



STUDENT GUIDE

Contact Information

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Mission Statement

Founded in 1974, The Clay Studio is committed to ensuring the space, support, and inspiration necessary for expression and learning in the ceramic arts. We work in partnership with artists and the community to advance the ceramic arts as a force for good, building connections where all can flourish.

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 and 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

Building Access for Students

- The VERKADA app is required for stairwell and elevator access
- **Main Entry Hours:**
 - Mon-Fri: 9:45 am – 5:30 pm (unlocked front door)
 - Sat-Sun: 9:45 am – 5:00 pm (unlocked front door)
 - Mon-Fri: 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm (front desk staff onsite to open the door if needed)
- **Evening Access:** enter via the community pavilion (garage door metal gate with the Verkada app):
 - Mon, Wed, Fri: 6:00 PM - 9:30 PM
 - Tue & Thur: 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM
 - Sat & Sun: 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- **Front Desk Evening Hours for purchasing clay & tools (students only) :**
 - Mon-Fri: 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Important Facility Notes

- Each student receives **one storage cubby per class enrollment**
- Watch personal belongings; leave valuables at home (TCS is not responsible for lost/stolen items)
- **Fully accessible** facility with motion sensor doors, elevator, and ADA-approved features
- **No phone calls** in the studios (emergency exceptions only). Please take calls to the hallways or stairwells.
- First aid kits located on floors 2, 3, 4 (left of mop closet)
- Report any problems immediately to the staff: Education@theclaystudio.org

Emergency Exits

- **Stairwell A:** Leads to the front vestibule and onto American St.
- **Stairwell B:** Exits at the back of the building, access street via the pavilion

Food and Drink Policy

- No food or drink is allowed in the studios (closed containers are permitted, but not encouraged)
- **No drinks in glazeroom**
- 4th floor lounge and roof deck available for food/drinks during open studio hours (see weekly schedule for updates)
- 4th floor refrigerator available for daily use only (cleaned weekly)

Studio Resources and Guidelines

Personal Storage

- Cubbies are personal space only; do not remove tools, clay, or work from others' cubbies
- No hanging items on/outside the cubbies
- Contact Education@theclaystudio.org before switching cubbies
- Coat closet located in hallway (clean items only, no towels/aprons)
- Lost and found is located on the 2nd floor, under the slab roller. Personal items will be located at the L&F at the front desk

Shared Equipment

- Black TCS-logo buckets and sponges are shared, cleaned, and returned to the shelf above the sinks after use
- No storing of communal or shared tools or supplies in cubbies; if found, they will be removed and returned to circulation
- **Wedging tables:** clean after use with plastic scraper, do not reclaim clay on wedging tables (use hallway plaster slabs)

Safety Equipment

- Heat guns are NOT permitted
- Plug-in blow dryers are provided (one per room max)
- Step ladders are available in each 2nd-floor classroom. Please do not stand on stools

Health and Safety

- **NO SANDING** of greenware or bisque in the studio
- **WET SANDING IN SINKS ONLY**
- Use wooden boards or cutting mats under slabs when cutting on tables

Work Storage

Large Work Overflow Shelf (Room 211, Handbuilding)

- For greenware only, must be larger than 12"x12"
- Must be labeled with name and date, with a 2-week maximum storage time

Needs Help Shelf (Glaze room)

- For work that cannot be fired, will be removed after one month

Open Studio Hours

Eligibility and Rules

- Open to currently enrolled students only. No guests, children, friends, or pets allowed
- Students cannot use classrooms during scheduled classes
- The weekly schedule is emailed on Sundays with upcoming classroom availability and updates
- Hours do not extend between terms; additional hours may be available during Obsession Sessions or September Special

Clay, Tools, and Materials

Purchasing Clay & Tools

All clay must be purchased from the Front Desk on the 1st Floor (see front page of this guide for shop hours)

Materials Included

- **Glazes:** Variety of 20+ cone 6 glazes for reduction and electric firings
- **Low fire glazes:** Variety of cone 03 glazes
- **Slip:** Seven different colors
- **Underglaze:** Nine Speedball underglaze colors
- **Wax resist**
- **Shared tools:** wareboards, etc (located under tables and shared tool cart)

Outside Materials Policy

- **Outside Materials are STRICTLY PROHIBITED:** Outside clays, glazes, mason stains, materials, etc.
- **Exceptions:**
 - Commercial ^6 clear glaze (with staff approval)
 - Non-fluxing underglaze (with staff approval via permission form, available at tech office)

Violation Consequences:

1st offense: Warning

2nd offense: Removal for the remainder of the term (no refund)

3rd offense: Permanent removal from TCS

Wet Work Guidelines

Timeline

- Students may make new work up until the greenware deadline, which is the last day of the 8th week of the term
- Students who are enrolled for the upcoming term may continue to make wet work until the last week

Work Requirements

- Sign all work before placing on the carts to be fired and consider photographing your pieces or taking notes
- Place work back to front on carts at the appropriate height shelves
- No production-level work, the amount of work you create must be proportionate to the classes enrolled in

Size Limitations

- **Size limit:** 14" L x 14" W x 18" H (as greenware)
- **Oversized fee:** \$20 for bisque & glaze from 14"-17" W or 18" H (oversize slips available at the 2nd floor office or 1st floor)
- **Kiln rental required:** Any work over 17" W or 18" H

Glazing Procedures

Guidelines

- Don't wait until the end - glaze work throughout the term
- All Cone 6 and low-fire glazes are located in the glaze room
- Do not remove glaze or wax from the glazeroom; only slips and underglazes can go to the classrooms and should be returned promptly after use
- Complete all glazing by the end of the term if not registered for an upcoming class
- Leave ¼" unglazed from the bottom of the piece
- Overlap glazes only on the top one-third of the piece
- Stir glaze thoroughly (20+ seconds) before use
- Bare bottom required - no stiling or jewelry racks permitted

Problem Resolution

- Work with glaze too close to the bottom, too thick, overlap, etc will go to the "needs help" shelf located in the glazeroom
- Clean or fix issues and return to them to the firing shelf

Firing Procedures

Cart System for Firing Work

- Use the correct carts for the desired firing type (bisque, electric, gas, low fire) as there are specifically labeled carts for each
- Never mix low-fire with high-fire glazed work
- Place work towards the back and place on the appropriate height shelf
- Do not handle or move other students work, ask for assistance

Firing Schedule

- **Bisque:** Continuous throughout the term
- **Glaze:** Weekly or as available (^6 electric & gas/reduction)
- Multiple factors can cause delays

Refiring Policy

- Only for firing issues (pinholes, kiln misfires)
- Requires a signed form from studio techs
- Cracked/broken pieces moved to "needs help" shelf

Clean-Up Procedures

Health and Safety: Clay and glaze dust can cause serious health problems over prolonged exposure. Always clean thoroughly:

Clay Disposal

- **NEVER discard clay in the sink**
- Pour water into the sink pans
- Put slip and clay chunks in reclaim bins

Required Cleaning

- Wheels, pans, benches, stools, tables, floor, and walls
- Use squeegees and dust pans for clay scraps in your work area
- Clean and turn off wheels; flip the stool on the wheel head once cleaned
- Scrape and clean wedging/plaster tables
- Return glazes and tools to their proper places
- Clean the glaze counter and replace the lids
- Wash wareboards, leave above sinks to dry

Collecting Finished Work & End of Term Information

Firing Timeline

- Kilns are fired weekly, and all work is expected to be ready for pickup within 2 weeks from the date it was placed on the cart
- Pick up your work in the "Fired Artwork" room throughout the term, and work should be collected and removed promptly
- **Pick-up deadline:** Students will be notified via email, and a 2-week pickup deadline will be established at that time
- Work remaining after the deadline will be recycled or donated to the annual Pottery Sale at the studio's discretion

End-of-Term Cleanup

- Take work, tools, and clay home on the last day if not continuing
- All items left on shelves will be discarded before the next term

Evaluations

Class evaluations are available at the end of the term. Your feedback helps us improve classes and provide instructor guidance—we are always open to feedback, so please feel welcome to reach out to staff throughout the term with any questions or concerns.

Inclement Weather

The Clay Studio is expected to be open regardless of the weather. However, if it needs to close due to inclement weather or other travel impediments, an email notification will be sent to all students, and updates will be posted to the front page of our website www.theclaystudio.org. The Education Manager will schedule make-up classes, and information will be sent via email.

Transportation and Parking

Street Parking

- Unmetered parking on N American and surrounding streets (Check the signs on each block)

Paid Parking

- [LAZ Parking](#): 1400 N Howard St (2 blocks away)
- **Lot at 1320 N Front St**: (7-8 minute walk; more expensive Thursday-Sunday)

Public Transportation & Alternative Options

- **Subway**: Market Frankford Line to Girard Station (10-minute walk)
- **Bus Options**:
 - Route 5 to 2nd & Girard (6-minute walk)
 - Route 57 American & Master (across the street)
- **Indego bike share** at 3rd & Girard
- **Enterprise CarShare** at 6th & Girard

Additional Programs

Functional & Exhibition Galleries

Rotating exhibitions every 10-12 weeks; join us at a Second Thursday Gallery Night from 5-8 pm. The Functional Gallery shows work by 75 local and national artists and is a wonderful educational resource for you.

- **Hours**: Mon-Fri 11 am - 5:30 pm, Sat-Sun 11 am-5 pm

Community Engagement: Claymobile & Hands on Clay

An award-winning mobile ceramic program serving 6,000 youth and adults annually at 200 sites throughout the greater Philadelphia region. We also host weekly free community workshops, after-school programs, and drop-in events at the studio, and participate in over 20 festivals across the city.

Resident Artists Program

Competitive juried program for ceramic artists focused on creative growth and professional development for twelve artists.

Current Resident Artists: Soojin Choi, Bradford Davis, Dehmie Dehmlow, Michael Dela-Dike, Celia Feldberg, Adrian Gomez, Jeremiah Ibarra, Dauen Lim, Nicholas Malik McDonald, Janina Myronova, Micah Sweezie, and Robert Zumwalt.

Associate Artists Program

Non-juried communal studio space for 49 individuals with 24-hour access, serving former students and experienced ceramicists seeking shared resources and community.

Learn more about all our programs and upcoming events at www.theclaystudio.org. Details on the Code of Conduct are available on the website under 'Registration Info' and 'Policies'.