

Cosmic Water Dish



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Materials needed:
5 lbs. of low fire white moist clay, HS01 hump/slump, one yard of canvas, XL rolling pin, Sandbag (place one cup of play sand into handkerchief and tie to close), wooden fettling knife, small round sponge, medium glaze brush.

Handbuild Using Moist Clay and Plaster

Plaster forms and tools can be successfully used to create imaginative and unique clay pieces. Because of the absorbent nature of plaster, clay can be depressed into highly detailed sprig molds and lifted from the mold without sticking. Minute details can be successfully transferred from plaster to clay. The absorbent plaster forms help to assure an even and timely draw of moisture from the clay body, limiting cracks and sticking. Convex plaster forms are known as "hump molds" while concave plaster forms are known as "slump molds". Plaster forms help even the first time student create clay hand building projects with fantastic results! Find more information and additional projects at:

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The moist clay used in the projects featured is a moist low fire (cone 06-04) white clay, available from most ceramic/pottery suppliers. This clay body when fired to cone 04, can be painted with any glaze currently used on standard bisque ware.

To create this small dish in a slump mold begin by cutting an appropriate quantity of clay (approximately 3 lbs) from a block of moist clay. Place the clay on a piece of thick canvas or muslin. "Wedge" the clay body a little bit to remove any air bubbles and to ready the clay for work. Be careful not to fold more air into the clay. Pat the clay down to flatten it slightly. Begin rolling the clay with a rolling pin. Roll the clay 2 times and pick it up and turn it over. Roll the clay 2 times and pick the clay up and turn it over. You will need to repeat the roll and flip steps until your clay is approximately 5/16" thick. Carefully lift the slab and place it over the slump portion of the hump/slump mold. Lift the sides of the clay and ease the clay down into the center recess of the slump. Use a handkerchief full of sand to pounce the clay into the center slump and around the top brim of the slump.

With a wooden tool trim the excess clay in a random zig zag pattern as shown. Use a round sponge and water to clean the edge of the clay.

To make the spiral design in the center of the dish, create slip by adding a little water to dry clay trimmings and mix until smooth. Swirl the slip into the center of the dish with a large brush. Use a small squeeze bottle full of this slip to create the raised swirls and dots on the edge of the dish. Use a ruler or brush handle to create random depressions into the clay on the brim as shown. Allow the piece to dry in the mold for several hours before removing. Allow the piece to dry completely (at least one week) before firing.

Decorate the fired bisque using a aqua shade of semi transparent non toxic glaze in the "water" area and semi transparent non toxic golden tan on the rim.

