

Canton Museum of Art, Girl Scouts of the USA

Brownie Badge Program: Pottery



The Pottery merit badge provides an introduction to pottery making, enabling Scouts to gain skill and understanding from actually creating pottery. Completing the requirements will include hands-on production of a work of art, from start to finish.

CMA Pottery Badge Requirements

Pottery Badge Steps:

- 1. Session One: Pottery, Hand Building Basics, and Glazing Techniques:**
 - a. Students will participate in learning the fundamentals of creating basic pottery vessels and glazing techniques.
 - i. Make a pinch pot.
 - ii. Glaze a ceramic tile.
- 2. Session Two: Ceramics Lab Demonstration and Tour**
 - a. Students will participate in a tour of the CMA ceramics lab and watch a demonstration on throwing on a pottery wheel by a professional potter.
 - i. Participate in a discussion about the precautions that must be followed for the safe use and operation of a potter's tools, equipment, and other materials.
- 3. Session Three: Creating a Clay Sculpture**
 - a. Students will learn about hand building basics on how to create a sculpture.
 - i. Make an animal sculpture inspired by the CMA permanent collection ceramic sculptures.
- 4. Session Four: Guided Tour with CMA Docent**
 - a. Participate in a tour of the exhibit: *American Allied Artists* as well as CMA's permanent collection ceramics.
 - i. Participate in a discussion about the exhibit and connect the knowledge learned in previous sessions to the exhibit.

Girl Scouts of the USA, Brownie Pottery Badge Requirements

Crafts made with clay have been around for thousands of years. People who study history have found ancient clay art and everyday objects. Work your way through these steps to become a clay artist yourself!

Pottery Badge Steps:

Step 1

Find some pottery

Find the pottery that's all around you – that way you can get ideas for making your own. When you do one of these things, begin an artist notebook to write your great ideas or draw a picture of something you have seen.

Choices – Do One:

- Visit an art gallery or museum. Ask your Brownie volunteer to help you find a clay exhibit or gallery with pottery. Remember that pottery can break easily. Be respectful of artwork!
- Look for clay in your life. It's all around you at your house, at your school, in your community. See how many things made of clay you can spot in a week. For More Fun: Have a scavenger hunt with friends and see how many things you can find that are made of clay.
- Look in books, magazines, or online for clay things. Did you know that false teeth used to be made out of clay? What else can you find that was made from clay? For More Fun: Paste pictures of what you find in your artist notebook.

Step 2

Get to know clay

Visit with a clay expert! Ask this person to tell you about scoring, storing, wedging, and firing, and why each of these is important.

Choices – Do One:

- Visit a potter's studio. A clay artist is often called a potter.
- Invite a craft teacher to your meeting. Ask them to bring clay samples, if possible.
- Go to a pottery class at a community center. Many offer classes for beginners.

Step 3

Make a simple pot

Pots have been made from clay for thousands of years. Pots do more than hold flowers! People carry water, eat food, and drink from them. Make your own simple pot. You could use it to hold jewelry, candy, or pencils.

Choices – Do One:

- Make a pinch pot. See the directions for help. Hint: In step 2, start pinching at the bottom of your container and move slowly to the top.
- Make a coil pot. A coil pot is made from "coils" of clay. See the directions for help. For More Fun: Stack your coils into interesting shapes!
- Make a slab pot. A slab is a piece of clay rolled flat. See the directions for help. For More Fun: Try building a pot on a triangular or square base.

Step 4

Make an art piece

Make some clay decoration.

Choices – Do One:

- Decorate a tile. Turn a square of clay into art. Try making a handprint or stamping a design with rubber stamps. You can also use small tools, like a pencil or tweezers, to draw designs in your tile. When it's dry, paint it with acrylic paints. For More Fun: find pictures of tiles from other countries and copy one of the designs.
- Make a pinch or slab sculpture. Make a clay sculpture of a house, pet, car, or animal. Make "hair," grass, or other decoration by squeezing clay through a garlic press. For More Fun: Make a sculpture of something you like to imagine, like a castle or a spaceship.
- Make beads for jewelry. Roll balls of clay into beads. Then use a straw, toothpick, or pencil to make holes so you can string them together. You could make them out of colored modeling clay or paint plain clay.

Step 5

Paint and glaze!

Glaze is special clay paint. It changes in heat to make bright colors and add shine. Make sure a potter or teacher helps you use glaze.

Choices – Do One:

- Dip your pottery. Fill a container with glaze and dip your pot in. Make sure there is extra room in the container so it doesn't overflow. Keep your pottery level and use slow movements.
- Paint on glaze. Using a regular paintbrush, paint glaze on your pottery. Try to paint evenly – that means with the same amount on all parts of the pot. (If you dipped your pottery first, let that dry before you start painting.)
- Sponge paint your pottery. Dip your sponge in the glaze. Press it gently onto your pottery. You can use different glaze colors and sponges in different shapes. A sponge gives a cool pattern to glaze.