**CLAY METHODS**

There are three common methods to creating basic constructions: pinch, coil and slab. To make a **PINCH POT**, make a small ball of clay the size of a tennis ball or less, and stick your thumb in the center, making a hole. Then apply pressure with your fingers on the outside and thumb on the inside, creating a rounded bowl shape. You can easily join two of these shapes together to create a spherical form that could be the body or head of an animal figurine, bird house, etc.

Creating a **COIL POT OR COIL STRUCTURE** is repetitious, slow and tedious, but the results can be extremely pleasing and original. To make one, create a coil by carefully rolling a lump of clay with all 8 fingers so that it is a nice and even thickness. Coil it upon itself to create the bottom of the pot. Make another coil of the same thickness and attach it to the end of the first coil, carefully smoothing them together. Finish the bottom of the pot if necessary, then allow the coils to go on top of one another. The closer in you go, the more the pot will taper in. Putting the coils more towards the outside will make the pot expand outwards. You can create some interesting effects by making the coils go in and out in this manner. If you desire a smooth look, you can smooth the coils as you go. You could choose to smooth just the inside and leave the coil appearance on the outside.

The **SLAB METHOD** allows for the most variation of creations. One can make just about anything out of a slab. A slab is made by rolling the clay with a rolling pin to an even thickness. It works best to have guides of the same thickness that the clay is to be. The rolling pin rolls over the guides with the clay in between and keeps all the clay the same thickness, preventing you from pushing too hard with the rolling pin. If the clay is sticking to the rolling pin, it is too moist. Work it into a piece of canvas to get some of the moisture out. Also make sure that no clay has accumulated on the rolling pin before you begin. Your clay slab will stick to these pieces. When constructing slabs, it is best to have them slightly dry because moist slabs will not hold up and will wobble and droop. It is also best to join clay that is the same consistency to prevent warping and cracking as they dry at different rates. When joining slabs, it is advisable to score the surfaces of the pieces to be joined. This means to make some scratches in them to roughen them up, making the surfaces stick together more readily. Once the main body of the slab structure is assembled, it can be paddled, shaped, cut into, twisted, or otherwise formed into the final concept. Other appendages, handles, spouts, decorative clay forms, wads of clay, coils, decorations and textures can then be added if desired.

**Creating textures**

Certain textures are best applied when the clay is in the soft, plastic state. Impressed designs can be made by pressing textured objects into the clay. Objects such as pencil erasers, forks, shells, bottle caps, fabrics, etc. can be used to create interesting textures and patterns. The texture should be applied when the clay is soft enough to take an imprint, yet not so soft as to stick to the texturing device.