



Ceramic Studio Handbook





Clay Studio Protocols:

The Whitemarsh Art Center is a shared creative space dedicated to fostering learning and artistic growth. To ensure a productive and organized environment for everyone, the following protocols are in place:

Shelving and Storage:

1. Class Shelving:

- Each class is allocated specific shelving for student assignments. *This is non-negotiable* and takes priority over all other uses. All shelving for classes and otherwise will be clearly labeled. Confirm with your instructor which shelves are designated for your class work.
- Shelving for classroom assignments is reserved strictly for works related to class activities.

2. Greenware Overflow Shelving:

- Overflow shelving is available on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Works stored in this space should take as small a footprint as possible. Please be considerate of your fellow students when storing work.

3. Ownership and Respect:

- Students and participants are not permitted to move the work of another student.
- Shelves not explicitly assigned to a class or individual must remain available for communal use.
- If there's any uncertainty about shelf usage, students must consult an instructor before placing or moving items.

4. Open Studio Storage:

- Open studio participants are not automatically provided shelving or storage.
- Participants must bring their own supplies and take them home after each session unless they rent shelving space.

5. Rental Option:

- Students and open studio participants may rent additional shelving if space permits. Rentals must be arranged with studio staff.

Kiln Usage and Supplies:

1. Kiln Access:

- Only the kiln technician is permitted to use kiln supplies or operate kiln equipment, including loading, unloading, and scheduling firings.
- Unauthorized use of kiln space or supplies is strictly prohibited.

2. Firing Readiness:

- Only works that are 100% ready for firing may be placed on the firing shelves. This means:
 - The piece is clean and dry.
 - It does not require additional supports, props, boards, or plastic.

3. Consequences of Improper Placement:

- **Damaged Work** — Improperly prepared or labeled pieces may be mistakenly included in firing loads, leading to potential damage to the work itself or others' work.
- **Damaged Equipment** — Misplaced or unprepared work can damage kiln equipment, resulting in costly repairs, slower firing schedules, or even halting all firings.
 - *Kiln delays or damage affect everyone at the art center, including students, open studio participants, and instructors.*

4. Problem Pot Shelf:

- Works that are not ready or improperly labeled will not be discarded. Instead, they will be moved to a designated Problem Pot Shelf for resolution.
- It is the student's responsibility to address the issue promptly to avoid delays in firing.

Studio Etiquette:

1. Consulting Instructors:

- Students must always confer with instructors about where items should go, including shelves, firing areas, and overflow spaces.
- Instructors will introduce this protocol to their students at the start of every course to ensure clarity and consistency.

2. Shared Space Considerations:

- Space is at a premium; all users must respect the needs of classes and other participants.
- Works left in inappropriate areas or interfering with classroom activities may be relocated or removed by staff.

3. Respect for Mission:

- The art center's priority is to support education and artistic exploration. Personal production for commercial purposes is not the primary mission of this space. While such activities may be permitted within limits, they must not interfere with classes or shared resources.

4. Cleanliness:

- Students and participants must clean their workspace after use, including tables, tools, and shared equipment.

5. Instructor Authority:

- Instructors have the authority to enforce these guidelines, including reallocating shelving, moving misplaced works and addressing conflicts.

End-of-Session Work Pickup

1. Timely Pickup:

- Students are required to pick up all their work promptly at the end of a session.
- The art center will send out an email to all students with a deadline for pickup.

2. Discard Policy:

- Any work not picked up by the stated deadline—before the start of the next session — will be discarded (or offered for sale) by staff.
- This policy ensures space is available for incoming students and classes.

By adhering to these guidelines and actively communicating with instructors, we can ensure the clay studio remains an inspiring and equitable space for all.

Important Reminders:

Absolutely, NO SANDING OR GRINDING IN THE STUDIO!
Please sand or grind outside (while wearing a mask).

Clay:

- Your first bag of clay is free with class registration. Additional clay is available for purchase using the QR code in the studio (or at the front desk).
- All students in throwing classes will receive Laguna 55 Off-White Stoneware Clay.
- We also stock: Standard 306; Laguna 80 and Whiter Stoneware – Laguna 65.
- Specialty clays will require an additional cost (ask your teacher for details):
 - Standard 365 Porcelain Clay \$15
 - Standard 365 Porcelain Paper Clay \$25
 - Max's Laguna Paper Clay \$10.
- NO OUTSIDE CLAY IS ALLOWED
- All work must be made at the Whitemarsh Art Center

Cleaning:

- Please start cleaning up BEFORE the end of class.
- NO CLAY DOWN THE SINKS — all slurry goes in the slurry buckets.
Contact the teacher if buckets are full.
- Clean as much clay as you can off your splash pans and buckets before washing. Wash all tools thoroughly.
- Ware boards and bats must be cleaned and stacked neatly.
- Wipe tables with a wet sponge. Wipe down any areas and glaze buckets that you used to help cut down on dust.
- Shake canvases outside and fold with dark side inwards. Sweep up clay trimmings around and underneath wheels.
- Turn off wheels, unplug, put the plug, pedal and stool up on wheels.
- Please do your part and help keep the studio clean.

Glazing

Kilns are fired when there is enough work to fill them.

- Leave a 1/4" of unglazed space around foot.
- Wipe off the bottoms of your pots
- Unwashed pots will be put on the Problem Shelf.

Why are we adamant about keeping the studio clean?

Silicosis is a serious and fatal respiratory disease: Silicosis can result from exposure to fine silica particles that are present in clay. Those working with clay for an extended period of time need to protect themselves against dust inhalation that could cause irreparable lung damage. Dry dust is the most dangerous element in the ceramic studio. This dry dust contains Silica particles, which are extremely small pieces of glass that once inhaled will cut into the healthy lung. Cleaning the studio after every use will help cut down on that dust. As a potter it is important to understand the dangers of Silicosis so that we can all stay safe. Please remember, a clean studio is a healthy and happy studio.

Open Studio

Open Studio sessions are only available to students currently enrolled in a Ceramics class, and members who've taken a ceramics class within the last six months. It is an opportunity for independent work and not for production. All work must be made at the art center.

Materials: Participants are required to use clay purchased from Whitemarsh Art Center. A registration option has been provided for those who need to purchase clay. Prices include glazing and firing.

Registration Deadline: Students must register by midnight the night before and pay online; pay-at-the-door is not accepted at this time.

Whitemarsh Art Center

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