

Memory Café Clay Workshop : Materials

This is what you will need:

1 board (around 6"x6")

clay* -- 1/3 of a kilogram (slightly under 1 lb) is enough for this project

"tools" I use a little wooden skewer, but kitchen implements will do!

A blunt, rounded knife and a nail will suffice for this project

1 sponge (a small piece of sponge is fine)

1 piece of cotton cloth

a green scrubby, or a scratchy sponge is useful for clean-up

You may also like to use:

A piece of newspaper under your board

A water sprayer

A plate to put moist clay & wet sponge on

An airtight container or bag to store unused clay in

Air-drying clay is a little more solid than regular pottery clay when it dries and can be painted or varnished when dry. Thick things will be less likely to crack if they are first dried slowly under a piece of plastic. Objects made of regular pottery clay, while more fragile when dry, can be kept quite safely on a shelf for display.

Unused clay will keep for a long time if kept moist in an airtight container. Keep in a relatively cool area (ie. not next to a heater or in the sun) as warmth tends to encourage mold growth.

Regular pottery clay can be re-wetted indefinitely, even if it has become completely dried out and hard. Air-drying clay will not re-dissolve if it becomes dry.

Clay will dry out as you work with it so you can use a wet sponge (it does not need to be dripping) to re-wet it from time to time. Or mist your clay using a spray bottle. The sponge is also useful for smoothing the surface of the clay. Keep unused portions of clay moist by wrapping them in a damp cloth (this is a cloth which has been got wet and is then totally wrung out).

Cleanup: Sweep away any dry bits first, to minimize what goes down the drain. Boards and skewers are easily scrubbed clean with one of those green scratchy scrubbers, or a nailbrush. They will last longer if you don't soak them. You need to clean air-drying clay tools right away as this clay does harden onto things. Regular pottery clay washes off more easily. Clay that is squashed or hardened onto table surfaces or the floor can be easily removed with a paint scraper.

**The following are some brands you can find at Deserres art supply store in Halifax in 1kg packages for around \$8.00: Sio-2 "Plus" brand, Vallauris air-drying clay, Plastisail air-drying clay. Regular potters' clay is also fine to use.*

