

**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES
TECHNICAL TIPS AND PRODUCT INFORMATION #8**

USE OF CERAMIC OXIDES & CARBONATES

- These colouring products are generally heavy metals and should be handled with care – wear latex gloves when applying by hand (staining), use a quality particle mask when mixing powdered oxides into wet mixtures, and wear a plastic apron to protect clothing from stains.
- Staining is done by applying a watery mix of oxide/carbonate and water to BISQUE FIRED and TEXTURED pottery. The oxide stain will collect in the recessed areas and a damp sponge can be used to remove any excess mixture from the raised (relief) surface. This will accentuate your texture and provide more tonal variation on a form. (Red Iron Oxide, Black Copper Oxide, etc.)
- Coloured oxides and carbonates can be kneaded into a white clay body to create a coloured clay. Be careful not to “overload” the clay body with too much colourant as it can reduce the overall melting temperature of the clay body (i.e. stoneware clay will no longer fire to stoneware temperatures, and earthenware clay will no longer fire to earthenware temperatures).
- Oxides and carbonates can be added to white decorating slip or clear/white glazes to create coloured slip/glaze. You will need to do a series of tests of 1–10 parts of oxide/carbonate to 100 parts of dry powdered slip/glaze to ascertain how much of each colourant to use. Remember, putting a clear glaze over a coloured slip will intensify the colour somewhat.
- Oxides and carbonates can be mixed into a watery solution with water or with a brushing medium to paint over a brush on glaze (light coloured glazes only) – this is called overglaze decoration or maiolica. Beware of making the painting mixture too strong (thick) with too much colourant or you will create dry/metallic patches on your forms rather than colour which fuses into the glaze layer.
- Always soak brushes overnight after use to ensure that all the colourant is removed, and then clean in a light soapy detergent till clean. Smooth brushes into the correct shape and the detergent will help hold them in place.

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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