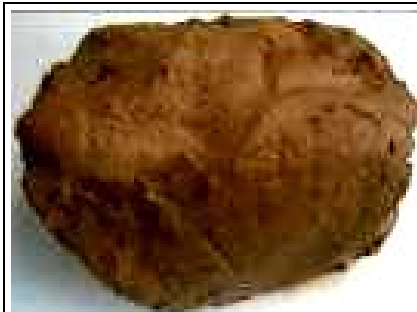


## Ceramics: Hand building. One way to hand build pots.

### EQUIPMENT: What you will need



Coarse clay (Raku clays are good)



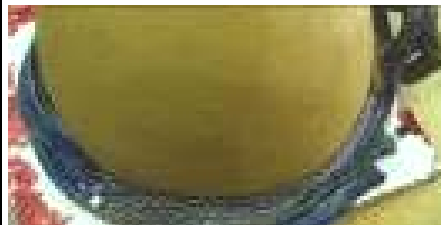
Wooden table or piece of long board for rolling coils



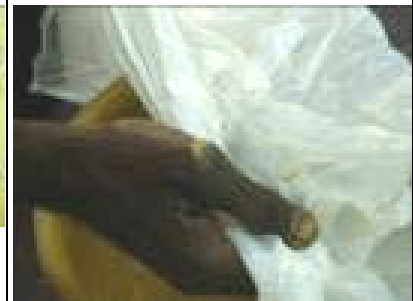
Wooden base board for building on



Tools for scraping e.g. large shell, wooden or metal kidneys



Strips of rags



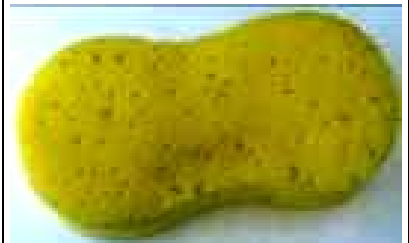
Big plastic sheeting or bags, for covering



Burnishing pebble /spoons



Bucket of water



Sponges



Wooden paddle



Cloth or fibre head ring

## SAFETY: How to stay safe

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A plastic apron will wipe clean. If clay dries on a cloth apron, it will make clay dust every time you move. That is bad for your breathing.

If you are making glazes, wear a respirator. Check that the cartridge is for dust particles, and change it according to specifications. Glaze materials can be very dangerous.

Always work with a clean container of water like a bucket, and a sponge and work towel. This will make cleaning up quick and easy.

If you are scratching or carving into clay, always wear a mask and work outside, use a clean paint brush to brush dust away.

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## Glossary: Words you need to understand

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**Leather-hard** is firm but still able to be worked a little. It will still feel damp and cool, and will keep its shape when turned over.

**Bone dry** is very dry clay that will no longer feel cool on touch. Likened to dried out bones that have been in the sun and have no moisture left.

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## Hand building pots

### Size

Decide how big the pot will be.

The baseboard needs to be a little bit bigger than the size of the pot.

Roll the first coil to make the base, joining two together if needed.

This is the top of the pot, as we are making it upside down.



### Coils

Roll second coil.

Hold the 2nd coil up, in your right hand. Place the coil on top and slightly to the inside of the first coil. This will start the shape of the bowl.

With your left hand push coil down firmly. Slide clay from the top coil with your thumb, over the first coil, on the inside.

This will join the coils. Join firmly and evenly all the way round.



## Coils

Keep rolling and adding more coils in this way.

Watch the shape that you are making.

It should keep growing up and curving inward.

Where you put the coils will make the shape.



## Shape the wall

When it is a good dome shape, put your arm inside it; use the paddle in a downward motion to beat the wall against your arm or hand.

This smooths, shapes and strengthens the wall.



## Make the base

The top will be the base. Drag the clay evenly toward the opening and slowly remove your finger from the hole.



### Shape the pot

Beat the pot with a paddle to make a rounded shape.

Flatten the base if you want the pot to stand up without a head ring.



### Leather hard

Dry pot slowly until it is **leather hard**.

To make sure it dries evenly, cover the base with damp rags to stop this part drying out too fast.



### Drying slowly

Cover loosely with a plastic sheet or opened plastic bag.

Make sure the plastic has some small holes in the middle.

Place some weights around the plastic to hold it down.

Dry it away from breezes and the sun.

This may take a day or two, so keep checking the pot.



### Turn the pot over

When the pot is leather hard, turn it over. Use a head ring if it has a rounded base.



### Smooth inside

The inside can now be scraped smooth.



### Shape the lip

Smooth the lip with tools, a sponge and paddle into the shape you want.



### Dry slowly until completely hard

The pot can now be dried slowly. Put it right side up, loosely covered with plastic, and out of breezes and the sun.



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## Tips: Hand building

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### **Burnishing**

This will make the clay shiny and compact, helping it to be waterproof, though it will not be completely waterproof. This was used many years ago before there were glazes.

The pot must be **leather hard** to burnish.

- use a smooth pebble or metal spoon.
- make small firm circles against the clay with your **burnishing** tool.
- support the pot from behind so that you can push firmly against the clay.
- the clay will compact and become dark and shiny.
- you may burnish several times.
- let the clay dry just a little between each burnish.

Do a final burnish with a little fine plastic or glad wrap wrapped over your finger. The pot will become more and more shiny.

**Do not let the clay dry too much or it will scratch when you burnish.**

Allow to dry as usual when burnishing is complete.