



Mini Pinch Pots

Introduction

Pinch pots are one of the primary techniques used in hand building, and a great introduction to working with clay. Utilizing air dry clay allows you to explore the medium without the need for specialized equipment like a kiln. Air dry clay is not waterproof though, so if you are hoping to make a small planter, you will need to varnish the inside and select a low moisture plant like a cactus or succulent.

Mindful Reflection

As you move through the process of creating your pinch pot, consider this poem by Kabir.

This Clay Jug

Inside this clay jug there are canyons
and pine mountains, and the maker of
canyons and pine mountains!
All seven oceans are inside, and
hundreds of millions of stars.
The acid that tests gold is there, and
the one who judges jewels.
And the music from the strings
no one touches, and the source of
all water.
If you want the truth, I will tell you
the truth:
Friend, listen:
The divine whom I love is inside.

Materials

air-dry clay
butter knife
acrylic paint
paint brush
palette or paper plate
*optional varnish, succulent soil, air plants or succulent



Directions

1. Slice about two inches of air-dry clay with your knife. Warm the clay a bit by kneading it in your hands. Roll it into ball between you hands and a flat surface. Ideally, you want the ball to fit in the palm of your hand.



2. To start pinching your pot, flatten the top on the ball and insert your thumb into the center of the flattened top. Pinch around the center of the hole trying to create uniformed walls as the pot grows. Keep pinching until you reach your desired size.



3. To smooth out your pot, flip in onto a flat surface and use a small amount of water to help smooth out the cracks. If you are going to use your finished piece as a planter poke a small hole in the bottom of the pot with your toothpick. Flip the pot upright and smooth the top edge.
4. Allow to dry and harden completely. Recommended dry time should be listed on the product's package.

5. If you would like to use your pot as a planter, you need to seal it by painting the inside with varnish so water doesn't seep through.
6. Paint your pot with preferred colors and designs. Allow to dry thoroughly before use.