

### Tips for getting the most from your kiln furniture.

1. **Always store your kiln shelves on their end.** Never store kiln shelves flat and certainly never flat stacked on top of each other. Doing so significantly increases the risk of shelves cracking.
2. **Always use kiln wash** to minimise the risk of glaze runs ruining a shelf. Regularly scrape off and reapply your kiln wash.
3. **Always flip kiln shelves** when using them in the kiln. This will minimise warping. All shelves will begin to warp, particularly at temperatures exceeding 1260c. Thicker shelves minimise warpage, but may also be excessively heavy, so making loading them difficult. The best solution is to use shelves that you can manage easily and regularly flip them. This may require the application and sanding of kiln wash on alternative sides of the shelf (if the underside of a shelf is kiln washed, then you risk having flakes of kiln wash drop onto your glazed ware, causing damage, so best to remove and clean the underside).
4. **Always** make sure you kiln shelves are **bone dry** when using them. If there is moisture in the shelves then as they heat they are likely to suffer expansion cracks.
5. **Always use moderate ramp rates** in the initial stages of firing up until 200c (generally rates below 120c/hr are safe). Fast ramp rates may cause rapid expansion of the shelves, leading to cracking. The same applies when cooling your kiln. Avoid rapid cooling below 250c as sudden drops in temperature will cause thermal shock and cracking.
6. **Always use 3 props** to support a shelf. This is the most stable configuration. Ensure the props are placed in line vertically, so that the load of each shelf is passed down the props.
7. **Always check your shelves** carefully when packing your kiln. If a shelf is showing signs of **cracking DON'T use** it. Better to replace a suspect kiln shelf than risk a collapse of furniture and ware in the kiln.

Sadly, kiln shelves don't last forever, but by sticking to the above pointers you will prolong the life you get from them. The higher you fire, the more likely you are to experience warping and cracking of your shelves even with the best of kiln shelf care.

We now offer not only traditional Cordierite-Mullite shelves but also Oxygen Bonded Silicon Carbide (OBSiC) and Nitrogen Bonded Silicon Carbide (NBSiC) shelves.