

Before loading, make sure the kiln is turned off and cold.

To start, use a 2" or 3" kiln support to place under the bottom shelf of the kiln. Do not fire anything on the floor of the kiln. First of all the bottom will always be cooler than the rest of the chamber, and also you would be running the risk of having your glazes run off onto the floor and damaging it, in case of over-firing.

Always use shelves that have been covered with Kiln Shelf Wash on their upper side. After you have the first shelf in place, and if you have enough pieces that will require multiple shelves, then choose your ware so that you can fire the larger (taller) pieces on the lower shelf and the smaller (shorter) pieces on the upper shelves.

This arrangement will help distribute the heat better. Since heat moves up, this will open up the space in the lower part of the kiln making a better air circulation, and evenly distribute the heat throughout the kiln.

If you are firing a load of Bisque (the first firing) then you can load the kiln very tight, even place pieces one into the other (see photo No. 1). When you have the urge to put as many pieces as possible in the kiln, remember to leave room to place the cone. The cone should have enough room for it to bend without touching the ware (see

photos 1 and 2).

When you are firing glazed ware you must pay close attention to leave enough room between each piece. Remember that if pieces touch they will stick together. Place the ware 1" to 2" apart and away from the wall of the kiln (see photo No. 2).

If you have a dry foot on your pieces, (you do not have any glaze on the foot) then you can place them directly on the shelf that has been covered with Kiln Shelf Wash. If you have glaze on the bottom of your pieces, you can place them on stilts. Make sure the pieces are well balanced on the stilts and will not tumble off.

Once the pieces are glaze fired you can grind off the stilts' marks either by using a hand-held carborundum stone or on an electric grinder. Do not forget to wear goggles when you do grinding and remember that broken off stilts can be very sharp. Therefore, take precautions not to cut yourself. See photos 3 and 4.

Most kilns today have either a kiln sitter or an electronic control. Both are fairly good indicators of temperature, and practical because they will shut off the kiln automatically when the firing is completed. However using guide cones gives you the most accurate temperature reading. Use either the self-sup-



Photo No. 2

porting or the regular ones. It is advisable to place a cone on every shelf in the kiln, especially when you first start using the kiln. This will show you any temperature difference in your kiln from top to bottom.

You will need to place the witness cone behind the middle peephole. When temperature rises in the kiln you can look through the peephole, and see your witness cone bend as

sitters may not be very accurate unless they are adjusted to shut off at the same time as the witness cone bends. Or since they always tend to shut off early, use a higher temperature difference in your kiln from top to bottom. For example: If you want to fire to Cone 05 then put a Cone 04 in the sitter. Compare this to a witness Cone 05 in the kiln during the same firing.

Never open the kiln during firing.



Photo No. 3



Photo No. 4



Photo No. 1

you monitor the rise in temperature. A proper firing will cause the cone to bend to a 90° angle.

Junior cones or bars are used in the kiln sitter and will shut off the kiln automatically as they absorb the heat and bend. However, kiln

When the kiln is off leave it closed overnight to cool. Open the kiln the next day and make sure it is cool to the touch before you handle the ware to unload it.

Always make sure the kiln is off before you open it.