

Throwing on the Potter's Wheel

Take notes on each stage in your sketchbook

There will be quiz.....

Step 1 - Centering

The most important step!

1. Placing the clay in the center

Throw the clay down close to the center of the wheel. You want the clay to stick well, so give it a good toss onto the wheel.



2. Pat into a cone





3. Wet the clay and with the wheel spinning a **moderate to fast speed**, force the clay to the center of the wheel and **raise it while both hands are touching each-other.**

Use your whole body to force the clay into the center and elbow against your thigh

Use both hands and your body to keep your arms from moving with the clay, press the clay on both sides to force the clay upwards.



4. Bring the clay down by using the widest part of your right hand while the left hand pushing the clay towards the center and down.

Both hands are touching each-other

Step 2 - Opening up the Piece



1. Slow the wheel down

Opening up the center of the clay can be a tricky task. **If you do not manage to keep your hands totally still, the hole in the center will wobble around**, even though the outside of the clay appears to still be centered.

2. While pressing down with the thumb use your other hand to help hold your thumb still.

Also, press your arms into your side to help hold your arms still. **Be careful to leave enough clay for the bottom of the piece.**

You can use the 2-thumbs approach as well

Use both hands to widen the opening.

Move toward you slowly and steady. If water pools on the inside use a sponge to remove the water

This has been cutaway to show the bottom to be about 1/4 inch thick and the walls about 3/4 of an inch thick ready to pull up the wall.



Step 3 - Pulling up the Walls

If centering and opening was done well, pulling the walls up will not be too difficult. The speed of the wheel should be at a slow to medium-fast speed. Pulling up the walls usually will **take two or three pulls**. **Don't try to pull it up in one pull.**



<--Notice the hand placement.-->

Pull the walls up by squeezing the clay and pulling up - all in one motion. The speed at which you pull up will be affected by the speed of your wheel. **The faster the wheel is spinning the faster you can pull up.** In the beginning it is better to start slowly then when you feel more comfortable move onto a faster speed.

Repeat the pulling until you get the walls to the **desired thickness. Usually about 1/4 inch thick**

Trim the base of the piece with a wood tool that has been cut on a diagonal



Step 4 - Shaping the piece

Narrowing

By applying pressure the outside you can narrow the opening of the piece.



Widening

Placing your fingers on the inside and gently pressing out will widen your piece. (Be careful. Remember your piece is spinning and if you pull too far it may fall.)

Removing work from the wheel:



- Using a sponge **flood the bottom with water**
- **Use a wire or fish line to cut the bottom**, pulling the water underneath
- **Slide the piece** carefully off the bat or wheel **onto a small ware board**

Step 5 - Trimming on the Wheel

Carving a Foot:



- Turn the piece to be trimming over. Be careful not to set it down to hard and dent the top
- **Spin the wheel and check to see if the piece is centered.** Adjust the piece as necessary to center it **Press clay balls around the top of the piece to hold the piece in the center** while you are trimming.
- With the wheel spinning, **draw two lines where the foot will be left after trimming**
- Trim the **inside** of the base and the **outside**.
- **Use a sponge and your finger to smooth the area that was trimmed.** If the piece has a handle or something that obstructs your ability to flip the pot over, use a post to elevate the piece from the inside