

Clay etiquette, processes and states

Clay etiquette

- Keep all clay in the art classroom.
- Only use clay for making artwork.
- Keep clay in an airtight plastic bag.
- Put your initials on your work.
- Clean up clay with a damp cloth.

Clay processes: making strong clay joins

- Score (roughen) the join surfaces with a tool (e.g. fork).
- Apply a small amount of slip (clay and water mix) to scored surfaces with a tool (e.g. plastic knife). The slip works like glue.
- Push and twist join surfaces together firmly.
- If needed, add a coil of clay to smooth over the join with fingers.
- Smooth join and coil neatly with fingers and a tool (e.g. plastic knife) until you cannot see the join.

Clay states

Raw clay	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• clay in its natural state or clay that is not capable of being used without further preparation• may be wet or dry, clean or containing foreign matter
Slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the liquid form of clay• used to join clay surfaces and for decorative purposes, such as slip trailing and slip glazing• “engobe” is the term used to describe slips that have been coloured with oxides
Slurry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a thicker form of slip, verging on the plastic state
Plastic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the stage at which most clay is worked• sufficiently pliable and self-supporting to allow modelling, throwing and other forms of manipulation
Leatherhard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• plastic clay that has dried to a stage where it can be handled without deforming• retains original colour and is able to be bent to some extent without breaking• still soft enough to be carved, stamped, incised, and joined with slip
Greenware	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• stage at which the clay has lost most of its plasticity and water through evaporation• does not feel cold to touch, has undergone a colour change, a weight loss and shrinkage through drying• cannot be effectively joined with slip, but can be scraped, sanded and incised• stage to which clay wares are dried before bisque firing
Bisque or biscuit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• clay that has been through a firing in 600°C or higher — the higher the temperature, the more vitreous and the less porous the body• form is permanent and rock-like and cannot be converted back to plastic clay
Glaze or gloss	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• clay body with a glaze or gloss melted over its surface• normally put on a bisque-fired body