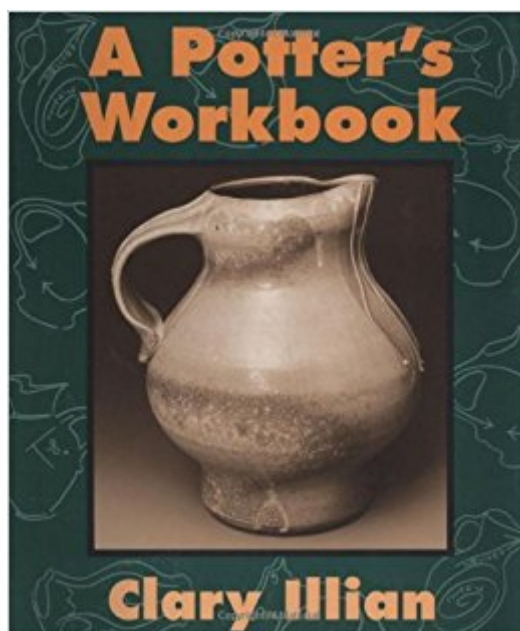


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# A Potter's Workbook



## 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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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (26 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Clary Illian has given the ceramics community an amazing gift by writing this book. Not only is she thoughtful and clear, she inspires potters (whether beginners or professionals) to make better, more personal pots. Filled with examples -- beautifully photographed by Charles Metzger -- which add flesh to her superb text. Every potter should consider this must-reading.

I have been teaching ceramics for over 20 years and have been looking for a book like this one to share with my students. I am also a studio artist and have and will find it an invaluable tool when considering the importance of form while I work. Clary Illian is a fabulous potter. She has a great

love of the material and her instincts and knowledge about beauty in functionality in pottery is clear and lovely.

Once you have some skill at basic throwing, this is the book you need! Clary examines aesthetic principles of pottery. If you have wondered aloud just what has happened to your pot as it emerges on the wheel, you can get your answer here. Why does your pot look cumbersome while the person next to you has double the clay and yet their creation is light and airy? If you have pondered the question, you need a course in the matter. There are no colored pictures because the book is about form and not about glazes or other embellishment. No more bowling pin vases for me. I am on to lovelier pots!

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.

This book focuses on form and how to think about form. It presents lessons that blend function and aesthetics. Overall, a book that can be picked up at any time in a potters life and help one critique their own work.

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.

An excellent resource for the novice or the professional. Wonderful read, and great pictures.

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.

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