

STUDIO HANDBOOK

Last updated on 15 Dec

Hazards in the studio

NO sharp tools: Do not bring in any sharp tools into the studio.

NO hazardous materials: Do not bring in any materials that contain lead or cadmium.

Kilns while cooling: We fire kilns overnight when no one is in the studio. However, the kiln is still very hot even when it's cooling. Please be aware of this and try to stay away from the kilns when they are hot.

During the sessions

NO teaching: Drop-in sessions differ from classes and workshops as they do not include instruction. Participants are expected to be self-sufficient. Mizuyo or a designated assistant will be available to assist in case of any issues.

Respect each other: The studio is a communal workspace meant to be shared by all. Please show consideration for your fellow potters by respecting their work and personal space. Avoid handling others' work unless it is absolutely necessary, as this can result in damage from misplacement or improper handling, especially for pieces that are in progress and stored on the shelves.

Eating & Drinking: Consuming food is not permitted within the studio. However, you are welcome to make yourself a cup of tea at the small kitchen area near the sink. If you wish to eat, you may do so outside on the balcony by bringing a chair with you.

Dust: Take precautions against ceramic dust by keeping surfaces clean. Always use a wet sponge or mop to minimise the amount of dust floating in the air. Additionally, it is important to familiarise yourself with our Health and Safety in Ceramics guidelines.

Production

Using studio clays: The studio provides access to three basic clays: White Stoneware, Terracotta, and Crank. The amount of clay used in your work will be weighed and used to calculate the firing and material fee, which includes glaze usage. This fee will be charged based on the weight of the clay used.

Using other clays: The studio also stocks Black Clay and Porcelain, which can be purchased by the bag. You are also welcome to bring your own clay or coordinate with other makers or the studio to acquire clays not provided. However, some clays are not compatible with our studio clays and must be kept separate at all times. If you are unsure, please speak with Mizuyo.

Recycling clay: Please make an effort to recycle clay whenever possible. Dried or partially dried clay and slurry should be placed in designated recycling buckets. Clay in a state between slurry and solid can be left on water-resistant MDF or plaster boards provided by the studio.

We have separate recycling buckets for <White Stoneware> and <other studio clays>. However, if you use clays with a high manganese content (such as some black clays) or porcelain, you will need to recycle them separately, as they are not permitted to be recycled in our studio buckets.

Keeping your work-in-progress on the shelf: Place your pieces on a board that is appropriately sized and use shelf space efficiently. If your pieces are hand-built, it is recommended to cover them with plastic wrap or to properly wrap them to prevent excessive drying. Clearly label your pieces with your name and the date of creation, either on the board, your piece, or the wrap, so that they are easily recognizable to others.

If your work is too wet and delicate to be wrapped at the end of the session, please speak to Mizuyo or an assistant. We will wrap them at the appropriate time.

Signature on every piece: Before placing your pieces in the drying shelf, it is important to ensure that each piece is marked with your signature or personal mark to prevent any confusion with other people's work.

Wax resist and brushes: When using wax resist, please remember to rinse your wax brushes with boiling hot water before and after use to ensure proper maintenance.

Glazing: You are welcome to use all of the glazes available in the studio. However, it is a good idea to let others know when you are glazing, so everyone is aware of your delicate work. Our glazing bench is not large enough to be shared with another person, so if necessary, please use a section of the larger table and inform others at the table. To avoid cross-contamination, make sure to keep clay and glaze separate. Additionally, it is important to wash your hands, arms, and glazing tools thoroughly every time you switch to a different glaze to prevent contamination.

Making your own glaze: Feel free to bring or make your own glaze, but please be aware that a comprehensive understanding of glaze creation is necessary. If you're interested in learning about Glaze Technology, please speak with Mizuyo. When there is a sufficient number of individuals interested, we would be glad to organise a class on the subject.

Strictly no glaze on the base: It is important to ensure that the bottom surface of all pieces is properly cleaned before glaze firing. The glaze should be removed at least 2 mm from the base of the piece. If the piece has multiple layers of glaze, it may be necessary to remove the glaze more

extensively. Failure to properly clean the piece may result in it becoming stuck to the kiln shelf, requiring chiselling to remove it. This may result in a charge for any damage done to the kiln or its shelves. To avoid this, it is recommended to make a clay disc to place under the piece during firing.

Technical questions: If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to Mizuyo or a technician. We will be more than happy to assist you and answer any questions you may have. Just ask when we are available.

Storage

Tools and materials: Storage shelves are available for members who are eligible. It is recommended that you label your tools with your name to avoid confusion with the studio tools and the others'.

Firing

Queue for the firings: Please make sure each piece has your signature, as this will help us keep track of whose work is in the kiln. If your pieces are not properly marked, we may not include them in the firing process. When your work is ready for bisque or glaze firing, place it on the designated shelves and boards. This will help us to ensure that the firing process is organised and efficient.

Firing schedule: Your work will be fired when completely dry. The drying time for small and thin-walled pieces is typically 3-7 days, while larger and thicker pieces may require more time. We will make every effort to fire your work as soon as a space becomes available in the kiln. However depending on the size and shape of your pieces, it may not always be possible to accommodate them in the next firing. Firings are typically conducted in 2-3 week cycles, and it is at the discretion of Mizuyo to determine when a piece is ready for firing.

Firing costs: The cost of materials and firing (including glazes) is not included in the session fee. The cost is calculated based on the weight (£5.5 per kilogram of soft paste clay) and the space it takes up in the kiln. On average, the cost is roughly as follows. Please note that large, flat shapes and tall shapes may incur a higher charge, as they require more kiln space.

Roughly costs: Well thrown mugs: £2.00 - , plates (up to 20cm) : £6 - , plates (larger than 20cm): £15 -

NO external Work in the kiln: We do not fire work made outside our studio. We strive to maintain the highest standards of quality and safety for all our members, and as such, we only fire work created within our facilities.

Hiring a kiln: If you are a regular member and require specific temperature conditions for your glaze, you may rent one of our kilns. The cost of the rental will vary depending on the size of the kiln, the firing temperature, and the duration of the firing. Before you can rent a kiln, you must receive a

training session on how to properly pack a kiln. If you are interested, please speak with mizuyo for more information.

Cleaning

Strictly NO clay in the sink: To prevent blocking the drain pipe, we prepare water in big green/blue flexi tubs on the surface by the sink where we wash our hands, arms and tools thoroughly before rinsing them under running tap water. The dark green/blue tubs are for mixed clay, the lighter colour tubs are for white clay. Please be mindful of which clay you are working with and not to let any clay particles get into the drain.

Dust: To ensure the health and safety of all members, it is crucial to avoid exposure to clay dust, as it can lead to a serious lung disease called silicosis. The effects of this condition are irreversible and accumulate over time, making it imperative to take appropriate precautions. Be mindful of not generating clay dust and protect not only yourself but also your fellow potters.

Wheel: With a large clean wet sponge go over the surface multiple times to ensure a thorough cleaning. This means that you should clean the wheel and stools to the level of cleanliness that you would expect and desire for your own use. Ensure that the surface is free from any clay residue or debris so that it is ready for your next use.

Table: Please make sure the table surface is tidy after your use.

Tools: Please ensure that all the tools you used during your session are cleaned and returned to where you found them.

Floor: Please clean any mess or spills you may have made. By doing so, you help us maintain a clean and safe environment for everyone to use. Thank you for your cooperation.

Health and Safety in Ceramics

Please read the Health and Safety in ceramics. A PDF file on this topic can be found in a PDF file on our website or in the attachment included in the booking confirmation email.