



# LAITICE BOWLS

Mold  
Clay  
Water  
Sponges  
Ribs  
Knife  
Needles  
Scratcher

Straight edge, metal preferred, for cutting strips  
Décor you want (if any) on your bowl at the end

A round, oval, square or rectangle mold, any size. Also trays with a small lip work well. Roll clay to a little less than  $\frac{1}{4}$ " The amount needed will depend on your mold size. You will need about  $\frac{1}{3}$  more than you would normally have for a bowl of that size.

If the clay is too soft, the piece easily collapses upon itself; too hard and the clay cracks from the stress of being bent. Once the clay is at the preferred state, compress and smooth with a rib. Keep rolled slabs at the preferred state by laying on and covering with plastic wrap.

Using a straight edge like a metal ruler, cut strips of clay. The length will depend on your bowl, but they need to be 3 - 4" longer to allow for the back and forth of the process. Cut about 6 strips to start. Leave clay covered.

Each strip is smoothed with your fingers or wet sponge. Sanding after the piece is dry is not recommended as they tend to crack so I only sand the bottom to make sure it is smooth before bisque. Therefore, you want the clay to be as smooth as possible while you are designing your piece. Smooth both sides of the strip edges.

This is the most important step in your design is the spacing between the strips and will depend on the strip angle of your design, the width of your strips, etc. Diagonal is pretty, straight across on a square is nice, but has an entirely different look. The spacing is very important to keep the same throughout the piece. Don't try and push one against the other, they need room for weaving. Begin by staying at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch away from each other. NOTE: This bowl is not going to ever hold liquid so holes are beautiful.

**Always begin in the exact, eyeballed, middle with one strip.**

Lay one strip on each side of the center strip. Start the other way by folding back the outer two strips to a little over 1/2 way and laying your 2<sup>nd</sup> center strip.

Lay the two back down over the one. Do not press. Do not stretch. Just lay. Fold back one of the original side strips and lay another, etc. Back and forth, doing one on each side, both ways until you have the entire project covered. When your strips get a little too long over the sides, do not let them drag, pinch them off to a couple of inches hanging. All weaving complete.

Using a damp sponge press all over the bowl, do not wipe or pull or stretch, just press. This will adhere the strips together and also makes a better shaped piece. If your bowl is becoming dry at any point, spray with a little water.

Trim the edges and smooth, press with sponge. You need to finish the edge. I have used several different ways and have several options on finishing the edge. You can coil around the edge with one small strip and then do a braid, twist or another coil on the top. You can use a strip under all the strips around the edge and another on the top to have a finished edge, or a combo. Keep your piece damp, do not let dry out. Now is the time to decorate.

Cover tight with bag for at least 2 days to let everything meld together and then only let it dry very slowly with a few holes in bag. When completely dry, sand bottom if needed. Paint, glaze, fire.

**GOOD LUCK AND GOOD JOB!!**

Betty Cool 2010

