

Student Orientation

Greater Lansing Potters' Guild 2024

It is important that the following rules and procedures of the Potters' Guild are understood by everyone. There is a lot to remember, so please revisit this and the **Student Handbook** from time to time. *Special Note: The Guild is committed to providing a cooperative and interactive environment for all students regardless of their experience in working with clay. The Guild reserves the right to deny future enrollment or other opportunities to any student who does not adhere to Guild's rules and procedures or are inconsiderate of others in their use of the facility or its resources.*

- **Class routine**

- a. Please arrive to class a few minutes early, since the instructor's demonstrations usually take place at the beginning of the class period.
- b. Most class sessions will include a demo. No matter your skill level, please watch the demos, as each teacher offers fresh approaches, and as your skills increase, you will see things you may not have before.
- c. At the end of your work session, clean up your wheel and all areas where you have worked, as well as sponges. Clay slop and trimmings go in the large plastic cans across from the sink (not the white one next to the sink).
- d. Unless indicated to the contrary, it is expected that all students, regardless of their skill level, should be paying attention to the teacher's demonstrations in order to learn and/or improve skills.
- e. Always feel free to ask for help/critiquing as needed.
- f. Consideration for others:
 - Keep cell phone activity to a minimum or excuse yourself for a call
 - No perfume in the studio
 - No headphones during class; they are okay when you are in the studio for a lab.

- **Tools and References**

- a. There are calendars for firings on the corkboard by the phone, so you can monitor and pace yourself. Other bulletin boards have potting tips and the class roster, as well as the lab calendar with lab monitors listed.
- b. **Your "Potter's mark"** is a small icon, your initials, or other 'signature' by which you and we can identify your pots. Once you know what you want to use, make a note of it on the poster class roster.
- c. We will ask you to provide emergency contact information and proof of covid vaccination.
- d. Put your name on tools with permanent marker or other waterproof system. There is a lost-and-found bucket by the sink.
- e. **Guild towels are for drying clean hands.** Bring your own towel for use at your workspace.

- **Use of Guild Facilities**

- a. Lab hours for students: Mondays 12:00 noon – 3:00 pm
Wednesdays 6:30-9:30 pm
Saturdays 9:00 am – 12:00 noon; Noon-3 pm

Any student may attend **any or all** of the lab-hour sessions. We ask students to sign in when they come to the labs, so that we can continue to assess the usefulness of those time offerings.

NOTE: There are NO lab hours on the day of class 10.

- b. An alternate class or lab time on Tuesday will be offered if there is a holiday conflict during the term.
- c. No bats, ware boards, nor tools are to be taken out of the Guild.
- d. No outside clay or glazes to be used at Guild.

- **Clay allotment and purchase**

- a. As part of the class fee, each student receives one 50# box of regular stoneware (850) at the beginning of each term. They may purchase up to 50# of additional clay during the term. (1 or 2 bags of new clay at 25# each, 1 or 2 bags of recycled clay at 25# each, or a combination of the two. **Only guild clay may be used by students and fired in the guild kilns.** The clay price list for 50# boxes is on the door to the clay room. Clays usually available:
 1. Regular stoneware
 2. White stoneware
 3. Porcelain
 4. B-mix
 5. Recycled clay
- b. Students can purchase clay **from class assistants only**, not from other members, teachers, or lab monitors. You need to think ahead and plan for buying clay during class time and write check or provide exact change.

- **Student shelves**

All students' work, tools, and materials, including unfinished pots and those that have been bisqued, are to be kept on student shelves. The only exceptions are bone-dry greenware and glazed bisque, which are to be kept on the appropriate student carts. Unfinished pots may not be kept or stored on guild work tables.

- **Heat Lamps**

Use of heat lamps for drying clay/glaze IF. . .

- a. The weather outside is not conducive to drying
- b. Members are not using the spray booth
- c. There is a special need to hurry the drying

- **Ware Carts**

- a. Green ware carts are for pots that are **completely dry**. This means the color of the pot will be even and lighter than moist clay. Pots that are not fully dry can explode in the kiln, ruining yours and others' pots. Check with the class assistant if you are unsure of the dryness of a pot.
Avoid creating complex, large, or thick items at the end of the term. They are difficult to get dry.
- b. Student glaze carts are for work that has been bisque-fired and glazed. Students are not to touch pots on any member shelf or glaze cart.
- c. On all cart shelves, place pots from back to front, and on appropriately sized shelves.

- **Clean up procedure**
These procedures include cleaning the wheel thoroughly, the floor surrounding the wheel, throwing bats, wedging table, hand-building table, and all work tables in the main room. **Dirty tools and wheel splash pan are to be rinsed in slop buckets across from the sink before final washing in the sink.**
- **All clay and clay sludge to be recycled by the guild is to be put through the grate into the large barrels, not directly into the sink.** Water is to be used sparingly. Tools are to be accounted for. We are on a septic system at the guild, which is even more restrictive than the plumbing in homes. **Anything you wouldn't wash down your own sink shouldn't be washed down the sinks at the guild.** To conserve water, clean tools with dirty water first, then clean water. Note: NOTHING off floor goes into the recycle buckets.
- **Glazing and Firing pots**
 - a. **Point system for firing pots.** Your class assistant will explain measuring your pots, calculating firing points, and recording in the points book and on kiln slips. There will be a thorough orientation to glazing midway through the term. Points are monitored continually by the class assistant. For more advanced students who want to be glazing before the glaze orientation, always check with the class assistant before you begin for a review of procedures and any new information you may need to be aware of.
 - b. **Students may use "batch" glazes only.** They may not use experimental glazes, member-only glazes, soda glazes, or oxidation glazes. If a glaze bucket is low, inform the class assistant, who will contact the member responsible for that glaze.
 - c. **Raku glazes** may only be used by students if the teacher schedules a raku firing during the term. Pots glazed for raku must be kept on the students' shelves until fired, not on the regular glaze shelves! Students take full points for raku and must complete a kiln slip and enter their points in the student points book.
 - d. **Firing Schedule.** Check the firing calendars to find dates for bisque and glaze firings. The Guild does its best to schedule firings in a timely and convenient manner for students, however scheduling is dependent on the amount of ware available to stack at any time. We cannot stack if there is not enough ware, and occasionally firing schedules may change. Students must allow for this reality. Every effort will be made to schedule bisque and glaze firings throughout the term so that students may have early feedback. It is guild policy to give student ware priority in firing at all times except the last firing before a guild sale.
 - e. The class assistant will inform students each time a firing is scheduled and give deadlines for ware to be on the appropriate carts. **This will include an absolute deadline for bone-dry greenware to be on the cart for bisque firing. This will allow you time to glaze your bisque pots prior to the end of the term and get them into the student glaze firing after the last class session.**
 - f. Although we do our best to treat everyone's ware with care and respect, occasionally a pot may break during handling. It happens to members, too, and although disappointing, is part of the potting experience.