How to Make a Creamer & Sugar Bowl on a Potter’s Wheel

Shelly Green Stoler and Nancy O’Neil
2009 Creative Workshop
Photos by Larry Merrill, Shelly Green Stoler, and Nancy O’Neil

How to…the Process Show, is a product of the Creative Workshop of the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester.
Step 1
Weigh and wedge the clay

The clay is wedged (or kneaded, just like dough) to homogenize the texture and work out any air pockets.
Step 2
Visualize and/or draw a shape
Step 3
Throw a pitcher, throw a sugar bowl and lid on an electric wheel.

“Throwing” is derived from the Old English word “Thawring” which means “to spin”.

Making a spout
Step 4
Trim the pitcher, sugar bowl and lid.

Trimming the bottom of the clay (carving away excess clay) should be in the leather hard state.

Trimming underside of lid, upside down in sugar bowl gallery, in order to protect knob on lid.
Step 5
Pull and attach the handle

Starting to pull a handle (stretching the clay).

Attach clay by scoring the side of the pot and applying slip (liquid clay). Then continue to pull until clay is long enough to attach at the bottom.
Step 6

Bisque fire your creamer and sugar. The bisque firing takes eight hours in a kiln that fires to a maximum temperature of 1818 degrees Fahrenheit (i.e. cone 06).
Step 7

Wax the bottoms and galleries of creamer and sugar bowl, especially inside the lid. This helps prevent glaze from adhering to those areas. That will help keep the pieces from being harmed when fired in the kiln again.

This is the rim of the lid.

This is called a gallery.
Step 8
Dip your pieces in the glaze buckets. Glaze is glass. When it reaches temperature it will melt, liquify and fuse to anything it touches.
Glaze (glass) coats the clay and fuses to the surface. The glaze protects, provides a vitreous coating, and adds an aesthetic dimension to the piece. Glaze also renders the piece functional.
Step 9
A glaze firing for nine and a half hours at 2088 degrees Fahrenheit (at cone 2) completes the process.

Admire pieces and then fill them with cream and sugar and proudly serve at your table.

Glazed creamer and sugar by Nancy O’Neil.