

**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES
TECHNICAL TIPS AND PRODUCT INFORMATION #1**

SAFER WORK PRACTICES IN THE STUDIO

1. MINIMISE DUST – ALL OF THESE ACTIVITIES MUST BE DONE WEARING A QUALITY INDIVIDUAL RESPIRATOR WITH AN APPROPRIATE DUST FILTER.

- Wet mop floors or sweep with moist sawdust daily.
- Never sand pottery when dry – sponge it when wet / leather hard instead.
- Ensure all mixing of powdered materials takes place in a confined & ventilated space away from others.
- Vacuum the studio monthly with a quality vacuum with a suitable particle filter (including shelves, tool drawers etc.).
- A wet/dry vacuum is an excellent addition to a pottery studio's equipment.
- Clean benches while clay is still moist – scrape with a paint scraper, sweep (while moist) with a dustpan and brush, and finally, sponge down.
- Vacuum the kiln interior each week with a quality vacuum with a suitable particle filter to remove any dust.

2. BACK CARE

- Carry only one single clay bag (10 -15kg) at a time.
- Use appropriate lifting strategies when lifting (see Worksafe Australia web site).
- Take care in packing kilns – inserting kiln shelves, positioning heavy work, vary repetitive tasks, take breaks, stretch etc.
- Do not twist while lifting heavy weights.
- Vary repetitive tasks with short periods of stretching (throwing, reclaiming clay etc.).

3. SLIPING HAZARDS

- The best floors for studio hygiene are smooth floors like lino etc. but wet clay and smooth floors create slippery situations. TAKE CARE! Install adhesive textured strips or rubber mats on floors in dangerous zones, e.g. sink areas or exterior doorways

4. ORAL HYGIENE

- Be careful what you put in your mouth. Better still, put nothing in your mouth while in the studio (no paintbrushes, tools, pencil/pens etc)
- Do not smoke or eat in the studio at any time because you can pick up / transfer dust to your mouth
- Be meticulous when washing hands after completing a task. Wash hand towels regularly to remove dry clay/dust.
- Wear latex gloves and a plastic apron when handling powdered materials – do not re-use gloves without washing them fully.
- DO NOT PUT ANY CERAMIC MATERIAL IN OR NEAR YOUR MOUTH unless you are confident you know exactly what you are handling. Ask for a Material Safety Data Sheet.

5. EYES

- Wear safety goggles when dealing with powdered substances.
- Wear UV filtering goggles/glasses when looking into hot kilns.
- Most ceramic materials can be washed out of the eye with a mild saline solution in an eye bath – have some on hand in the studio at all times.

6. FIRST AID

- Have an appropriate first aid kit in the studio and keep its supplies updated and fully stocked.

7. FUMES

- Kilns should be vented to the exterior of a building.
- BEWARE of lustre fumes during application and firing.

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