

No. 35015

Clay Rollers



Make one-of-a-kind patterns on clay for beautiful texture art! Introduce young children to the joy of clay-making. Clay is the perfect material to use for sensory development. Give your students slabs of clay and watch them express themselves through hands-on manipulation.

Clay Rollers will add an extra level of fun to clay working with their two-in-one functions. Use the Clay Rollers first as a rolling pin for flattening slabs of clay to even thicknesses. The second function involves creating a unique pattern to texturize the slab. Combine the provided lengths of string to create interesting texture arrangements.

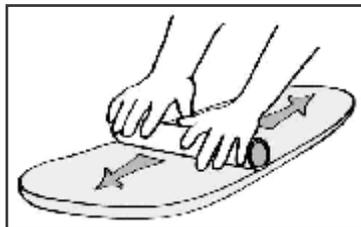
Clay has been used for thousands of years as a readily available material for making housewares from plates to utensils, vases to bowls and centerpieces to plaques. Clay is still used as an artistic medium to create one-of-a-kind pieces of art and items of practical use.

Depending on the concentration of water mixed with clay, it can be molded into a variety of shapes. Once the clay has hardened, it is fired in a special oven called a kiln which uses super hot temperatures to harden the clay into a permanent solid state. The clay then turns into ceramic. To see what plain ceramic looks like, check out flower pots or bricks that line the wall of a house. Ceramics can be "glazed" with special paints to make the flat baked clay appear glossier and more decorative. The ceramic is then fired in the kiln again to make the paints adhere to it completely and bring out the shine.

Bring clay into the classroom and let young students develop both their imaginations and their hands. Explore tactile sensations through squishing, pressing, folding, pinching and shaping the clay in its wet stage. This helps to lengthen periods of concentration in young students, especially for students with learning disabilities or shorter attention spans. Exercise children's foresight by engaging preparatory activities such as designing the final sculpture then molding it to suit his or her individual vision.

Clay Rollers will open up a new world of clay exploration for your students. Give each child a ball of clay about the size of a baseball. Provide Clay Rollers at a station or separate the class into groups and give each group a Clay Roller to share.

To flatten a ball of clay into a slab using the Clay Roller, make sure that the stoppers are removed and the string is left aside before using the Clay Roller. Without the additional pieces, the Clay Roller can be used in place of a rolling pin. Place the ball of clay on a flat surface away

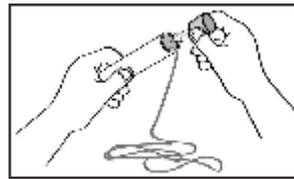


from any corners or edges. Sit the Clay Roller on top of the ball of clay. Using the base of your palm, press on top of the Clay Roller and direct it back and forth in a rolling motion. Gently increase pressure until the clay appears to be flattening across the top.

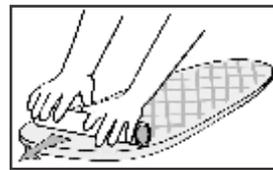
Continue adding pressure as you roll the Clay Roller back and forth across the top to push the clay ball further into a slab shape. The clay should be flattened up to a thickness of ½" (1.5 cm). The thicker the clay is, the harder it will be for the clay to dry evenly throughout. However, the thinner it is, the easier it will be for the clay to crack as it dries. It's important to get the right consistency!

Each Clay Roller comes with three lengths of string in different thicknesses. Mix and match the string types to make new and interesting patterns.

To make your Clay Roller pattern, make sure both ends of the Clay Roller are open. Take one end of the length of string



and tuck it into the inner tube. If you plan to use more than one length of string, tuck the other ends into the inner part of the Roller. Press one of the rubber stoppers into the end of the tube to secure the strings in place. Next, wrap the string around the roller to make a unique imprint. Braid or entwine with the other lengths of string to make the pattern more complex. Experiment with different wrapping styles. Hold the tube in one hand as you twist and intertwine the lengths of string. When you are satisfied with the appearance of the string pattern on the Roller, secure the other end with a stopper.



When you finish arranging the string, place the Roller at the top of the clay slab. Place both palms on either side of the Roller and gently but firmly roll it downward along the slab.

Mold the patterned slabs into bowls, cups, saucers and platters! In this guide, we provide you with a few basic instructions on how to create a mug, name plaque and textured pendants using the Clay Rollers. We've included brief pointers in the guide for using clay. Refer to these pointers before starting one of the following projects.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- Develop fine motor skills
- Design new and creative patterns
- Combine multiple mediums
- Explore self expression through art
- Improve concentration and self-control while using clay
- Envision a final result before working with materials
- Learn about clay art techniques
- Use techniques and processes to develop ideas
- Make a variety of projects from vases to pendants



Give your students a positive start to learning how to use clay. Within the first few minutes, students will have already started to experiment with ways of manipulating the clay to make fun shapes and sculptures. Practice pressing into the clay, tearing it apart, squishing it together and rolling the clay into a ball.

Begin with three basic practice techniques that students will be sure to use later on—the pinch pot, the coil and the pinch and tweak!

To start off the pinch pot, roll the clay into a ball about the size of your palm. While holding the ball of clay in one hand, gently press your thumb into the center of the ball to make a scoop. Press down half way then release. Set the clay ball onto a flat surface and work around the edges with both hands. Gently pinch the edges then smooth them out. Make the inside scoop larger by pressing into scoop and around the sides.

The coil is a technique used to create long skinny tubes of clay. These can be wrapped around something or used to fill in joined edges. To make coils, take a small chunk of clay and place onto a flat surface. Put your palm right on top of the clay and move gently back and forth until the clay begins to mold into a long tube. Coils can be used to make handles or unique forms of pottery.

Finally, the pinch and tweak technique shows how to manipulate the clay instead of simply tearing it apart to form smaller pieces. To manipulate the clay, a child should be able to pinch the clay from a small flat slab into small spikes and waves. For this activity, instruct your students to make a landscape plaque. Roll out a handful of clay into a 4 x 4" (10 x 10 cm) slab about ½" (1.5 cm) thick. Press thumbs into the plaque to form a groove. Use pointer fingers to gently press into the clay on the other side of the groove to "lift" it out from the plaque. This achieves an embossed look. Try making waves, clouds or trees with this technique. Use different finger strengths to tweak the image and give depth to the illustration.

Note: Use the following tips when working with clay. These are meant to be guidelines and not actual instructions for using clay in art projects.

TECHNIQUES

Your students have already learned how to make slabs and texture the clay. For the next few projects, students will need to understand how to attach separate clay pieces, how to make grooves for air escape if using oven-bake clay and how to properly dry air-drying clay.

Attaching Pieces:

Select the two pieces to connect. Make sure the connecting edges match up, either by smoothing or shaping the angle of the edges so that they fit snugly. Separate the pieces and let dry for a few minutes at room temperature. The pieces should feel slightly moldable but solid (referred to as leather-hard). While you are waiting for the slabs to harden, roll a coil of clay. This coil will act like a glue and go in between the two joined edges to seal in the space. Place the two edges next to each other and gently press the coil into the conjoined edge. Smooth out the corner with your finger. Tip: Dab at the corner with some water to spread the coil evenly between the two edges. Repeat for the opposite side of the edges if needed.

Making Grooves:

Hardened clay is fired in a kiln, which is a special type of

oven enclosed on all sides and uniquely shaped so that the heat disperses evenly throughout. A kiln bakes the clay to make it harden into a solid shape. Since clay is a liquid-solid substance, it needs to release air before it can harden completely into a solid. If the air is trapped while the heat hardens the clay, the pressure rises and causes the clay to crack. To keep this from happening, artists will purposefully place holes or grooves within the clay sculpture at various points. Use a toothpick to poke a hole into the bottom of a clay pot, vase or bowl. Poke two or three holes throughout a sculpture and choose inconspicuous spots so that they aren't entirely noticeable.

Air-Drying Clay:

Note: It is important to follow the package directions according to the manufacturer's specifications when handling particular brands of clay. The following are very general suggestions regarding the use of air-drying clay that can be applied to some brands of clay. Be sure to consult the package instructions or contact the manufacturer for more information before starting the activities.

Air-dry clay is essentially made of clay and water. The clay dries when all the water evaporates. Sometimes, small drafts or a breeze may cause the clay to dry unevenly. As a result, clay will crack in certain areas as the soft parts are still drying. To keep this from happening, place the sculpture in an enclosed space such as in a cardboard box. Leave to dry for about 6-12 hours before painting or decorating.

PROJECTS

1). Pendants

Pendants are a fun and easy gift to make as an exchange between friends or to wear with a special outfit!

Roll a chunk of clay into a ball. Use the plain Clay Roller to roll the ball flat into a slab. Weave a design onto the Clay Roller using string and roll across the slab to make an embossed design.

Use aluminum cookie cutters to cut out shapes from the slab. Note: Use several cookie cutters at once to make full use of your texture design. Peel away the excess clay.

To make a hole through the pendant for threading onto your necklace, take one end of a drinking straw and press into the top of the pendant. Remove the straw and set the pendant aside to dry or fire in a kiln. Tip: Before drying you can add dimension to your pendant by gently curving the shape. When completely dry, decorate with glaze or sparkles and leave to dry.

To attach the pendant to a necklace, cut a length of string about 3" (7.5 cm) long. Make a small loop from the string and thread through the pendant. Secure with a knot but leave a bit of slack so you can thread the necklace through. Using this additional loop of string, you can make sure your pendant will hang flat for all to see!

2). Name Plaque

Make a unique name plaque for a classroom display or to use as a doorknob hanger.

Roll a ball of clay and set it onto a flat surface. Use the Clay Roller tube to roll the ball flat into a slab. The slab should be about ¼ to a ½" (0.5 to 1.5 cm) thick. Cut the slab so that it forms a 4 x 2.5" (10 x 6.5 cm) rectangle. Tip: You can make

other shapes too!

Create a design on the Clay Rollers with string and roll it across the slab. Repeat several times to add an interesting appearance to your name plaque. Cut out a rectangle from a sheet of paper that fits exactly over the name plaque. Write a student's name across the paper so that it's easier to orient where the name will appear on the plaque. Students can trace their names onto the plaque using the sheet of paper. Follow the lines that spell out the name with a pencil or sculpting tool to imprint the name into the clay beneath it. Note: Try not to press the surrounding areas of the clay with your hands as this will flatten the texture you created with the Clay Roller. Remove the sheet to reveal your imprinted name plaque!

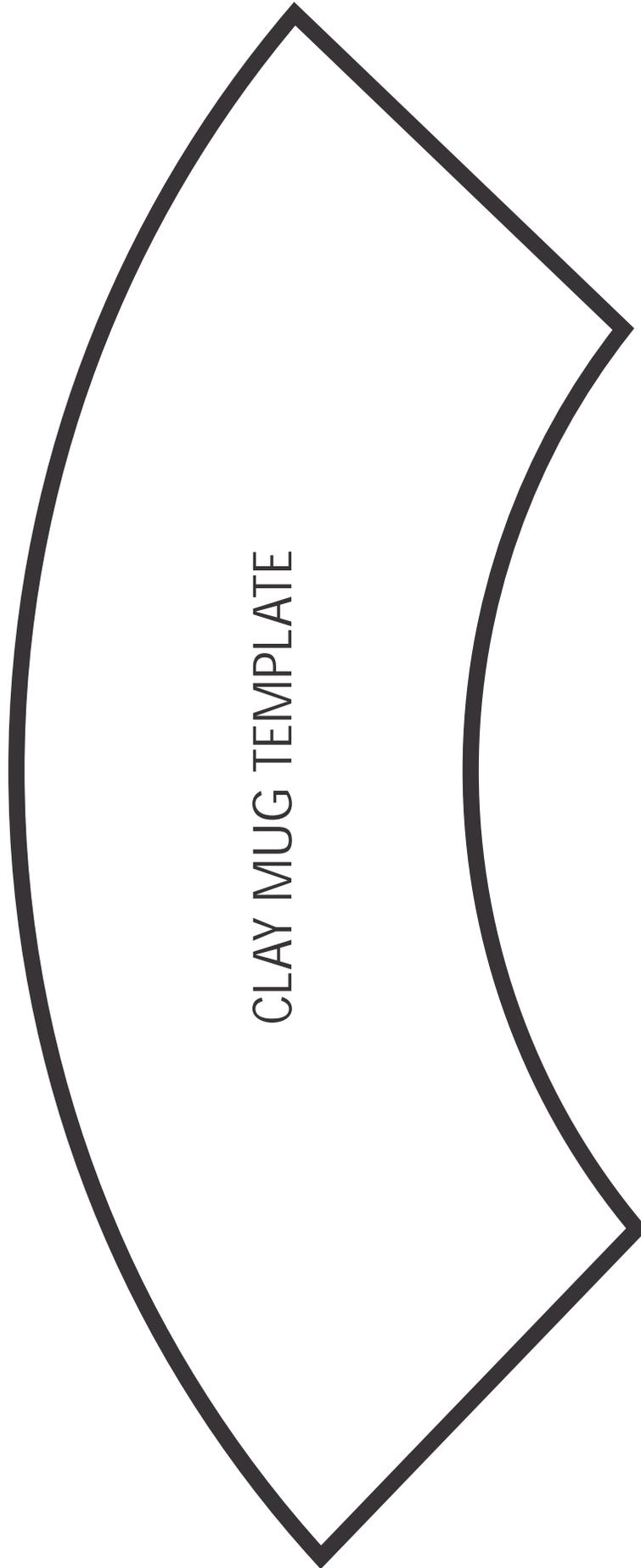
Fire the clay in the kiln or leave to air dry. When fully dry, glaze the clay and add decorative details.

1). Mug

Here's an easy way to make a coffee mug. Start with a water bottle. Measure the circumference of the bottle. Form a clay rectangle that's the length of the bottle's circumference. The height of the slab should be 4" (10 cm) and it should be ½" (1-2 cm) thick. Use a Clay Roller to emboss a design on the slab.

Carefully lift off the slab from your work surface. Coat the water bottle lightly with water. Wrap the slab around the bottle. Rub water along both edges of the seam and pinch the seam closed to seal it. Gently slide the clay tube off the bottle.

To make the bottom of the cup, here's a simple tip. Take the water bottle and cut off the bottom. Roll out a second slab of clay. Use the bottle as a cookie cutter to cut out perfect, round circles of clay that exactly fit your clay tube. To adhere the base to the tube, wet the edges and pinch to join.



CLAY MUG TEMPLATE