

The Clay Studio

STUDENT GUIDE

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WELCOME TO THE CLAY STUDIO!

Welcome new and returning students to The Clay Studio (TCS)! Thank you for taking classes with us this term. Please use this guide as a reference tool for classes and TCS's School. While you are here to take classes, remember that there is much more to TCS; details on our programs can be found towards the end of this guide.

Founded in 1974, The Clay Studio continues in the belief that shared creativity, so fundamental to humanity, is a critical force for good. The Clay Studio supports the ceramic arts through its artist residencies, gallery, studio space, school, educational and community engagement programs, and permanent collection. The Clay Studio inspires curiosity and discovery around the art and craft of clay, drawing together students, artists, and an engaged public into a welcoming community.

Shared Community Agreement

Core Diversity Values and Guidelines

The Clay Studio believes that a welcoming environment is critical to our Diversity Equity, Access, and Inclusion work. We do not tolerate anti-Blackness, racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, white supremacy, colonialism, hatred, or any other forms of discrimination and oppression. This extends to artists, students, customers, employees, board members, volunteers, interns, and patrons. We do not discriminate based on race, ethnic identity, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, or religion. We are a safe place for citizens and non-citizens alike. We strive to accommodate those of any age and physical ability.

We hold ourselves and each member of our community accountable and expect everyone to embrace and uphold these values. We will act swiftly and respectfully to correct the behavior that goes against these core values. We do not tolerate hate speech, violence, or intimidation. We also acknowledge that microaggressions can occur in less intentional but equally harmful manifestations. Therefore, The Clay Studio is prepared to take corrective actions that will seek to make room for education and conflict resolution before becoming punitive. We come from a place of respect and kindness but are committed to our responsibility to uphold shared community values. The Clay Studio asks that each member of our community commit to our agreement to ensure that we intentionally acknowledge our individual roles in creating a welcoming environment for all. Details of expectations, reporting, and review process may be found in our [Code of Conduct](#) on our website under registration info and policies.

The Clay Studio Shared Community Agreement

As a member of our community, you support our mission and values of access, community, inclusivity, and accountability. We agree:

- We all have a shared responsibility in creating the space, support, and inspiration necessary for expression and mastery in the ceramic arts.
- We welcome each other with open hearts and share space so all can learn and thrive.
- We respect others: including their work, perspectives, and diverse backgrounds.
- Everyone has something to learn; everyone has something to teach.
- To be present & gentle with ourselves: embrace the time we have given ourselves to be in the studio and with others; practice makes progress, not perfection.

Facility Information

- The Clay Studio's new facility at 1425 N. American St. opened in the spring of 2022 and was built from the ground up to serve the community and artists.
- Entering the building: To enter the building you will enter at the unlocked front door from 9:45 am – 6 pm Mon-Fri and 9:45 am – 4:00 pm Sat-Sun. For Mon-Fri evening access from 6 pm to the end of classes in the evening you will enter at the garage door metal gate with the Verkada app. ***Moving between the floors in the stairwell and elevator requires the Verkada app.***
- Each student receives one storage cubby.
- Please watch your personal belongings & leave valuables at home. The Clay Studio is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Our facility is accessible, no steps into the building, motion sensor main doors, an elevator, ADA approved doors, bathrooms and sink.
- Report any problems/concerns with the building immediately to a staff member.
- Please do not use your cell phone in the studios unless it's an emergency. Step into the hallway or stairwell for phone calls.
- The first aid kit is located on the wall to the left of the mop closet floors 2, 3, 4.
- Stairwell Exits: In case of emergency, both stairwells lead outside. Stairwell B will put you outside at the back of the building and then you can reach the street from the pavilion. Stairwell A leads you to the gallery shop (front) vestibule which and then you can exit the building.
- No food or drink is allowed in the studios (water bottles with a cap on when not in use are not encouraged but acceptable.)
- You are welcome to have food, coffee, tea, or just hang out in the 4th floor lounge and roof deck during open studio hours. There is a refrigerator for the food you are using that day. Please don't store anything in the fridge as it is cleaned out weekly.
- TCS reserves the right to close any studio or shared space as needed.

Studio Resources

- Each cubby is a personal space. Please **do not remove tools, clay or work from other people's cubbies.**
- Students are not allowed to hang anything on/outside of the cubbies or in the studios (even if it is removable). Nothing should be left hanging out of the cubby, including wareboards, tool boxes, etc). We are always open to suggestions for changes; you are always welcome to email us.
- If you want to switch cubbies with someone, or move to a different location, please send an email to Education@theclaystudio.org before relocating. Items may be removed from any unassigned cubbies.
- The **black buckets** with TCS logos and the **big sponges** with "TCS" on them are communal tools. Please clean and put them back above the sinks before you leave the studio. **Please do not store them in your cubby.** We will empty the content and put them back into circulation if we see a bucket in your cubby.

- When finished using a wedging table, scrape off excess clay and wipe down the table and scrapers.
- **Wedging tables are not to be used to reclaim clay.** Plaster slabs for reclaim are located in the hallway.
- **Heat guns are NOT permitted.** Plug in blow dryers are provided in each class room, limited to one in use per room at a time.
- When cutting slabs on the tables, place a wooden board underneath to avoid damages to the table tops.
- Everything underneath the tables are shared resources, **please clean and return them after use.**
- Each 2nd floor classroom is equipped with multiple step ladders. Fold and return ladders to classrooms as soon as you are done with them. **Please do not stand on stools.**
- **For health and safety reasons, NO SANDING of greenware or bisque ware in the studio. WET SANDING IN THE SINKS ONLY.**
- There is a shared tool cart near the glazeroom. You are welcome to borrow items from this cart but please clean and return them when you are done.
- A large work shelf overflow shelf is located in Handbuilding room 211. Work that is too large for your cubby space may be kept on this shelf **while in progress for up to two weeks.** This shelf is for greenware only, no glazeware or bisqueware. All work on this shelf must be clearly labeled with the provided tags with student name and date the work is placed on the shelves. Work on this shelf must be larger than 12"x12" to be stored here. Any work left on the shelves beyond 2 weeks will be removed and placed on the needs help shelf. *Reminder: work cannot **exceed 14" length, 14" width, and 18" height.**
- Work that cannot be fired (damages, glaze issues, etc) can be located on the **Needs Help Shelf** located in the glaze room. **Work will be removed from the Needs Help Shelf after one month and recycled.**
- Please remove your pieces from the bisque shelves and get them glazed quickly, do not use the fired work room as storage. One way you can help eliminate crowded shelves is to find and glaze work promptly, and pick up finished work once it is ready. The fired work room should not be used for storage.

Open Studio Hours

- Students are welcome to use the facility and equipment outside of class during posted Open Studio hours. Open studio is a great way to practice.
- **Please do not use classrooms for open studios while there are classes in session.**
- **Only students currently enrolled in classes may use Open Studio hours.** Guests (children, friends of students, and pets) **are not allowed in the classrooms.**
- A schedule will be emailed weekly reflecting any schedule changes and the availability of the 4th floor classroom.
- Open Studio hours do not extend between terms and can change on short notice. Please make sure to check for emails from The Clay Studio for changes to the schedule.

Buying Clay & Tools + Details Regarding Outside Materials

Clay and tools are available to purchase from the gallery shop until 6pm Mon-Fri and 5 pm Sat-Sun. On weekday evenings, the shop is open for students to purchase clay and tools from 6-8pm. School store hours are included on the document you've received called "Important Dates and Deadlines" and is also available online.

Outside clays, glazes*, mason stains, other materials and/or equipment are NOT PERMITTED in the studio. **One exception is commercial ^6 clear glaze if approved by the staff.* Please have all outside non-fluxing underglaze approved by staff as well.

If outside materials are used:

- **1st offense:** warning.
- **2nd offense:** you will be asked to leave the studio for the remainder of the term, but can return next term (no refunds.)
- **3rd offense:** you will be asked to not return to TCS.

Wet Work

- You may make new work up until the last 2 weeks of the term, in order to have it bisque fired for you to glaze on or before your last week of class.
For example, if you are taking a 10-week class, you have 7 weeks to make new work:
 - *Your class on the 7th week is your last day to work wet.*
 - *Your class in the 8th week is your last day to trim or hand build.*
 - *The last day of the 8th week of classes is the greenware deadline.*
- Carefully sign all your work before you have it fired. You may also want to take photos of your work.
- **Place work on shelves from back to front on the carts and on a shelf of appropriate height.** To avoid accidental breakage, avoid touching or moving anyone else's work on the carts.
- **Production levels of work are not allowed** as this is an educational facility. Our aim is to provide a learning environment for as many students as possible, making production amounts of work limits others' access to our kilns and is better suited for our Associates program.
- All work that utilizes TCS's equipment, materials and/or faculty and staff time must be made at The Clay Studio. Work produced must be proportionate to the number of classes enrolled. Students who produce large volumes of work will receive a warning, be charged accordingly, and asked to limit the amount of work and use the kiln rental option.
- **Size Limitations: Work must not exceed 14" length, 14" width, and 18" height.**
 - *For any artwork that exceeds the above size limitation; we require an oversized \$20 fee for bisque & glaze, and the piece will need an "oversized firing slip for bisque & glaze." The fee can be paid with a tech or in the shop. For any artwork greater than 17" wide or 18" high it will need to go through our kiln rental program.*

Glazing

- **Please do not leave all your glazing until the end;** you learn more if you glaze throughout the term.
- All Cone 6 and low-fire glazes are located in the glaze room. Please check with your instructor if you have questions about what glazes to use.
- If you are not returning for the next term, glazing must be completed by the end of the current term.
- If glaze is too close to or on the bottom of a pot, **it will be placed on the "needs help" shelf**, located in the glaze room. If you find one of your pots there, clean up the bottom and put it back on the shelf. **Please leave a ¼" from the bottom of your piece unglazed.**
- Only overlap glazes on the top one-third of your piece. **No overlapping at the bottom** due to the risk of the glaze combinations running.
- Please thoroughly stir the glaze for at least 20 seconds before using and be sure to stir materials at the bottom of the bucket.
- All work must have a bare bottom (no glaze) to avoid sticking to the kiln shelf. Stiling is not allowed.

Firing

- Place your work on the correct cart to make sure it is properly fired (electric, gas, or low fire) in a timely manner. Separate carts are clearly marked for bisque and glaze firing. Place your work from back to front

- on the carts, and place on a shelf of appropriate height.
- Glazed low-fire work must never be placed with objects to be high-fired (it will melt)
 - Bisque firings are done continuously throughout the term.
 - REFIRING will only be done when issues caused by firing, such as pinholes or kiln misfires, with a signed firing form by the studio techs. Please speak to a studio tech regarding any refire questions.
 - Bisque kilns are fired throughout the week, and glaze kilns (^6 electric & gas/reduction kilns) are fired weekly, or as work becomes available.
 - Fired work will be located in the “Fired Artwork” room for finished bisque ware & glaze ware. **Please remove your work from these carts when you see them and do not use these shelves for storage.**
 - Many factors can delay the firing or unloading of a kiln, please keep this in mind when waiting for work.
 - Cracked or broken pieces will not be fired and will be moved to the “needs help shelf” in the glaze room.

Fired Work

- After the final class, all glazed and bisqued work will be marked and available on the designated shelves in the Fired Artwork room.
- Fired bisque and glaze work is held for 2 weeks after the notification email is sent by the Education Manager. Once the pick-up deadline date is set, any work left beyond that date will be removed at the discretion of TCS staff.
- Take your work, tools, and leftover clay home with you on your last day of class if you are not taking a class the following term. **All items left behind on your shelf will be discarded before the next term begins.**

Clean-Up Procedures

It is very important to keep the classrooms and glaze areas clean. Clay and glaze left on the floor will dry and become a fine, nearly invisible silica dust, which is circulated and suspended to float indefinitely in the air. This dust can cause health problems for people who spend a lot of time working in the studios. Please make sure you clean up your trimmings and spills before they become dust. Below are cleanup guidelines:

Clay should NEVER be discarded in the sink. Pour off water into the pans in the sink, and put heavy slip and clay chunks in the reclaim bins found near each sink.

- Thoroughly clean wheels, pans, bench, stools, tables, the floor, the wall behind you, and bats.
- Use the squeegees and dust pans to clean up your clay scraps at your work area, ware boards, and the floor. Use the mops located in the mop closet to clean the floor around your work area.
- After the wheel is clean make sure it is turned off. Put the stool upside down on the wheel head, and place the foot pedal and brick on the wheel’s front tray. This lets everyone know that the wheel was cleaned properly and makes mopping easier.
- Scrape and clean the wedging and plaster tables after using them.
- Do not leave work on tables. Ask your instructor if you need help moving your work.
- Return glazes and cleaned tools to their proper places and clean the glaze counter after you are done. Place lids back on glaze buckets.

Evaluations

Class evaluations are done online at the end of each quarter. We rely on these for guidance in designing and improving the caliber of our classes and offering feedback to our faculty. Please feel free to come and talk to our staff about any immediate concerns.

Transportation & Parking

Street Parking: There's unmetered street parking on N American and surrounding side streets.

Paid parking lot: There's also a parking lot on 1320 N Front St. The walk from the lot to the studio takes 7-8 minutes. The lot is more expensive Thursday-Sunday with a flat fee in the evenings.

How to get to 1425 N. American Street:

BY SUBWAY: Market Frankford Line (MFL) to the Girard Station then a 10-minute walk

BY BUS: 5 Bus to 2nd & Girard then a 6-minute walk; 57 Bus to Germantown Ave & Master Street then a 3-minute walk

BY CAR: Google Maps search [here](#)

- [Indego Philly](#) has a bike share station at 3rd & Girard
- [PhillyCarShare](#) (now known as Enterprise CarShare) vehicles are available at 6th & Girard

Exhibitions and Gallery Shop

New exhibitions open in the gallery on a rotating basis and students are encouraged to visit the gallery. Our gallery shop features work by 75 local and national artists. Both are open Mon-Friday from 11 am - 6 pm; Sat & Sun from 11 am - 5 pm. The Exhibitions program and the Gallery Shop are valuable resources for students.

Claymobile

The Claymobile is an award winning mobile ceramic art program that partners with schools, community-based organizations & social service agencies in the greater Philadelphia region to bring hands-on art education to some of the region's most under-resourced communities. Staffed by professional teaching artists with expertise in ceramics and teaching in diverse settings, the van contains all of the equipment and materials needed for a ceramics class and is also outfitted to transport the finished pieces back. This program partners with 95 different sites to serve 4,000 youth and adults each year.

Resident Artists

The Resident Artist Program is the original basis for The Clay Studio and remains its core program. This juried program attracts ceramic artists of the highest caliber to immerse themselves in their creative growth and professional development. The Studio's reputation as a world class art center and the Resident Artist Program's unique features have made the program extremely competitive, attracting a diverse range of talented artists. *Current Resident Artists: Ruth Easterbrook, Dante Gambardella, Adebunmi Gbadebo, Akiko Jackson, Stephanie Kantor, Minah Kim, Josephine Larsen, Liisa Nelson, Christopher Rodgers, Kevin Snipes, Jeanne Robertson, and Jinsik Yoo.*

Associate Artists

The Clay Studio's Associate Artist Program is a communal studio shared by forty individuals on a non-juried basis. By making low-cost studio space available to individuals, the program serves an important need within the community. Associate Artists come to the studio in many different ways- some have been long-time students who transition into that program to have more space and 24-hour access, while others have a background in clay and are looking for shared resources and a community to work in.