

Things to test with Tiles

Glaze Testing Motto: “Do the minimum work for the maximum information”
-Don Santos

Record for every test tile:

- Name
- Type (Glaze, Slip, Engobe, other)
- Cone (Temp.) [Cone 5 or 6*]
- Atmosphere (Oxidation- Electric kiln*)
- Date
- Exact clay Type
- Volume or Weight of “Type”
- Application (Dip, Brush, Sprayed)
- Test System (Letters, Numbers, Decimals)
- Source (As much as you know- Studio Name, Brand, Ect...)

*The norm for multiple bay area pottery studios

Order of Work:

1. Notes: (See Above) and what you are testing for, and have a place for post firing notes.
2. Label Test Tiles in at least two places: visible from front and back
3. Mix and apply
4. Application Notes!
5. Fire
6. Post Firing Notes!
7. Glaze and Fire Test Bowl or Cup
8. Use on an actual piece

Test Tiles Should:

- Always be vertical to show how a glaze moves.
- Have two places to record numbers- incase one gets covered

- Have a sharp edge or small amount of texture to see how a glaze looks on a ridge.
- Test bowls or cups should have a band of texture on the exterior to see pooling of glaze.

Application for Tests and Projects:

- Tiles need to be cleaned with water just as you would do to bisque. Then label them.
- Brushing should be done in a manner to see 1 -2 -3- and 4 coats separately.
- Dipping should be consistent and timed by seconds every time (one, one million, two rhinoceros)
- Be aware of the **Gestalt of Water****
 - Weather, temp of room, porosity of your clay, how thick or thin your walls are, how wet the bisque is, how long you waited between coats, or how thick or thin your glaze is.
 - Thicker is better than thinner for glaze tests
 - 5 second dip is usually the most you can apply without running**
 - Stir the bucket as fast as possible with full extension of wrist- glaze should still spin for **7 seconds.****
 - You can use a viscous (non-running) glaze to catch a runny glaze
 - Glaze in groups of at least 5 or 10 items to allow drying between coats
 - Sometimes glaze the interior a day ahead.**

(A short list of) possible things to test for:

- **Trying your favorite glazes or combinations with a new clay body**
- **Trying a new glaze or underglaze that you purchased**
- **Trying a new glaze recipe**
- **Slip applications**
- **Slips under different glazes**
- **Underglazes (under and above) different glazes**
- **Oxides (under and above different glazes)**
- **Confirmation- retesting glaze combinations**
- **Double Dips**
- **Triple Dips**
- **Surface Design**
- **Understanding somebody else's work**
- **Defects in glazing**
- **Decals**
- **Lusters**
- **Refires**
- **Applications at different firing temperatures**
- **Different amounts of Water****
- **Different wall thicknesses**
- **Different forms/curves**
- **Color Theory- best contrasts, analogous colors, etc...**
- **Mason Stains- Mixed into Clays, Underglazes, Glazes**
- **Line Blends (inquire for more details)**