

Decorating Methods

Decorating Clay

- There are numerous ways to decorate clay.
- Some decorative techniques are done to clay before it is fired and others are done to clay after it is bisque fired (fired for the 1st time).

The following techniques are done Before Firing

Definitions:

Plastic clay – plastic clay is clay that has lots of moisture. It is wet, mushy, and moldable.

Leather hard clay – leather hard clay is clay that has been allowed to dry to a bit, it retains its shape, a lot of the water has evaporated, however the clay is still wet enough to scratch into the surface. The clay is still dark grey in color. If you try to bend a piece of leather hard clay it will break.

Incising

Scratching into the surface of clay



Incising is done on **plastic** or **leather hard** clay
but
looks best when done to leather hard clay

Carving

Removing portions of clay but not going all the way through a piece



Carving can be done on **plastic** or **leather hard** clay
but
looks best when done to leather hard clay

Impressing

pressing or stamping an object into clay



Impressing must be done on **plastic** clay

Appliqué

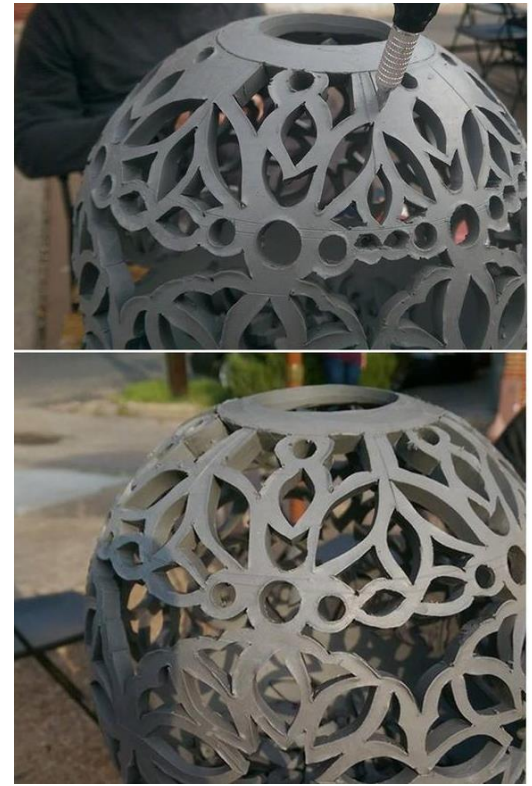
attaching one piece of clay to another



Appliqué can be done on **plastic** or **leather hard** clay

Piercing

Cutting all the way through the clay



Piercing is done on **leather hard** clay

Sgraffito

Leather hard clay is coated with a layer of slip of contrasting color and then a pattern or picture is added by **incising** through the slip to reveal the clay underneath.



Slip Trailing

Slip is applied to the **leather hard** clay through a tube or nozzle, much like icing a cake



Burnishing

Rubbing **leather hard** or **bone dry** clay with a smooth object to create a shiny surface similar to a **glaze** – creates a polished look without actually **glazing** the clay in a **kiln**.



The following techniques are done
after the first firing

Glazing

A glass-like surface coating for ceramics that is used to decorate and seal the pores of the fired clay.

(After Firing)



More Coming Soon....