

## Getting the most from your kiln furniture

1. Store your kiln shelves on their end. Never flat and certainly never stacked on top of each other. Doing so significantly increases the risk of shelves cracking.
2. Use kiln wash to minimise the risk of glaze runs sticking to a shelf. Regularly scrape off and reapply your kiln wash.
3. Flip kiln shelves when using them in the kiln to minimise warping. All shelves will begin to warp, particularly at temperatures exceeding 1260c. The thicker the shelves the less they warp but can make them harder to load due to the weight of the shelf. The best solution is to use shelves that you can handle easily and regularly flip them.
4. If the underside of a shelf is has left over kiln wash on it, then you risk having flakes of kiln wash drop onto your glazed ware, causing damage.
5. Make sure you kiln shelves are bone dry before use. If there is moisture in the shelves, then as they heat, they are likely to crack. If in doubt, candle at 90°C for a few hours.
6. Use moderate ramp rates in the initial stages of the firing up until 200c (generally rates below 120c/hr are safe). Fast ramp rates can cause rapid expansion and shelf cracking. The same applies when cooling your kiln, avoid thermal shock from rapid cooling by never opening your kiln when its above 100°C.
7. Use 3 props to support a shelf as this is the most stable configuration. Ensure the props are placed in line vertically, so that the load of each shelf is passed down through the props.
8. Check your shelves carefully when packing your kiln. If a shelf is showing signs of cracking DON'T use it. You are better off replacing a suspect kiln shelf than having a collapse of furniture and ware in the kiln.

Kiln shelves do not last forever, but by following the above guidelines you will help prolong their life. 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 supply traditional Cordierite-Mullite shelves along with Oxygen Bonded Silicon Carbide (OBSiC) and Nitrogen Bonded Silicon Carbide (NBSiC) shelves.

For more information about the differences, check out the [‘Kiln Furniture – Quick Comparisons Chart’](#) on our resources page.