



## HOW TO MAKE A COIL POT – Air Dry Clay

Students learn how to create coils of clay and join them one on top of another to create a small pot.

Required Time

80 Minutes

Grade Level

Grade 3 to Grade 8

Subject

Art Techniques

Vocabulary

air dry clay  
coil  
handbuilding  
score  
slab  
slip

Materials

Crayola Air-Dry Clay - 1.13 kg white

Slip

Toothbrush

Bamboo Skewers

Small Plastic Containers

Plastic Placemats - 1 per student

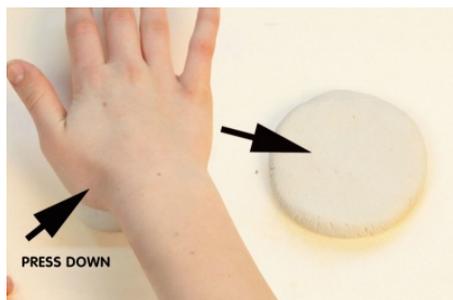
Paper Towels

Shop Crayola  
Products

# Steps

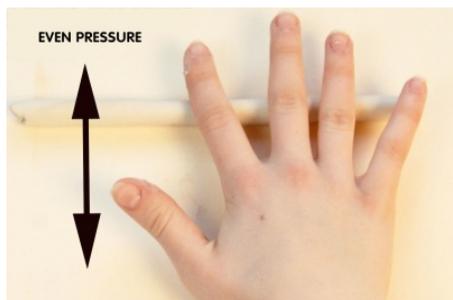
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## Step One



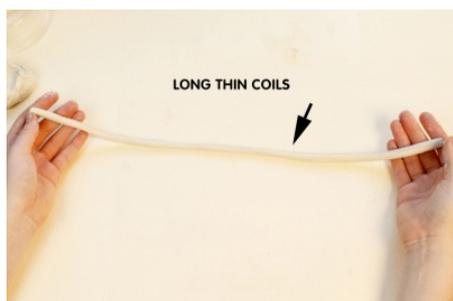
1. Take a small piece of clay about the size of a plum.
2. Roll it into a ball.
3. Place the ball on the plastic placemat.
4. Press down with the heel of your hand to flatten it into a circle.
5. It should be about as thick as your small finger.
6. This will be the base of your pot.

## Step Two



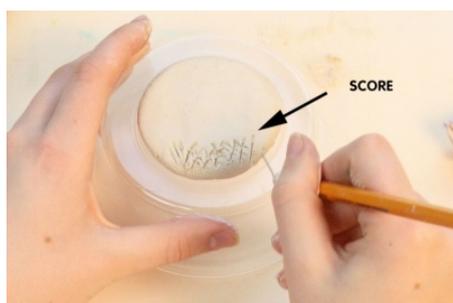
1. Take a small amount of clay and squeeze it into a long sausage shape.
2. Spread your fingers and apply even pressure as you roll the clay into a long cylinder.
3. Keep the thickness of the coil even and round.

## Step Three



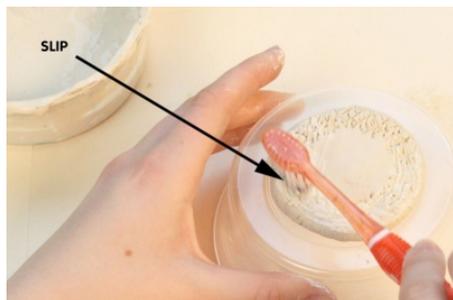
1. Roll a long, thin coil.

## Step Four

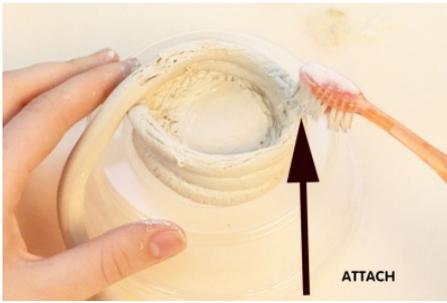


1. Place the clay base on an upside down plastic container.
2. Use a pin tool to make some scratch marks on the outer edge of the base.  
*- make a pin tool by taping an open paperclip to the end of a pencil*
3. This is called **SCORING** the clay.

## Step Five

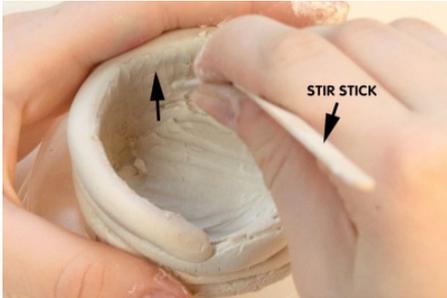


1. Use a toothbrush to apply slip to the score marks.  
*- make **SLIP** by mixing some clay with water until it is like a creamy milkshake*



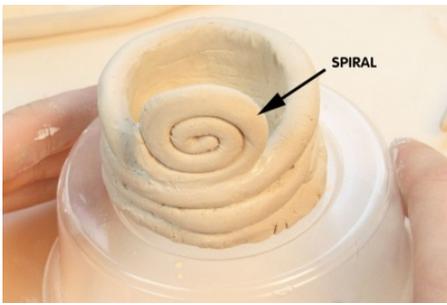
### Step Six

1. Place the coil on top of the scored clay.
2. Gently wind the coil around the outer edge of the base.
3. Make sure you blend each end of the clay coil into the clay.



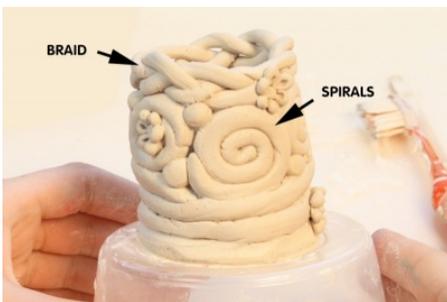
### Step Seven

1. Continue adding coils, attaching one to another using the score and slip technique.
2. Blend the coils together on the inside of your pot.
3. Use the end of a stir stick to blend the clay coils.
4. Support the outside of the pot with one hand when you are smoothing the inside.



### Step Eight

1. Use coils to make decorative elements on your pot.
  - roll a short coil into a spiral
  - attach it using score and slip technique



### Step Nine

1. When you are satisfied with your design set the pot aside and allow it to dry for about one week.
2. It will be white when it is dry and ready to be painted.

# Learning Goals

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Students will be able to:

- create a small, sturdy coil pot;
- use slip and score technique to join coils of clay;
- explain their process;
- express opinions about the artworks;
- demonstrate technical accomplishment and creativity.

## Extensions

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Have students explore other projects using air dry clay using the lesson plans available on this website, for example,

- **Medicine Wheel**
- **Seated Clay Figure**
- **Fantastical Clay Animal**
- **Something For Mother**

## Prepare

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1. Create a sample.
2. Prepare enough slip for each group of students. (Mix a small amount of clay with water until it is the consistency of a thick, creamy milkshake.)
3. Gather enough plastic mats and small plastic containers (about 11 cm diameter) so each student has one.
4. Make sure you have a place to store the completed pots while they dry.
5. Place students into small groups so they can share tools.
6. Download images of coil pots from the Internet, for example,  
**Navajo Clay Studio**  
**Stone Age Pot**
7. Download and display the *Form* and *Texture* **posters** available on this website.

## Introduction

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1. View and discuss several images of clay pots.
2. Share information about pottery, for example,
  - *pottery is one of the earliest crafts humans invented*
  - *prehistoric humans figured out how to use clay to line woven grass baskets*
  - *the clay shrunk inside the basket, but held its shape*
  - *they discovered they could make the clay hard and strong by heating it in fire*
  - *from as early as 400 BCE pottery was made in large quantities to be sold or traded*
  - *Egyptians created kiln - a special oven for baking clay*
  - *Greeks perfected the form and decoration of their clay pots*
  - *people in medieval times figured out how to make pots strong enough to cook with*
  - *pots can be made using a pottery wheel, or by using handbuilding techniques*
3. Explain that they are going to learn how to make their own clay pot using a *handbuilding* techniques.
  - *they will be rolling long snakes of clay called coils, which is why this pot is called a coil pot*
4. Introduce the challenge.

## Activities

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### The Challenge

1. Create a small, sturdy coil pot.
2. Use slip and score technique to join coils of clay.
3. Explain your process.
4. Express opinions about the works.
5. Demonstrate technical accomplishment and creativity.

### The Process

1. Make sure everyone understands the challenge.
2. Establish success criteria with your students, for example,  
I know I am successful when I have:
  - *constructed a pot using skillful handbuilding techniques*
  - *rolled straight, even coils*
  - *used score and slip joining technique correctly*
  - *created a pot that is sturdy and in good condition*
3. Guide students through the steps outlined in this lesson plan.
4. Encourage students to always join clay using the score and slip technique.
5. Observe students as they work.
6. Provide individual assistance and encouragement.

# Sharing

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1. Have students work with a partner.
2. Ask them to take turns discussing the completed pots. They must find:
  - *3 things that interest them about how the work was made;*
  - *what the artist found challenging;*
  - *what the artist thought was easy; and*
  - *how the artist felt about making this coil pot and why.*
3. Once everyone has had a chance to share ask students to report back to the whole class.
4. Have students tell what they learned about their **partner's** work/process.

# Assessment

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1. Observe students as they work – thoughtful focus, discriminating, seeking more information, elaborating, experimenting
2. Observe students as they share and discuss their pots – active listening, insightful contributions, supporting ideas with evidence found in the artwork and from personal experience.
3. Use a checklist to track progress. (Downloads - CoilPotI\_tracking.pdf)
4. Have students use the self-assessment form to reflect on their work. (Downloads - CoilPot\_self-assessment.pdf)