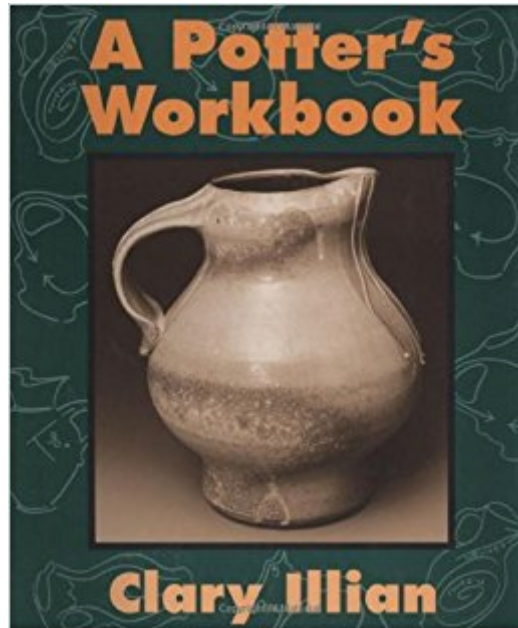


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# A Potter's Workbook



## Synopsis

In *A Potter's Workbook*, renowned studio potter and teacher Clary Illian presents a textbook for the hand and the mind. Her aim is to provide a way to see, to make, and to think about the forms of wheel-thrown vessels; her information and inspiration explain both the mechanics of throwing and finishing pots made simply on the wheel and the principles of truth and beauty arising from that traditional method. Each chapter begins with a series of exercises that introduce the principles of good form and good forming for pitchers, bowls, cylinders, lids, handles, and every other conceivable functional shape. Focusing on utilitarian pottery created on the wheel, Illian explores sound, lively, and economically produced pottery forms that combine an invitation to mindful appreciation with ease of use. Charles Metzger's striking photographs, taken under ideal studio conditions, perfectly complement her vigorous text.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“No other book has the specific focus of this one. Clary Illian addresses what are perhaps the most difficult and probably the most important aspects of pottery making: the questions of shape, structure, form, and forming. The practical exercises are particularly valuable, as are the discussions of learning to see as well as to make.”  
—Val Cushing, professor emeritus of ceramic art, State University of New York College of Ceramics at Alfred University  
“I would highly recommend Clary Illian's *A Potter's Workbook*.”  
—Warren Frederick, Ceramics Technical

In *A Potter's Workbook*, renowned studio potter and teacher Clary Illian presents a textbook for the hand and the mind. Her aim is to provide a way to see, to make, and to think about the forms of wheel-thrown vessels; her information and inspiration explain both the mechanics of throwing and finishing pots made simply on the wheel and the principles of truth and beauty arising from that traditional method. Each chapter begins with a series of exercises that introduce the principles of good form and good forming for pitchers, bowls, cylinders, lids, handles, and every other conceivable functional shape. Focusing on utilitarian pottery created on the wheel, Illian explores sound, lively, and economically produced pottery forms that combine an invitation to mindful appreciation with ease of use. Charles Metzger's striking photographs, taken under ideal studio conditions, perfectly complement her vigorous text. *A Potter's Workbook* is designed to help students who are just learning to throw pots, potters who know how to throw but who feel the need for greater understanding, and skilled craftspeople who enjoy thinking about the objects they love.

I think that over time, this book will be considered a classic. As other reviewers have mentioned, it's not really a workbook in the normal sense of the word. It's a deep assessment of the art, the craft and the aesthetics of throwing pottery, as seen from the perspective of students who must grapple with those issues in order to fully develop as studio potters. For thirty years, I've been married to a potter, and she still struggles with every one of the technical and aesthetic challenges that Illian describes. "*A Potter's Workbook*" provides a conceptual framework and a vocabulary for understanding pottery-making that is both rigorous and inspiring. It's the type of workbook that serious students of pottery will work on for their entire careers.

I love this book and keep it with me in my studio for a jumpstart now and again. It is a great book for advanced beginners. Clary Illian's writing is clear and calm. I have been throwing for many years, it is a nice touch stone and I would recommend it to anyone who falls in love with the thrown form.

I am a novice potter taking classes with a neighborhood arts group and at first found this book overly pedantic and set it aside. Then I moved past the point of sending every piece I made to the kiln and saving them. I only want to make and save work that is good. The assignments in this book progress in a logical fashion that will improve your technique and make you a better potter.

I teach from this book, and thank Clary for her thoughtful writing and insightful clarity about the functional object. This book is a treasure. Clary articulates difficult concepts beautifully and reminds

us about the continuum that every functional potter is a part of.

a classic! I've learned so much and will re-read.

Great book with an in depth view of the pottery form.

My pottery teacher suggested I read this book, after I did I bought it, it is that good! Not an instructional book in the sense of 'where to place your hands when centering', but full of instruction to learn how to see. A book to go back to again and again.

There is not much content. Has good basic pictures and comments on what is right or wrong about a design. It will not give any info on surface treatment or glazing but on general shapes and designs. It's for beginner potters and probably a book every beginning potter should read at least once, if not purchase and refer back to.

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