



January 2014



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“Old age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber, not the toy!” Anonymous

Dori and I are enjoying being grandparents; we have five and will be blessed with two more in 2014. Watching our own kids be wonderful parents, move ahead with their lives and ambitions is such a joy. We've learned that they all move away but they never really leave, and that's fine with us! So, it's been a good year, and next year will be even better if we can help it. I hope that you all have good fortune, love and the time to enjoy them in 2014.

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TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Topic of the Month: Laser vibration, lathe speeds, drill holes, set-up for hollowing and chuck limitations

(This month I will again use one of the questions as the featured topic. It expands on last month's topic nicely.)

Hi Lyle,

As I previously mentioned your larger boring bar seems to have resolved most of my vibration problems for larger hollowing. On another issue, the bar holding the laser has quite a bit of jiggle whenever a rough spot is encountered. I read where one person (I don't know if it was your system) filled the tube with the spray on foam to dampen the jiggle. I was thinking of something not so permanent, such as sand, might help with the problem. The ends would have to be somehow capped possibly with a cork.

Just wanted your thoughts on this,
Bill from Missouri

(This is a complex question and I called him to get more information and trouble shoot the problem over the phone. This is a condensed version of what I remember of the conversation.)

The movement of the laser is a symptom, not the problem. I told him that it would do no harm to put spray foam in the tubing; I just don't think it will help much. Any laser hanging out unsupported from the tip of the cutter to the tip of the laser is going to have some movement. I have built very large laser systems for very deep hollowing. We used very strong materials and still had some slight movement. When we hog off or get aggressive in our hollowing cuts, the laser might jiggle a little bit, any laser system would. When we slow our cutting action down and use the laser to fall off the edge of the vessel the laser stops jiggling or moving and settles in to give an accurate measurement of the sidewall. Bill's other fix to use sand would be a bad idea. It would add too much weight. I use the aluminum tubing because it is light weight and does not interfere with the fingertip controlled cutting action.

Bill indicated it took him 5-6 hours to hollow out an urn size vessel. Way too long!! I would guess an hour for me and maximum two hours if the turner was not experienced. In the excessive turning time the wood is drying and moving and that would create other problems with checking and cracking.

Bill and I talked about vibration issues previously. My first instinct is to prevent the vibration issue rather than find a fix or Band-Aid for the problem. Many times when vibration creeps up or grabbiness or catches or aggressiveness the culprit is the set-up. If the hollowing system is set up correctly you cannot get a catch and you hear this hissing sound from the cut and use only fingertip control. Bill assured me the set-up was done according to my instructions so we started looking at other factors.

We started with his hollowing process of drilling the drill hole. His assumption was the wood was drying out and as he got deeper and deeper into the vessel the drill hole was not round anymore. In contrast, I know that a drill (even a Forstner bit) will always wander and take the path of least resistance as the drill goes deeper into the wood. It will not stay in the middle. So the deeper you drill the more off axis the drill hole will be. This will cause some vibration problems when you start each cut in the drill hole. This wobbling of the drill hole is a good thing. It is an indicator that I am in the drill hole to start each cut. The wobble tells me I am in the right place to start a cut. I do not want to start a cut over on the side of the vessel and leave a hump in the center of the vessel where the drill hole is. Even with the drill hole there, the hump is hard to remove. So the vibration when we start each cut can be minimized by knowing the hole is not in the center of the vessel and take a slow controlled cut to start each pass. Do not force or push into the void from the wandering drill.

We talked about speed of the lathe and for the size vessel the speed was a bit too slow. Faster is better most of the time. The drill hole issue was made worse because of the slow speed. When you think of the cutter peeling off a shaving on the inside of the vessel the wood has to go all the way around the circumference one rotation before you move the cutter along the wall. With the speed too slow the cutter will make spiraling cuts and leave bumps on the wall when you make the next pass. With the speed faster the cut is made all the way around the inside surface as you make the cut. So the best cuts are made with the lathe speed high and the boring bar moving slowly across the tool rest. This might be an "AHA!" insight for many of you that have a comfort zone of turning at a slow speed. I have talked many times about turning fast when speaking of safety. Turning fast and safe means you are taking care of all the other details of good wood and good chucking methods.

This brings me to the last thing I talked to Bill about. I assumed until the end of our conversation that he was using my advice and using a faceplate. I was wrong. I believe the limitations of a chuck had been Bill's problem all along. He was exceeding the limits of a chuck big time. All the other things we talked about are still factors but the chuck had him turning with one hand tied behind his back. I never use chucks because I don't want to deal with their limitations. I can turn faster, bigger, stronger, better with a faceplate secured like I show in the DVDs. Concave surface with lots of screws.

I am confident if Bill follows my process with a faceplate, higher speed, sharp tools, good set-up, work in stages, and good tool control the boring bar vibration will go away, the laser will not jiggle and he will have a lot more fun turning in half the time it takes him now.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

DOUBLE TURNING

Question from YouTube about storing double turned bowl blanks from Jeff location unknown

Jeff,

I don't usually double turn. I like to take wet wood down to the final wall thickness in one setting, if you want to double turn, the roughed piece needs to be stored so the drying slows way down. My wife does not like the idea of moldy, smelly, bug-infested wood in the house so under the bed is out of the question. Freezing will stop the drying but you want it to dry out slowly. A garage in the summer would not be good either; the heat from the sun on the roof will cook the wood and dry it way too fast. Store it inside in a cool place like the basement floor. Put the piece in a paper bag or seal the end grain or use a plastic bag but let the moisture out every day. You could also put it in a box with its own shavings. It can be stored more than 6 months, but it will take 6 months to a year to totally dry. There are hundreds of ways to slow the drying. There is boiling, the microwave, alcohol, soap and more methods that might help. It takes trial and error to find out what works for you in the conditions where you live. Hope this is what you were asking.

WHAT TOOLS TO PURCHASE

What are the best wood turning tools to get?

Mark

Hi Mark from Michigan,

I use my bowl gouge for 90 percent of all I do. One tool does it all. My hollowing system is used for the inside of hollow vessels. The best tool to get you started is my Bowl Basics DVD. It has the foundation techniques for all kinds of turning. See my web site store menu for all my tools& DVDs.

SMALLER TOOLS FOR HOLLOWING

Lyle,

I ran across a YouTube of a guy making a hollowing rig for small pieces that you might be interested in. www.toolsbycrabtree.com

Have you ever thought about make a small version of your hollower?

Robert

Hi Robert from Texas,

Nice to hear from you, thanks for the inquiry.

Yes, I have and use a series of smaller boring bars in my system. The only advantage is access to small mouth openings. The disadvantage is you cannot go very far out over the tool rest without vibration. So they limit how tall of a vessel you can hollow. Why do I use them in my system you might ask, when I can easily hollow out Christmas ornament size vessels by hand. The big, big advantage is the laser. I use them, but do not have them for sale. Shop-built boring bars are too easy to make and too expensive for resale. Take a small piece of steel and drill a hole in the end and superglue a HSS cutting tip in it, and you are good to go. Michael Hosaluk and Packard have adapters for any size boring bars you might want to make that fit in my "D" handle. Another problem with marketing them is you need more than one to reach a variety of shapes and get through the small hole. As you can see, from your link, these are expensive to buy and the pricing gets too high for me to make and market them.

Mike Hunter makes a set to do hollowing with the Carbide cutter. His tools work differently than my carbide accessory, since his are used only as scrapers.

I have heard complaints about many of the other boring bar systems offered now with smaller diameter boring bars, that the boring bar limits the size of the hollowing they can do.

FEEDBACK

Hi Lyle,

I have been a fan of the lathe since about 1960, playing around my Dad's workshop. He only had an eighth grade education, but learned on his own to do just about anything, from building a house, garage or clock, to welding, or repairing an engine, etc., etc., etc.

So I learned by watching and trying also. Later I worked in machine shops, still enjoying lathe work. But this was in metal, all kinds, hard to soft steel, aluminum, and various stainless grades, brass and bronze. I learned that through the Machinery's Handbook to use a section in there on feeds and speeds to use. My 25th edition covers about 60 pages of detail. In reading your rendition on cutting speeds to use on wood, I have found surface speed, as we called it, was the key to good finishes. Yes there are a lot of variables to bring into the equation, but I feel more could be documented in this area and in this direction for others to use. Different woods, different tools, radius of tool or cutting surface could be all be integrated into equations that would help others attain a better cutting speed. I hope my experience will help others.

Attached is one of the ornaments I recently made. Enjoy!

A fellow wood turner,

Al



Hi Al from Pennsylvania,

Thanks for sharing the photo of your piece with me. Great idea! I assume an inside-out turning but with three sections instead of four. Looks like a good start to a series of these.

I totally agree with your speed analogy. It is a very important element. It is different for wood and the precision is not as important as in the metal

machining industry, but more important than most folks think. All I have is hands-on experience, I don't have the engineering background to analyze the specifications and math needed to find the details you describe. It would surely be a valuable part of woodturning if anyone could condense the details into a usable formula that could be used and understood by the non-engineers like most of us in the turning world.

(I offered to help a disabled vet and this was his note in reply)

Well, I sold that natural edge vase I was white knuckling the other day, which prompted me to give you a call the other day about your captured system. So I will send you the balance next week. I am so thankful for your kindness and help, you sure went out of your way for a stranger to help and teach me. I have to admit I was a little surprised to say the least. I'm sure I will have more questions in the future. Thank you so much and God bless you and your family. Happy Holidays, Steve in California

Thank you again for a great two day class. Chris and I had a great time. I'm glad I kept the bowl from day one. It's giving me a great opportunity to practice sheer scraping on the outside and my tool control on the inside. Wishing you and your family a great holiday! I'm sure we will do business in the future.
Steve from Michigan

Afternoon Lyle ,
I would just like to thank you again for our class and the attention to detail that each one of us received. I was very pleased with your teaching style and your ability and patience to insure we understood your process. You definitely have made this more fun and I can't wait to only get better with each bowl that I get to produce. I hope you and your family have a great holiday and you get a chance for a little shop time for yourself. I will send you pictures of my progression as a turner and an artist. Hopefully you will continue teaching and making us newer students into "ol'veterans". LOL
Take Care,
Chris from Michigan

Lyle,
Can't explain in an email just how much fun I'm having making pots with your hollowing system! It's easy to use and does a great job! The carbide cutter really helps with the pots with big voids. Attached pictures are of two more pots just completed this month. One is Sycamore about 8"x6" and the other is Walnut about 9.5"x7".
Ben from Missouri



Hi Lyle,

I just wanted to tell you that the new system arrived yesterday. Today in about 1 hour I had it up and running. This is the second time I ordered one from you. The first was tragic for me in that I got frustrated and sold it for a song. This time I actually took the time to FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS, and what a difference. I'll send you a photo of the 12 in high and 10 in diameter Norfolk pine cut to 1/4 in. all around, using two fingers (provided I don't blow it up). Thanks again for the wonderful tool because it is saving my right arm a lot of damage. Merry Christmas!

Thanks,

Rick from Florida

Very inventive shop setup on YouTube clip, this has a lot of great stuff in it. I do envy the space you have available; you're going to have me changing my given space for days. I like the shower curtain and have also given thought to my shop apron, perhaps the most important tool in the shop. I get nothing done until that's on. I must move my sharpening station.

Thanks so much,

Brad from YouTube, location unknown

CALENDAR

Check out my website calendar for more specifics.

(<http://www.lylejamieson.com/information/calendar.asp>)

February, 2014 – Tennessee

March, 2014 – New York

April, 2014 – Georgia

June, 2014 - Arizona

August, 2014 – Illinois, Texas

September, 2014 – Virginia