

How Big Is That Kiln?

by David Gamble

I give a lot of workshops and talk about many different aspects of ceramics — tools, techniques, equipment and so on. When talking about kilns, two of the questions teachers and potters ask a lot are “How big is 7 cubic feet (or 10 cubic feet)?” and “How many pieces can I fit into a kiln? For the teacher with 28 students in a class or the functional potter making dinnerware, the answers will help you determine the size kiln that will suit your needs.

Like most artists I’m visually oriented, so I thought it would be helpful to show how big a kiln is and what it can hold. With a 6-inch diameter bowl that you can easily fit into two hands, I loaded various-sized kilns with as many bowls as possible, being mindful to stagger the shelves (a preferred practice) for heat circulation. Note that a larger diameter kiln holds more bowls per cubic foot due to the larger stacking surface on each shelf. ?



Bowl, 6 inches in diameter and 3 inches high by Tracy Gamble. Of course a larger kiln holds more, but a visual helps. Realistically estimate your output when considering a kiln. Too large and you’ll have long waits between firings, and too small means you’ll be firing too frequently.



Approximately 28 in. in diameter and 27 in. high: 10 cubic feet, 50 bowls.

Skutt Model 1227



Approximately 23 in. in diameter and 27 in. high: 7 cubic feet, 38 bowls.

Skutt Model 1027



Approximately 23 in. in diameter and 18 in. high: 4.6 cubic feet, 26 bowls.

Skutt Model 1018



Approximately 18 in. in diameter and 18 in. high: 2.6 cubic feet, 12 bowls.

Skutt Model 818



Approximately 28 in. in diameter and 18 in. high: 6.6 cubic feet, 42 bowls.

Skutt Model 1218

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