

**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES
TECHNICAL TIPS AND PRODUCT INFORMATION #6**

POWDERED UNDERGLAZES

- Powdered underglazes are generally used for hand painting decoration onto bisque clay forms. The powdered underglaze is mixed with brushing and painting medium (and sometimes a little water) to form a thin consistency. This mixture is then applied to dust-free and grease-free bisque ware, and then covered with a suitable clear glaze. **DO NOT APPLY UNDERGLAZE COLOUR TOO THICKLY** as it can flake off if overapplied. One way to avoid this is to mix a little Ferro Frit 4124 into the mixture to increase the fluxing (melting) of the colour and therefore improve its adhesion to the clay body during firing.
- Powdered underglazes (mixed as described above) can also be applied to raw/unfired clay.
- Powdered underglazes can also be used to colour glaze, clay bodies or slips, just like stains (see Technical Tips and Product Information Sheet #5 Powdered Stains).
- Underglaze colours can be blended to create subtler and more complex colours to suit your personal taste. Care must be taken to ensure that tin based colours are not mixed with chrome based colours. Consult your price list for further information about which series of colours blend together.
- Underglaze colours have burnout temperatures which must be noted to ensure you do not lose certain colours from a design during the glaze firing. NB: pink and mauve colours are very susceptible to burning out above 1200°C.
- Underglaze colours are never intended to be fired in a reduction atmosphere in a gas kiln. An oxidation or neutral atmosphere is the correct environment for achieving the correct colour response. NB this does not mean that underglazes cannot be fired in reduction. They can be fired this way but may give a variety of undesirable responses other than that which the manufacturer intends. TEST colours prior to use to ensure their suitability for YOUR purposes.
- Powdered underglaze colours will last forever if stored in a dry, labeled jar out of contact with other materials.
- Underglaze powders and oxides are the primary colourants used in maiolica or inglaze (maiolica) decoration (see Technical Tips and Product Information Sheet #20 Maiolica).

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