



**October 2014**



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**There are two kinds of pedestrians: the quick and the dead.  
Anonymous**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### TIPS & TECHNIQUES

**Topic of the Month:** Reverse chucking methods

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Robust vs Powermatic lathes (correction)
- Hollowing with small openings
- Stripped socket screw
- Unsafe Turners on YouTube
- Conventional bowl gouge vs Easy Wood type tools
- Glue block failures
- 10 and 15 degree block use

### FEEDBACK

### CALENDAR

### TIPS & TECHNIQUES

**Topic of the Month:** Reverse chucking methods

When I do demonstrations at Symposiums or club meetings I seldom finish a hollow form turning due to the time constraints. My focus is always the process not the finished product. I want to talk about reverse chucking, or reverse mounting the vessel.

But first, let me take a side track and mention the process again. I find people really like/enjoy my teaching methods and agree with my techniques . . . but they will settle into a process they are familiar with and not use my entire process. They might start differently not using the balance point, use chucks, don't turn in stages, go the wrong direction against the grain, cut end grain not side grain, and on, and on, and on. When you ask people "What technique works best?" Most of the time you will get a response like, "They all work so you have to use what works for you." and this is correct in the beginning. All the differing and conflicting ways to turn do work, and for the originator they work for a specific kind of turning or kind of specialty the turner is known for.

Now let us go to the next level. When you are no longer a beginner, when you want to explore more advanced turning techniques, when you want to push the envelope of your creativity with your new learned turning skills, is when you need a process that opens up possibilities. You will need a process that does not limit your creativity. Too often the process we use will be an obstacle. Let's go back to why I do the things I do. I want to prevent the obstacles, not find a fix or band aide for them. The fix often has unintended consequences and the fix becomes a limitation or an obstacle to prevent you from taking your turning fun to the next level. May I suggest you go back to my DVDs and see if you can find some methods that will fine tune your process and make it easier and make your time at the lathe more enjoyable?

OK, now back to reverse chucking. There are a lot of ways to skin this cat. How about vacuum chucks, jam chucks, cup chucks, Longworth or adjustable jaw chucks, home built gripper plates, donut type rings that hold pieces, or even just tape or strapping to hold a piece. Where did all these methods come from? Usually they were used by production turners doing vanilla salad bowls by the hundreds. Most are designed to be able to have total access to the bottom with the tailstock out of the way. They all work for what they do. Some methods are more secure and accurate than others, but they all have something in common. They have significant limitations. What if I have a natural edge? What if it was turned green and is no longer running true and round from the drying process? What if it has voids in it? What if it is very thin and fragile? What if it is pierced? What if it is carved? Get my drift? The fix for giving me access to the entire bottom leaves me with limitations big time.

I prefer to reverse my turnings and drive them with friction against a waste block with the tailstock used to hold it. There is nothing that I cannot put back on the lathe using this method. True, I have a small ½ inch or smaller tenon that I need to carve off and sand after I take it off the lathe. The bad news I have to deal with the tenon, the good news I can reverse anything very quickly and very accurately. Most of the time I use the waste wood from the piece I just finished turning. I just shape it a bit to accept my reversed turning. For bowls I would usually use my sacrificial glue block already on the faceplate. I soften the corner edges so the inside of the bowl is not damaged by the waste wood block. I use padding between the waste block and the bowl. The padding could be just about anything. A couple thickness of leather or even some paper towels folded neatly works fine. When I use leather I also put a layer of paper towel next to the wood so that there is no possibility of color from the leather staining the bowl. Anytime the vessel is big enough to use the waste wood inside that is the best way. Some of the blocks need to be thicker so it can accept a deeper bowl with room for it to fit and not hit the rim on the headstock.

On hollow forms I always capture the friction drive on the outside of the vessel. Never drive with force from the waste wood on the inside of hollow forms or risk cracking or breaking it. If the hollow form is thick enough and strong enough to drive with the mouth opening edge I cut a recess in the waste wood and drive with the rim. (See photos below)



Shows walnut hollow form with solid rim recessed into waste block.



Waste block on left is same as on left, both capture hollow forms with solid rim.

If the hollow form is natural edge or has voids I capture the friction drive from the outside with a donut shaped waste block. (See photos below)



Shows cut away hollow form reversed in "donut" with cloth padding taped on it to protect vessel wall.



Two donut shaped waste blocks with padding attached.

I even have some waste wood blocks made up ahead of time with permanent padding on them. The blue ones have a cloth towel for padding taped on the blocks.

Can you keep a secret? Don't tell anyone but I use a chuck sometimes when I reverse chuck things. My advice is to only use chucks on reversing when the stresses are small and light.

For the really odd piece like thin walls, or many voids, or fragile in any other way, it can be driven with a post all the way down in the bottom of the inside of the vessel. There are some commercially made jigs to help if you want something manufactured but I just stick a dowel smaller than my mouth opening in my chuck and true up the end to drive with.

Now what about the outside bottom of the vessel? There is usually a knob or tenon left from the original axis left over. I have to bring up the tailstock live center to hold the vessel against the friction

drive block. Use the cone shaped live center, the point allows more access to get the final waste tenon. We want to carve off as little as possible and have more access to more of the bottom surface of the vessel. The tailstock live center point will be pressed into the bottom of the vessel and damage the bottom. Make sure there is enough waste wood left behind that can be removed and will not leave any damage on the bottom finished surface. If there is no wood there I can glue a temporary waste block that can be sanded off later.

I always plan for a little extra waste wood on the bottom of my vessels so the reversing can be done easily. That means planning a L-I-T-T-L-E extra wood waste so I have access to the bottom area easily. So I make a little shallower bowl. The extra wood will help you in the design possibilities and make sure the shape or size of the foot is not influenced by the chucking method. It's OK to plan to waste a little wood here, it only hurts for a little while. You will get over it. Just remember this stuff we turn grows on trees. "LOL" The more waste wood you leave on the bottom, the more possibilities you have designing your foot and bottom.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### ROBUST VS POWERMATIC LATHES (Correction)

Hi Lyle,

I'm just reading your August/September newsletter and this caught my eye:

*Question, how would you compare the Robust Sweet 16 and the Powermatic 3520B?*

I own a Sweet 16 and you should be aware that the swing is actually 32". That's the "Sweet" part of this lathe, the gap comes out and gives you an additional 16" of swing. Plus you can install that "gap" to give you more spindle length or you can move it to the front of the lathe, move your banjo and get easily to the back side of your turning.

Lyle – On the same subject, Brent has a new video out on the Sweet 16, he turns a 32" diameter table in the video.

I thought you'd enjoy watching it. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX\\_iqj1V1Ek](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX_iqj1V1Ek)

Tom

Hi Tom from Wisconsin,

OOPS, I forgot about that feature. I have to re-think my position and would recommend the Robust over the Powermatic. Thanks for setting me straight.

### HOLLOWING WITH SMALL OPENINGS

Lyle,

Is it possible to get or add either  $\frac{3}{8}$ " or  $\frac{1}{2}$ " boring bars to your system? I do a lot of fairly small turnings and even with somewhat larger ones like access holes as small as possible.

Thanks, Joe

Hi Joe from Massachusetts,

Yes, I have been using a half inch boring bar for years to do things like Christmas ornaments. I recently started making them and put them in my web site store a few months ago. Are you getting my newsletter? I introduced the new tool and adapter in the newsletter. My bar is dual purpose and has a straight cutter position in one end, and an angled cutter position in the other end. The package comes with the bar, adapter to fit in the hollowing system handle, Allen wrench, 3/16 HSS cutter, and a longer socket screw for your handle.

## STRIPPED SOCKET SCREW

Lyle,

I have one of your 3/4 inch boring bars and the set screw striped out, so I drilled it out, now I need to know what size is the tap and what size is the set screw that you used for that bar size.

Thanks, Mark

Hi Mark from Iowa,

The old socket screw was 1/4-20 thread. To prevent it from stripping out again, make sure the socket is clean before you use the Allen wrench in it. Use a safety pin to clean out the dust and slurry that gets in there, than blow it clean. Usually air alone will not keep it clean.

## UNSAFE TURNERS ON YOUTUBE

Hi Lyle,

I'm one of the many who stopped by your display at the AAW Symposium in June.

Thanks for the few minutes you took to show me how your system works. Yours is the system I have recently purchased and am waiting for the time to use it.

After watching everything I could find on YouTube about hollowing tools I can only think some of those people are out of their minds.

I have seen examples that I feel are simply too unsafe to even consider.

Thanks again for the time you spent with me.

Lyle R.

Hi Lyle R. from California

Thank you for your observations and kind words. You are correct, there are some tools for sale out there that are dangerous or at best don't work very well. Make sure to use all my resources like DVD, articles, newsletter tips, etc. The process is just as important as the tools you use. Keep in touch.

## CONVENTIONAL BOWL GOUGE VS EASY WOOD TYPE TOOLS

Lyle,

Probably the most valuable part of your Bowl Basics DVD so far is the four basic cuts that are very clear and simple. I had been trying about a hundred basic cuts, thinking they were all different for each of my many tools.

I've been turning seriously for about a year and started using the Easy Wood type tools early on. I think I'm becoming too dependent on them, so, I expect your DVDs will get me to give the conventional tools another try.

Thanks again and safe travels.

Dave

Hi Dave from Pennsylvania,

You are correct the carbide cutters like Easy wood tools are usually used in scrapping mode and the old carbide is not as sharp as HSS or the Hunter carbide tools. So that's two strikes against you before you go to bat. The bevel supported slicing cuts from a bowl gouge will be easier to make shapes with and means a lot less sanding. The Easy Wood type tools are designed for roughing but people are trying to do finish cuts with them and they don't do well at finishing.

## GLUE BLOCK FAILURES

Hello Lyle,

It took me a couple of days and reviewing the DVD a couple of times, but I've got the pull cut down. Really sweet again! I love the shavings.

On your advice, I've also been turning without my chuck (Oneway). I've had two glue block failures at the block/blank glue line (both while the work was between centers, so no danger). I'm using medium CA with accelerator, and my faces are well prepared. I'll have to work on that.

Again, thank you so much. With best regards,  
David

Hi David from Pennsylvania,

Thanks again for the note. The pull cut is the hardest to master, mostly because it is used the least. Done my way the glue block will never fail. There has been a lot of chatter about different processes for glue blocks, and talk about failures. I think some are just trying to justify the use of chucks.

People spend so much money on chucks it's hard to leave them behind. You need to follow all my procedures, so go back to the DVD one more time and see what you missed or decided not to adopt. One thing you mentioned is medium glue---not good. Always use thick or gap filling CA, don't use the tailstock. This is a different kind of gluing then we use on flat woodworking. It can be a little hard to reject old habits.

Remember the wood is moving as it dries so we cannot leave a glue block on for extended periods of time. Start and finish a piece in one day unless you put a plastic bag over it to prevent it from drying and weakening or breaking the glue joint.

## 10 AND 15 DEGREE BLOCK USE

Lyle,

I will be ordering your bowl gouge and the treaded tool rest after I send this. How do you use the 10 and 15 degree angle that you offer?

Ron

Hi Ron from Illinois,

Nice to hear from you and thanks for the order. There will be a flyer for all my tools in the packet with your order. The degree blocks allow me to change the tip angle from my 60 degree bowl gouge to my 50 degree spindle gouge without moving the grinding jig or sliding arm of the Wolverine system.

The thickness of the wood block (shim) will dictate the change desired, a thicker block a steeper angle. When I take the block out again I am back to the bowl gouge without moving the jig. It saves the tool life and the gouge angles stay accurate.

## **FEEDBACK**

Thank you. You've confirmed my suspicions. I just turned off the lathe after turning the outside of a bowl using only a bowl gouge and your techniques. I'm a happy camper. Thanks. Dave, From Pennsylvania

(Follow-up note) Hello Lyle, This morning I turned the inside of that bowl I started yesterday. Again I used only a bowl gouge and your technique from the DVD (I had to watch it three times). The results are just spectacular. Super fine finish, no tea rout (I probably would not have to sand, and the shavings are fine ribbons, 8-10" long. What a revelation.

Thank you. Dave

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I found your presentations at the "Turn-on Chicago" 2014 symposium very enlightening and as also in your newsletters there are also new ideas and tips to improve my woodturning skills. Thanks, Bill from Illinois

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Lyle,

I want to thank you for your CD on hollowing. I just finished my first goblet by following your CD step by step. My goblet came out just great, made out of Russian olive which has a really nice grain. Your CD really made the making of the goblet a simple process. Thanks a lot!

The only thing I need to improve my finished product is your carbide cutter which I just finished ordering on you website.

Let me know if you produce any more CD's.

Roger from South Dakota

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Thank you for selling me your boring system. It is a pleasure to use because it is so easy and SAFE. I have some nasty old olive burl that was 100 years old when they pulled them out of the ground and that was about 20 years ago. {I am in the Central Valley in Calif. so this stuff is really dry.} The first time I mounted a piece on my old Delta lathe it killed the lathe. After rebuilding the lathe and buying your system I am proud to say your bar did a fine job going 14" deep in that olive. Even better, the lathe survived. Thanks again for your help and inspiration.

Sandy, from California via LinkedIn

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## **CALENDAR**

Check out my website calendar for more specifics.

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

March, 2015 - New York

May, 2015 - New Hampshire

June, 2015 - Pennsylvania

September, 2015 - Wisconsin