

CERAMIC JAR

Ceramics is one of the most ancient industries going back thousands of years. Once humans discovered that clay could be found in abundance and formed into objects by first mixing with water and then firing, a key industry was born. The oldest known ceramic artifact is dated as early as 28,000 BCE (BCE = Before Common Era), during the late Paleolithic period. It is a statuette of a woman, named the Venus of Dolní Věstonice, from a small prehistoric settlement near Brno, in the Czech Republic. In this location, hundreds of clay figurines representing Ice Age animals were also uncovered near the remains of a horseshoe-shaped kiln. Ceramics are generally made by taking mixtures of clay, earthen elements, powders, and water and shaping them into desired forms. Once the ceramic has been shaped, it is fired in a high temperature oven known as a kiln. Often, ceramics are covered in decorative, waterproof, paint-like substances known as glazes.