

## FASTfire BRONZclay™ Overview & Firing Guide

FASTfire BRONZclay created by Metal Clay Adventures is easily sculpted, molded, carved and formed, and becomes solid bronze when fired. Your imagination and just a few simple tools will allow you to create solid bronze pieces—from jewelry to sculpture and everything in between!

FASTfire BRONZclay is just that: a clay. Like clay, it's highly workable but it also dries quickly. You'll notice the clay stiffening and cracking when it begins to dry.

### Some tips to keep in mind:

- Condition your hands with Claymate before you begin working with the clay to keep it from sticking to hands.
- Condition the clay with Slik before using it or spritz with water with a drop of lavender oil. This will extend the working time and give the clay a better texture.
- Avoid using tools that absorb water.
- While storing or while in use, keep clay wrapped in a piece of loosely sealed plastic wrap and store in a clay hydrator for added longevity. Refrigerate when not in use.

### Making Slip

Slip will quickly become one of your favorite tools for working with FASTfire BRONZclay, and it's easy to make. Simply mix tiny pieces of clay (filings, small dried or wet pieces, etc.) with water until you reach a yogurt consistency. Keep your slip stored in a sealed container. We recommend distilled water with a drop or two of lavender oil for a longer shelf-life.

### Drying the Clay

Once you've finished your piece, you will need to dry the clay before firing it. Gently place the piece on a warming surface such as a metal clay hot plate or in a dehydrator. Once dry, you'll notice the clay is leather hard, making it very easy to add finishing touches such as filing, drilling, sanding and carving. Once FASTfire BRONZclay is fired, it's much more difficult to finish, so take advantage of this pre-fired stage to do as much of your finishing work as possible.

### Firing

We recommend that you fire a test piece (at least 1-1/2" x 1/2" x 4 cards thick) at 1525°F/830°C (the recommended temperature). If the test piece blisters, lower the temperature to 1500°F/816°C. If the test piece breaks when you try to bend it, raise the temperature to 1550°F/843°C. To reduce oxidation, piece(s) must be surrounded by activated carbon or Magic Carbon during firing. Spread 1" of activated carbon granules on the bottom of a stainless steel firing container.

1. Place the piece on top of the layer; if firing two or more pieces, leave at least 1/2" between pieces, more if the pieces are large.
2. Pour more activated carbon granules on top of the pieces until the container is full, making sure there is a 1/2" layer of granules on top of each piece. If you are firing many pieces in layers, make sure there is at least 1/2" of space between the vertical layers as well.
3. Put a slotted stainless steel lid on the firing container (or offset your solid lid to create a gap) and set it in the kiln on stilts to allow good heat circulation.
4. Ramp at full speed to 1525°F, and hold for 2 hours.

**Note:** Most kilns are cooler in the front, near the door, so the front of your firing container will be cooler than the other sides. Compensate for this possibility by placing the pieces closer to the sides and back of the firing container. If you have a top-loading kiln, there's no need to adjust. After firing, a residue will be left on the fired pieces. This residue is easy to remove with running water and must be washed off prior to finishing.





COOL TOOLS

### **Finishing**

Once fired, the FASTfire BRONZclay piece is solid metal. As with other metals, it can be sawn, drilled, sanded, patina-ed or soldered using traditional jewelry tools and materials. Keep in mind that many finishing techniques will be easier to perform at the dried, pre-fired stage. Repairs can be made by adding fresh clay and re-firing.

### **Safety**

The binder in FASTfire BRONZclay is non-toxic, and no toxic fumes will be present during firing. Though rare, it is possible for some individuals to experience a sensitivity to FASTfire BRONZclay. We recommend wearing a dust mask while working with activated carbon.