

ACTIVITY GUIDE

- UPSIDE DOWN CLAY POT
WITH IMPRESSED
DECORATIONS



Connecting creatively to the
landscape of the Wye Valley AONB and Forest of Dean

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wye valley **dyffryn gwy**
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Ardal o Harddwch Naturiol Eithriadol

UPSIDE DOWN CLAY POT WITH IMPRESSED DECORATIONS



Explore the range of marks and patterns by impressing or rolling natural objects into the clay's soft surface. Once impressed, you can exploit the clay's soft malleable quality and drape and fold it around an object to form an attractive looking shape.

Activity rating

Suitable for all. Minimal assistance required.

Time required for activity

30-45 mins.

Preparation time

10-15 mins. Tables may need to be covered.

Shopping list

- Air dry clay
- Wooden board or similar to prevent clay from sticking to the table surface
- Rolling pin
- Selection of natural objects eg leaves, shells, seed heads, stones, twigs
- Kitchen roll
- Tin or jar or bowl to act as a rest for the pot
- Plastic bag or cling film to use as a barrier between clay and the tin or jar
- *Optional* - Acrylic paints (diluted) and brushes if you wish to stain the pot when it is dry

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Step by step instructions

1. Take some clay about the size of an orange and pat it into a neat ball.
2. Put the clay ball on your wooden board and using your rolling pin, roll out the ball into a pancake shape. Keep turning and rolling like you would with pastry until it is the thickness of a biscuit and roughly 8-9 inches in diameter.
3. Select your objects you wish to push into the clay. These can be pressed in by hand or gently rolled over with the rolling pin. Be careful when you pick them out so you don't leave finger marks and don't roll the clay too thin.
4. Take your tin and place a scrunched up piece of kitchen towel on top and cover this with a plastic bag or cling film. This rounded shape will prevent the soft clay slab from cutting on the edge of the tin and the plastic will stop it sticking to the clay.
5. Lift the clay and place it over the top of the tin, pattern side down, almost like you would place pastry over a pie. It will droop naturally only slightly and you can then use your hands to manipulate and exaggerate folds in the clay.
6. Using a flat surface such as a board or plate, tap the top of the clay form (top of the tin) to flatten it as this will eventually become the base for your pot when it is dry and turned upside down.
7. Leave to dry for at least 48 hours until you remove it from the tin and turn it upside down. If you like the idea of colouring it and enhancing some of the marks, paint a thin diluted wash of acrylic paint over the surface and allow to drain off naturally or you could wipe it off with a cloth. The diluted paint should retain in the subtle impressed marks.

Top Tips

- Don't roll the clay too thin as this will cause it to collapse and also not too thick.
- Don't press the objects through the surface of the clay too hard.