

HANDPRINTS IN CLAY

At Hobby Ceramicraft we are committed to helping you grow your business. We have found that hand and footprints in clay are increasingly popular, and can easily bring added revenue to your current business at no extra cost! Here's how it works.



You will need:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| TFF1505 White Earthenware Clay | ICER8 Round Brush #8 |
| CT21 Clay Cutting Tool | AC219 Writer Bottle |
| HCG004D Superclear Dipping Glaze | Unfinished Wooden Board |
| | Flat Battens (approx 1cm thick) |
| | Rolling Pin |
- Mayco Stroke & Coat colours:
SC39 The Blues or **SC18** Rosey-Posey

+ child!



Shape your clay into a ball to eliminate any air pockets. Flatten it out on your working area with your hand. Place the battens along each side of your working surface, 25-30cm apart. Your rolling pin should be able to balance on the battens.



Roll your clay out putting pressure on the battens, not the clay - cut away any excess and put aside.



Decide where you want your first handprint to be, and guide the hand onto the clay.

Press the heel of the hand gently, but firmly, into the clay, then the palm and each finger in turn. You can make it fun for kids by counting the fingers with them!

By pressing in the heel of the hand first, you ensure an even print. Repeat as necessary.



Cut away the excess clay to your final desired outline.

Abstract shapes give a pleasing finish - and it is also quick to achieve. For a circular or square finish cut round a suitably-sized plate or tile.

Complete the edge by wiping lightly with a damp sponge. This will remove any imperfections and give the finished piece a softer feel.

Leave the piece to dry out completely on the board.



For more details on this technique, please contact:
Tel: 0118 9326153 E-mail: order@hobbyceramicraft.co.uk





DRYING TIME Depending on the environment it is stored in, clay will dry out at different rates. As it dries, white earthenware clay turns from a dark grey to a much lighter hue.

The clay must be completely dry all the way through to ensure a successful firing. In a centrally-heated house this could take 2-3 days - in a damp environment it could be much longer.

To be sure, retain an offcut about 5cm round from the rolled out clay next to your finished piece. When you feel the clay is dry, break the offcut in half. If it is the same light colour all the way through, then the clay is ready to fire.

TIP: When you feel the clay is dry enough, place it next to your kiln when you next do a firing, just to be 100% sure!



Once dry, place your piece directly onto a shelf in your kiln and fire to Orton Shelf Cone 05 (1020 degrees Celsius). This is the optimum firing temperature for our white earthenware clay.

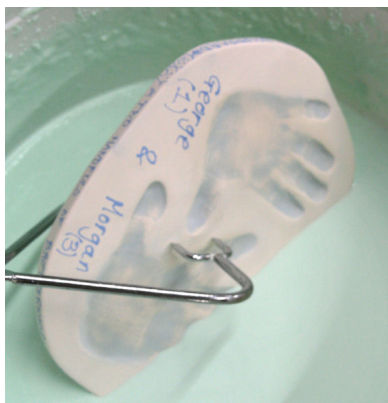
PLEASE NOTE: See the box above about drying your clay. If you try to fire wet clay, there is a danger that your piece may crack, or even explode during firing.



Once fired to bisque, your piece will be bright white, and ready to decorate. Paint the print area roughly with undiluted Mayco Stroke & Coat. We have used *SC031 The Blues*. For girls, why not try *SC018 Rosey-Posey* for a dusky pink finish.

To bring out the detail, brush the colour across the grain of the handprint, to ensure it sits in all the crevices.

Remove any excess colour by pressing lightly with a damp sponge



Add any writing as desired - if you are not confident about writing with a brush, try using a writer bottle - this makes writing on bisque much easier.

For a neat extra touch, add a message around the edge of the piece.

Once dry, dip the piece in *004 Superclear* non-toxic dipping glaze, which will give the finished item that strong, shiny white finish which will be craze-resistant.



Once dry, still the piece on the kiln shelf and fire to Orton Shelf Cone 06 (998 degrees Celsius).

Your finished masterpiece will come out of the kiln looking fabulous! For extra effect, present the piece in a frame. There are many suitable frames available both online and in the shops. Or why not ask your local picture-framer if they would be able to make one up for you?

Great results every time, for a minimal investment of time and money. For more details, or to place an order, give us a call on 0118 9326153! We have clay available from stock in 12.5kg or 25kg blocks.



Add-On Sales Opportunity

There is a great way to capitalise on that clay-print sale, and it's so easy to do!

When the customer comes in, instead of just doing **one** print, why not do **three**?



Initially you don't need to charge for the extra two prints - you can tell the customer you are just doing them for insurance—and what a good idea that is!

How many times have you completed that one-off commission piece to find that it cracks in the final firing, or sticks to the shelf? It's always best to do more than one to cover yourself.

Using our clay and glazes, faults are uncommon, but correcting them can cost you time and extra effort.

Decorating all three pieces won't take you much more time than decorating the first one, and if they are all successful, you can offer them to the customer at a discounted rate. The take-up rate with studios that do this is VERY high!

There are always other friends and family members to give these to as presents, and customers don't like to walk away from those treasured pieces.

And if you don't get the extra sale? You have sample pieces ready to display in your studio and elsewhere, so none of your effort will be wasted.

