

POTTERY STUDIO

Guidelines and Procedures



explore.wspr.ca

250-478-8384

Welcome to Pottery

With West Shore Parks & Recreation

Our Vision

Inspire our community to learn and be creative in our welcoming, fun, and inclusive pottery studio.

Our Mission

West Shore Parks & Recreation is dedicated to providing recreational potters with a community gathering space to be creative with clay. Our space is intended to be inclusive, accessible, and friendly. Our classes provide comprehensive instruction on a variety of pottery techniques. Open Studio Time (previously known as Drop-in Pottery) allows those with previous pottery experience to work independently in the studio, in shared creative space.

Open Studio Time Guidelines

The procedures, rules and guidelines outlined in this manual are intended to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment of the studio. Please ensure you have read and understood the manual prior to each term.

Pre-Requisites to Attend

Studio users must have a good working knowledge of the ceramic process and be able to work independently, as instruction is not available during open studio times. All participants new to pottery at our studio must also attend a studio orientation before their first open studio time visit. Orientation dates and times are available for viewing on our website.



Open Studio Time and Drop-in Pottery - Days and Times

The studio is open 7 days a week for various registered time slots. We offer both daytime and evening studio time slots. Please visit our website for more information about open studio time and registration. Registration is required for all open studio time programs.

Please note that open studio time and drop-in pottery is staffed by volunteers. While we do our best to avoid any disruptions to the open studio time schedule, hours are subject to change.

Clay and Glazes

We offer a variety of clays and glazes to purchase and use in our studio.

Please see our clay chart at the studio for available clays. Clay bodies may change based on availability.

Recycled clay is also available at a reduced price.

NOTE: Recycled clay is not ready to use when purchased. It takes a considerable amount of drying and wedging before it is usable.

Please see our glaze wall for all available glazes. Glazes are changed regularly.

Facilities and Equipment

- 12 throwing wheels
- 3 kilns
- Glazing room
- Hand building area
- Wedging table
- Slab roller
- Shelves to store clay and works in progress

Please purchase clay on our website (explore.wspr.ca) or via JDF reception (either in person or by calling 250-478-8384). Present your receipt at the studio to pick up clay.



Open Studio Time and Drop-in Pottery Procedures

- A volunteer will sign you in at the beginning of each visit
- Please do not enter the studio outside of your registered time slot as you may disrupt classes
- Please ensure you begin clean up with adequate time to leave the studio at closing time
- Each participant is responsible for clean up of all equipment, tools, and areas of use for that day- see our cleaning tips and tricks on page 6

Storage

Each open studio time registrant is allocated one cubby. Cubbies are assigned by our pottery technician. Please do not switch your cubby numbers. All cubbies must be cleared out by the end of the registered session if you do not plan to return. If a user has not registered at the start of the new session and their shelf will be cleared out to make space for other users. Items will be placed into storage and/or disposed of at the studio's discretion. Please note that Centennial Centre is open to the public so we recommend that you do not store any valuable items in your cubby. WSPR is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.

Drying Space

No more than 18" x 18" of communal shelf space may be used by one person. Our studio is not intended for production work. ***Items stored improperly, unlabeled, or taking up additional space in any studio areas for more than 14 days are subject to removal at the studio's discretion.***

Firing

Please pick up fired items as quickly as possible to allow space for newly-fired items!

The kiln room is a staff-only area. Only items made in the studio using clay purchased from the studio will be fired. Please do not bring pieces from home to be fired. Large items, flat plates, and tall pieces will take longer to fire. Boards and boxes should be kept off firing shelves, as they can shift and break other pieces. A variety of participants pieces will take precedent over one person's production of multiple items when kiln loading. At times classes and camps will also take priority. The firing schedule posted on the kiln room door is a guideline only and can change for any number of reasons (including but not limited to kiln issues and repairs).

Bisque Firing

Only work that is ready to be bisque fired shall go on the bisque fire shelves. You are responsible for how fast your work dries. Thicker pieces take longer to dry, and will therefore take longer to fire.

Glaze Firing

We fire to Cone 6 Oxidation. Do not apply glazes to surfaces which will touch a kiln shelf and 1/4" up the side of the piece. Wax must be applied to the bottoms of posts to resist glaze while dipping. Please ensure that you sponge residual spots of glaze off the pot bottoms. All glazed pieces must be bisque fired, we do not do single fire. Improperly glazed pieces will not be fired.

Firing may take 3-5 weeks depending on the time of the year, kiln maintenance, staff vacations, and other factors that may contribute to a delay in firing.

Studio Rules

- Clay used in the studio must have been purchased at West Shore Parks and Recreation, and all parts of the production process must be completed in our studio for items to be fired in our kiln
- No sanding of pottery is allowed in the studio as clay dust is a respiratory health hazard when air born. Minimize dust by using a wet sponge instead of scraping clay or glaze
- Operate equipment only after receiving instruction on how to operate safely.
- Do not use wax or cutting tools directly on canvas, use a ware board under your clay
- When using red clay please use areas and equipment specifically labeled for red clay, and be extra diligent with clean up, as contamination with red clay can ruin other pieces
- Please share the table space and only work in one area at a time (wheel, table, glaze areas) when the studio is busy
- Please tidy your work area and leave equipment available to others when leaving the studio for a break
- Participants are to provide their own basic tools (throwing tools, calipers, hand building tools)
- We encourage you to admire the work of others, but please do not touch
- Take care when moving about the studio, to avoid bumping someone while they are working
- Complete pieces in a timely manner so that pottery in progress does not take up shelf space for prolonged periods of time
- Be considerate of fellow workers, take phone calls outside
- Please refrain from wearing scented products in the studio
- Smoking is not permitted anywhere on West Shore Parks and Recreation property
- Please recycle as much of your clay as possible rather than using the communal recycle bin
- Clay debris from the floor goes into the trash, not the recycle bin
- Report any damage or other problems to the attendant

Please refer to the following document for additional procedures:

Open Studio Time and Drop-in Pottery – Participant Information

***This document can be found online at: explore.wspr.ca**

Violation of studio rules and procedures listed above and throughout this manual may result in suspension from the studio.

Help us keep the studio clean and green!

The studio is a shared space. Please leave wheels, wedging tables, work tables, and any other equipment in a condition where the next person using the equipment/tables can begin working immediately. Please ensure you leave time at the end of your visit to clean the areas in which you were working. A clean studio is everyone's responsibility!

- Clean all tools and return them to where you found them
- Wipe down all tables, wheels, workspaces, or equipment you use
- Use wet methods to clean whenever possible
- Towels, fabric, and cloths must be well-rinsed after use to prevent clay dust from gathering
- Turn off electric equipment (wheels, fans, etc.) after you have finished using them

Helpful hints for cleaning

- Use a sponge first, rinse the sponge before starting
- On canvas covered tables, use lots of water to penetrate and remove clay, rinsing the sponge as needed.
- After you have finished, rinse the sponge completely and wipe over everything a second time
- Continue rinsing out the sponge and wiping the surface until it is no longer leaving streaks

Cleaning wheels

- Wheel heads and pans are to be cleaned after each use
- Use the mop to clean splatter and trimming shavings around wheel areas
- Wheels are to be turned off after each use

Health & Safety

Clay **dust** can cause silicosis. Please avoid actions that will cause clay dust to become airborne. All cleaning is to be done through "wet" methods (mopping) vs. "dry" methods (sweeping).

- Anything that creates dust should be done outside, well away from the doorway and windows while wearing a NIOSH approved respirator.
- Dress in comfortable clothing which may get dirty! Loose clothing which may accidentally find its way into equipment such as wheels should also be avoided. Long hair should be tied back.
- Tetanus immunization is recommended in last 10 years
- Extreme caution must be used around the kiln; it can be hot and is fragile
- All glaze and clay spills must be wet sponged immediately.
- Glazes contain hazardous elements-avoid skin contact and wash your hands when you are done glazing
- An eyewash station is available should glaze or other materials come into contact with your eyes
- For first aid assistance please call the maintenance radio by dialing extension 250-474-8660

Glazing tips

- Ensure wax is very dry before dipping in glaze
- Be aware of those around you prior to dipping
- Glazes must be applied by brushing or dipping
- Spraying, air brushing and dusting is not permitted
- Proper instruction of participants using glazes is required to prevent contamination of glazes
- Check to ensure that glaze names on lids match their buckets
- Inform the attendant if the glaze bucket is empty or low
- If a glaze appears too thin or thick notify an attendant and don't use it. Do not thin or decant glazes yourself
- Use tongs to dip, then use a paintbrush to dab tong marks after dipping-try not to touch bucket bottom/sides
- Make sure each coat of glaze dries completely before glazing again
- Try not to get glaze on your hands, and wash hands after glazing
- Glazes, slips and stains cannot be packaged or bottled up in private containers for personal use at home as this depletes the bucket levels for dipping and the materials are very expensive
- Do not mix glazes together
- Clean up glaze area when finished: rinse all brushes, bowls, pouring cups, stirrers, etc., making certain that all the equipment is thoroughly cleaned of glaze before returning equipment to proper storage area
- Clean brushes used for waxing thoroughly with soap and hot water
- Wipe up glaze splatter on bucket lids and dollies
- Mop the glaze floor area where you have been working

Pottery Lingo

Wedging - a lot like kneading dough. Blending the clay for even distribution of moisture and ridding the clay of air pockets. Clay can be re-worked indefinitely to use again and again.

Kiln – heating unit in which the clay is fired.

Leather hard – a stage in the drying of clay where it has become almost rigid but is still damp. It is stiff but not completely dry. This is an ideal time to trim or tool.

Green ware - before the clay has been fired. Usually dry, and very fragile. If soaked, will return to its original state.

Bisque firing - the first time the clay is fired it becomes hardened, ready to accept glaze. The firing changes the composition of the clay from clay to ceramic. A bisque-fired pot will not disintegrate when encountering water.

Glaze ware - bisque ware is glazed and fired at a higher temperature resulting in a non-porous, vitrified ceramic body, usually covered with a layer of glaze creating a glassy surface.

