Sial art

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PROCEDURE

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CLAY HAS FROZEN

1. Let thaw slowly

- Place the still wrapped clay **in a temperate place** (18–22 °C).
- Do not use direct heat sources (radiator, oven, sun).
- Recommended time: **24 to 48 hours**, depending on the size of the block of clay.

A slow thaw prevents internal cracks and overly dry areas.

2. Knead carefully (very important)

Once the clay is completely thawed :

- Cut it into several pieces.
- Knead it **vigorously** (kneading in a spiral or ram).
- Objective:
  - To re-homogenize humidity
  - To eliminate water pockets from frost
  - To restore the clay's plasticity
- Allow **5 to 10 minutes of kneading** per cut piece.

3. Check plasticity

Tests the clay:

- Make a small coil and fold it
- Lightly crush a plate between the fingers :
  - If it is soft and uniform → OK.
  - If it is: granular, brittle, spongy → Head to the next step.

4. Rehydrate if necessary

If the clay has become unbalanced in water :

- Add **a little water** (gradually, never all at once)
- Seal the clay in an airtight plastic bag
- Let stand for **12 to 24 hours**
- Knead again

Tip: it is better to make several small corrections rather than one too strong.

5. Resting time (optional, but recommended)

- Wrap the kneaded clay
- Let it sit for ***24 hours***; this allows the moisture to be evenly distributed.

6. Do a test before, an important part

Before you start :

- Make a small test sample
- Let it dry
- Verify for :
  - Abnormal cracks
  - Deformations
  - Unusual texture

When is clay unsalvageable?

Rare, but possible if:

- It has frozen ***several times***
- It has become powdery or totally unstructured
- It separates into mud/water + hard blocks that are impossible to homogenize

In this case, it can sometimes be ***recycled into a slip*** but not used as is.