

## *Common glaze faults*

**Crawled glaze-** In “crawling”, blank or bald spots appear in the glaze surface after firing. Crawling may be caused by having a dusty or dirty surface, or applying the glaze heavily. Skin oils from excessive handling of greenware may clog clay pores, causing the glaze to be repelled. Hard spots in the clay surface created by excessive sponging or polishing of the greenware is also a cause. To attempt to salvage such a piece, apply additional glaze to the bare spot and refire, or cover the entire piece with a textured glaze and refire.

**Cratered or bubbled glaze-** In this situation, the craters develop as a result of body gases erupting through the glaze and “freezing” as the kiln cools. This condition is caused by underfiring. To salvage such a piece, grind down the high spots, apply a thin coating of glaze and refire to a higher temperature.

**Pinholes-** Pinholes are tiny indentation’s in the glaze surface which are generally no larger than the point of a pin. This fault may occur in almost any type of glaze, and is caused by underfiring. To salvage a piece, refire at a higher temperature.

**Sagging glaze on a vertical surface-** Sagging or running glaze is generally caused by too heavy an application of glaze. It is a warning sign that too much glaze is being applied. Take extra care with similar pieces.

**Cracks in the body-** When a crack occurs in the body, examine the glaze at the edge of the crack. If the glaze is inside the crack or rounded over the corners, the break occurred early in the glaze firing, and was probably present in the clay body before the piece was glaze fired.

In some instances a sound appearing piece of ware will crack during a glaze or overglaze firing. This can be caused by an excess of water used in the original cleanup of the greenware. Too much moisture applied to an area of greenware causes that area to expand while the dry or slightly damp areas have already gone through normal shrinkage. Even if a piece of dry, cleaned greenware shows no visible cracks, it is possible an internal stress is there. This crack can open up during later firings. If the glaze at the edge of the crack is sharp, the break developed after the glaze was fired. This type of crack is usually due to opening the kiln door or peepholes while the ware is still hot.

**Crazing-** Crazing is characterized by a network of fine cracks in the glaze surface. It may be caused by underfiring bisque, clay or glaze, incompatible clay and glaze, or by opening the kiln door before the ware is completely cooled. Crazing may be eliminated by refiring the piece to a temperature one cone higher than the original firing.

**Aftercrazing-** Crazing that occurs days or months after the piece has been fired. Although the finish may look perfect when it is first removed from the kiln, crazing may occur. While underfiring may not be the direct cause of immediate crazing, it is the major cause of delayed crazing. To correct it, refire the piece.