



# Trimming Demo

After you've thrown your pot, you'll usually need to trim the bottom.

There are a few forms that won't need trimming, but most pots look and function much better if they are trimmed. After you throw your pot, allow it to firm up for awhile. Trimming is best done at the soft leather hard stage. If your pot is now dry greenware, it's too late to trim.

Your pot is ready to trim when it's hard enough to handle, but soft enough to cut easily. The pot at the right will need to dry some more.



When your pot is dry enough to trim, take it off the bat and turn it upside down. Feel it all over, inside and out. Look at the inside, and compare to the outside. How should the outside be trimmed to go with the interior shape? How much extra clay will you need to trim from the bottom and the lower walls? Visualize the trimmed pot.



Center the upside down pot on the wheel. To do this, first place the pot in what appears to be the center. Take out a pin tool (or a pencil, or a ball point pen). Trace a circle on the bottom of the pot while bracing your elbows (overlap your hands for more stability). If the circle you inscribed isn't centered on the bottom of the pot, then move the pot slightly in the appropriate direction, and draw the circle again. When your inscribed circle matches the bottom of the pot, the pot is centered. (Note: if your pot is off-center at the bottom, it can't be centered on the wheel now – you'll have to estimate.)



Tack the pot down to the wheel head with 3 soft pieces of clay.

It's useful now to inscribe another circle that marks how much of the outer edge of the pot you plan to cut off in the trimming process.



Pick up a loop tool and start trimming. (A basic tool kit has 2 loop tools, but there are many other styles. Try various ones to see what they do.) The wheel should be going around medium-fast to medium-slow. It's a good practice to have your left fingers gently in contact with the center of the bottom of the pot while your right hand operates the tool. Overlap your hands together and brace your elbows on your legs – this is important for stability.



Trimming in process: the loop tool has started to cut away some clay.



The lower portion of the pot is really changing shape as you cut away the clay. You can see that trimming is part of the design process for most pots.



Trimming is almost finished. This pot is being trimmed with a flat bottom. However, if you have left a thick bottom on your pot, you could cut a foot ring (we'll cover that in another demo).



Trimming is finished. Now you can remove the pot from the wheel. Pick it up and examine it all over. Did you trim enough? Too much? If you didn't get it just right, you can apply your thoughts to another pot.



