MAKING THE WARRIORS

Terracotta is clay that has been fired until hardened. The terracotta warriors moved through a three-step process:

FORMING & FIRING  Warriors were probably fully assembled before being fired (baked) at high temperatures (950–1050 °C).

PAINTING  The fired warrior figures were painted with rich, brilliant colors: purple, red, green, blue, brown, orange, yellow, white, and black. Qin-dynasty artisans had experimented to develop these intense colors. (The colors on the warriors have largely disappeared through centuries of burial.)

Steps in creating a terracotta warrior:

1. A warrior’s head and feet were probably made by hand, either in a wet or reconstituted state.
2. Legs were created by rolling clay into a tube.
3. Legs were affixed to the base and feet.
4. Head was affixed to the body.
5. The body was formed by rolling clay around a mannequin.
6. The upper edge of the arm was attached to the shoulders.
7. A hand was created by shaping and folding clay into hands, fingers, and back of the hand. The hand was then added to the arms.
8. Two pieces were used for the front and back of the chest. These sections were then joined.
9. All the parts were assembled into a complete figure.