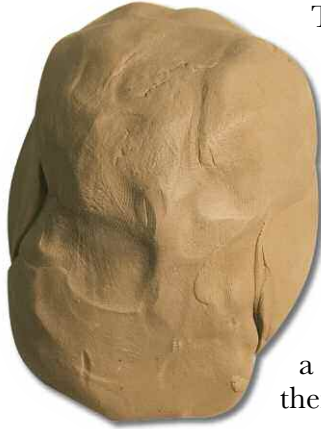


Natural Clay



To the uninitiated, it's just 'a lump of clay'. . .to those who have had the opportunity to feel and manipulate that clay it's a world of possibilities... vases, bowls, boxes, mugs, signs, sculptures and more.

Whether you choose to use a wheel or create hand built pieces there are many tools that can assist you in your efforts. The shape of a tool often suggests its best use, however you are the artist; there is no firm right or wrong way. If it works for you, great!



For those making small pieces, or who like fine detail, Loew-Cornell offers smaller sized boxwood and wire end tools. These are also ideal for use with polymer, air dry and oven bake clays.

What is Clay?



For as long as the earth has existed, clay has been forming. And, since prehistoric times when man discovered fire and its many possibilities, people have been engaging in "ceramics" the molding, drying and firing of clay into decorative and functional objects.

Formed from the deterioration of feldspathic rock, a basic component of the earth's crust, clay can be found throughout the world. Many varieties of clay occur naturally depending upon the original rock and whether the clay - essentially alumina, silica and water - combines with other naturally occurring "impurities" like minerals and other types of broken down rock. These impurities change the properties of clay, including its plasticity, shrinkage, firing temperature, final color etc.

Clays used today are often enhanced with a variety of other ingredients to increase their suitability for the ceramic trade. Earthenware, terra cotta, stoneware and porcelain are some of the most popular types of clay used by artists for hand-formed, wheel thrown or molded pieces.



Clay Tools & Their Uses

Pottery Tool Kit

An excellent starter kit, especially for those who will be working on a wheel, the PTK offers essential tools needed to prepare and form your clay pieces.

A. Sponge - Use to add or remove water to clay when working on the wheel. A damp sponge is also ideal for smoothing clay, cleaning and smoothing greenware and general clean-up around the studio.
Greenware is dry, but unfired clay.

B. Wooden Rib - Used on the wheel to help apply even pressure when shaping and forming pieces. A rib might be used on the inside or outside of the piece.

C. Trimmer - Good for rough shaping and removal of excess clay.

D. Wire Tool - More precise than a trimmer, work can be shaped, sculpted and carved with more detail. Carving is often done when clay is leather hard; firm, damp and cold to the touch, but not wet.

E. Needlepoint Tool - On the wheel this finely pointed tool is ideal for scribing lines, bursting air bubbles, and leveling rims. When hand building pieces it can be used to rough up surfaces that are to be joined, scribe decorative lines and make holes in beads, buttons, or pieces that will be hung.

F. Flat Trimming Stick - An overall scraper and shaper, the flat trimming stick is used to cut, slice and trim clay balls which have been centered on the wheel and also trim the base of cylindrical shaped objects.

G. Wire Cutters - Used to slice clay during wedging and cut pieces from the wheel head.

H. Metal Rib - Thin and flexible, the metal rib can be contoured to fit an area for scraping, smoothing & forming.



Boxwood Modeling Tools



Boxwood modeling tools are smooth, strong and lightweight. Although plastic tools are available and sometimes a more economical choice for beginners, wood tools are usually preferred for their stiffness, durability and slight absorbency. Loew-Cornell offers double-ended boxwood tools in 6" & 8" lengths and a slim line smaller version in a variety of shapes that can be used to carve, smooth, slice and create textures and holes in clay.



Smooth clay where two pieces have been joined.



Create texture by carving an add-on motif.



Pushing in to create patterns



Carving removes areas of clay



Scribing Texture

Clay Tools & Their Uses

Wire End Tools



Available with a round or flat wire, these tools let you precisely remove areas of clay to smooth, shape and carve. Carving is often done when the clay is leather hard. (*Firm & slightly dry.*)

A round wire will produce a softer edge than the flat wire. There are many styles available and clay can be removed using the broad part of the tool (A), or the corners (B) for deeper, narrower cuts. Small ribbon tools are ideal for precise sculpting.

Right hand photos:

- A. Broad, flat wire tool
- B. Round wire tool being used at the corner.
- C. Flat wire tool with a rounded head.



Ribbon Tool



Flat Wire



Round Wire

Brushes

A variety of good natural hair brushes are useful for applying slip and glazes. Soft mops and nicely shaped round and flat brushes will serve most purposes.



Series 274



Series BB



Series 165



Series 796 - White Nylon



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Clay Tools & Their Uses

Greenware Cleaning Tools



Greenware, clay which is dry, but not yet fired, often needs to be smoothed and trimmed. This is particularly true of mold poured pieces. A variety of stiff metal shaped tools will come in handy for this task along with items like sponges, sandpaper and small, nylon spiral brushes. These handled brushes are particularly good inside of objects and other hard to reach places.



Many greenware tools and a variety of other specialty shaped tools found in Loew-Cornell Clay Tool sets can also be used to carve and detail both greenware and leatherhard (not fully dry) clay.



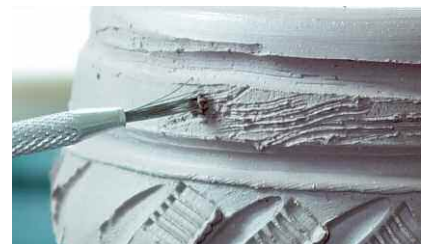
Cleaning/Carving Tool

This tool can be used to clean greenware seams from mold pieces, carve clay or add texture.



Wire Tool

Use to create surface texture or rough up clay for better adhesion when joining two pieces.



Spiral Hand Drill



Hole Tool



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Clay Tools & Their Uses

Clay Gun

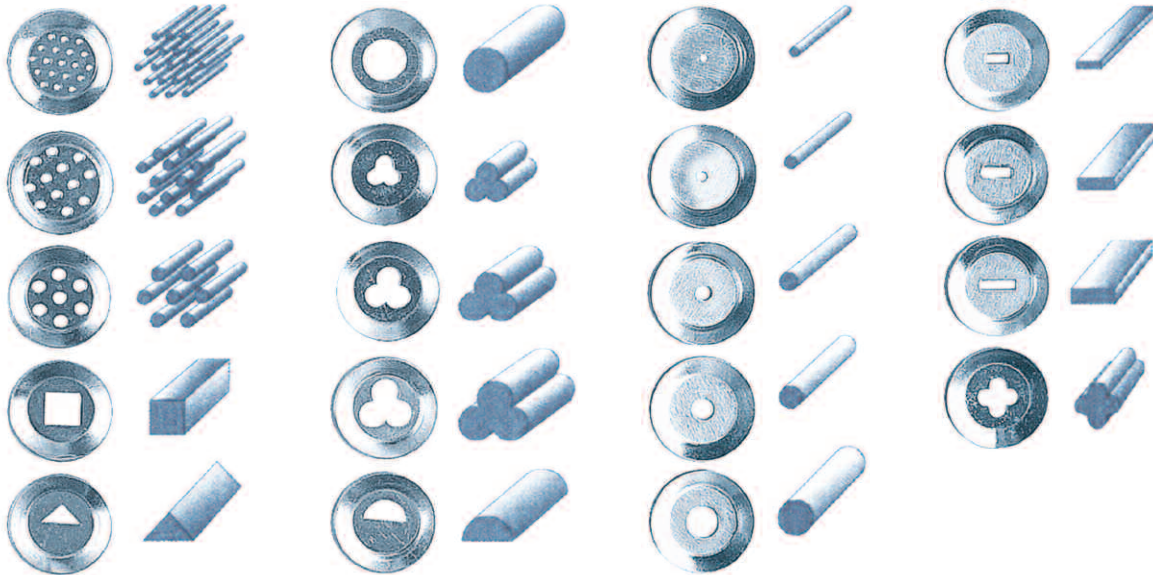


The clay gun is an extruding tool that comes with 19 design discs. Create textures and shapes quickly & easily. Cut, bend and join pieces as desired to create surface decorations.



Tips for Using the Clay Gun Effectively

- Clay should be moist and pliable, but not too wet. Think new 'PLAY-DOH®.'
- Unscrew end cap and insert disc into cap, flat side down. Replace cap. Roll clay into a log shape. Remove plunger and insert clay log. Insert plunger and apply steady even pressure. Watch shapes appear. It may help to stand the gun on a table with the plunger side down and press down on the plunger to extrude the clay.
- Small amounts of clay are easier to extrude.
- Clean gun when finished with warm water and a small bottle brush.



Acrylic Roller

Use to flatten clay for slab work.
Join clay by rolling to press surfaces together.



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