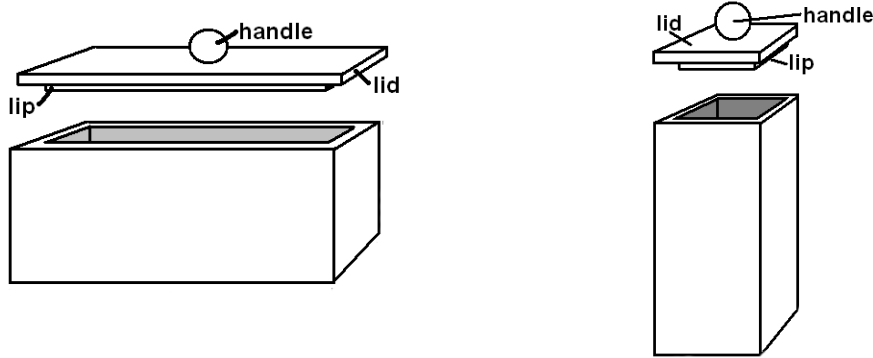


Slab Box Project

For this project, you will make a textured box and lid using the slab method of construction. It is important you plan out this project in its entirety before getting out the clay. At first glance, this project may seem fairly simple, but it takes careful planning to make sure the finished product meets the requirements. You can make it in either configuration, shown below. The handle can be whatever shape you like.



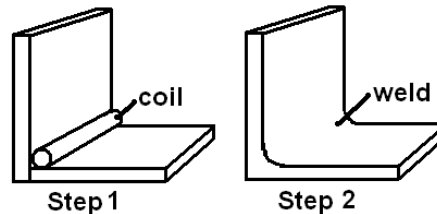
Instructions:

1. Plan the project – including all measurements. Be sure you take into account how thick the clay slabs are in your measurements. The box can be any dimensions, as long as **no side exceeds four (4) inches in any direction**, and all sides and corners must have 90 degree angles.
2. The box must have some sort of texture and/or added decoration on all four walls.
3. Be sure you follow the instructions from the demonstration carefully so you have the best chance of success:
 - a. Roll out the clay using a rolling pin and wooden slabbing strips
 - b. If you plan on applying texture using texture plates, do that before Step C
 - c. Measure and cut out each piece
 - d. **RETURN EXCESS CLAY TO A BAG IMMEDIATELY**
 - e. Allow the slabs to firm up a bit by letting them sit flat on the canvas
 - f. Assemble using score-and-slip
 - g. “Weld” each side to the other(s) one at a time (not all at once at the end)
 - h. If you are adding or subtracting any other decorative element(s), do so **after** the box is fully assembled
 - i. Create a lid (there are two ways). It must have the same decorative elements as the box as well as a functioning handle, and it must have a lip or must fit into the cut-out parts on the box (when using the alternative method)
4. Once your box is finished, scratch your name (first and last) and period on the bottom (outside) of the box, put the lid on it lightly and put it on the Greenware Shelf to dry.

Here are some other helpful tips:

1. As you roll out the clay with rollers and slabbing sticks, remember: **CLAY MOVES SLOWLY.**
2. The box must have some sort of decorative element. This can be done using a texture plate or by adding features. Use your imagination. You can have a specific theme that’s consistent throughout the entire piece, like Christmas, wood, flowers, skulls, geometric shapes, etc.
3. Be sure you add the texture *after* rolling out the slabs and *before* cutting them out. Be careful not to press down too hard, as it will distort the slabs. Rub the texture plate using the rounded end of the long wooden tool. Check periodically to make sure the texture is transferring properly.
4. Double-check your measurements before cutting.
5. **PUT ANY EXCESS CLAY BACK IN THE CLAY BAG IMMEDIATELY.**

6. Let the cut-out slabs set up a bit to become firmer. About 45 minutes ought to be enough. You can also place them carefully in a plastic bag and put them in your locker for a day or two. It's important to let the clay set up a bit so the slabs become firm and therefore easier to keep flat. If you start assembling your box immediately after rolling out the slabs, they will still be floppy and unwieldy, and it's very difficult to make the sides straight and flat.
7. Eliminate all seams, inside and out (see tip #8 for a way to reinforce the inside).
8. Assemble the box using score and slip, "weld" each interior connection with a small coil, then eliminate **all** of the seams (see illustrations). This is best done after attaching each slab (don't wait until you've assembled all four sides).



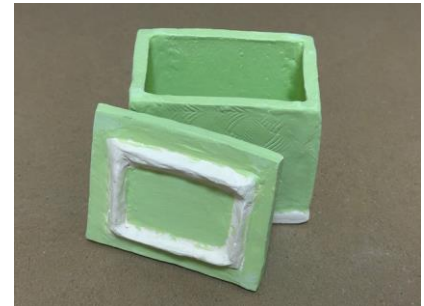
9. Use score-and-slip to add anything to the slab.
10. Add a lid. Make sure you include a usable handle and a lip on the bottom (the handle's shape should reflect the other decorative element[s] you've added). For the lip, you can either add a slab that fits inside the box opening or roll out a coil and attach it to the underside of the lid so it fits within the opening. Make sure there's a bit of "play" between the lip and the box. It should not fit in tightly. The lid should also have texture. See below for an alternative method.
11. GLAZING: Glaze the outside AND inside of the box. Draw a pencil line 1/8" from the bottom (on the outside), all the way around the box to remind you not to glaze too far down the sides (the line will burn off in the kiln). The entire lid **EXCEPT FOR THE LIP** should be glazed.



Nicely crafted box, functional handle that reflects the texture



Nicely crafted box, functional handle, good glazing



Nicely crafted lip (unglazed), good glazing



Nicely crafted box, functional handle made the same shape as the texture pattern, glazing could be better



Nicely crafted and glazed box, but even though the handle looks good, it is not functional



This box misses the mark entirely on construction quality, handle functionality, and glazing

Here are some more examples I found on the Internet that were done by ceramics students that show more creative and challenging decorative elements. Some have added features using score-and-slip. You will notice some of the lids are also made differently than in the examples on the previous page (make the entire box – all 6 sides – then cut off the lid). You may choose which method you like better. You may get ideas from these examples, but **do NOT** copy someone else's work. All images are the work of the respective artists.

