

POWDERED STAIN

Technical Tips And
Product Information

#05

- Stains are prepared mixtures of naturally occurring colourants combined to form a 'formula colour' which is always the same. Once the formula mixture has been made, the colour is fired and then ground to create a 'stain' with a specific brand, code and colour name.
- Stains are traditionally used to colour glaze, clay bodies or slips. When colouring a glaze, create a test line blend to see how much stain is required to create the desired colour.

	Test A	Test B	Test C	Test D	Test E
CLEAR OR WHITE BASE GLAZE	100gm	100gm	100gm	100gm	100gm
STAIN POWDER	10gm	8gm	6gm	4gm	2gm

- You will need a set of digital scales or triple beam balance to measure small quantities. Once each glaze test A-E has been applied onto a small bisqued test piece, fire them in the same kiln to the correct temperature for the base glaze. Once fired, choose your desired effect and mix a larger batch of glaze using the appropriate ratio.
- When colouring a wet clay body, slice the clay into 1cm thick slabs. Dip each slab into water, then sprinkle with stain powder and put into a plastic bag. Place each slab on top of the other to form a 'sandwich stack'. Close the clay bag and let sit overnight. Next day, knead to integrate the clay and stain and create a uniformly coloured clay which is not too firm (*see Technical Tips and Product Information Sheet #10 Neriage*).
- Making coloured decorating slip is no more difficult than making coloured cake icing. Simply add stain (moistened with water) to white slip and stir. Add stain, keeping in mind that you are colouring a WHITE base, so choose a dark stain to start because the white slip will lighten your final colour (*see Technical Tips and Product Information Sheet #7 Coloured Decorating Slip*).
- Powdered stains can also be used to 'stain' textured bisque fired pottery items. Simply apply a creamy mix of stain and water with a soft brush to bisque-ware. Force the stain mix into the texture covering the relevant area, then sponge off the excess stain to reveal the enhanced textural detail. Always fire stained clay to its glaze firing temperature to ensure the mixture fluxes onto the clay body.
- Stains can also be used for maiolica or inglaze decoration (*see Technical Tips and Product Information Sheet #20 'Maiolica'*).
- Stain colours are NEVER intended to be fired in a gas kiln in a reduction atmosphere. An oxidation or neutral atmosphere is the correct environment for achieving true colour response. Note: this does not mean that stains cannot be fired in reduction. They can be fired this way but may give a variety of undesirable responses other than that which the manufacturer intended. Test colours prior to use to ensure their suitability for your purposes.
- Powdered stain colours will last forever if stored in a dry, labelled jar out of contact with other materials.
- Stains and underglaze powders are very similar and can often be substituted in various ceramic decorating processes (*see Technical Tips and Product Information Sheet #6 Powdered Underglazes*).