

Throwing Faults and Remedies

(altered from Susan Peterson's The Art and Craft and Clay p. 54)



1. Clay breaks in two because you squeezed too hard in one place. **Remedy:** Keep pressure steady on the way up. *Keep the clay cone shaped without a knob on top which will twist off. Keep hands tilted inward, not outward.*



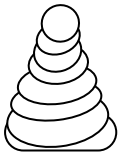
good hand angle



bad hand angle



2. Uneven pressure on cone, with one **hand** pressing more than the other. **Remedy:** Steady yourself, with back of neck, shoulders, upper arms, wrists, and palms rigid; both hands must move up with equal pressure. *Steady yourself by bracing arms against body and legs. In a sense use your entire body and not just your arms and hands.*



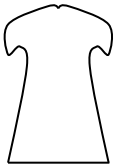
3. Spiral, because hands moved faster than the wheel was going. **Remedy:** allow more rotations of the wheel each time before moving both hands upward. *Complete a circle around the cone before moving up. Centering should be done at faster wheel speeds. Same applies for spirals on cylinder walls.*



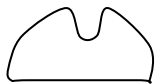
4. Off-center mound. **Remedy:** left palm must lean into clay with steady pressure at exactly 8 o'clock position. *Center bottom 1st then cone up. The uncentered clay will disappear as the cone gets smaller and smaller.*



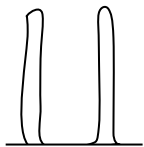
5. Center of clay does not rise when coning, leaving a hollow center. **Remedy:** Push hands deeper into clay until clay rises as a whole in the middle as the clay rises, follow the clay with your hands moving hands further in as you rise. *This will ensure a "cone" shape.*



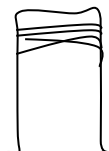
6. When pushing cone down clay mushrooms and goes off center or traps water under clay causing clay to rip off when coning back up or doing pulls. **Remedy:** Push clay from the side by leaning clay over. *The clay will go back to center as you apply gentle downward pressure. Keep the clay smooth & continuous.*



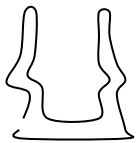
7. Opening hole is uneven and off-center. **Remedy:** left middle fingertip or tip of left thumb, supported by right fingers, must push straight down in the center. *Open flat with fingers or thumb then press down and move to the middle instead of poking in the middle. Make a hole big enough for several fingers.*



8. No bottom, because fingers pushed too fast or too hard. **Remedy:** stop wheel, fill hole with pancake of clay, re-throw smooth. *Stop opening to the bottom on the thick side. Check thickness with needle to measure thickness. If thick push down further.*



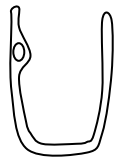
9. Top lip is cut off unevenly. **Remedy:** to cut it evenly, hold wall at 4 o'clock position at the lip with left fingers. Push needle through clay wall to inside fingers for several revolutions; lift off ring of clay.



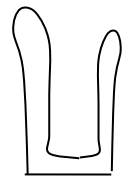
10. Wall collapses. **Remedy:** use as little water as possible during throwing. Always move hands up to bottom to top; never press down. *Don't take too long to center and throw. The more pulls you do the softer the clay gets. Try to get to height in 3-4 pulls.*



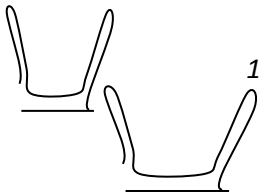
11. Lumpy off-center wall. **Remedy:** exert even pressure on inside and outside fingertips at 4 o'clock position and move up evenly. *To do this keep hands together so you may keep the gap between fingers on outside and inside constant for even wall thickness.*



12. Air bubble in wall. **Remedy:** stop wheel, poke bubble with needle, fill void with wad of clay, re-throw wall. *Prevent by wedging clay well and coning clay several times.*



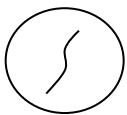
13. Top lip is higher, with wall thicker on one side than the other because hands moved up on the diagonal or one hand was in front of the other. **Remedy:** inside and outside fingertips must move up in a straight line, together. *Often this occurs if the clay wasn't centered or opened on center.*



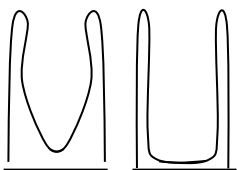
14. Cylinder flares out or gets wider and wider. **Remedy:** Throw with outside fingers lower than inside fingers so last finger touching keeps the wall in. Support wall with inside fingers, and push in clay with outside fingers to make cylinder thinner and to gather clay to pull up. Throw towards middle to compensate.



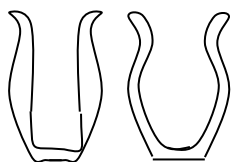
15. Uneven wall thickness, bulging wall, or cut off wall. **Remedy:** keep inside and outside fingers same distance apart. Touch hands together so they move as one.



16. "S" crack in base, usually discovered after drying or bisque firing. **Remedy:** compress clay better when throwing. Drop clay ball down harder on bat to start; press fingers down harder to open ball. *Open on the thick side, then compress by throwing the bottom. Also don't leave water in bottom. Dry pots evenly. Try drying pots upside down or covering the top.*



17. . Cylinder comes to a point causing the walls to be very thick by leaving a triangle of clay at the bottom. **Remedy:** Remember to create a flat bottom. After opening the centered clay, put fingers in hole and pull slowly across until a flat bottom is formed on the inside, then do your pulls.



18. Shape of cylinder form on outside does not match shape on inside. **Remedy:** Remember to throw the cylinder of clay 1st. Get the height that you want then shape the cylinder afterwards. In a sense the inside shape determines the outside shape. If they do not match then you have thick and thin areas, which cause problems such as cracking, blowing up during firing, and just poor weight, feel, and balance.