

FINISHING OFF

In theory, once you have checked that the airway is clear, your whistle is finished. However, there is a lot of trial and error to whistle making, so overleaf there is a list of things you can do to make sure your whistle works.

You can decorate your whistle with slips or under glazes. Once your whistle has been bisqued you can glaze it, but make sure you don't get glaze anywhere near the whistle hole or airway.

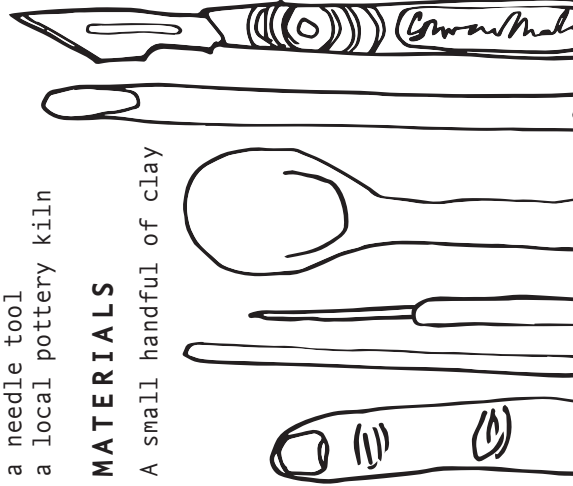
HOW TO MAKE A BIRD WHISTLE

MATERIALS

A small handful of clay

TOOLS

scalpel
small modelling tool
wooden spoon
lolly stick or strip of old credit card
a needle tool
a local pottery kiln



MAKING THE WHISTLE

9. Turn the whistle over and insert the lolly stick or credit card strip horizontally through the end of the tail and push it gently until it pierces the body chamber. It is important that this hole aligns with the side of the chamber.

The hole is cut here

stick

mouth piece



10. Leaving the stick in place and leave the whistle to dry for a little while. The next stage is easier if the clay is leather hard.

11. Use your scalpel to cut a 45° bevelled edge to the hole you've just cut on the edge furthest away from the tail/mouth piece. See figs. 8 + 9

airial view
of the hole

fig. 10



11. Use your scalpel to cut a 45° bevelled edge to the hole you've just cut on the edge furthest away from the tail/mouth piece. See fig. 10

Now remove the stick.

ATTACHING THE NECK + HEAD

7. Use a 2.5cm ball of clay to make the neck and head of the bird. Roll it between your palms until it becomes a cone. Bend over the top to form the head and beak.

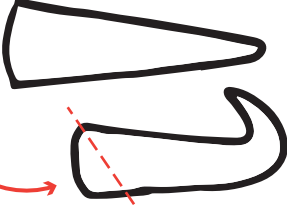


fig. 6

8. Cut a wedge at a 45° angle off the bottom of the neck so that you can join it to the body more easily. Join the body and neck.

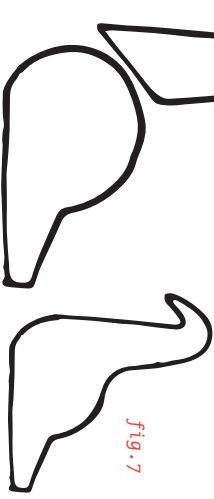


fig. 7

4. Once complete, I pat my ball with the back of a wooden spoon to even out the surface and flatten any bumps. Flatten one side of the ball a little.



fig. 4

MAKING THE MOUTHPIECE

5. The mouth piece is the tail of the bird. Roll another 2cm ball of clay and mould it into a wedge shaped tail. Ensure that it is thick enough to have an airway created inside of it.



fig. 5

6. Align the bottom of the ball with the tail and join it by dragging the clay from the tail onto the ball.

MAKING THE WHISTLE BODY

1. Begin by rolling two small balls of clay, measuring approximately 2cm, in your palms.

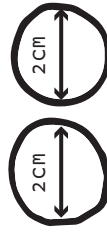


fig. 1

2. Use your thumb and fingers to make two small pinch pots with walls that are 3 or 4 mm thick.



fig. 2

3. Make a hollow ball by joining the rims of the two pinch pots together, using a modelling tool or your finger. Smooth over using your finger tip.

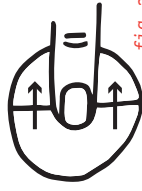


fig. 3

TROUBLE SHOOTING

THIS ANGLE NEEDS TO BE APPROX 45°

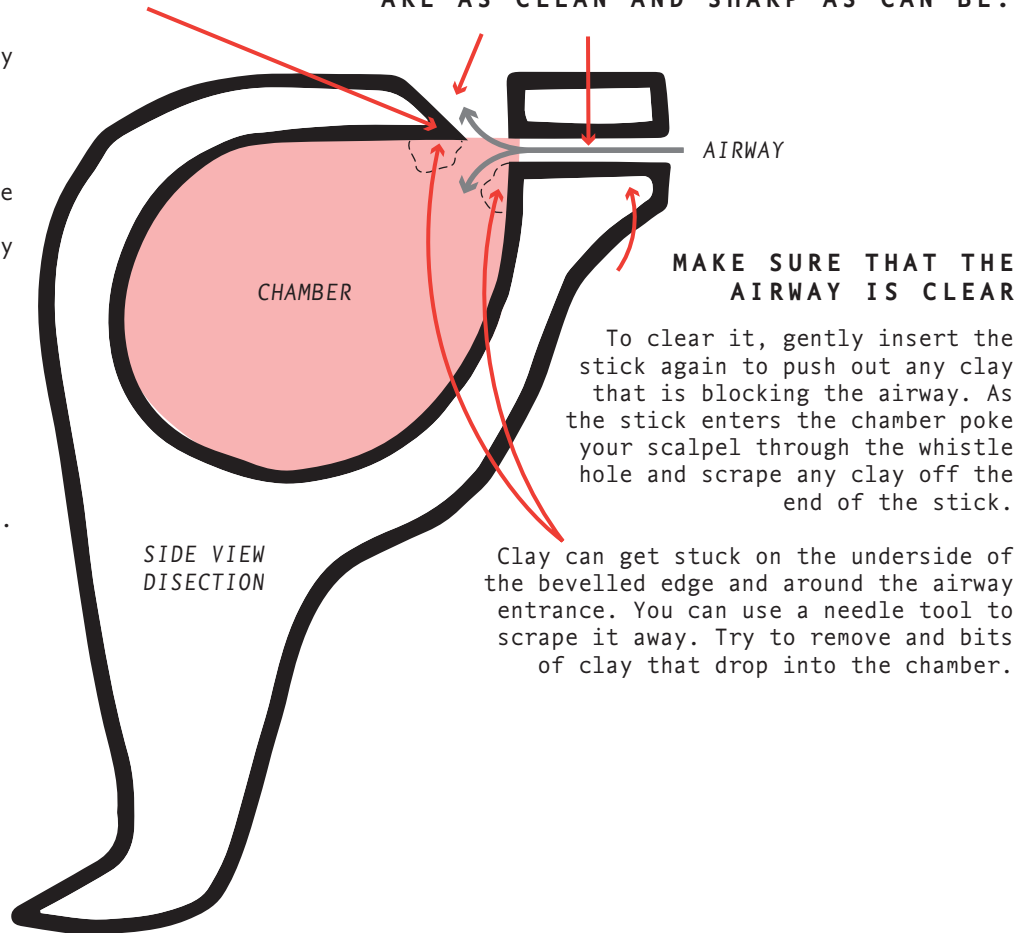
The tip of the bevelled edge needs to align with the airway entrance into the chamber so that the air gets split as it enters the chamber.

If it's too high, reinsert the lolly stick and use the flat side of your scalpel to gently push the bevelled edge down until it meets the stick.

If it's too low, reinsert the lolly stick and gently push the bevelled edge up.

Test to see if the whistle works now. Don't be surprised if it takes a few adjustments.

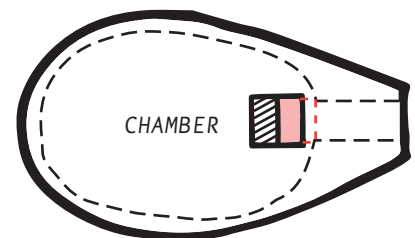
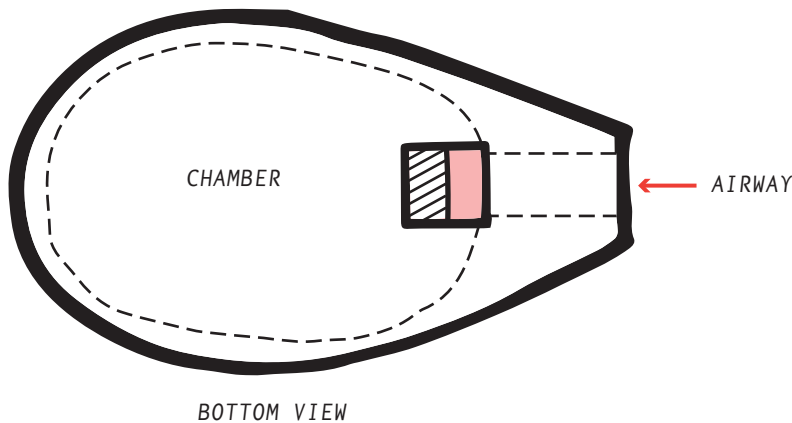
IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THESE HOLES ARE AS CLEAN AND SHARP AS CAN BE.



IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE WHISTLE HOLE ALIGNS WITH THE CHAMBER ENTRANCE

Check to see if you can see inside the chamber and if any clay is blocking it.

Make sure that the hole you've cut is at the entrance to the chamber. If it is not near enough to the airway entrance you can use your scalpel to lengthen the hole slightly so that it aligns correctly.



BITS AND PIECES

LEATHER HARD means clay that has been left to dry for a while until it is like leather. It is still a little malleable and it is easier to carve at this stage.

JOINING CLAY PIECES. The method I use to join the parts of my whistle is a bit lazy, but it works for me. I simply align the two pieces I want to join and using a modelling tool or finger, drag the clay from one piece over the other. I smooth over the join with my finger tip.

HOW A WHISTLE WORKS. Air passes through a canal until it hits a bevelled edge of clay that divides it. The air will alternate between escaping out of the whistle and being forced into the whistle chamber, creating oscillating sound waves that then tumble around the resonate chamber, creating the sound wave we hear from the whistle.