

How to...

Model an Elephant

Artist Patz Fowle demonstrates a straightforward method to create elephant forms. She calls it her “easy-to-learn process.” How might this technique be adapted to sculpt other animals?

1 Patz “balls” her clay parts into different sizes. She adds holes to the larger balls for the animals’ legs and head.



2 She refines the form of each part, making tapered cylinders for legs and modeling the basic head structure.



3 Using the score-and-slip method for adhesion, she inserts parts into the bodies.



4 Smoothing the seams strengthens joints as it contributes to a better finish.



5 To add texture, Patz presses a sheet of plastic into the work while creating “wrinkles” with her fingernails.



6 She models eyes and eyelids, adding small bits of porcelain for a “whiter” eye. The clay has now become leather-hard, so she hollows out the large body forms, then carefully patches them. With a toothpick she makes holes in the bottom to vent moisture and gas during firing.



7 She fires her completed sculptures to cone 5 (oxidation) without a glaze. Notice the elephants’ expressive character.

