

IN POTTERY, THERE IS NO ART WITHOUT PATIENCE

VERONICA APPIA
vappia@metroland.com

I have always been that person who creates things without following instructions.

My Ikea furniture takes a few tries (or the help of someone nearby), and any sort of recipe is a real hit and miss in my hands.

While skipping ahead and eyeballing measurements certainly keeps things interesting, in the world of beginner pottery, this is a no-no. There's pretty much one hard and fast rule: stay patient and follow the steps.

Last week, my colleague and I visited the Credit Valley Artisans in Georgetown, where I attempted to craft a bowl for the first time. And while impatience is my specialty, it was satisfying to perform each step slowly and meticulously, and to end the class with a decent piece of pottery, rather than a lump of goop on my wheel head.

This wasn't without the help of our instructor Frans Rood, however, who showed us the ropes and gave us a hand here and there.

My verdict is this: pottery gets a little messy. And for first-timers, your form is likely not going to be ideal. But the feeling of clay on your hands and attempting to make something out of it



IFP reporters Alex Heck and Veronica Appia take a pottery class with Frans Rood of the Credit Valley Artisans.

Carolyn Martin/photo

can be therapeutic - if you can let go of your ego.

For those beginners who are looking to get their hands dirty, here's the low-down on the primary steps to creating a basic piece of pottery.

Don't wear your best clothes

Expect to get a little messy, because you will. Generally speaking, the clay will wash off your clothes, but you may want to wear something you are not exactly in love with. Also, make sure to remove all jewelry that could get in the

way (rings and bracelets) and keep your fingernails nice and short.

You need to prep your clay before you can dive in

Before you throw your clay onto a wheel, you will need to prepare it first, using a method called wedging. Wedging (kneading the clay in a triangular shape) helps make the clay easier to work with, while also aiding in the removal of any air bubbles.

Centring the clay

Once your clay is nice and malleable, you need to

"throw" it onto the centre of your wheel head, or as close to the centre as possible, using enough force to allow it to stick.

Following this step, wet the clay with water and wet your hands as well.

Then turn on the wheel and keep it spinning at a moderate speed. Cup your left hand around the left side of the clay and keep your left elbow tucked tight into your body. Place your left thumb over the centre to prevent a point from forming. Then, with every rotation of the wheel, move

your hand ever so slightly back and forth to nudge the clay, until a cylindrical shape is formed.

Whether you are making a vase, a plate, or a structure in between, the process begins with creating a cylinder, Rood informed us.

Opening the clay

To open the clay, place your left thumb and right middle finger in the centre and gently push downward, opening the clay, but not reaching the bottom.

Compressing the bottom of your piece

In pottery, compression

ensures a smooth and sturdy base/floor. To do this, use a wet sponge and place it on the base of your piece of pottery. Then, apply a slight downward pressure and move sideways toward the wall of your piece, allowing the rotations to do the work, smoothing out the bottom.

Collaring the clay

To collar clay, wet both hands, cup them around the entire piece, gently pushing upward to begin to create the shape you desire.

Finishing the rims

Run a wet sponge along the rim of your piece to create a smooth and aesthetically-pleasing finish. This should be done after each time the clay has been worked.

Pulling up the walls

Begin by using your left thumb and index finger, starting at the floor of the piece. Keep your thumb on the outside and index finger on the inside, then gently pinch the wall to create an indent. Apply this same pressure evenly and as you pull upward through the wall with each rotation of the wheel.

Credit Valley Artisans is offering two fall pottery courses beginning in September and October 2018 respectively. For pricing and further information, visit www.creditvalleyartisans.ca/Pottery.html.





Mustangs U13 and older Rep Tryouts

Mark Your Calendar!


Sept. 29th & 30th - Trafalgar Sports Park

Visit georgetownssoccerclub.com
 for details and full schedule


Did you know

DEKER eLeCTRIC

will safely recycle your old batteries (any size!) at no charge?



Drop them off at our location at
348 Guelph Street during office hours.




DEKER GENERAC[®]

eLeCTRIC Ltd.

905-702-0515

www.dekerelectric.ca



SALES SERVICE INSTALLATIONS

2016 SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

ESA #7003060