

# SCULPTING A CLAY MUSHROOM



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**





# Getting Started →

## COVERING UP & EQUIPMENT

Air dry clay is a wonderful material but it is very sticky. It will stick to your hands, the work surface, and tools. Covering up your table will make clean-up a bit easier. Hand lotion help hands become less sticky. It works surprisingly well!



- Small containers with water and rags/tissues are very useful!
- Water on your fingertips works great to smoothen the clay surface
- 400 grams of clay makes a 20cm mushroom
- Pencils, a paperclip taped to a pencil, glue spreaders and lolly sticks can be used as clay tools.





# Clay Joints

## PREPARATION

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Some joints can be blended with a little water on your finger tips. However, to guarantee a successful joint sculptors and artists use 'slip' a sort of clay 'glue' to attach one piece of clay to another.



### To make slip:

1. Add some clay and little water to a jar and blend \or
2. Cover and leave overnight or for a few hours, this will soften the clay and make it easier to mix by hand.
3. Mix the clay and water to make a paste that is thick with consistency of double cream.



# Score, Slip, Stick, Smooth

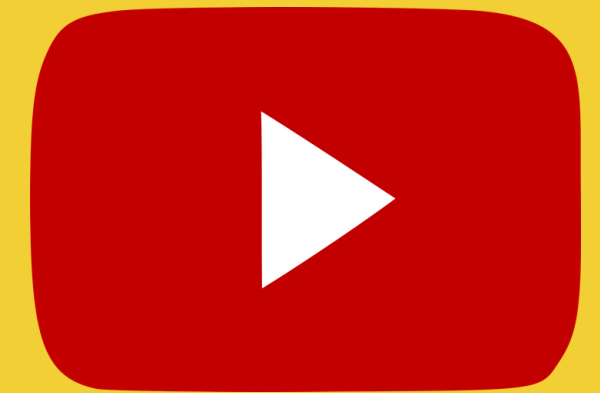
## CLAY TECHNIQUES

**SCORE:** First, *score* the clay. Use a feather tool or some other type of tool to make scratches in the surfaces that will be stuck together.

**SLIP:** Slip is very watered down clay. Then you *slip* it-wet the scored surface with some slip, using it like glue.

**STICK:** Join the 2 pieces of clay together by sticking (pressing) and wiggling the two pieces together.

**SMOOTH:** Using a wooden modeling tool, shaper or your finger, smooth the joint of the pieces that were just scored and slipped together so they are seamless.



[Score, slip, stick & smooth demonstration video](#)



# Clay Sculpture Techniques I



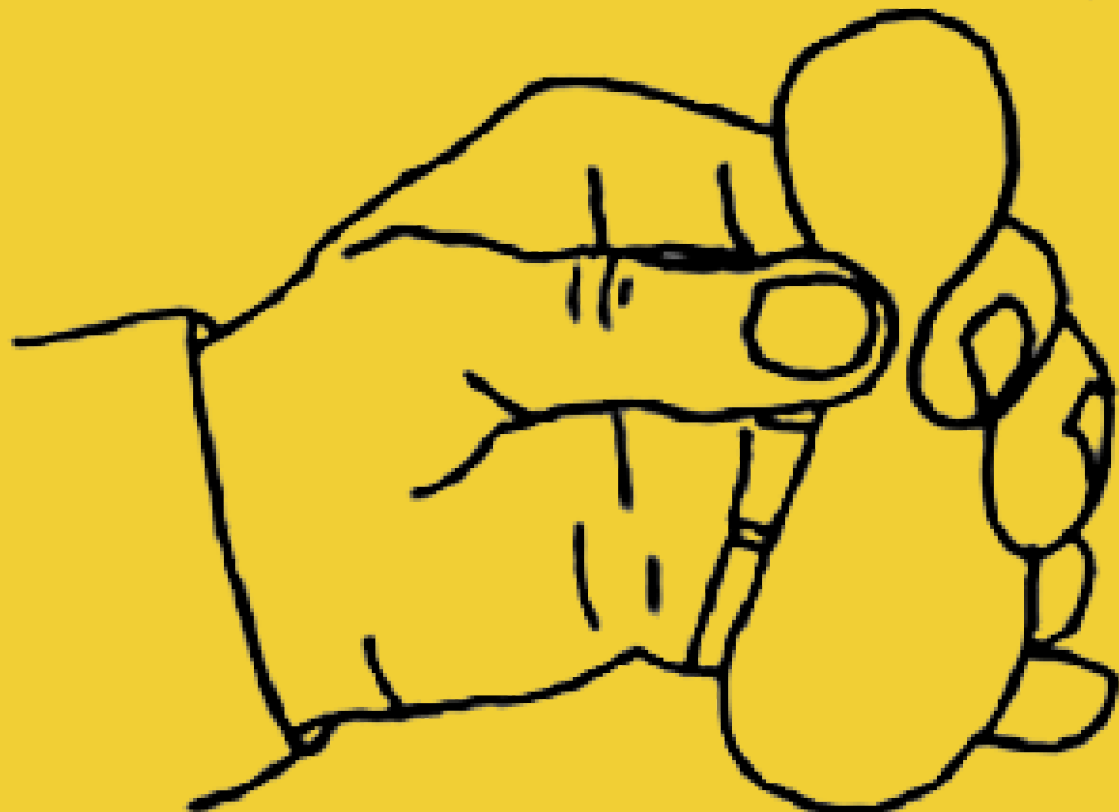
**I can roll Balls of clay.**

**working with moist clay.**

**Remember,  
gentle  
and  
slow.**



**I can roll snakes with clay.**



**I can squeeze the clay.**

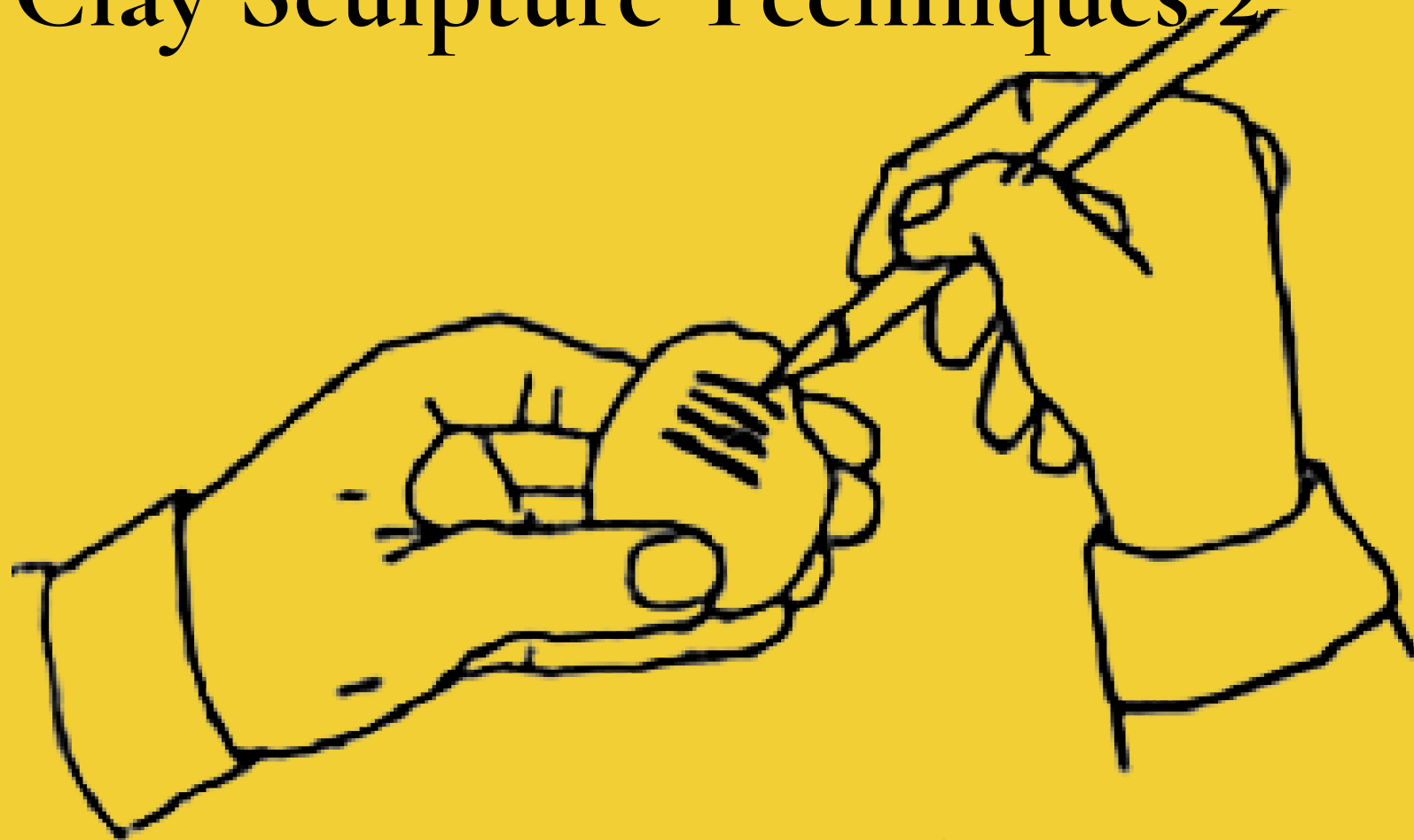


**I can pull forms out of the clay.**

Source



# Clay Sculpture Techniques 2



**I can carefully scratch designs into the clay.**



**I can gently smooth the clay to give it a finished look and feel.**



**I can subtract (take away) pieces of clay. I can use tools or my fingers.**



**I can add clay pieces to my sculpture by simply sticking them together and pressing firmly.**

Source



# 01

*Choose your favourite fungi*





# Prepare your clay

Knead the clay for  
around 3 minutes.

The warmer the clay  
the easier it is to  
sculpt.

02





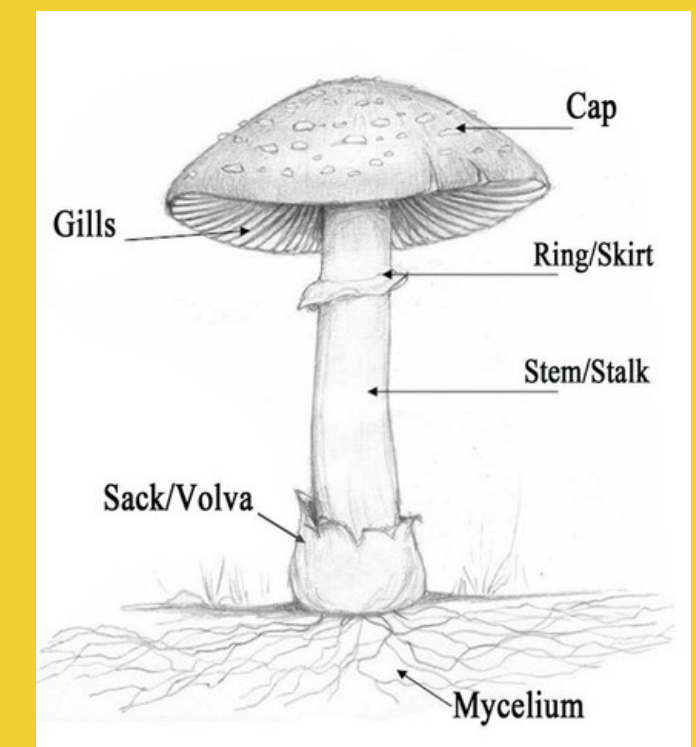
# Check the size of your mushroom

MUSHROOM HEIGHT 15 TO 20 CMS

- 1) Divide the clay into 4 pieces.
- 2) Make a quick shape for the cap, stalk and soil to check you have enough clay.

Check the height by placing the stick (20cm) next to the shapes. The stick can be cut to size.

- 3) Adjust the size of the clay pieces if they are too big or too small, by adding or removing clay.





# Sculpt the base

Score, Slip, Stick, Smooth



1) Pinch, press and smooth to shape. The soil acts as a base to help create a full free standing clay mushroom.



2) Score the centre and add slip to connect the stalk.



USE A LITTLE WATER ON YOUR FINGER TIPS TO HELP SMOOTHEN AND SHAPE.





# Make the clay stalk



1) Roll the clay for the stalk into a long coil (snake)



2) Score and slip on the one end of the coil and press it down onto the soil base smooth to join.



3) Wrap the coil around the stick press and smooth to secure to the base.



## Wrap & smooth the clay coil



4) Cover whole stick with clay all the way to the top and smooth. Cut the stick if your mushroom is shorter than 20cms.

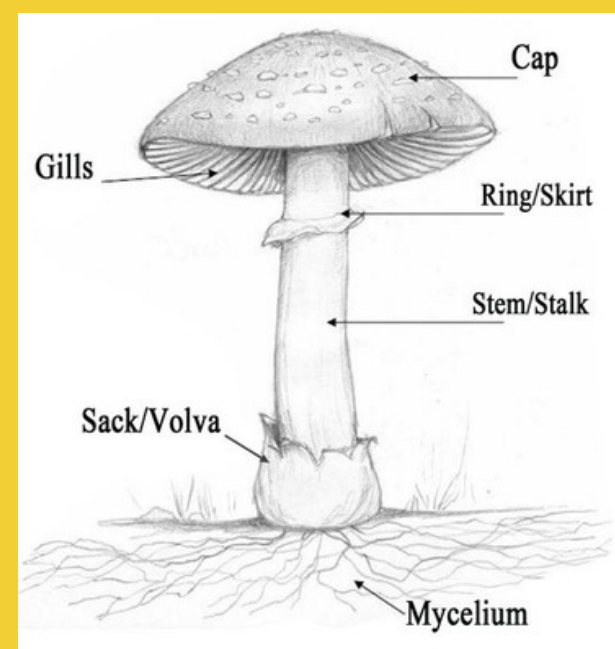


# Make the stalk top & add features

To help join the cap to the stalk. Flatten the top of the stalk to size 2 pence coin. Add more clay if needed.



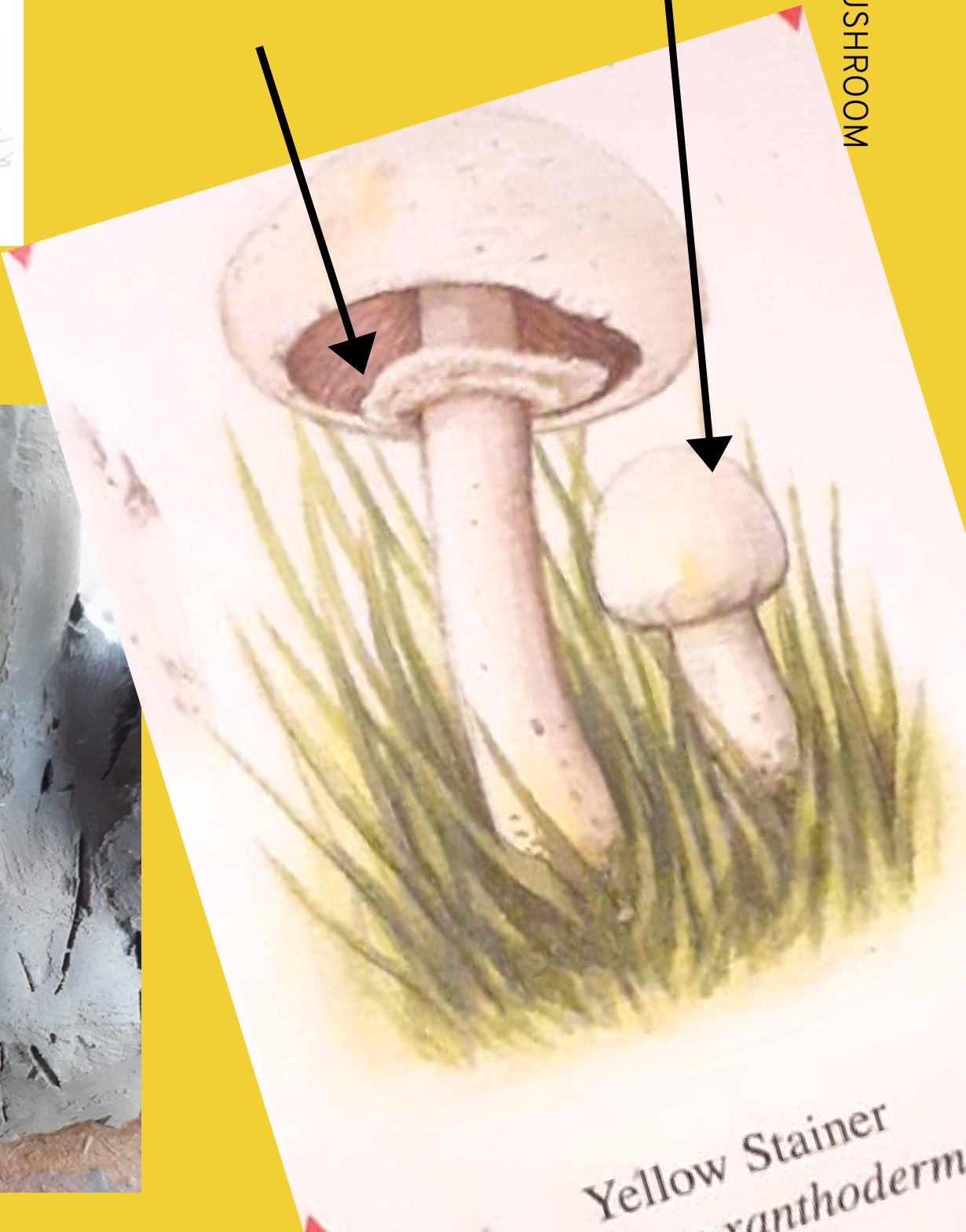
Make sure the stick is covered!



Draw the mycelium network onto soil.



Look at your mushroom card and add any features like a ring or young fungi to the stalk and soil base.







# 6 Sculpt The Cap

Pinch pot clay technique

MAKING A CLAY MUSHROOM

Look at your mushroom card to help you sculpt the shape

Round cap  
see next slide  
for elongated  
cap method



1) Make your clay cap into a ball shape .



2) Push your thumb into middle of the ball



3) Hold the cap in the palm of your hand.



4) Pnch & turn with your other hand.



4) Shape the top of the cap and smooth.

07



K  
♠

# Sculpt The Cap

Pinch Pot Clay technique for elongated caps

MAKING A CLAY MUSHROOM

long  
cap



1) Make your clay cap into a cylinder shape .



2) Push your thumb into middle of the ball.



3) Hold it in the palm of your hands pinch and turn.



4) Turn and shape the top . Make it smooth.

08



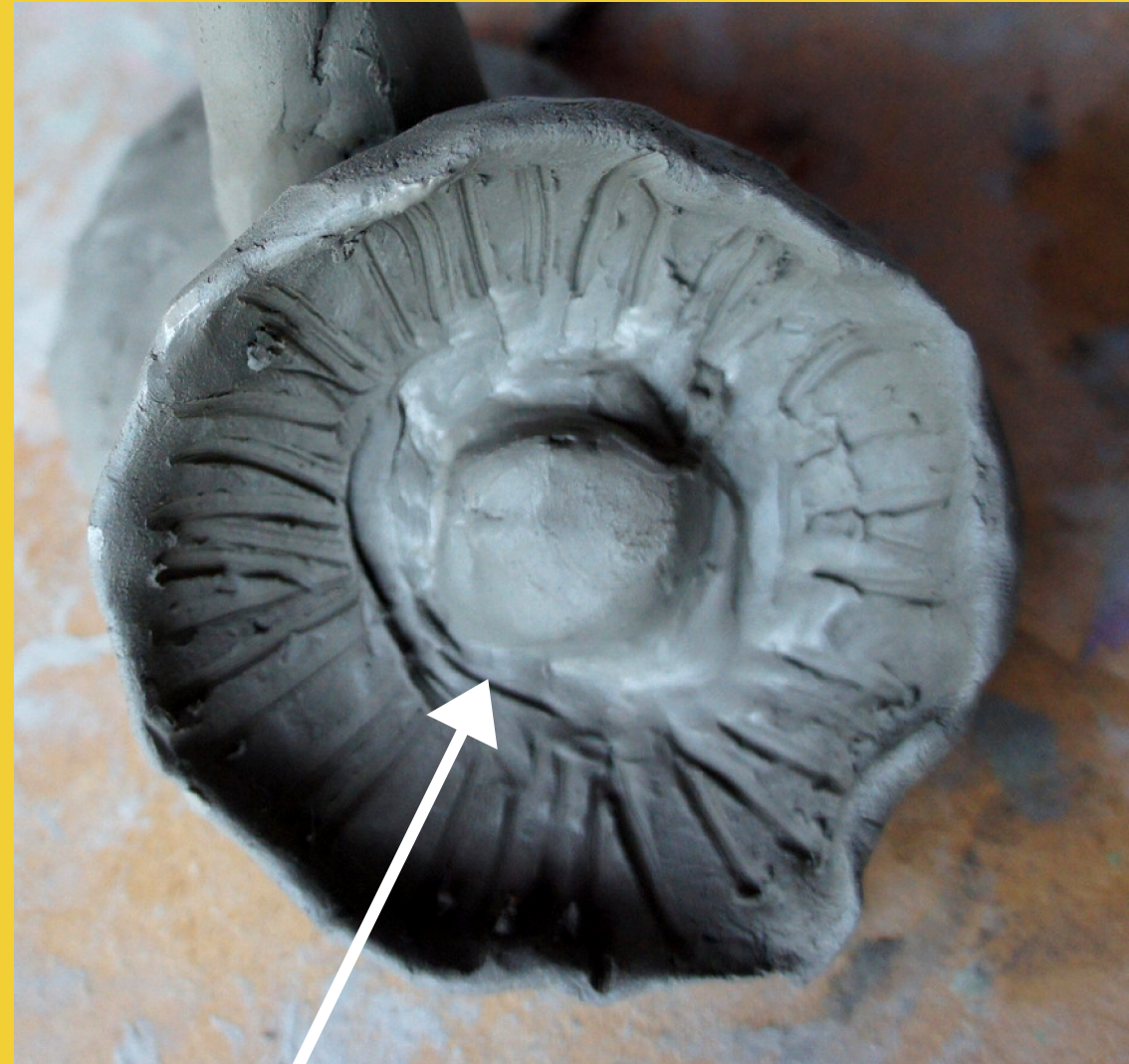


# Add Features to the Cap

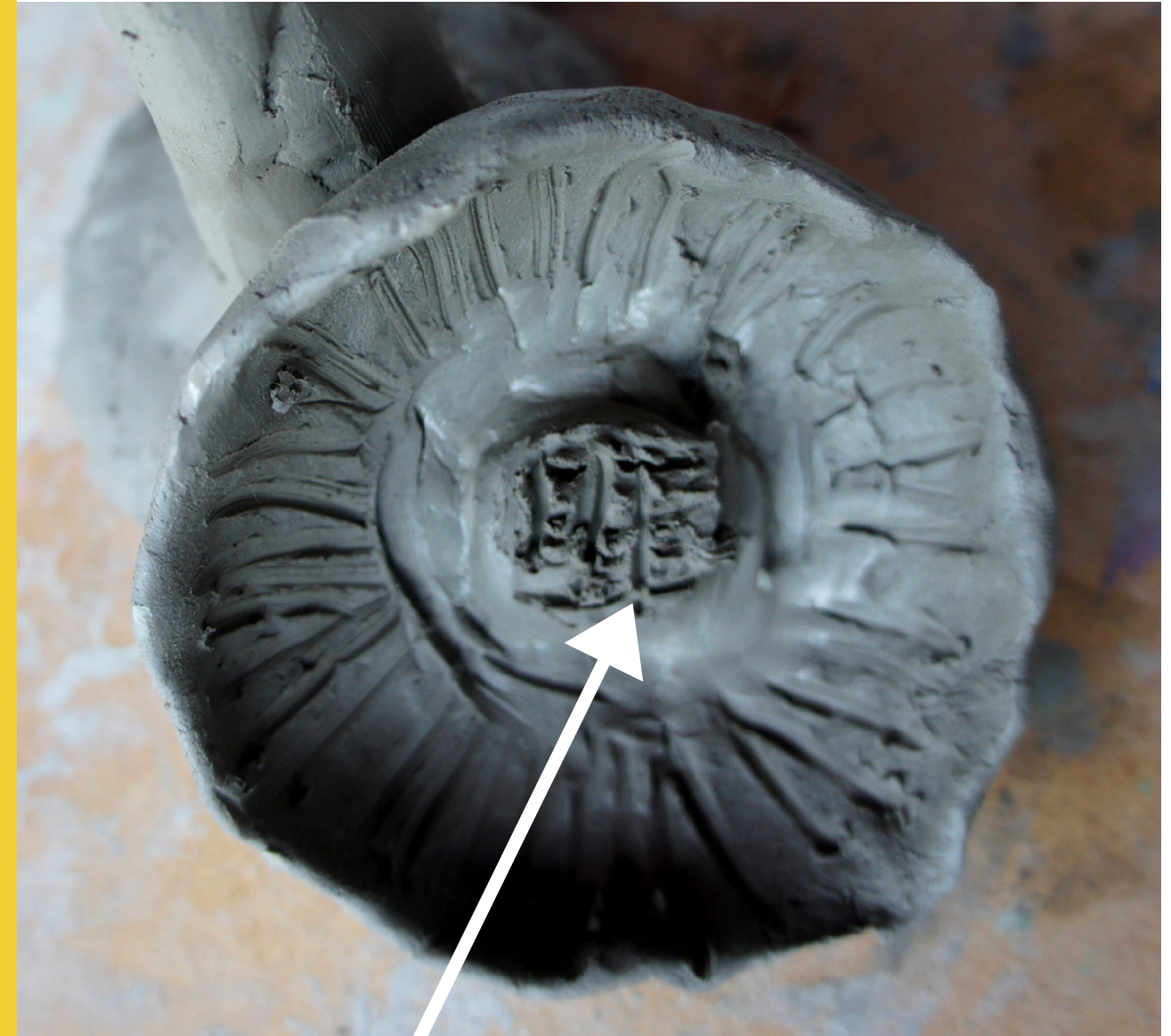


UNDERSIDE

1) Add features to underside and top



2) Add a bit of clay in middle of the cap -score ,slip stick, smooth.



3) Score the top of the clay piece you just added

Then add some slip

This is for joining ithe cap to the stalk.



# Join the cap to stalk → Score, Slip, Stick, Smooth

1) Score the clay on the top of the stalk



2) Add slip to the top of the stalk



3) Place the cap on the stalk and press.



4) Tilt & hold your mushroom.



5) On the underside of the cap gently smooth the clay to join the cap and stalk together.





# Fix any features & leave to dry

Smooth your sculpture with a little water on your fingers.

Leave to dry. Air drying clay is slow drying. Depending on environmental conditions, it can take 24-48 hours to dry.

Clay shrinks when it dries and can cause cracks. These can be repaired by mixing a bit of clay with a little water. Just spread the wet clay into the cracks and let it dry.

The clay mushrooms can also be smoothen with damp sponge or a little water on your finger tips after they have dried.

## Thank you for taking part!

