

How to Use Mason Stains

As Stain...

Use to stain textured clay (glazed or unglazed) or for brushwork over or under glaze.

...for cone 10...

Mix one part stain to one part feldspar
(use *Custer* or *Minspar*)

...for cone 4-6...

Mix one part stain to one part Nepheline Syenite

...for cone 06...

Mix one part stain to 1 part Frit 3124 or 3110 or
mix one part stain to 1 part Gerstley Borate
(Adding small amounts of CMC Gum or
Vee-Gum Cer add brushability and durability.)

In Glaze

When making your own glazes, the liquid glaze should reach the consistency of whole milk. Add Mason Stains by weight as a percentage of dry ingredients.

Greens, Blues & Blacks: .5 - 3%
Yellows, Pinks, Purples: 2 - 8%

In Clay

Add Mason Stains by weight as a percentage of dry ingredients when mixing your own clay. When coloring moist clay, allow for 30% water, then add Mason Stains as a percentage of dry ingredients' weight (ie, 17½ pounds dry out of 25lbs total weight).

Greens, Blues & Blacks: 2 - 5%
Yellows, Pinks & Purples: 5 - 10%

As Engobe or Underglaze...

Engobes and underglazes should reach the consistency of cream. Add Mason Stains by weight as a percentage of the total dry ingredient weight.

Greens, Blues & Blacks: 3 - 10%
Yellows, Pinks & Purples: 8 - 15%

Base Recipes for...

...Lowfire cone 08-1...

EPK Kaolin	25%
Ball Clay OM4	25%
Lead-free Frit	15%
Talc	5%
Flint Silica	20%

...Midrange cone 1-6...

Kaolin	25%
Ball Clay	25%
Nepheline Syenite	15%
Talc	5%
Flint Silica	20%

...Highfire cone 8-11...

Sapphire Kaolin	10%
EPK Kaolin	25%
Ball Clay	25%
Feldspar	20%
Flint Silica	20%

Oxide Washes for Cone 6 Electric Firing

Brown

IRON OXIDE is the coloring agent with the most economy. Iron is available in a variety of purities. All forms of iron produce only one color in an electric oxidation kiln: BROWN! Only the intensity or tone of brown will change. My preference is the 4284 Red Iron (our part number CH330).

Blue

COBALT (carbonate or oxide).

Green

(or turquoise)

COPPER (carbonate or oxide) or CHROME OXIDE.

A virtual rainbow of other colors can all be made with Mason Stains.

In cone 10 reduction traditions, all it takes is mixing the pigment with water. In the cone 5-6 range, pigments need a little boost to create adhesion and enable the color to bloom.

The best and simplest way to do this is with Gerstley Borate, a naturally occurring mineral that is high in boron. Frits, or man-made melters, can also be used. My preference for Gerstley Borate comes from its organic quality, that acts as a natural flocculant -- floating the color, keeping it from becoming concrete in the jar.

Mixing:

I mix 2 parts color to 1 part Gerstley Borate.

Water content controls the intensity.

For example, the most common iron oxide wash uses:

2 tablespoons Red Iron Oxide 4284

1 tablespoon Gerstley Borate

2 cups water

Cobalt is a more powerful colorant. You may want to increase your water content (lessening the purity of the solution) to 3 or 4 cups.

Try the variations to see what you prefer!