

CHOOSING AND PURCHASING AN ELECTRIC KILN

A ceramic or glass kiln can be a major capital expenditure; however, with careful selection, placement, maintenance and care, it can be a piece of equipment that will last for many years.

KILN SPECIFICATIONS WORKSHEET - REQUIRED FOR ALL KILN PURCHASES

It's important that we receive the completed worksheet before your kiln is shipped in order to save you time and trouble upon receipt. We recommend that you meet with your electrician or building specifications authority prior to completing the worksheet to ensure that the kiln you are choosing is compatible with your art room's limitations. **Visit [SchoolSpecialty.com/Kilns](https://www.schoolspecialty.com/Kilns) to download your Kiln Specifications Worksheet.**

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Before buying a kiln, several very important factors must be considered including: Kiln Location; Electrical Supply; Firing Capacity; Ventilation; Controller Type; Warranty and Accessories.

Kiln Location

Due to the high temperature and the emissions the kiln may give off, the best location is a dedicated, low traffic, kiln room with a locking door, exterior wall for easy ventilation, preferably near the art room for convenience of transporting ware.

Other things to consider with the location of your kiln:

- Dry, well-ventilated area.
- Non-combustible floor such as concrete or ceramic tile.
- At least 18" of space around kiln.
- Ceiling clearance enough for kiln to be opened.
- Be sure to order a kiln you can fit through all doors!
- Sprinkler system that is not activated by elevated kiln room temperatures.

Electrical Requirements

The kiln should be supplied by a dedicated breaker. Consult your electrician to make sure you have availability in your breaker box to handle the recommended breaker for your kiln. You will need to know the voltage and phase of the power supply available in the kiln room. Voltage will be either 208V or 240V (220V is a generic term and not a specific voltage). The supply will be either 1 phase or 3 phase. Residential supply is almost always 240V 1 phase and commercial supply can be any combination. Have your electrician test the supply to be certain. Some kiln models may require an electrician to direct wire the kiln.

What Size to Buy

Besides determining the physical placement for the kiln and the electrical requirements, getting the kiln that serves your needs is vital.

Ask yourself the following: What are you firing? How big is the work? How often will you be firing a load? Will your needs/enrollment grow and can your kiln keep up? To what temperature are you firing? The closer you fire a kiln to its maximum temperature, the shorter the life of the elements and relays. Are you able physically to reach down in a kiln to load and unload?



Visit our website for more kiln options

Often, a shorter wider kiln is easier to work with. Sometimes though, you need a deep kiln for tall pieces. Front loaders are more expensive but some people find them easier to load. Buy for the future. Your kiln, with care and maintenance, can last many years.

Venting Your Kiln

When clay fires, it gives off fumes due to the burning of organic materials in the clay body. Formaldehyde, sulfur dioxide and even carbon monoxide are released. **A vent is a must and is often required by building codes.**

Your Controller...Kiln Sitter or Computerized?

- Kiln Sitter controlled kilns are a little less expensive but do not offer the features and convenience desired by most teachers.
- Electronic (digital) controllers allow freedom in firing. Simply determine the cone to be fired to, the speed of the firing, and it does the rest. It is easily programmed, holds your program for repeat firings, and if it has a ramp/hold feature, allows you to even fuse and slump glass!

Warranty

What is covered and for how long? Does the manufacturer have a good reputation and is it responsive to your questions/problems? Are parts (elements and relays) readily available?

Optional Accessory Considerations

1. Kiln furniture (posts and shelves) that specifically fit your kiln model.
2. A Kiln stand; does the kiln come already with a stand? Does the stand need a caster? Is the vent mounted on it?
3. A Lid Lifter: a mechanical arm that helps both wide and heavy lids open and shut easier.
4. Test cones to place on the shelves to determine firing efficiency.
5. Glaze stilts to stilt glazed pot bottoms.
6. Kiln wash to keep glaze from sticking to your shelves.
7. Tile or plate setters for flat work.

BEFORE USING YOUR KILN

Make sure to read each page of your owner's manual in detail before you install or operate the kiln. Warranties do not cover damage caused by failure to follow instructions. We suggest you read the manual twice. The first time read it straight through before you plug in your kiln. The second time use it as a guide as you set the kiln up and for the initial firing.

Each of the kiln manufacturers we represent offers more kilns than we can show in our catalog. Contact your local sales representative for assistance on finding additional models. After your purchase, our customer care department would be happy to assist you with any questions, concerns or replacement parts for your new kiln. We want your ceramics experience to be creative and enjoyable!