

ART / SCULPTURE · Y2–Y6

Pinch Pot

Air-dry clay — beginner's guide

You will need

Per pupil

- Air-dry clay — approximately 100–150g per pupil (orange-sized ball)
- A smooth work surface (placemat or cloth)
- Small bowl of water (for smoothing cracks)
- Toothpick or pencil for decorating
- Smooth stone or wooden tool for shaping
- Wire or cheese cutter (teacher use, for slicing)
- Allow 24–48 hours to dry fully before painting

How to make a basic pinch pot

1. Roll your clay into a smooth ball — no cracks on the surface.
2. Push your thumb into the centre of the ball, stopping about 1cm from the bottom.
3. Pinch the clay between your thumb (inside) and fingers (outside), rotating slowly.
4. Keep pinching and rotating — the walls should be an even thickness (about 5mm).
5. Smooth any cracks with a wet finger.
6. Flatten the base slightly so the pot stands upright.
7. Let it dry upside down for the first hour to prevent base sinking.
8. Dry fully for 24–48 hours before painting with acrylic or poster paint.



Design challenges

1. Can you add a texture by pressing a leaf, lace, or textured fabric against the outside before it dries?
2. Can you add coils of clay to build the sides higher?
3. Can you make two pots that stack or nest together?
4. Can you research a famous ceramic tradition (Japanese Raku, Mexican Talavera, ancient Greek pottery) and use it as inspiration for your decoration?

