



201 Hollow Road, Waterbury Center Vermont

Welcome to the MakerSphere Clay Studio!



The MakerSphere Clay Studio is a special place where potters of all ages can come together to learn and experience the dynamic nature of ceramics. Whether the pieces you make are functional, decorative, or whimsical, you will enjoy creating new things, developing your skills, meeting fellow potters, and sharing your inspiration with others.

This guide includes MakerSphere Clay Studio policies and procedures and information that will be helpful to you as a student or member. Please note, production work is not allowed. MakerSphere does not have the capacity to accommodate production potters.

Two ways to join the MakerSphere Clay Studio:

1. **Student** – Classes are offered throughout the year with the exception of July/August. Classes are taught in sessions consisting of 7 classes, each two hours in length. See the website (<https://www.makerspherevt.com/>) for the most current options.
2. **Monthly Membership** – Students who have completed at least one MakerSphere class may become a monthly member. Potters with experience, who have not taken a class with MakerSphere, must schedule a brief orientation and interview with a studio staff member to be eligible for membership. Contact makerspherevt@gmail.com.

Studio Access

Students and members have access to the studio daily between 8:00 am – 8:00 pm except when classes are in session (see schedule on the website). The studio may NOT be used when classes are running.

The Seminary Arts Clay Studio is on the first floor with access via the stairway on the right as you face the building. Handicap access is available via the rear of the building where there is an elevator. The rear door is locked and therefore, advance arrangements are needed to use this entrance. Note that personnel must be available at the time of your entry. The clay studio is part of a larger residential apartment building. Potters are asked to please park in the side parking area, or in the rear lot if necessary.

After enrolling, you will receive an access code to the front door keypad lock. Input the code and use the thumb turn to unlock the door. Through the foyer, a second door leads into the front room of the studio space. The lights are located on the wall to the right as you enter the room.

Exiting/Locking Up

If you are the last person to exit the building, please turn off all lights, check that wheels are off and all spaces are clean, and lock the door. To lock the door, press the “Schlage” button and then turn the thumb-turn to the locked position. Check to ensure the door is locked. Please stop working with enough time to clean up before any incoming classes. Instructors often need time to prepare before their class.

Clay Studio Equipment and Tools

- Individual shelves assigned to each potter to store their projects, clay, and tools.
- Workspace tables and stools
- Plaster wedging slabs
- 6 Pottery wheels
- Slab roller (for hand building); rolling pins.
- Clay extruder (forming clay shapes)
- Molds and forms
- Tools and Supplies (bats, sponges, water containers, trimming tools, paint brushes)
- Glazes and stains
- Shelves to hold work to fire
- Kilns (1 bisque; 1 glaze)
- Sink for cleanup; paper towels, etc.
- Plastic for covering projects, newspaper, sheetrock work boards, etc.

Clay Purchases

Clay must be purchased from the studio - no outside clays are permitted. There are several types of clay to choose from which may depend on wholesale availability. The cost is \$40/bag and covers glaze materials and firing costs.

Clay is paid for at the studio. Please fill out the posted clay form to indicate your purchase details. For your convenience, you may use the QR code posted beside the slab roller which allows payment via bank, debit, or credit. You may also leave a check in the black mailbox. We prefer that cash not be used. We do not accept Venmo payments.

Studio Etiquette

- The clay studio is a safe and welcoming space for everyone. There is no tolerance for intoxication, substance abuse, harassment or discrimination of any kind. Alcohol is not permitted on the premises.
- All resources in the studio are shared. Please put tools or supplies back in their place.
- Contain your workspace so that others have room in the available space.
- Store all personal tools, supplies, and projects on your shelf. Do NOT leave work on tables.
- Never touch work on someone else’s shelf without permission.
- Do not distract other members with cell phone conversations or music/podcasts that can be overheard.
- Guests are not allowed.

Health and Safety

- **Clay dust is hazardous.** No sanding of greenware or bisqueware is allowed in the studio. If you must sand, please do so outside of the studio and use a proper mask. Use sweeping compound if you need to sweep the floor after your session.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- No food or drink in the clay room. OK in the front room.

Cleaning Procedures

- Clean all tools and equipment and return to designated spaces at the end of each work session.
- Use a wet sponge to clean plaster wedging slabs and work tables after using.
- Sweep crumbs (with compound) and/or spot mop floors and walls as needed. Be sure to clean after throwing AND trimming please!
- NEVER discard clay in the sink. Clean tools in the bucket before rinsing with clean water. NO clay or glaze should go down the sink drain.

- **For wheels:**
 - Empty your splash pan into a throwing bucket and clean with a wet sponge.
 - Wipe wheel and area with wet sponge.
 - Gently sweep any crumbs (so as not to create dust). Spot mop floor and clean wall splashes.
 - Empty throwing bucket into right side sink bucket and wipe out large chunks with sponge. Wipe down throwing bucket and tools with wet sponge, getting as much clay off as possible without running fresh water. Never use faucet on right side sink.
 - Rinse sponge in left side sink when needed to clean off tools and throwing bucket, ringing out clay water into right side sink bucket. Give final rinse off in left sink, washing down any residue with plenty of water, and put bucket and tools away to dry.

- **For handbuilders:**
 - Clean all surfaces and tools used. Gently sweep any crumbs (so as not to create dust). Spot mop floor etc. as needed.
 - Rinse sponge in left side sink when needed to clean off tools, ringing out clay water into right side sink bucket. Give final rinse off in left sink, washing down any residue with plenty of water, and put tools away to dry.
 - Be sure to leave the slab roller ready for the next potter, with canvases hung up and no clay residue or crumbs left behind.

- Studio towels are for drying CLEAN hands only. If you need help understanding how to properly clean up, please ask. If you need to keep a towel at your wheel please bring your own. Be aware that washing heavily soiled clay clothing can clog your washer pipes.
- If you are interested in learning how to reclaim your own clay, see more information below.
- We do not reclaim clay as a studio, however we DO use reclaim for instructors and demos. It is important to keep glaze and foreign substances out of the right sink bucket.

Glazing Guidelines

Please make every effort to glaze and clean your piece properly before putting it on the glaze shelf to fire. If in question, please check with your instructor or another experienced potter.

- Stir dipping glazes thoroughly. The drill with a mixing bit works best.
- Remove all glaze from the bottom of your piece and at least 1/4" up from the bottom.
- Do not overlap two glazes near the bottom of your work as it will flow off the pot.
- If you are using a low fire underglaze or glaze (melts in bisque cone 06) please leave a note on the piece in the glaze room. These cannot touch other pots, unlike typical bisqueware. If we know, it saves time in loading and assures your piece won't get stuck.
- If your work looks too risky to fire, it might be "rejected" with a note as to why and usually how to remedy. This saves on equipment wear and tear and ensures success for your work. If your work is rejected more than 3 times, you will be required to schedule a glaze training with the studio manager.
- Water used to clean up glaze can be dumped into small labeled containers next to the right sink.

Firing Procedures

- Be sure to sign your pieces. Unsigned pieces will be placed on the table under the window and will be discarded after 30 days if not picked up.
- Students and members may NOT load, unload, open, close, remove any work from or operate the kilns without prior consent from MakerSphere staff or technicians.
- Do not touch or move work that is not your own. If there is no space in the kiln room for your piece, place it on the overflow shelves next to the sink (bottom 2 shelves).
- If you accidentally break another's work, please leave a note for them/us.
- If you choose to no longer be a student or member, please notify the studio manager.
- Any unfinished work left behind after terminating a membership or class will be discarded after 30 days. This applies to personal items such as clothes and shoes as well.
- While we do our best to safely handle and fire all work successfully, pottery is a risky craft, often with many variables which can create unpredictable results. MakerSphere will not compensate for broken pieces or wares damaged due to equipment malfunction or studio accidents.
- Work is not guaranteed to be fired on a specific timeline. A bisque and a glaze firing occur each week. Large and odd shaped wares can sometimes take longer. Priority cannot be given to particular individuals. Any extenuating circumstances should be addressed with the studio manager.

The following pertains to students only; (excludes monthly members)

Missed Classes: If a student misses a class for personal reasons:

- A maximum of two makeup classes in another class, other than your own, may be possible **IF:**
 - You seek permission from the class instructor whose class you wish to attend PRIOR to class
 - The instructor approves
 - There is room in the class
 - You understand that wheel preference must be given to the regular class members
 - You have not already exceeded two makeup classes

Class Cancellation Policy

If a class is canceled for any reason by MakerSphere; due to weather, instructor illness, etc., a makeup class will be offered if at all possible. Instructors will work with students to identify possible makeup dates.