

Terra Sigillata Recipes

PETE PINNELL'S SMOOTH AND EASY TERRA SIGILLATA (WHITE BASE) VERSION #1

OM4 Ball Clay 10 lbs
 Water 2.5 gal
 Sodium Silicate 34 g

In a 5-gallon bucket, mix 2.5 gallons of water and 10 lbs of OM4 ball clay. Add .25% (in this example this is equal to 34 grams of sodium silicate. Allow to settle overnight (12–24 hours).

After settling, carefully reach in the bucket to see if sediment layer has formed. If you don't feel a distinct layer or feel soft mush all the way down, your terra sig has not settled out properly (yet). More time or deflocculant is necessary. Mix, settle, and try again.

When it's ready, remove or siphon off the top half. Do not disturb the mixture. This top half is the terra sig. You can throw the bottom half or sediment layer away. The terra sig should be about the consistency of low-fat milk, and works best when applied to bone dry greenware and buffed.

After making a bucket of sig, measure smaller amounts and separate into individual containers. Fill each container with 8 ounces of terra sig, and add 1 teaspoon of titanium dioxide and 1–2 teaspoons of Mason stain. It's very important to mix and then sieve the terra sig with the stain, then blend with a small handheld mixer until the colorant is suspended. I usually re-blend the mixture each time I use it.

Courtney Murphy's boat (surface detail), earthenware with colored terra sigillata, 2012.



PETE PINNELL NO BALL MILL TERRA SIGILLATA VERSION #2

Water 3 cups
 Dry Ball Clay (OM4) 400 g

Mix ingredients in a blender. Add sodium silicate drop by drop until the mix thins. Let sit for 48 hrs. Keep the top 1/3 and discard remaining material.

For Pink Sigillata

1 cup sigillata
 3 tsp. Mason Stain (MS) 6020 Pink

Magda Gluszek's surface detail shows her seamless integration of terra sigillata and glaze.

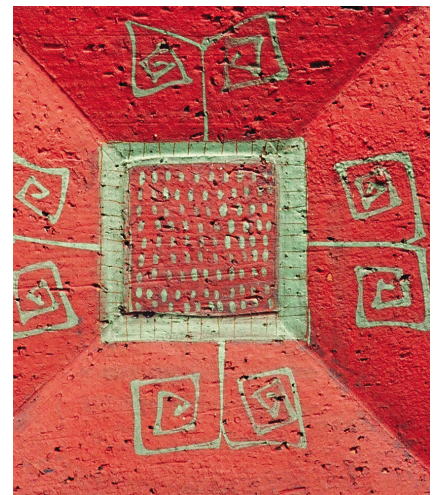


ANNE FLØCHE TERRA SIGILLATA

Ball Clay	19.0	%
China Clay	77.0	
Bentonite	3.5	
Deflocculant	0.5	
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	100.0	%

Allow to settle into layers before decanting the middle layer. Add coloring oxides or stains, as one would with an ordinary slip. The china clay can be replaced by any other clay: local clays, stoneware clays, etc. Each clay has its own nuances. Peeling may also occur if the terra sigillata is applied too thick.

Anne Fløche's, square plate (surface detail), earthenware mixed with perlite, terra sigillata, 2004.



"LOW-TECH" PINK TERRA SIGILLATA

Ball clay	75%
Cedar Heights Red Art clay	25
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	100 %

Dry mix the clays and add them to water. Mix in 1 teaspoon of deflocculant. In a few days, decant the water from the top and save the middle layer, which is the stuff you want.

When terra sigillata is made with red clays (which has larger particles than white clays), it needs to sit longer in order for the layers to fully separate.

Tom Bartel's *Disconnected Figure*, (surface detail) handbuilt, with vitreous engobes, black copper oxide, terra sigillata, fired multiple times, 2003.

