

Family Art from Home

Printing with Clay

by Ophelia Cornet

Make very simple stamps from a small amount of unfired clay which you keep reusing. The subject matter is open ended with patterns and bold designs stealing the show! What I love about this art project is the wonderful texture of the individual small prints and the overall element of surprise!

Supplies Needed

- Clay (any type other than oil-based modeling clay)
- Black India Ink
- Paper towels
- Small plate or tray
- Simple tools: skewer, toothpicks, or a popsicle sticks
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Sheet of paper

How to Do it

What shape is that thing? Come up with a theme for your piece and think of the individual elements and the shapes that will make up your picture. For example, if you are making a flower for a landscape you would roll your clay into a small sphere. A house might be a rectangle and a tree trunk might be a coil.

Make some patterns! Once you have formed your general shape and have smoothed out the surface of the clay, you'll use the tools mentioned above to push indentations into the clay making your stamp. Once you print you will end up with the paper color for the indentations rather than the black ink which is on the rest of the clay. The more designs and patterns, the better! See Image 1.

Cover with ink and print! Use a small Styrofoam or plastic tray/plate under your folded paper towel, then saturate it with ink. Now take your clay stamp and gently tap it a few times onto the paper towel. Check the clay stamp to see that it is evenly covered with ink and press it onto your paper. Stamps can be used many times or modified as you go. See Image 2.

Note: You do not need to use new clay each time you are making a new stamp but rather rework the clay you have and reconfigure it!

Bring it to life with color! Use colored pencils, crayons, markers or oil pastels to color in your picture once the ink is fully dry.



Image 1



Image 2



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