



Some Things You Might Like to Know about the Kentuck Clay Co-op

Why has Kentuck created the Clay Co-op?

Kentuck has set up the Kentuck Clay Co-op in response to community interest expressed to Kentuck Studio Artist Kerry Kennedy and to members of the Kentuck staff. The Co-op is a new outgrowth of Kentuck's mission to perpetuate the arts, engage the community, and empower the artist. The Co-op is intended to provide a group through which "hobby" potters (those who are not currently making their living as potters) at all skill levels can have a place in which to work in community with others with similar interests, using community equipment, and having their pieces fired by the Kentuck Clay Co-op's shop technician. We also intend to offer classes, workshops, and private parties.

Is this a separate organization from Kentuck? What exactly is meant by "co-op"?

No, this is not a separate organization. The Kentuck Clay Co-op is a service and a program of the Kentuck Museum Association as are our other classes and programs. This is a co-operative endeavor in that each person who pays to join the group and work in the studio (which is called The Clay Place)

- can benefit from the shared knowledge and camaraderie that can develop in a community of shared interests
- will have stated privileges that can be enjoyed
- will have stated responsibilities that must be fulfilled for membership to be continued
- will be heard by the Kentuck staff as a respected member of the community.

Is everything about the Kentuck Clay Co-op "set in stone"?

At this point, it's not even fired in clay. This is a pilot program, and we'll adjust it—with notice—as necessary so that it meets the needs both of members and of Kentuck.

Is there an age limit for membership?

Independent members must be at least 19 years old; people under 19 must be sponsored by a parent or guardian; people under 16 must be sponsored and accompanied at all times in The Clay Place by their sponsoring parent or guardian, unless in a class or camp.

If people have little or no experience with working clay, but want to learn, can they join the Co-op?

Potential members tell what experience they have with working clay as part of the application process. The membership committee reviews that information and may interview the applicant to learn more. If the committee sees that the applicant doesn't have enough experience yet to work independently, the applicant must successfully complete one or two introductory courses

presented by the Co-op prior to obtaining membership. Clay 101 covers basic clay handling and principles; Clay 102 is a beginning throwing course. Each class will last a month and have weekly sessions. Tuition for each class is \$80, plus a \$20 materials fee. Students in these classes do not pay Co-op membership fees.

Can experienced people start working The Clay Place as soon as they become members of the Co-op?

All members, regardless of experience, must complete a one-session orientation before working in The Clay Place.

What else does a person need to do to be part of the Co-op?

It's crucial that every member work and play well with others. Every member will abide by the Kentuck Clay Co-op Community Rules.

Will I have a key to The Clay Place? Can I go in and work whenever I want to?

No, Co-op members will have access to The Clay Place during scheduled hours. The shop manager, shop technician, or another qualified staffer will be present during all scheduled open hours.

What are the Co-op hours in The Clay Place?

Right now, the Co-op is in operation for several hours on most days of the week. We're adjusting the schedule as we see what the demand for hours is and how they can be staffed. Please see <http://www.kentuck.org/claycoop.html> for current hours.

What if all the members want to work in The Clay Place at once?

If early weeks of operation show there is a need for members to reserve hours to work in the studio in order to allow equal access to all, we will devise a system and put it into operation. Such a system's specifications will include, but not be limited to, whether all hours must be reserved, or only those during certain peak periods; how many hours a person may reserve in advance; that if a member has reserved a time but has not arrived by twenty minutes after that time, the reservation will be removed if there is another person who wants to work in the studio and the reserved space is the only one available.

Again, this is a pilot project. We will work through issues as we come to them.

Do members get to fire the kiln by themselves?

Nope. The kiln will only be fired by the shop tech or another person approved by the executive director of Kentuck.

What does it cost to belong to the Kentuck Clay Co-op? How do I pay?

Members pay a monthly fee of \$50, or \$35 for students with valid I.D. Fees are paid each month in advance. Currently, they may be paid by cash, check, or credit card during store hours in the Kentuck Gallery shop, or by mail to the staff in the Kentuck office. We will investigate payment by credit card online and also will look into setting up recurring payments by credit card.

Upon joining, members also pay a security deposit of \$100 to be returned within 30 days following the member's last paid month with the Co-op, assuming no damage occurred for which the member was responsible.

What does the membership fee include?

Membership includes access to the facilities and community tools in The Clay Place and two open shelves for storing your work in progress. Each additional shelf, as available, will cost \$10 per month.

What other costs are there? How do I pay them?

All clay and glazes used by members in the Co-op must be purchased from Kentuck. This is both to insure uniformity in firing and to provide an additional revenue stream to subsidize the costs of the Co-op as part of Kentuck operations. To avoid the added administration of financial transactions in The Clay Place, these purchases will be made with "Clay Co-op Cash," vouchers sold in the Gallery Shop and taxed at the time of sale thereby making it possible to price in even dollars all items sold in The Clay Place. These cannot be replaced if lost or stolen, so treat them with the same care you treat your cash.

The current cost for clay is \$1.00 per pound (price to be adjusted periodically as needed to reflect increase in clay or electricity costs). This price includes the bisque firing of pieces, regardless of number or size.

The fee for glazing and glaze firing will be assessed per piece based on size. The Co-op will have a "box system" in which the piece will be fitted into one of a series of graduated boxes to determine the size and thus the fee. The fees are set as follows below, subject to increase based on empirical discovery of costs. (The measurements below are in inches.)

4x4x4	\$1 per dip
6x6x6	\$2 per dip
8x8x8	\$3 per dip
10x10x10	\$4 per dip
12x12x4	\$5 per dip
14x14x4	\$6 per dip

Kits of clay-working tools will also be sold in The Clay Place, but members do not have to purchase these tools.

Can I trade volunteer hours for part of my membership fee?

Very possibly. We don't have the details of this worked out yet, but individuals age 19 or older with demonstrated knowledge, maturity, and professionalism (and letter(s) of reference from previous employers, teachers, or volunteer coordinators) may serve as staffers and receive a reduction of their monthly fee for this service. It may also be possible for members with limited clay experience to serve volunteer hours in related Kentuck administrative activities.

Can I bring a guest with me when I am working in The Clay Place?

Non-members with sufficient clay experience determined in advance, accompanied by members, may use Co-op facilities for a \$15 day use fee and must abide by all rules of the Co-op, including reviewing the orientation guide prior to beginning work. Other guests are not allowed.

Can I just buy and use a day-pass from time to time to work independently in the Clay Place rather than joining the Co-op?

In rare instances the Co-op Membership Committee may agree to extend day use privileges to an experienced individual who is dealing with difficult circumstances, but as a rule, day passes will not be available to people unaccompanied by members.

What if I want to use different glazing techniques and colors?

We will begin operations with a fixed number of glazes and allow only dip glazing. We may expand later to other types of glazing, but only if there is sufficient demand and adequate controls can be established to prevent contamination of materials. Additional glazes will be developed as demand and resources allow.

Are Co-op members the only people who use The Clay Place?

No, non-members can come to classes there. And Kentuck rents use of the space to a class from The University of Alabama some semesters.

Will the Kentuck Clay Co-op be a permanent part of Kentuck? What are the membership fees used for?

We hope so, but it depends on the actual community response. Since it is a service and program of Kentuck, the financial risks and the potential financial gains of the Kentuck Clay Co-op will belong to the Kentuck Museum Association. Kentuck will promote and run the Co-op as a pilot program for six to twelve months to assess feasibility of continuing and possibly expanding the program. At a minimum, the Kentuck Clay Co-op must cover its costs, which will include performance of some needed deferred maintenance on the building. Ideally, the program will provide a significant revenue stream to the Kentuck Museum Association to use for year-round programming and physical plant maintenance while continuing as an affordable service to a diversity of users. As noted above, the opportunity will exist for some members to barter volunteer hours in The Clay Place and in the Kentuck administrative offices for a portion of monthly membership fees. We will also seek grant funding for educational outreach related to the Co-op.