

## Basic Steps for Throwing on the Wheel

1. **Wedge clay** well, form into a round ball.
2. Throw the clay onto center of a bat on the wheel. Seal base, pat into cone.
3. **Center clay:** Brace arms on legs, have wheel speed medium-fast. Place hands around base of clay, slowly squeeze clay to center and cone up.
4. **Push clay down:** With the heel of your left hand, push the left side of clay and with side of your right hand press down on the top of it.
5. **Repeat** steps 3 & 4 until clay is centered.
6. **Open up clay:** Slow wheel, place thumbs together, push down into middle of clay. Leave  $\frac{1}{2}$ " clay at bottom - measure with needle tool.
7. **Create floor:** Start in center, pull fingers of right hand outward. For cylinder, keep floor flat. For bowl, let fingers curve up wall to establish curve.
8. **Pull walls:** Slow wheel. Left hand inside, right hand outside (3 o'clock). Right hand pushes at base to move clay up & rises just above left. Gently squeeze and let hands travel up with clay. Keep clay in a cone shape.
9. **Shape:** To shape in: outside fingers above inside, press slowly in and up. To shape out: inside fingers above outside, press slowly out and up. Use a rib to refine and smooth curves, also to remove water from surface.
10. **Finish:** Trim rim to level. Trim excess clay at base. For bowls leave clay at base to support walls. Pull string under base.

### Remember:

- Keep your elbows down!
- Keep the clay lubricated with water, use less water when shaping.
- Keep your hands touching, using them together as one for better control.
- Use your entire body to work the clay, focus on the center.
- Always move your hands into/out of contact slowly while the wheel is going round. Jerky motions will result in an uneven pot.
- Only touch the pot when the wheel is moving!
- The higher and wider you go, the slower you must go.
- Centering the clay is the hardest and most important part of throwing. If it's not centered your pot will be wobbly and uneven.