

Kingston Potters' Guild Handbook

FOR ALL MEMBERS

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Introduction

Welcome to the Kingston Potters' Guild. We hope you will find this booklet helpful in finding your way around the Guild. Please don't hesitate to ask questions. The goal is to make your time at the Guild a positive, exciting and productive experience.

The Kingston Potters' Guild is a not-for-profit corporation, hereinafter referred to as the Guild.

Our Mission Statement

Kingston Potters' Guild creates a collaborative learning environment that inspires self-expression in the art and craft of ceramics.

The requirements of a non-profit corporation direct that funds are generated through fees collected for Guild activities (memberships, classes, workshops, sales, etc.) used for Guild operating and equipment expenses and other costs related to reaching our goals.

The purpose of the Kingston Potters' Guild shall be:

1. To promote artistic expression and technical skill in ceramics by holding workshops and classes to suit varying skill levels and providing educational materials such as books and videos.
2. To cultivate the exchange of ideas and technical information related to ceramics by holding meetings, participating in online or in-person sharing and learning, and fostering informal learning events.
3. To nurture a collaborative community that shares the responsibilities of maintaining and administering the Guild and to operate and maintain a top-quality studio to be used by members, students, and guests by requiring all members to volunteer their time, working together to support all facets of the organization.
4. To celebrate the art of ceramics and promote public participation in this artistic medium in the community by hosting open houses, special events for diverse groups, exhibitions, and sales, and by working with local organizations to facilitate outreach programs, innovation, and collaboration.

The Kingston Potters' Guild is a cooperative guild existing for the support and use of its members: to showcase their work at twice-yearly sales; to arrange workshops for their instruction, and to do community outreach through teaching classes or open house events such as Culture Days within the Tett umbrella.

Special Meetings are usually held at 7 PM on the third Wednesday of every September, October, November, January, and March. Should a meeting be cancelled for any reason, the contact person will try to inform members. It is not always possible to reach everyone so use your judgement in inclement winter weather.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held on the third Wednesday of June. The Board will be elected at this meeting for a two-year term.

Members are expected to adhere to the handbook rules which have been developed over time to assist in the safe and smooth functioning of the Guild for the enjoyment of all. Members are required to treat Guild property and other potter's work as if it were their own and leave equipment and work surfaces in a clean, safe condition for others.

Refer to the Guild website for the schedule of membership fees and the due dates. Annual receipts for income tax purposes are available in January to anyone who requests one.

Studio

Rules and Procedures

Keep your work clothes in your personal area. Hang outdoor clothing behind the studio door. Please use studio shoes as it helps keep the studio clean. Wet footwear is a possible slip hazard due to the studio floors being slippery when wet.

No equipment is to be removed from the Guild at any time unless for Guild purposes authorized by the Board. Studio equipment must remain in the studio.

There are separate canvasses for the slab roller marked for red and white clays. When you have finished using the canvas, please hang it dry on the rack in the glaze room. Your effort to use the correct canvas and keep it clean is appreciated. No cutting on the canvas is permitted. The marked wedging slabs are for white and red clays.

Guild members are required to provide their own batts if they want to leave work on them for any length of time. The Guild batts need to be available for classes.

Aisles are to be always kept clear for general safety. Stools are to remain on the floor — not on the tables or wheels.

Cubbies must be emptied of contents when a Studio Membership ends or a student is no longer taking classes.

Pots may remain in the drying cupboards for 2 - 3 days. Place dry class pots on shelves in the kiln room. The shelves are marked to indicate class and member shelves.

Only use the carts for holding your work before loading a kiln. Label the cart with your name and when you will be firing. Do not use the kiln room as a storage area. Store work in your personal space until you are ready to fire.

The last one to leave the studio must check that all doors are **locked** and **lights are off**. The light in the annex has no switch. It has a motion sensor and will shut off automatically.

Pug Mill

Only trained members can use the pug mill. Use at least two boxes of clay for recycling.

Glaze Room

Studio members are allowed **one** five-gallon glaze bucket or **two** small, stackable ones. All glaze buckets must have MSDS ingredients listed for fire regulations. Mark your buckets with your name. Do not remove recipes from the class glaze buckets. Class glaze buckets are for class use only.

Spray Booth and Extruder

Only qualified members (or have apprenticed under a qualified member) can use this equipment. Please book the Spray booth on the website calendar. IMPORTANT — Clean this equipment after use.

Studio Cleanup

Keep all areas as clean as possible. There are assigned cleaning jobs to teams, and members must fulfill their job requirements but everyone must help to keep the workspace clean and tidy..

1. Always use a wet sponge or mop in cleaning up. Silica and other dusts are a health hazard. Do everything you can to avoid stirring up the dust. Avoid inhaling ceramic dust and material. Wear a mask if necessary. Sweeping is **not** recommended.
2. After use, all working surfaces must be cleared and wiped with a wet sponge or mop. Be sure to put away all your tools and materials so that others have a clean and tidy area to work.
3. Wipe wheels clean after use. Pay special attention to cleaning up slop or trimmings from the floor around and under the wheels. Clean the on/off switch area when it is in the off position. Leave stools on the floor.
4. Always wash your hands thoroughly, even after removing gloves. Do not eat or drink when working with potentially hazardous ceramic materials.
5. Guild tools, water buckets, glazing buckets, and sieves are to be thoroughly cleaned after use and replaced in their storage areas.
6. Wash plaster molds after use.
7. When finished working in the studio, glaze, or kiln rooms, look around and be sure that you have left all working areas and floors cleaner than you found them.

Kilns

a. Rules for the use of Electric Kilns

1. To ensure safe firings, proper care, and use of the kilns new members are required to pass an apprenticeship.
2. To be approved for firing alone, a member must apprentice under the supervision of a member authorized to use the kilns. A contact list of willing supervisors is in the kiln room.
3. Supervised firings will include two bisques and two glaze firings before a member will be authorized to fire alone. Supervised firings are noted in the Apprentice Firing logbook. Firing will be dated and initialed by the supervisor. An apprentice must be involved in all aspects of each firing and entered in the logbook. A maximum of two apprentices can be involved with these supervised firings.
4. Following the supervised firings, the apprentice will have to successfully complete one glaze firing under supervision. The apprentice will be responsible for all aspects of this firing; their competency to fire will be based on this glaze firing.
5. Once the supervised firings are completed the newly authorized member will be expected to have another authorized member on call for help with difficulties for at least four more firings.

b. Bookings and Electric Kiln Firing

1. Book kilns on the online calendar. An individual potter can only have two firings booked on the calendar. Once the first firing is completed another firing can be booked. Six weeks prior to a sale, booking of firings will be done online in conjunction with the sale meeting. Anyone wanting to book a kiln must advise the sales convener. This applies to all potters, whether in the sale or not.
2. Booking consists of 72 hours, from 6 PM the evening before the firing to 6 PM the evening of the day after the firing. Enter your first and last name and type of firing (bisque or glaze) on the calendar. Mark the three days for the load, fire, and unload.
3. Fire kilns overnight. This will help prevent exposure to noxious fumes by members using the studio. Also, firing at night keeps electrical costs down.
4. Do not fire electric kilns above Cone 7. This preserves the elements and other electrical components.

5. You **MUST** attend the final hour of the firing.
6. Please notify the Electric Kiln Supervisor when fewer than a dozen cones remain in a box.
7. The bottoms of all pots must be clean and free of glaze before loading. Use bisque tiles under test glaze pieces. Use silica sand or alumina hydrate on the waxed bottoms of large pieces. It helps to prevent damage to the pot when it expands and contracts over the kiln shelf.
8. Check kiln shelves after use. Scrape and sand to remove glaze, and apply kiln wash as required. Apply kiln wash in two or three thin applications. For severe drips, use the grinding tool. Do this outside and wear a mask and safety goggles. **DO NOT** leave shelves for someone else to clean. Should a shelf be damaged beyond repair, the user is obligated to replace or pay for the replacement of the shelf. Failure to replace a shelf may result in the loss of kiln privileges.
9. Never run fingers or hands over kiln shelves; use a brush or scraping stone.
10. Vacuum kilns after each use, especially removing any silica sand.
11. Report concerns about equipment malfunctions promptly to the Electric Kiln Technicians. They are the only persons authorized to make repairs to the kilns.
12. Record each firing in the logbook for the appropriate kiln. This information is helpful for subsequent firings. Also, include the number of each shelf used. Record the firing cost per member.
13. Make sure the **downdraft** fan is on for the duration of the firing.
14. Do not operate kilns if there is or has been any evidence of water damage or leaking within the immediate areas surrounding the kilns.
15. While firing, do not leave papers or other combustibles or place objects on or lean against the kiln. Never touch the outside of a kiln, other than the control panel, when it is on. The kiln surface temperature may be hot.
16. Use dark-shaded glasses from a safety supply house (shade number 1.7 to 3.0) when looking into the peepholes. Do **NOT** blow into the peepholes. You will find a pair in the kiln room. Regular sunglasses are inadequate for this purpose. Proper glasses will protect your eyes from the heat and brightness and allow you to see witness cones more clearly.
17. Kilns are installed to electrical and fire safety codes. As well as, the manufacturer suggested installation instructions. It is possible to receive a shock or burn if you misuse or abuse the kilns.

18. Proper firing of **food-safe glazes** is critical. Use pyrometric witness cones to ensure your pieces have been fired high enough even though the kiln is electronically controlled, as electronics are not always accurate. Always follow glaze instructions. crazed or under-fired glazes may not be food-safe.
19. Do not unload the kiln until the temperature is 100 degrees or less. Removing pieces that have not adequately cooled can result in burns, fires, or crazing of the glazed surface.
20. Keep the lid to the kiln open when not in use. Never place anything on the kiln lid.

c. Rules for use of the Reduction Kiln

The Reduction Kiln Group operates with the same house rules as the rest of the Guild.

Reduction Group members follow an apprenticeship as outlined below:

1. The applicant must be a member in good standing with the Guild. And have a full Studio Membership or a Kiln/Glaze Membership.
2. Members wishing to join the Reduction Group will submit a request to the Reduction Group Committee.
3. The potential apprentice must have experience in oxidation firing, qualify to fire the electric kilns alone, and have completed at least six glaze-independent oxidation firings.
4. The apprentice should not plan to occupy more than two to four kiln shelves per firing unless the team makes an exception.
5. The apprentice may not book a firing.
6. The training period will be at least seven firings.
7. At the end of the training period, the Reduction Group Committee will review the apprentice's capability and decide whether the apprentice qualifies as an authorized fire master. If the Reduction Group Committee thinks the apprentice is not ready, they may extend the training period as necessary.
8. The last two firings will be completely directed by the apprentice under supervision. If the Reduction Group Committee thinks the apprentice is not ready, they may extend the training period as necessary.

The Reduction Kiln Group operates with the same house rules as the rest of the Guild.

1. It is mandatory that at least two people participate in each kiln firing, one of whom is a Fire Master.
2. Under no circumstances during the firing process is the kiln to be left unattended. At all times, someone **MUST** be on the property to regularly check the kiln.
3. Vacuum the kiln before each firing.
4. Untried glazes must be tested on the insides of pots only.
5. Clean shelves immediately after firing and repair kiln wash if necessary.
6. Members are responsible for promptly reporting any damage to the kiln, its furniture, or other equipment to the Reduction Kiln Committee Supervisor.
7. At least eight weeks before each Guild Sale, the Supervisor will arrange a meeting of reduction kiln users to set up the firing schedule to ensure equality and fair use of the kiln.
8. Each Reduction Group member will be permitted a maximum of ten full firings, or the equivalent, per year.

Volunteering

All members are required to participate in the functioning of the Guild. Members are encouraged to serve on a committee or stand for a Board position. **A minimum of 12 volunteer hours per year** is required for Studio, Glaze, and Kiln members and **6 hours per year** for General members. Glaze and Kiln members and Studio members will have a job from the jobs list allocated by the Studio Supervisor. General members may assist by serving on a committee, helping with outreach activities, or having a job.

If volunteer hours are not completed then the renewal of your membership in September will be denied.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Safety

Be aware of all fire exits and alarms when in the studio. Take note of the map posted on the right side of the wall as you enter the kiln room. In the event of a fire, pull the nearest fire alarm. Close all doors and exit the building using the safest route. If working with others and you are separated, exit the building and meet at the upper parking lot. Do not enter the building until the all-clear from the Fire Marshal or designate.

Supply Room

The supply room sells basic glaze materials and tools to Guild members. Clay purchase is for students only due to space restrictions.

Throughout the year, members may place small orders by completing an order form near the Supply room or placing their order using the Supply webpage. Specific instructions are posted along with the order forms. There is a maximum on basic ingredients of 3kg and a maximum on colourants of 500g (with the exception of some used in higher quantities such as Red Iron Oxide and Zircopax/Ultrox). The primary role of the Supply Room is to make glaze mixing more accessible and convenient to members by supplying materials at cost (as opposed to selling bulk quantities). There is no limit on how many times you can order material in a year. If you are using large amounts, consider ordering from Amaranth Stoneware. They sell whole bags or will divide them for you.

Orders will be filled on a weekly basis by the supplies committee member named on the calendar for each specific week. Orders will be placed on the shelf outside the Supply room once completed.

The Supply room is open for business from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm before any general meeting on the third Wednesday of the month.

Library

The Guild maintains a library of books, videos/DVDs, and periodicals covering many aspects of pottery. Books are added to the collection from time to time, often at the request of a member. Books and videos circulate among the members. Check out books, videos,

and DVDs using the notebook in the library area. There is no specific due back policy, but in fairness to other Guild members, please return them within two weeks. Read the magazines in the studio. They are not to be removed from the studio.

We have a subscription to Ceramic Arts. Access their website with the username subscription@kingstonpottersguild.ca. The password is available from the librarians.

Publicity

The Guild has a Publicity team. It is managed by the Publicity Coordinator (a member of the Board) along with a Website and Social Media member. We have a public Facebook and Instagram account to relay news to the public. Our website will have news posted.

Guild Sales

Anyone who has been a member for **six** months is eligible to participate. There is a commission applied to pottery sold. The percentage covers sale costs. The commission rate is adjusted annually.

First and second-time participants are required to have a selection of their pots juried before being accepted into a sale. All pots brought to the sale will be juried for the first **two** sales. The convenors will set up times for the jurying participants.

Find the rules and guidelines in the Sales Handbook on our website.