SilkeMat™

SilkeMat is a non-carcinogenic kiln forming blanket - exclusively at Creative Glass Guild in the UK. Use it to create re-useable forms for slumping glass, use the rigizider to give structure and the ability to create repeat slumps of the same forms, as it is a non-carcinogenic fibre, it can be cut and handled with minimal concern.

Instructions for use

It is recommended to prefire SilkeMat™ to 787°C (1450°F) for 15-20 min to burn out moisture. There are no organics to burn off, but moisture and a small amount of residual oil from the rollers may be evident. Vent your kiln accordingly. PLEASE NOTE: IF RIGIDIZING, YOU MAY SKIP PRE-FIRE.

SilkeMat™ will shrink slightly the first firing but will not change upon subsequent firings.

Once fired, you will notice that SilkeMat™ becomes slightly stiffer, rather than softer like other fibre materials. This also allows it to hold a form longer.

SilkeMat™ can be laser-cut and/or hand cut for kiln carving projects. The fabric cuts cleanly for a crisp edge and can be fired multiple times with no degeneration.

SilkeMat™ may be rigidized with SilkeMat™ Rigidizer, but care should be taken when sanding down a flat piece, using a good dust mask.

A rigidized board may be coated with kilnwash or a high-quality boron nitride spray to avoid any sticking issue due to the rigidizer. However, we have found even pot melt glass usually pops out with little to no damage to the mould.

SilkeMat™ may be molded without rigidizing. It has a memory for soft forming and will hold that form for many subsequent firings.

Float Glass has not been found to stick to SilkeMat™ at normal temperatures, even with multiple firings. However, softer glasses (COE96) and opaque glasses are more stubborn at full-fuse temperatures, although residual fibres can be removed with a brush. Coating the unrigidized blanket with boron nitride has not appeared to prevent sticking, so use caution accordingly. However, a light dusting of dry kilnwash on the pre-fired SilkeMat™ has been an effective separator when being used as a firing surface.

When using SilkeMat™ for slumping moulds, it has not been necessary to do any preparation other than prefiring. You can shape and prefire at the same time. And all glasses tested, released smoothly with no clouding at slumping temperatures even when the interior has been left unrigidized.

If rigidizing and using as a pot melt or vitrigraph mould, firing to 871°C (1600°F) for an hour has been sufficient to create a nice melt, and the residual glass usually pops out with little to no damage to the mould.

We have found the ¼" thickness is quite sufficient for all applications can usually be used for several firings, especially if unrigidized.

We are constantly discovering new things about this product and will update you accordingly. Our Facebook Group "SilkeMat Tips& Techniques" is a good source for interacting with the SilkeMat™ community and discovering new and different ways to use SilkeMat™ and SilkeMat™ Rigidizer.

SilkeMat™ Rigidizer

SilkeMat Rigidizer is non-flammable and formulated for molding SilkeMat into rigid reusable moulds of the highest quality in performance. Easy to use, this Rigidizer fires solid at 788°C (1450°F) for pot melts and vitrigraph moulds, and can even be used to solidify just the outer shell of the SilkeMat mould to retain a soft, release-free interior for slumping any glass. Properly prepared and fired, all SilkeMat moulds are completely reusable.

Instructions for use

Shake thoroughly before applying, as the solution settles. May also be water-diluted to desired consistency of medium to heavy cream.

Brush or dip SilkeMat™ both sides. It is not necessary to completely soak through for a firm mould.

Position on a non-porous mould or form which has been lightly sprayed with vegetable oil or similar mould release; or hand-manipulate into shape. If the model you are using is porous, clear plastic food wrap can be used instead of oil as a release agent.

For slumping moulds an optional method is to only saturate one side of the mould and leave the interior soft for a gentle texture on the glass. No separator needed. GLOVES ARE RECOMMENDED WHEN WORKING WITH WET RIGIDIZER.

Allow to air dry. Or, set the wet mould into a warm kiln at 121- 148°C (250-300°F) to gently dry. Make sure the form you are using will withstand that temperature without warping or melting.

Keep fibre or mould as flat or undisturbed as possible since it may warp upon drying.

When sufficiently dry to handle easily, cure in a vented kiln set at (AFAP) 787°C (1450°F) for 20-30 minutes. Some odour may be evident as the oil and moisture burn off, but it is not harmful. REMOVE MODEL BEFORE FIRING MOULD.

To avoid shrinking in final mould it is recommended to prefire mold (even if air-dried) or raw SilkeMat™, to completely cure it. REMOVE FROM MODEL BEFORE FIRING. Keep vent open for moisture to escape. Some odour may be evident, but not harmful. SilkeMat™ will now be in rigid form and ready to use.

A high-temp fibre paper or boron nitride coating may be applied as a separator and dried as directed by the manufacturer. However, for our purposes this has not been necessary. Test first to see how your glass reacts with a coated surface.

When dried, SilkeMat™ may be sanded for some smoothness, but a facemask is highly recommended to eliminate inhalation of dry silica particles.

Holes and/or slots may be drilled or cut into the dry rigid SilkeMat™ form for pot melts using an X-acto type knife or electric drill. Again, a good dust mask or respirator is recommended.

Rigidized SilkeMat™ moulds tend to degrade slightly with multiple firings, and a thin layer of surface fibre may stick to the glass. Store at room temperature.

This product is non-flammable and is non-hazardous in liquid form.

For more information go to www.silkemat.com

SilkeMat
12 x 12" **£14.99**
24 x 24" **£58.98**
36½ x 24" **£89.95**
36 x 26 **£115.00**

SilkeMat Rigidizer
946ml **£18.98**
1.89 litres **£34.00**