



*'Craft is a starting place, a set of possibilities.
It avoids absolutes, certainties, over-robust definitions, solace.
It offers places, interstices, where objects and people meet.
It is unstable, contingent.
It is about experience. It is about desire.
It can be beautiful.'*

Edmund de Waal, Practitioner

For more perspectives on what craft means to other individuals, [click here](#)

A range of techniques used in the production of craft are detailed below. Read on to find out more...

- **Ceramics:** The first example of ceramics dates back to 24,000 BC, when clay was used to make animal and human figurines which were fired in kilns. Over the years the technique has developed as ceramics are now, more commonly, glazed and fired to create a coloured and smoother surface. Ceramics take on many forms which include Earthenware. This is a popular material used for pottery and decorative objects. Stoneware is form of a semi-vitreous, fine textured ceramic made primarily from non-refractory fired clay. One of the most well-known types of ceramics is porcelain. Porcelain is known for its strength and translucency and although it contains clay, kaolin is a key ingredient.
- **Glassware:** The history of creating glass can be traced back to 3500 BCE. Glass is an amorphous and solid material which is made up of silica, alkali and metal oxides. Glass is often shaped and decorated before it hardens. However, once it is cooled it can be embellished by cutting, etching or engraving the glass. The 19th century saw glass becoming a significant form of decorative arts. As well as using glass on a more functional basis, glass is also used to produce glass art through glass blowing, kiln casting, fusing, pate-de-verre, flame-working, hot-sculpting and cold-working.
- **Woodwork:** This type of craft involves sculpting or carving wood. Along with stone and mud wood was one of the first materials worked on by human beings. Egyptians and the Chinese are two ancient civilizations that used woodworking a great deal. Woodturning is a popular form of woodworking that is used to create wooden objects on a lathe. During this process the wood moves whilst a stationary tool is used to cut and shape the wood.

- **Textiles:** As early as the Stone Age, the first signs of textiles can be seen by manipulating plant and animal fibres. Techniques have naturally evolved since then, especially in the 19th century where synthetic fibres were introduced. Textiles are often made up of thread/yarn which can be woven, knitted or crocheted. Felt is also a popular material used, which is pressed to create the item. At the time of the Arts and Crafts Movement textiles were reintroduced as objects in their own right. Popular types of textile-made items include tapestries, rugs, scarves, brooches, figures and hats.
- **Metalwork:** The first examples of metalwork as a decorative art can be traced to the Celts around 500-50 BCE where personal weaponry and items of jewellery were created. Metalwork in terms of craft is used to create assemblages, sculpture and jewellery.
- **Jewellery:** The first signs of jewellery came from Africa around 75,000 years ago. Jewellery at this time was made up of perforated beads from snail shells. As with other craft techniques things have advanced as precious metal, gemstones, plastic and glass are now popular materials for jewellery.
- **Furniture:** Evidence of furniture dates back to the Neolithic Period. Furniture, as with craft in general, is multifaceted as it can be functional, symbolic and decorative. Furniture can be made from many materials, including metal, plastic and wood.