

Sculpture Studio Q&A

1. How long does each session last?

Each session lasts 2.5 hours. Most people arrive on time and leave on time, but some choose to come a little later, which is fine. However, sessions are not prorated.

2. How long does it take to complete a sculpture?

That varies based on the artist's skill level, experience, and pace. Some sculptures can take a few sessions, while more detailed pieces take longer.

3. Can anyone learn to sculpt?

Absolutely! Sculpture is a skill that can be learned with patience and instruction. Talent plays a small role—about 30%—while skill and practice account for the other 70%. The key is learning how to see and interpret forms correctly, which improves with guidance and experience.

4. Is talent required to be a good sculptor?

Talent may help someone grasp concepts a little quicker, but it is not essential. With instruction and practice, anyone can improve. Our studio focuses on developing skills through structured learning and observation.

5. Will I feel embarrassed next to a sculptor who is very accomplished?

No! In our studio, we focus on personal growth. The only comparison you should make is with your previous work. Advanced sculptors have gained their skills through experience, and beginners will improve with time and practice.

6. What type of sculptures do you focus on?

We specialize in figure sculpture, including both human and animal forms. Beginners typically start with simpler shapes and contours before progressing to more complex forms.

7. How much guidance will I receive?

Our instruction is organic and intuitive. Teachers are available to answer questions, but we also encourage students to trust their instincts and develop their artistic eye. Our methods are designed to ensure success at every level.

8. How do you prevent sculptures from breaking in the kiln?

Proper hollowing and construction techniques are essential. We teach methods to ensure sculptures survive the firing process, preventing breakage and protecting other pieces in the kiln.

9. How do we preserve our clay between sessions?

Clay must be wrapped tightly in a plastic bag of a specific thickness that we provide, ensuring an airtight seal by tying it securely underneath. We also spray the clay with water using a spray bottle. If wrapped correctly per the teacher's instructions, sculptures can be worked on for an extended period. Some artists love fine details and may spend months refining their work.

10. Can I just do whatever I want and freewheel it?

Nobody freewheels in the studio because we are dedicated to teaching the fine art of sculpture. Our rule is to learn the skills, and then you can choose to break them as you become more skilled or find your artistic voice. More experienced sculptors can create their own compositions, but beginners need to learn the fundamental skills first. If you're looking for a less structured approach, you might try ceramics. There are plenty of places in the area that offer that kind of experience.

11. How much do materials and kiln fees cost?

Clay costs \$25 for a 25-pound bag. Kiln fees range from \$20 and up, depending on the size of your sculpture. Our fees are kept low because we fire sculptures in full loads, allowing students to enjoy a discounted rate. However, since space is limited in each kiln load, we charge based on size. Typical kiln fees range from \$20 to \$50, though large pieces may cost more.

12. How flexible is the schedule?

We offer around 10 sessions per week, providing flexibility for students to find a time that works for them.

13. How do I sign up?

We use a booking site called Calendly. Once you decide to start, we'll provide you with the link to sign up for sessions.

14. How much does it cost?

We offer three pricing options:

- Single session
- 5-session package
- 10-session package (best value)

Even at the highest rate, the cost is about \$15 per hour, making it an affordable and competitive option. Check our website for our fee schedule.

15. Are there other sculpture studios in the area?

No, our studio is unique. While there are ceramic studios and some college programs, no other dedicated figure sculpture ateliers exist nearby.

16. What is the history of the studio?

We are a unique and vibrant atelier that has been in operation for 18 years. The studio was founded by Lynn Forbes, a talented sculptor and my teacher for many years. I purchased the studio four years ago when she moved to Italy, just as I was retiring from my career as a high school English Language Arts teacher. I have been sculpting for over a dozen years and have studied in Italy and San Diego with various instructors and workshops. While I have always been deeply invested in art, owning this studio has allowed me to fully dedicate myself to this passion and create a welcoming, enriching environment for all who wish to learn sculpture.

Teaching high school for many years gave me the skills to manage large groups of people, stay organized, and effectively communicate complex concepts. Teaching is a highly transferable

skill, and my experience helps me reach all levels of learners. My goal is to provide an engaging and supportive learning environment for every student. I am the primary teacher here, but I have a few people who sit in for me now and then, and Gretchen is one of them.

17. Do I need to bring anything?

No, everything you need is provided, including tools, a stand, a board, clay, and instruction. The only things you may want to bring are a water bottle to stay hydrated and a smock or apron to protect your clothing, although clay is very washable. Other than that, just come as you are!

We look forward to welcoming you into our creative and supportive sculpture community!