Hi Karen,

Thanks for coming to the chat.  I do coil hand throwing only with my very large vessels that are really more of a sculpture as they really are not made for use, they stand alone as an art object, not made to be used.

Slab Boxes:

Here are the steps to use in making my Magic Spirit Treasure Box:

1. Get a box of TEA at the dollar store - those small boxes that it comes in are perfect for our use in making the boxes.
2. Carefully take a box apart. You will have 6 pieces:

    Top, Bottom, 2 sides, and 2 end pieces (short sides)

1. Roll out your slab to about 1/2 inch thick.

4. Use 5 your tea box pieces as a template - lay them out on your slab and cut around them.  Do not cut out around the TOP template yet.

5.) For the TOP you will use the 6th piece, you will need to add another inch all around it to allow it to fit onto your box. You don't want it to be the same size, but larger, so it will look nicer. Once you cut it out you can round your corners.

6.) This is the VERY important part.  When you are working with slabs, they need to "set up" awhile so that they are not so soft and pliable. This makes them stronger, too, so they won't warp in the kiln.

I put my slabs onto newspaper that is laid out in several layers on a cookie sheet or some flat surface. I also use pieces of drywall for this purpose.  Place a couple more layers on newspapers on TOP of your slab pieces. Now, cover with a plastic bag or garbage bag.

7.)  About 2 times a day, go take the wrappings off your slab pieces, and let them get some air for an hour or so.  Take them OFF the wet newspapers and put down fresh dry newspapers under them. Be CAREFUL to NOT BEND your slab pieces. You are in the process of gently and SLOWLY drying them - the slower the better-  Now, cover them with fresh newspaper, too, and put the plastic back on them.

You will keep doing this - for a couple of days usually. You want the slabs to be slightly moist, and not quite leather hard - and when they are like that they are ready to begin putting them together into a box.

How to put your pieces together:

1.) Lay the bottom piece on clean newspapers.

2.) Scratch/score the edges all around the bottom piece and place some SLIP onto those scored palces.

(Slip is vinegar (or water)  with clay dissolved  into it.Make it ahead of time and keep it in a tightly sealed tupperware container.)

3.)  Pick up one side piece at a time.  Scratch/score the edges that will meet up with the edges of the bottom piece.

Again, put some slip onto those score marks. This SLIP is like GLUE, it will BOND the two pieces together. Do this until you have all FOUR of your side pieces attached to the bottom slab.

4.)  Once your sides are attached to the bottom, you may want to roll out a small coil to place on the outside or inside corners of the box. You want to be SURE that your BOX is not going to fall apart in the firing, so you are going to REINFORCE your edges from the bottom slab up to the top of each side. I do this OUTSIDE the box as a decorative accent and it looks very nice.

Now, cover your box with more newspaper, and be sure it is placed on clean newspapers, and put plastic over it.

You will let it age another couple of days, covering and uncovering in intervals like you did before.

Important:  You want your pieces to DRY SLOWLY and EVENLY.  Time is on YOUR SIDE here - NO RUSHING< NO HURRIES...SLOW AND EASY does it.

5.)  Now, I do not yet work with the LID for the box. I want it to continue to dry longer - the longer you can let that lid dry between the newspapers the more successful you will be in getting it to remain FLAT and not warp.

6.) Once your LID piece is ready, you can add a handle on top, or decorate it - whatever you want to do.  For the underside, you can make two coils and place them well inside the place where the box will fit into. I do this like two little bars that run down the center of my lid. It is EASY to do it this way and it works well. You can do anything else you want to do with it though.

If you want your box to stand UP on FEET:

1.) Go ahead and make the FEET.  Here is a good way to do it:  Roll out a COIL that is kind of thick - about 1 inch.

2.) Cut your coil into four even pieces about 1 inch long. These can be your legs.

3.)  You will have to put them on the bottom of your BOX. Turn your BOX over with the bottom side UP.

4.)  Now, scratch/score the four places where your legs will go - and scratch/score the little ends of the legs. Apply the slip, and push them onto the bottom of the box where you have prepared with your slip.

5.)  Allow to dry slowly - and when completely dried, you can put the top on your box and have it fired into bisque.

Glazing the Box:

After your box has been fired, with the LID ON IT, you are ready to glaze it.

1.)  Put WAX RESIST on with a small brush - do the bottoms of the feet, or the box bottom if you did not make feet.  Just a thin layer of the wax is all you need. Be careful NOT to let the wax drip onto any other part of your box. It prevents the glaze from adhering to the bisque.

2.) To wax the lid - just wax the underside of it in the area where it will touch the bottom. You can wax the entire underside if you want - it is easier to do it that way.

3.) Now, you are ready for the final glaze firing: Fire your Box with the LID on it...They MUST be fired TOGETHER or they will warp in the heat and they will never go together when they are finished. (I have done this and LOST them).

There you have it:  the Magic Spirit Treasure Box.

If you are making one, and need my assistance call me:

724 758 4979

I can help walk you through it if you need me to do that.

Lynda River Woman

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Karen](mailto:butterfly05@earthlink.net)

**To:** [Lynda Lambert](mailto:llambert@zoominternet.net)

**Sent:** Monday, November 07, 2011 10:06 PM

**Subject:** Slab Boxes

Hi Linda,

I thoroughly enjoyed the discussion about fire clays and your work. I wanted to ask about your technique for making the smaller boxes. I understand the coil technique you said you use for the large boxes, but how do you make a box with a slab base and then build up the sides and form a lid that fits.

Thanks,

Karen