

Cozy Snowman Candle Light

By Julie A. Soper

Objectives

- Carve decorations into clay
- Use common household items to help construct your shape
- Great project for advanced artists which can be simplified for beginners

Step 1: Trim a block of clay and shape to a wedge so the slab roller has an easier time starting. Roll out to a medium thickness (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick). For a rolling pin, roll out your clay to about $\frac{1}{4}$ thickness on the carvas.

Step 2: Borrow two plastic bowls of the same size from the kitchen (dollar stores are a good source, if needed)

Step 3: Line the inside of the bowls with two layers of tissue paper.

Step 4: Mold the slab clay on top of the tissue paper in each bowl, leaving $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of clay above the bowl's rim. Score the clay rims and coat with slip. With the clay still inside the plastic bowls, turn one bowl upside down and push the clay rims together.

Step 5: Let the clay harden enough to support its shape, then remove bowls and tissue paper.

Step 6: Use a sharp Xacto knife to cut off the smallest end of the bowl on one side (this will become the base of the piece. Cut a $\frac{3}{8}$ inch vent hole on the other end. This will be the snowman's body.

Step 7: Cut a half circle out of your clay slab and shape it into the snowman's head. Cut a $\frac{3}{8}$ inch vent hole in the top of the head. Score the bottom edge of the head and the top of the body, coat with slip, and attach both pieces together.

Step 8: Cut a smaller half circle of slab clay to form the hat. Score and coat the entire straight edge of the half circle with slip. Bring the the two corners of the half circle together and smooth over the seam edge so that it's no longer visible.

Step 9: Extrude small clay ropes and measure a piece to fit around the bottom of the hat, cutting each end of the rope at a 45-degree angle. Score and slip the bottom side of the hat, attach the rope to the hat, and join the ends of the rope.





Step 10: Hand form a small clay ball. Cut 3/8 inch off the tip of the hat, then score and slip both the top of the hat and a section of the clay ball. Holding a piece in each hand, press them together and hold for a few seconds.

Step 11: Cut a 7/8 inch length of small clay rope and roll one end to make it smaller — this will be the snowman's carrot nose. Use a cleaning tool to make scores in different places around the rope to give it the textured appearance of a carrot (see photo). Score and slip the thick end of the nose and the spot on the head where the nose will be placed. Push the nose into place.

Step 12: Take a 12-inch piece of small clay rope and flatten with a rolling pin for the scarf. Score and slip one side and wrap around the base of the snowman's head.

Step 13: Extrude a large clay rope and cut it into 5-inch lengths for the arms. Cut one end of the clay rope at a 45 degree angle, and slightly flatten one edge of the rest of the rope. Score and slip the angled edge of the rope and the flattened side of the rope that will lay against the body. Attach the angled cut just under the scarf on the side of the body, and pose the rest of each arm along the side of the body. Tuck the left arm under the end of the scarf.

Step 14: For the hands, cut 3-inch lengths of small clay rope. Start coiling the rope at one end, making an elongated spiral. At the start of the third loop, trim the clay rope off to form the look of a thumb (see photo). Score and slip one side of the hand and the "wrist" end of the hand and press onto the end of the clay rope arm and to the front of the body.

Step 15: Looking at the front of the snowman, trace one snowflake pattern just above the left hand and pick any place for the other two snowflakes and the curly tree. Trace the "Believe" pattern across the front of the belly.

Step 16: Carve the snowflakes and the tree halfway through the clay wall. Cut completely through the clay wall in the center "plus sign" part of each snowflake.

Materials

Brent Mini-SRC slab roller
Clay cutting wire
Clay canvas
Clay tools
Xacto knife
Plaster board
Medium cup of slip
Brush for slip
Laguna EM 347 Whiteware clay with grog
Clay extruder with large and small circle dies
Clay rolling pin
Cordless Dremel tool with tile grout bit
Stylus
Liner brush
Spectrum 700 Clear Glaze

Colors by iLoveToCreate

CN 141 Light Aqua
CN 505 Neon Green
CN 516 Really Red Sprinkles
CN 253 Black
CN 504 Neon Orange
CN 74 Really Red
SY 546 Fired Snow





Step 17: Carve the word "Believe" about three quarters of the way through the clay wall.

Step 18: Use the Dremel tool to make small holes sporadically over the entire body of the snowman

Step 19: Let the piece dry for three to four days.

Step 20: Fire to cone 04.

Step 21: Outline the holes, snowflakes, and curly tree with Light Aqua. Outline the word "Believe" with Black.

Step 22: Apply three coats of Black to the hands.

Step 23: Apply three coats of Neon Orange to the nose.

Step 24: Apply three coats of Really Red Sprinkles to the hat.

Step 25: Apply three coats of Neon Green to the scarf, then use the liner brush to paint stripes of Really Red Sprinkles across the width of scarf and Black lines along the length of the scarf.

Step 27: Paint two large Black dots for eyes and a series of small dots in a curve for the mouth.

Step 28: Apply fired snow to the hat's clay rope trim and the clay ball at the top.

Step 29: Clear glaze everything except the fired snow.

Step 30: Fire to cone 06.

Step 31: Place your snowman candle light over a flashing LED light and enjoy!

Basic Method

For beginners, instead of cutting off the bottom, just cut basic vent holes on the top and bottom of the body and omit the carving and drilling to make a basic snowman figurine.

About the Artist: Ceramics has been part of Julie A. Soper's life since she was 15. She's spent the last seven years developing and expanding her skills, and she enjoys traveling to different venues for ceramics classes and spending time with ceramics friends from around the world. Christmas is her favorite time of year; she loves to create unique gifts for friends and family.

Sources

Amaco: www.amaco.com

Dremel Tools: www.dremel.com

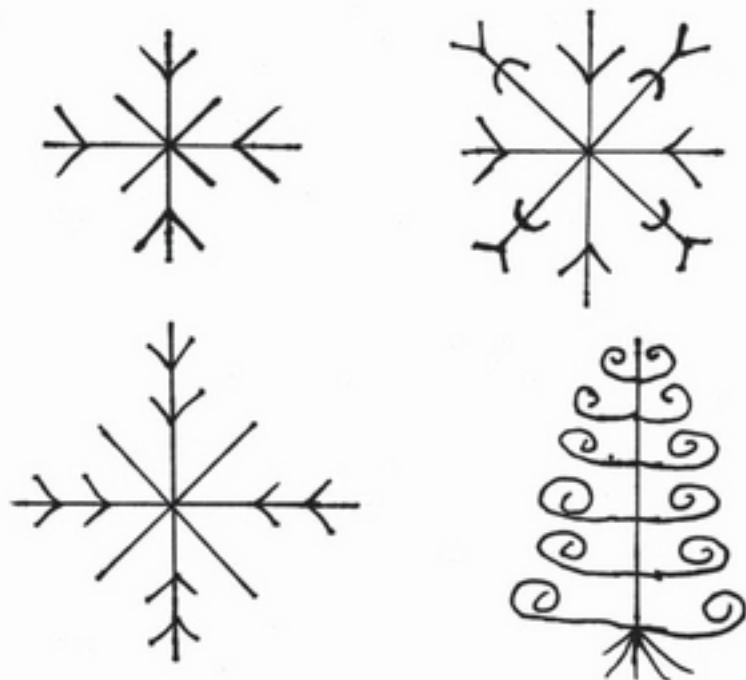
iLoveToCreate: www.ilovetocreate.com

Laguna Clay: www.lagunaclay.com

Spectrum: www.spectrumglazes.com

Quick-n-Easy Holiday Gift

Texture a slab of clay. Use a large snowflake cookie cutter to cut shapes from the slab. Let them dry, then fire to cone 04. Paint with Duncan Really White Sprinkles (or any color Sprinkle), then fire to cone 06. Attach an ornament hook, and they're ready to give as gifts!



Believe