

**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES  
TECHNICAL TIPS AND PRODUCT INFORMATION #7**

## **COLOURED DECORATING SLIP**

**NOTE** all decorating slips will achieve their best results if you match the slip to the clay body (i.e. use earthenware slip with earthenware clay, stoneware slip with stoneware clay).

### **SLIP MADE FROM THE SAME CLAY (WHITE) AS YOUR POTTERY**

- Break clay into 1cm<sup>2</sup> pieces and soak for a day in water.
- Blend to a creamy consistency with a bamix, blender, paint stirrer etc.
- Wet down some ceramic stain, underglaze or oxide powder till saturated and then introduce this mix to the creamy slip mixture. The more stain you add, the darker the colour will be (it's a bit like colouring cake icing with food colouring).
- Always apply slip to moist clay rather than dry because of its high water content. You don't want to open up or weaken joins on dry pottery pieces by wetting them.

### **SLIP MADE FROM COMMERCIAL CASTING SLIP**

- Prepare wetted stain, underglaze or oxide powder as for above.
- Stir into a small quantity of casting slip and then add additional water to make a very thin slip. Sit overnight till the mix settles. Next day, pour off all the clear water (including the deflocculant which is in casting slip) and then stir. Add a little more water if necessary.
- Be careful not to apply this slip thickly, as it will peel off.
- Always apply slip to moist clay rather than dry clay.

### **COMMERCIAL RAW/BISQUE SLIP**

- Raw/Bisque Slip can be applied to wet clay, leather hard clay, dry raw clay or bisque fired clay.
- Stir Raw/Bisque Slip well before use and also during periods of prolonged use.
- Apply with a soft brush to clay surface. Wash brush in water when finished painting.
- Raw/Bisque Slip can be blended to create new colours.
- Once fired, Raw/Bisque Slip can be left for a matt coloured decoration.
- Clear glaze can be applied over Raw/Bisque Slip to give a glossy finish which will be more suitable to holding moisture.

### **SLIP MADE FROM A RECIPE**

- Books and magazines will often have base recipes for making slip from raw materials – ensure that the recipe is from an Australian publication as raw materials vary from country to country
- Ensure that you have a quality set of scales before starting (i.e. digital for small quantities or kitchen style for larger batches).
- Weigh out colourant additions as a percentage of the recipe so that in future you can repeat the colour mixture precisely.
- Follow the instructions in the recipe with regard to quantities of water etc.

### **BENEFITS OF SLIPS**

- Dried out slip can always be re wet unlike underglazes.
- Slips are very tolerant decorating products and rarely peel off when over applied.
- Slips are easy to remove if you make mistakes – they can be sponged off wet work or sanded off dry work.
- Slips are very easy to make yourself, and economical.

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**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES PTY LTD  
142 – 144 WESTON STREET BRUNSWICK 3056  
PHONE: 9387 3911 FAX: 9387 4011  
MON-FRI 9.00AM TO 5.00PM SAT 9.00AM TO 4.00PM SUN CLOSED**

**[www.northcotepottery.com.au](http://www.northcotepottery.com.au)**