

Ceramic Artist

You throw, hand-build, glaze and fire clay, and sell the results at markets, shops and galleries.

TYPICAL PAY

\$42,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$32k to \$58k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Home and shared studios, craft schools, production potteries, ma...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 10 to 12
Visual arts, and any class with a kiln. Chemistry helps more than you would expect because glazes are chemistry.
- 2 Learn to throw** 1 to 3 years
Community studio classes, a college program, or an apprenticeship with a working potter. Expect a year before your pots are even.
- 3 Studio access** Ongoing
Join a shared studio or a co-op. You need a wheel, shelving and access to a kiln long before you can afford your own.
- 4 Production work** 1 to 3 years
Making the same form hundreds of times, for a studio or for your own line. This is where speed and consistency come from.
- 5 Your own studio and line** 3 to 8 years in
A recognisable range, a market schedule, wholesale accounts and a class or two a week.

Pros and cons

- + You make useful objects people live with every day
- + You can start with an evening class and no debt
- + Self-employed, with full control of what you make
- The lowest pay of any creative path on this site
- Equipment and studio space cost real money before you earn any
- Clay dust and repetitive throwing damage lungs, wrists and backs if you are careless

Optional boosts

Teaching. Restaurant ware. Glaze knowledge. Kiln repair and firing services.

Good to know

It is an older workforce

Job Bank reports that about 40% of ceramic artists in Canada are 50 or over, with a median retirement age of 63. Plenty of people come to this work as a second career.

Clay shrinks as it dries and fires

A pot loses roughly a tenth of its size between the wheel and the finished piece. Potters make everything slightly too big on purpose to land on the size they want.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Ceramic Artist in Canada, wages (updated November 2025)

Job Bank: Ceramic Artist in Canada, job outlook

NSCAD University: ceramics and craft programs

Canada Council for the Arts

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/ceramic-artist>



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