

A thing about brushes for potters (and maybe other clay people, too)

1. Hake Brush

Fluffy natural bristles in wide sizes for wide, even coats of material (slip and glaze,) available in a variety of widths. A type with multiple bamboo barrels (2) can be acquired and then separated into multiple brushes of various widths.

3. Calligraphy Brush

Fluffy natural bristles, but comes to a point for better control/detail. Holds a lot of material and can vary the line width/style with pressure. Many sizes available.

4. Wax Brush

I recommend a brush with short, stiff synthetic fibers for applying wax to feet—1/4" wide and about 1/2" long. These features help you control exactly where the wax goes, and since it doesn't hold clay materials, the bristles don't need to be fluffy.

5. Hakeme Brush

Traditionally made from stiff reeds, can create a distinct and rough brushstroke pattern. Tie together a few bristles from a whisk broom, some dry grass, or try a stiff scrub brush.

6. Fan

Good for some blending/texture effects and a handy supplement to a hake brush in a pinch. Choose natural fibers over synthetic; available with rough/stiff or softer bristles.

7. Lining Brush

Long bristles and thin width. Good for lines of stain/wash or luster.

8. Teeny Pointy

Great for fine drawings/writing and great if you enjoy frequently dipping into your pot of paint. Probably better with wash than slip or glaze.

9. Stiff Bristles

if you're really invested in scraffito, or desire a thick impasto mark with your slip, this might be for you. If you choose this brush to sweep away the carving burrs from scraffito, be careful because it will create clouds of dust! Short stiff bristles (like a toothbrush) are good for fine splatter effects.

10. Rubber Fingers/Blades/Combs -

Combs can create texture in wet clay or slip, and silicone fingers may be helpful in compressing joints. Available in a variety of shapes and sizes, and different brands might even be more or less firm.

11. GWAH Brush

Good for absolutely nothing. Relatively short synthetic fibers spread material (slip and glaze) very thin and are prone to either showing brush strokes, or making the slip/glaze so thin it disappears. Please reach for a hake or fan brush before you grab this one!

EXCEPTIONS: OK maybe good for applying wax to larger surfaces OR if you *desire* pronounced brushstrokes. Because terra sigillata particles are so fine, synthetic fibers like this are an OK choice.

nb: Misbehaving fibers can create negative space and unpredictable line qualities.

