

If you work with ceramics and have never worked with a potter's wheel, you really have missed out. Ever since I got a pottery wheel, I have had more options than ever before. I make more money selling my pots, produce more, and I'm able to do some interesting techniques that I couldn't before. Pottery wheels aren't good for everything, but what they are good for, they are very good for. What can take hours to make by pinch or coil methods can be made in minutes on a decent wheel.

A pottery wheel, however, can represent quite substantial investment. Nowadays, the kick wheel is going out of style, and has been largely replaced by the electrically powered pottery wheel. These things can cost anywhere from hundreds to thousands of dollars, depending on what is required. If you're trying to buy one on a budget, however, you might be interested in making a kick pottery wheel. These are operated by turning a wheel at floor level with your feet. They are surprisingly easy to build and, once properly adjusted, work as well as the electrical wheels. The problem, of course, is they eventually get your feet tired. Besides that, it can be hard to keep the wheel spinning at the same rate.

Just getting potters wheels, however, does not guarantee that you will be able to use them. When I first started using one, I thought that I could teach myself. I was sadly mistaken. Learning to throw pots is one of the most time-consuming and difficult processes you can imagine. It takes hours and hours of work. The first couple times you try, the clay will simply fly back off the pottery wheel or, if it doesn't, you pots will collapse in a lopsided mess. You have to learn precise muscle control in order to make you pots correctly. If anything is even slightly off center, it will wobble and wobble until it falls down.

Still, with the help of an expert, you can learn to use a pottery spinning wheel pretty quickly. I would say to set aside at least a day or two to work on basic technique. After that, you can work some more on your own, gradually refining your skills until you master throwing pots. Once you begin, it can be pretty addictive. You will be making some great finished work in no time flat, and that is no lie.