clay down**: With the heel of your left hand, push the left side of clay and with side of your right hand press down on the top of it.
5. **Repeat** steps 3 & 4 until clay is centered.
6. **Open up clay**: Slow wheel, place thumbs together, push down into middle of clay. Leave ½" clay at bottom - measure with needle tool.
7. **Create floor**: Start in center, pull fingers of right hand outward. For cylinder, keep floor flat. For bowl, let fingers curve up wall to establish curve.
8. **Pull walls**: Slow wheel. Left hand inside, right hand outside (3 o'clock). Right hand pushes at base to move clay up & rises just above left. Gently squeeze and let hands travel up with clay. Keep clay in a cone shape.
9. **Shape**: To shape in: outside fingers above inside, press slowly in and up.
To shape out: inside fingers above outside, press slowly out and up.
Use a rib to refine and smooth curves, also to remove water from surface.
10. **Finish**: Trim rim to level. Trim excess clay at base. For bowls leave clay at base to support walls. Pull string under base.

Remember: Keep your elbows down! Keep the clay lubricated with water, use less water when shaping. Keep your hands touching, using them together as one for better control. Use your entire body to work the clay, focus on the center. Always move your hands into/out of contact slowly while the wheel is going round. Jerky motions will result in an uneven pot. Only touch the pot when the wheel is moving! The higher and wider you go, the slower you must go. Centering the clay is the hardest and most important part of throwing. If it's not centered your pot will be wobbly and uneven.

The 6 different stages of clay

Written By Katherine Tomlinson

Clay is a fascinating (and sometimes frustrating!) substance. It has completely different properties at different stages throughout its drying and firing cycle.

There are 6 essential stages of clay:



1. Slip

Slip is clay with added water to make it into a paste or liquid.

Use: Slip is most commonly used to join pieces of wet or leather hard clay together. It can also be used decoratively. Color can be added to slip to make a decorating medium which can be painted on to wet or leather hard clay or applied in lines with a pipette ('slip trailed'). Slip can also be mixed with chemicals to make it extra runny and used with a plaster mold to cast pieces of pottery in a process known as 'slip casting'.



2. Wet clay

Wet clay is used by many potters to produce their work. It usually comes in 12.5kg plastic bags from pottery suppliers who make the clay up using different combinations of rocks and clays. It must be kept wrapped in plastic at this stage to keep it in a usable state.

Use: Wet clay can be used to make an infinite array of pieces using many different techniques. It can be used to throw pots on the wheel, roll out flat slabs, to clay shapes cut out with cookie cutters, pull handles, impress marks in or hand build sculptures.



3. Leather-hard clay

When wet clay has dried slightly but is not fully dry it is known as 'leather-hard'.

Use: Leather-hard is a useful clay state, because the clay is strong but still wet enough to be shaped. Pots thrown on the wheel are now strong enough to have their bases 'turned' where the pot is turned upside-down the foot ring is carved whilst on the wheel. Leather-hard is often the state when flat slabs of clay are joined together to make 3D structures.



4. Dry clay

Dry clay is also known as 'greenware'. It is when clay is at its most fragile, and needs careful handling to prevent breakages. Dry clay needs to be fired in the kiln in order to make it strong enough to use.

Use: Any sharp edges that are not smoothed at this stage will become solid in the bisque firing. Final finishing of work is done with a damp sponge.



5. Bisque

'Bisque' refers to clay which has been fired once. For stoneware clay this firing reaches temperatures of 950oc which permanently changes the chemical and physical nature of the clay. Clay at this stage is hard but still porous enough to absorb glaze.

Use: This is the stage at which glaze is applied ready for the final firing. Work can be dipped into glaze or glaze can be poured over the bisque pot. Water is absorbed into the clay making the glaze stick to the surface of the pot.



6. Glaze ware

After a second firing to 1260oc for stoneware clay, the clay and glaze have fused making a non-porous surface. Hopefully, the firing has resulted in an evenly melted glaze which has not run too much (sticking the pot to the kiln shelf!).

Use: This is the final, finished stage, although sandpaper can be used to smooth any remaining sharp edges. Ideally there should be no glaze faults such as ‘crazing’ when the glaze cracks or ‘shivering’ when the glaze flakes and peels away from the clay.

So these are the 6 stages of clay. A lot of the time spent learning about making pottery is focused on learning what you can (and can't!) do at each stage. What's more, different clays have different properties, ‘porcelain’ for example is very plastic and smooth whereas ‘crank’ has added grit for strength and texture. It is only by trying things out with the type of clay you are using that that you learn its limitations. and possibilities!

Further Reading:

If you're interested in learning more about eco-conscious pottery, we've put everything we know into these eBooks:

- [Eco-Friendly Pottery: 30 Simple Ways: to make your pottery practice more ethical and sustainable](#)
- [Eco-conscious Pottery Glazing: Make your own pottery glazes with minimal harm to humans, animals and the environment](#)