

Electric Kiln Firing

This playbook provides a step-by-step guide on the basic process of firing ceramics in an electric kiln, focusing on essential aspects of temperature control and timing.

Step 1: **Preparation**

Ensure the ceramics are bone dry, the kiln is clear of any obstructions, and the kiln shelves are properly arranged. Verify that the kiln's power supply corresponds to its voltage requirements and that the kiln sitter or electronic controller is functioning correctly.

Step 2: **Loading**

Carefully load the ceramics onto the kiln shelves, allowing for adequate space between pieces to enable proper heat circulation. Ensure the wares do not touch the kiln walls or elements.

Step 3: **Candling**

Perform a preheat cycle, known as 'candling', at a low temperature for several hours to ensure any residual moisture in the wares evaporates, preventing cracks or explosions.

Step 4: **Bisque Firing**

Begin bisque firing, initially on low, then gradually increase to medium and high over several hours following the kiln manufacturer's schedule, until the desired bisque temperature is reached.

Step 5: **Cooling**

Once the target temperature is achieved and maintained for the appropriate soak time, allow the kiln to slowly cool down. Avoid opening the lid or door until the temperature drops to avoid thermal shock.

Step 6: **Glazing**

After the wares are bisque fired and fully cooled, apply glaze as desired. Ensure the wares are clean and dust-free before applying the glaze to achieve the best results.

Step 7: **Glaze Firing**

Load the glazed wares into the kiln, again ensuring they do not touch. Repeat the gradual heating process, but this time to the specific temperatures required for maturing the glazes.

Step 8: **Unloading**

When the kiln has cooled completely to room temperature, it is safe to open the lid and remove the fired ceramics. Use caution as pieces may still be fragile.

General Notes

Kiln Safety

Always adhere to kiln safety guidelines, such as using protective eyewear, ensuring good ventilation, maintaining a safe area around the kiln, and not leaving the kiln unattended during critical phases of firing.

