

Armatures

Art & Design

The internal skeleton that stops modelled work collapsing.

An armature is a rigid internal support, usually wire or steel on a base, carrying the weight of soft material while it is worked and while it dries.

SMALL WORK
aluminium wire

FIRED WORK
no armature

- Aluminium wire for small work, steel for large.
- Build the pose into the armature, not the clay.
- Wrap or bind the wire so material grips it.
- Clay shrinks as it dries and cracks around fixed wire.
- An armature must be removed before firing clay.
- Hollow or coil build anything that goes in a kiln.

LOOK FOR IT

A standing figure needs support at the ankles, not only a fixing at the base.

Educational reference. Overhead or cantilevered work needs a support calculation rather than an estimate; failures fall on people.