

**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES  
TECHNICAL TIPS AND PRODUCT INFORMATION #34**

**HANDBUILDING TECHNIQUES –  
SOLID MODELLING**

- Starting with a fresh block of clay, use a cutting wire to cut off a 'chunk' about the size of your intended piece.
- Using modelling tools and wire loop tools, sculpt the form you are trying to make in the solid lump of clay (head, torso, animal etc.)
- Once you have completed the form, leave it uncovered overnight to firm up. Next day, slice it in half with a cutting wire and remove the excess clay inside the form with a wire loop tool. No remaining part should be thicker than 1cm.
- Apply some 'slip' or 'slurry' (mashed up clay and water to toothpaste consistency) to the joins and scratch/score the two surfaces till they are moist. Press together firmly and run a coil of moist clay down the join to fill any gaps. Tidy up the detail in the join area and place the piece in a plastic bag for 2 weeks. Dry slowly!
- If your form does not have an open base, you will have to pierce one or some 5mm diameter holes in the base of the piece before drying to allow air to escape during firing.
- **NB** using a coarse hand building clay is the best way to ensure that your form will survive firing (if you have doubts about it being too thick). Naturally, a coarse clay will not give as precise detail as a fine clay. But, the fine clay will be less tolerant of fast firing if it is too thick.

**RECOMMENDED CLAY FOR THIS ACTIVITY**

**BEGINNERS: PS2000 Terracotta, PS3010 Stoneware, WEB White Earthenware**

**EXPERIENCED: PS4080 Fine White Earthenware, PS10 Porcelain, PS5000 Earthenware/Stoneware Blend**

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