

Clay Treasure Pot with Lid

Originally shared by us for the Get Creative and Hey Clay celebrations in May 2020, this easy step-by-step tutorial demonstrates how to make a clay treasure pot with lid.

If you go wrong, don't worry just kneed up the clay and roll it out again!

You will need:

- air-drying clay
- a tea towel
- a rolling pin (if you haven't got one try a bottle, pipes, tubes, dowels)
- a knife (not too sharp)
- a mug and a small container or a plate that is slightly larger than your mug
- a pencil, old store card, fork and/or other tools to make marks and patterns on your pot
- a brush if you have one (otherwise you can also use the knife or your fingers)



If you work on a tea towel your clay will not stick to the surface, the back of carpet tiles are also ideal!

Look through the photos below for detailed instructions.

Don't forget you can get lots of ideas on our facebook group [NCCD Family and Community](#), you can share your creations with us across all our social media pages, or by tagging us on Facebook [@The National Centre for Craft & Design](#).



1. Halve your clay and divide one half into 2 again: this will be for your base and your lid. The remaining half will form the wall around your base. While you are working keep your spare clay in a sealable tub or wrap it in a plastic bag to keep it moist.



2. Next, make the base for your pot: roll one of the smaller halves of clay out evenly, frequently turning it over until your slab is about 5mm thick.



3. We used a mug to make a round base, but you can use anything available at your home. Put it on top of your slab and using your knife cut carefully around it.



4. Roll out the bigger half of the clay into a long rectangular shape, again turn it over and make it as even as possible. Make it between 3 and 5mm thick.



5. It has to fit all the way around your circular base, so don't forget to keep checking it is the right length.





6. Once you know it is long enough, use a ruler or similar to cut straight edges along both of the long sides.



7. Now you need to prepare your 'slip'! Take some small cut offs of the clay and mix them with water until you have a cream-like consistency. Slip functions like glue, so remember that anything that needs to be stuck on to your pot or stuck together will need slip.



8. You can now make patterns or add decorations your pot. You can use anything! We used a fork and a pencil for texture and applied a flower to show you both techniques. When sticking clay together it is best to cross-hatch first, then add the slip, then firmly press together and clean all the joints as best as you can. This will ensure nothing will fall off as the clay dries. If you don't have clay tools, store cards and the ends of cutlery (or your fingers) will also work well to smooth the clay out.





9. Now, cross-hatch all around the outside of your base, along the two edges that will be joined and along the bottom of the long 'wall' for your pot – you need to cross-hatch everywhere where it will be stuck together.





10. Add the slip to all of the cross-hatched lines and stick the wall around the circular base and press firmly together. Use a smoothing tool to clean up the joints and the seam.



11. Using the same technique as before, roll out the second smaller half of the clay (the only one left!) to make your lid. It should be 3-5mm thick. You can either make it fit or a little bigger than your pot. You could give it a fancy trim around the edge and decorate it as you wish.





12. In the middle of the lid you can add a finial (like a handle) so you can easily lift the lid on and off once it's dry. Make it quite big and solid otherwise it will be too weak and dry out too quickly. Remember to cross-hatch all areas that will stick to each other first and then add the slip before you stick them together.



13. Your pot is finished! Let the clay dry out slowly and evenly, cover it loosely with a plastic bag. A cold spot is better than in the sun or near a radiator.

Tip: Once the clay is 'leather hard', it is much easier to smooth and clean areas. But you will need to be careful as dry clay can break very easily.

If you have worked with air-drying clay, once it is really dry, you can use acrylic paints to add colour.

Visit nccd.org.uk/community for more ideas and tutorials!