



Ceramic Garden Stakes

Supplies:

- Low fire white clay or air dry clay
- Rolling pin, or sturdy kitchen jar
- Workboard preferably covered in non stick cloth
- Small sponge, water, ceramic slip
- Cookie cutters (without tiny details)
- Saran wrap, optional
- Rubber stamps, optional
- Bamboo skewer
- Plastic (to wrap final piece to dry)

Instructions:

1. Take your lump of clay and using a rolling pin (or sturdy kitchen jar), start hitting it, evenly, so as to start to flatten it. Go back and forth, without rolling yet.
2. Once you have thwacked the clay down into a slab that is very thick, like 2 or 3" high, you can start to use the rolling pin to roll it out, like a batch of sugar cookie dough.
3. Always roll from the inside to the outside, do NOT roll the opposite way. Do this over and over until the slab gets thinner. Our eventual goal is about 1/2" thick.
4. You can even "throw" the slab, by gently lifting the slab from one side, and "throwing" it on the workboard at an angle. This will help the slab clay stretch. Keep doing this until you get the desired thickness.
5. Now, this is just a trick to get very smooth edges, and if you don't have saran wrap - no big deal! Stretch a piece of saran wrap over the entire slab and gently lay it in place.
6. Now, find all the cookie cutters you want to use - plain old circles are great, or hearts or leaves or flower shapes - be sure not to pick a cutter with lots of details, they will most likely not transfer to the clay or could break easily.
7. Go ahead and cut out your pieces, just as if you were making cookies for the holidays! Do not pull them out of the clay slab yet. Once done, pull the saran wrap off gently, THEN pull the extra clay off the discs.
8. One by one decorate your stakes - use rubber letter stamps if they are going to be herb stakes, use decorative rubber stamps to make pretty designs around the border, use a kitchen fork to make fun designs, use an old library card edge to make stripes...the sky's the limit! Use your almost dry sponge to smooth out the edges or any little mistakes.
9. Take the bamboo skewer and gently push it halfway into the bottom edge of the stake, so once it's fired you can glue a metal cover it with plastic wrap, and using air dry clay, wait for it to delight!

stick in. Place it on a board to dry, deliver it back to Danielle to fire. If dry and paint it to your heart's

