

How to Get Terracotta in Minecraft?

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By Vipin PG | Published July 21, 2026 | Updated July 21, 2026 | Format: Guide | 3 min read

Quick answer

The fastest way to get terracotta in Minecraft is to mine it straight out of a Badlands biome, where it already generates naturally in several colors. If there's no Badlands nearby, dig up clay from a river, pond, or swamp, smelt it in a furnace to make plain terracotta, then dye it in a crafting table with any of the 16 dye colors to match your build.

Terracotta (most players still call it "hardened clay" out of habit) is one of the few building blocks in Minecraft that comes pre-colored straight from the ground, and it can also be crafted, dyed, and even glazed into patterned tiles. There isn't just one way to get it, which method makes sense depends on whether you want speed, a specific color, or a supply that never runs out. Here's every way to get it, step by step.

Step 1: Mine Natural Terracotta in a Badlands Biome

The Badlands biome (the old "Mesa" biome) is the only place in the game where terracotta spawns in bulk without any crafting at all. Its canyon walls are built almost entirely out of layered terracotta, orange, yellow, red, white, and light gray, plus the plain brown version, so a single trip can fill your inventory with several colors at once, for free. You do need a pickaxe to collect it, though; any tier works, from wood to netherite, but breaking terracotta by hand drops nothing. If you're nowhere near a Badlands biome, keep an eye out anyway, terracotta also shows up in desert village houses and lamps, inside desert temple chests, in underwater ruins, and as part of mason houses in regular villages.

Step 2: Dig Up Clay Near Water or in a Swamp

Clay generates as gray, waterlogged clumps on the bottom of rivers, ponds, lakes, and shallow ocean water, and it's especially common along the banks of swamp biomes. A shovel breaks it fastest, and each clay block drops 4 clay balls rather than the block itself, so once you've collected a stack, place 4 clay balls into a crafting grid in a 2x2 pattern to turn them back into a clay block, which is what you'll actually need for the next step. If you'd rather skip that extra bit of crafting, mining the clay with a Silk Touch shovel or pickaxe gives you the whole block directly. And if there's no water near your base at all, you're not stuck: splash a water bottle on dirt or grass to turn it into mud, then place that mud next to pointed dripstone to convert it into clay, slower, but genuinely renewable.

Step 3: Smelt Clay Blocks Into Terracotta

Smelting is what actually turns clay into terracotta, and all it takes is a furnace (8 cobblestone) and any fuel source, coal, charcoal, wood, or anything else that burns. Put the clay block in the top slot and your fuel in the bottom slot, and after a few seconds it finishes cooking into a terracotta block, along with a small amount of XP each time. The ratio is always 1:1, so one clay block gives exactly one terracotta block, if you're planning a big terracotta build, gather clay in bulk before you start smelting so you're not running back and forth to the river.

Step 4: Dye Terracotta Into Any of the 16 Colors (Optional)

Plain terracotta already looks great on its own, but dyeing it opens up all 16 Minecraft colors for more detailed builds. Open a crafting table, place one dye of your choice in the center slot, and surround it with 8 terracotta blocks filling the rest of the grid, that gives you 8 dyed terracotta blocks in one go. One thing worth knowing before you commit: dyed terracotta can't be re-dyed or reverted back to plain, so pick your color first. If you want to go further, smelting dyed terracotta in a furnace turns it into glazed terracotta, where each color prints its own unique pattern on the block, cyan, for example, comes out looking like a creeper face, which is popular for pixel-art builds and detailed floor or wall designs.

Conclusion

Which method you use really just comes down to what you need right now. Badlands mining is the fastest way to stock up on multiple colors at once, clay and furnace smelting gives you an unlimited supply of the plain block, and dyeing lets you match terracotta to any build. Combine all three and you'll never run short of it again.