



Tina Parker



Tom Krahe



John Smolenski



Sookie Kayne



Electric fire

Characteristics: Shiny to matte finishes, various clay bodies, Most commercial ware is fired in electric kilns.

Firing temperature: Bisque: Cone 09 - 04, Glaze: Cone 05 - 10

Electricity is the most common heat source for firing clay pieces. Elements (wire coils) that are embedded in channels of the firebrick are heated electrically generating the most reliable temperature increases. The kilns are usually fired indoors but vented outdoors to remove the fumes and gases. The metal shell gets very hot so precautions must be taken including restricting access, situating the kilns on concrete or ceramic floors and locating them away from combustible materials and water.

Electric kilns have evolved with new technology so that potters no longer rely solely on pyrometric cones to indicate kiln temperature. Many now have digital program controllers which enable the potter to set firing schedules over time with preset ramps (temperature increases) as well as preset cooling programs. The kilns can also be programmed to turn off when the firing is completed. Firing temperatures are still described in cones however, and many potters continue to use them.

Electric kilns are used for the first firing (bisque) as well as for the second firing (glaze). An average bisque firing takes between 8 and 11 hours. At the bisque stage the clay has been altered to a more permanent state.

In electric firing, glazed pots are often fired for a period of approximately 10 hours to cone 6, a temperature that transforms the glaze into glass. Combinations of glazes with electric firing can produce striking results.

