

JANUARY 2017



Find me on facebook!
<https://www.facebook.com/lylejamieson46/>
Subscribe to my YouTube channel
<http://www.youtube.com/user/JamiesonLyle>

Please include your location if you write in with comments or questions.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter on and don't forget to invite your friends and family to [register](#) to receive their own copy or view previous newsletters at <http://lylejamieson.com/newsletters/>

SPECIAL NEWS! FACEBOOK

I have accumulated quite a large following on my Facebook pages. It is time to start using this social media for my business and teaching outreach. I have created a business Facebook page. Please go to my new business page <https://www.facebook.com/lylejamieson46/> and click "like" to get connected. There are some differences between the personal and business pages. The business page will focus on keeping in touch with my turning family. The business page does not have "friends" or friend requests available. If you wish to follow my business page you need to click the "like" tab, or comment, or share the page now and then. This activity will insure you will get notification when new content is posted.

New features that will be on the business page will include woodturning tips postings called "Tuesday Tips". As the title implies I will try to post a very short video every Tuesday to share techniques with the followers. There will be more focus on a Q&A section also. My YouTube channel will continue to offer periodic project turning videos.

YOUTUBE

I started my YouTube channel August 12, 2012.

It has been an amazing run that just reached the 1,000,000 views milestone.

I am humbled to see the extent of my reach into the turning community.

I wish I could thank every one of my viewers and my 7700 subscribers for the support I have received. <http://www.youtube.com/user/JamiesonLyle>

LIVE REMOTE DEMONSTRATION

This is an exciting time, blazing new trails. I am doing demonstrations for interested woodturning clubs all over the world and I don't have to travel.

Live-Remote-Interactive Demonstrations are up and running. Have your club program chairperson give me a call for details: 231-947-2348.

Reminder

If you are thinking about upgrading your lathe, just give me a call to chat about what a Robust lathe can do for you. **New:** Robust has designed a new lathe with a 14 inch swing, mid-range price and same Robust quality. Give me a call and I will introduce you to the new "Scout" model.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Topic of the Month: Turning green bowl to a thin wall and finish

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Wet and dry sanding
- Better tool steel holds an edge longer
- Faceplate size/ Bowl gouge grind angle
- Jamieson VS Ellsworth grind
- Turning multiple branch crotches
- Buffing questions
- Sanding disk techniques
- Vacuum Chucks
- Turn the bottom or top first??
- Handling green wood, how green??
- Home built kilns
- Keeping Carbide cutter sharp and when to replace it

FEEDBACK

CALENDAR

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Topic of the Month: Turning green bowl to a thin wall and finish

I will use a question from Ken in North Carolina to continue on the drying and green wood handling theme from the last newsletter.

"Thank you so much for your videos. I am interested in being put on your list for one of your two day teaching sessions probably in May or later. In one of your videos you said what you do after turning green bowls. I just tried your suggestions (as best I could) on turning crotch wood bowls from cherry. I put walnut oil on them hoping to slow the drying speed. Can you refer me or tell me what you do after turning?"

Thanks, Ken from North Carolina"

Hi Ken,

Nice to hear from you, thanks for the question. You did not indicate if your method resulted in success or not? When you turn green to a desired wall thickness, that's all there is. You're done. If it is thin, say 1/4 inch or thinner and it is a uniform wall thickness it will not crack. It will distort a bit in drying and will not be round anymore. If it is thicker than about 1/4 inch it would be wise to put it in a paper bag for a week or two to slow down the moisture loss.

As long as it is dry enough to sand without the sandpaper clogging up, go ahead and sand. You will have to slow the lathe WAY down because it will not be round anymore. If the sandpaper clogs up wait a few hours or overnight until the surface of the wood dries enough to sand. Once it is sanded put whatever finish you like on it. With the exception of lacquer, there may be some moisture still in the wood at this point and lacquer finishes do not work well on wet wood.

You have to use some judgement here. A thin wall vessel say 1/8 inch or less will be dry almost as soon as you finish turning it. A thicker wall will need longer to dry, but still a relatively short period of time before you sand and put finish on it.

If you have done everything right, i.e. thin wall and uniform wall, it will not crack unless the crack was in the wood before you started.

My method sequence would go something like this:

- 1) Finish the bottom of the bowl with the best tool control you have. No torn out grain. Do any sheer scraping and refine the shape and lines of the bottom as far as you can reach to where the glue block gets in the way. If possible finish this entirely down to where the bowl will sit on the table. We are not going back to this again, so make it perfect.
- 2) Turn the inside in stages working your way from the rim into the middle of the bowl. Again use fast speed on the lathe and slow speed movement of the bowl gouge across the surface. The size of each stage will depend on how thin you are making the bowl. The thinner the bowl the smaller each stage needs to be to prevent the wood from flexing. No vibration. Using a bevel supported push cut on a 45 degree angle slicing cut will leave a great surface with little or no torn out grain. Do each stage as best as you can and never go back to a previous stage.
- 3) Sand both the inside and outside of the bowl. If the sandpaper clogs up wait some time for the surface to dry out to allow sanding. Slow lathe speed and sharp sandpaper will make easy work of sanding. Do not allow any heat buildup from sanding. Only use drill and sanding disks with the courser sandpaper and use your fingers to hand sand 220 grit and finer. If you have natural edges or voids sand with the lathe off.
- 4) Remove from glue block and reverse chuck to turn the bottom waste area under where the glue block was.
- 5) Sand the bottom area when it is dry.
- 6) Carve off the tenon nub where the tailstock was and sand the little area in the middle of the bottom under the foot
- 7) Now put your favorite finish on it. The bowl will not be completely dry at this stage. It will have additional movement and distortion from drying after you put the first coat of finish.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WET AND DRY SANDING

This question is from the More Woodturning magazine subscriber Bruce.

The question is:

- What are your views on dry sanding, wet sanding, and sanding sealers?

Hi Bruce,

Hope you enjoyed your Christmas, have a happy and healthy New Year!

I do both wet and dry sanding, not because one is better at sanding from the other. Both good wet and dry sanding methods will take a surface off the lathe tools and refine it to the desired polished surface. Why are we sanding? There should be very minor if any tool marks and there should be little to no torn out grain. I don't even own 60 or 100 grit sandpaper. Sandpaper is not a shaping method, just the opposite. Sanding can ruin details you might want to make with good tool control. I wet sand when I have a piece of wet wood that will benefit from wet sanding. The benefit to me is having the drying process enhance a characteristic of the wood. So I wet sand a wet piece of wood with crotch figure in it for example. By wet sanding, the surface is perfectly clean and smooth. I use water. Then I get to watch with amazement what Mother Nature does when it dries and the grain and figure leave a washboard or pebbled surface. Now I see the character and color of the feature along with surface texture from the drying. Very dramatic effect! Some people start sanding with some

finish, lubricant, wax or some combination of finishes. I prefer to sand to the completed preferred surface before I put any finish on the wood.

On the other hand, if I want a very smooth polished surface I will always let the wood dry first before I sand. At this point we need to dry sand and take all the distortion from the figure or grain off the dried surface. Even if the wood is not perfectly round after drying the surface can be polished smooth with dry sanding. My goal is not to make the piece round again but to make the surface smooth.

Both these options require sharp sandpaper, slow speeds, and hand sanding through the finer grits. I don't use sanding sealers. They are OK, I guess, no harm in using them. The main reason would be to help fill porous wood pores like oak. I prefer to show the grain character rather than try to hide it. Many people try to hide torn out grain with sanding sealer. Not a good plan. Torn out grain can, and should, be prevented with good tool control, correct grain direction, fast lathe speed, slow tool movement across the tool rest, and sharp tools. The result is sanding, wet or dry that is quick and easy with sharp sandpaper.

BETTER TOOL STEEL HOLDS AN EDGE LONGER

Hi Lyle,

I'm a beginning turner with only about a year experience. I've been using a Sorby gouge that's ok but it doesn't hold an edge very long and I find myself having to sharpen very frequently. I'm interested in getting one of your Thompson gouges, which I understand may hold an edge longer and from what I've read online, are highly regarded as a quality tool.

I have a Tormek sharpening machine and am wondering if your grind profile will work on that machine and if so, what the recommended settings might be.

I appreciate any help,
Andy from Minnesota

Hi Andy,

Nice to hear from you, thanks for the inquiry. There is much to be said about your questions. I would suggest you call me so we can chat about your situation. The short of it is, yes, the Jamieson tool is made of better steel than the Sorby, but we still have to sharpen often. There are thousands of feet of wood going by the sharp edge of any tool when we use it.

This leads to the second point. The Tormek is not a very good tool for sharpening woodturning tools. A standard bench grinder does a better job. Because we sharpen often, we need to sharpen - fast, - easily -, and - accurately. Tormek does none of these things. To answer your question my grind can be done on a Tormek. It is a difficult set up, but possible.

FACEPLATE SIZE/ BOWL GOUGE GRIND ANGLE

Lyle,

I have a couple questions to ask please.

Your 5/8" bowl gouge that I purchased is best kept at the 60 degrees? When you using faceplates and turning different size bowl woods is there a rule of thumb to size up or down?

I'm getting my other projects done and getting ready to start turning bowls. I have watched your videos, so much info for a beginner that I'll be watching them again & again.

Have a nice holiday season,
Michael

Hi Michael,

Nice to hear from you and I'm glad to help. Yes, the 60 degree tip angle is important for versatility. It can do a wide range of shapes. If I want a steeper grind for a special purpose I use a spindle gouge with a 45-50 degree tip angle. Other angles work on the bowl gouge also but have limits on what shapes they will get. It is all about having and keeping the bevel supported cuts.

Did you see my recent YouTube video on the heart shaped bowl? It has great views of the push cut on the inside of the bowl.

As to your second question, yes, for secure and stable hold there is a 40 percent rule. So keep in that range for the size of the faceplate. So, anything much bigger than a 10 inch bowl should have a 4 inch faceplate and glue block. On the other side of the coin, a big faceplate gets in its own way when doing smaller pieces. I use the 3 inch faceplate for most things, that size is the most versatile.

JAMIESON VS ELLSWORTH GRIND

Hi Lyle,

I'm so used to the Ellsworth grind, with your bowl gouge what happens if I change your bevel angle (double angle I think) over to the Ellsworth grind, thanks.

Joe

Joe,

My bowl gouge grind angles are the same as David's. The sharpening shape of the grind edge I use is slightly different from David's because I take the Ellsworth hump off. The shape of the grind is different from the angles of the grind - two different things. David uses the hump on his grind for a finishing cut he uses on the inside of bowls. I don't do that cut and the hump gets in the way for my uses. A double bevel is used in steeper angled tools. With the 60 degree angle that I use the double bevel is not necessary.

TURNING MULTIPLE BRANCH CROTCHES

Hi Lyle,

A friend gave me the trunk of a willow cherry, about 10' long and it had the "knob" at the top where all of the branches grew. I think I saw a video you did with a similar piece of wood. I've attached a picture of it. Here are my questions:

- Once trimmed to a shape that will be easily mounted and balanced on my lathe, what are some of the issues I will have to deal with as the piece is turned? (I think it is going to be a bowl, rather than a hollow form, to show off all of the various grains and textures.)
- Next issue is finishing. Once turned to shape, sanded and ready for finishing, I would assume that I will have to be aware of possible/probable cracking at the multiple pith areas. What would you recommend as a finish, and how would you deal with the issue of cracking at the piths?

Love your newsletter and your videos. Both teach in different ways.

Ray from Massachusetts



Hi Ray,

Great find there! I like to work with distressed and unusual wood like that. Think first about scale. Our first instincts are to do as big of a piece as we can. That should not be the goal. Change the goal to do the best piece or pieces you can. That means cutting it up into manageable size pieces. The first chainsaw cut will reveal the color and grain patterns for the second chainsaw cut, etc.

Cherry usually will have good figure or flame from the crotch area between each branch. Make your chainsaw cuts through the pith trying to salvage the character and figured wood between the branches. Visualize the path the bowl wall will take through the tree. Make the bowl pass through the flame and figured area so the best wood is not made into shavings. I would consider natural edge bowls to capture the odd shape tree.

When you do have a bowl or vessel with pith in it, as you suggested, it might crack, or may already be cracked around the pith. This is Mother Nature doing her thing. No way to avoid it, if the pith is there. I seldom leave the pith in any turning because I don't like the cracks. I too, make sure there are no cracks in the wood before I invest much time in a piece. If I find a crack it is firewood.

Many others would leave the cracks, try to hide the cracks (impossible), or accentuate the cracks and make a feature out of it. I prefer the last option.

Now to try to answer your question, how to deal with piths. I would turn it green to a thin wall. By thin I mean 3/16 or 1/8 walls or thinner if you like thin walls. Don't try to double turn or the pith cracks will migrate a long way from the pith. The thin wall will allow the wood to move, warp, and distort easier and limit the cracking. It may bulge out a bit, but that's better than cracks.

A finish will not prevent cracking, it may slow it down but it will still move and cause stress that might crack. Use the same finish you use on other turnings, whatever you like.

The turning will not be any different just because you leave the pith in it. Use sharp tools, but you always use sharp tools, right?

The best advice is to slow down and plan out your goals, scale, shape, axis, etc. The more planning you do the luckier you get. Cutting it up into multiple blanks will give you experience. The first piece will lead you to ways to make the second piece better.

BUFFING QUESTIONS

Greetings,

I stumbled on your YouTube video on buffing last night. I am heading in the same direction. I have one quick question. What is the rpm and horsepower of the motor you are using? If you built the system again would you change either? Guess that was two questions!

Thanks,

Dave from Minnesota

Hi Dave,

Nice to hear from you! My home built system is on a 1/2 HP motor that is 1750 RPM. It works perfectly! I have had no thoughts of updating or improving it.

SANDING DISK TECHNIQUES

From YouTube video on plates: <https://youtu.be/2sgZuW55kco>

I don't understand your remark on sanding the wrong way. At your first "position" with the sanding disk, you say this is the wrong way. But when you turn the plate 90 degrees you get the right sanding way..... like you mention in your second position. So when the plate turns it alternates from right-to-wrong..... right? :-) I'm from Holland so my English may not be correct. I hope you understand my question and that you can explain what I don't see with your sanding.

Thank you for your time,

Peter from Holland

Hi Peter,

Thanks for the chance to clarify. Yes, the grain is alternating from side grain to end grain and back twice every rotation. We use this information to make the pass across the inside shape of a bowl from rim to the bottom to cut "supported fibers".

The soft sanding pad is mashed down when you sand at the rim of the pad. This sanding pattern is a crescent or moon shaped sanding surface. On the plate if I sand in a motion moving the disk from

the rim to the middle (wrong way) the disk will float into the small irregularities left from the bowl gouge. These undulations will be left behind and even made worse sanding by floating up and down over the bumps. Using the sanding disk to sand with a pattern that bridges the tool marks (Correct way) they will disappear. This is moving the disk up and down not left and right.

This is really hard to explain in text so go back and look at the video one more time and look at my finger pointing at the sanding surface going across the tool marks not with the tool marks.

VACUUM CHUCKS

Lyle,

Anybody who has ever met you knows you can smile!

I've never heard you mention vacuum chucks.

Do you ever use them?

Gerry in Wisconsin via YouTube

Gerry,

A vacuum chuck would work for a lot of turning applications. I don't use them because of the limitations. I usually have voids, natural edges, and turn green. It would not seat on a warped surface. My method allows me to put anything back on the lathe. It is a small price to pay to carve off the nub left behind.

TURN THE BOTTOM OR TOP FIRST

From YouTube,

Is there a reason you finished the inside prior to the outside as you do with bowls? Is that to better establish the flat of the bottom of the plate?

MC

Very good question MC!

The norm is to do the bottom first because we need to see the shape. In a plate the shape of the top of the plate is where all the creativity and design is, so I did that first. The bottom is done by making a uniform wall from there. I had to make sure there was enough wall thickness for the inside depth of the plate before I started, so when I did the bottom there was wood thickness left. The answer is to do the part where the shape design is established first.

HANDLING GREEN WOOD, HOW GREEN

Hi Lyle,

I have a couple of questions regarding turning green wood. You repeatedly tout the virtues of turning green wood, and I agree. But what I don't yet know from you is what constitutes green in your world? How green does the wood need to be to be green? A week since it was a tree? A month? Six months? Let's say, for example, a cherry or maple tree comes down and you get some and immediately paint the ends of long pieces with a wax sealer and store them in a safe, dry place (basement, shop, barn). In general, how long can you go before turning, after which you would no longer consider it green and worth working with?

This then leads to the question of managing a steady wood supply. Mine comes in pulses, and I suspect most folks are the same. A friend has a tree down and offers me wood. I get a length or three of the trunk or large limbs and store them properly. Obviously I can't get through it quickly, while it is all fresh. And then another batch from another tree arrives. So my question regards management of wood supply and again goes back to how long you can store wood before it no longer falls into your "green" category? How do you, personally, keep a constant supply but not so much that the bulk of it ends up in the wood stove?

Finally, have you ever used Pentacryl? It is a green wood stabilizer (preservation-solutions.com) in which you soak your fresh-turned green-wood product after turning and it replaces the water, thus preventing checking. I have never heard it spoken of by any turner except a guy in Florida who put

me onto it. I have used it for several projects and it seems to have worked, in that the bowls did not check. Of course that begs the question of whether or not they would have checked without treatment! But I'd like your opinion of the product if you are familiar with it.

Thanks, Lyle, for always being there for us and helping us to constantly improve!

All best,

Gary from Vermont

Hi Gary,

Great questions! You cannot dry a tree of any considerable thickness. A thick piece of wood will do two things when stored, it will crack or it will start to decay. So any wood that has not self-destructed is what I call green. It can be a tree cut ten minutes ago or a tree that has been stored correctly with any resulting end checking or end cracking cut off as scrap. The middle section of this stored wood still has a lot of water. Store the tree sections in long lengths knowing you will cut away the ends that have cracked. Spalting is the start of the decay process. If you see spalting, it must be used soon or it will get punky and unusable.

You are correct; a large amount of wood ends up in the firewood pile. It is inevitable, if you have been harvesting wood for a while, that you will always have more than you can use. The sources become more frequent and the network of people to share with gets larger. I use up a lot of wood not only for my own use and YouTube video productions but I supply all the wood for my students that are frequently here, but I still end up wasting some. If the wood is punky it's trash. If the wood is cracked it is trash. I don't waste my time and energy salvaging bad wood. It's not safe, it's not fun and there is more wood in the pile worthy of my attention and I know where to find more, it grows on trees. What have you got if you turn cracked, rotten wood? You might get hurt but the end product looks like a bunch of glued up cracks, even if the cracks are filled with turquoise or gold, they are still cracks. I choose to work with solid wood.

Natural voids and natural edges are a different matter. I love to reveal and showcase distressed or gnarly wood. I make my vessels bigger than the tree to produce voids and wings, without cracks. Most of my bowls are natural edge bowls, partly because the edge masks the fact it is not round after it dries and warps.

Yes, Pentacryl works. Ed Molthrop got famous and rich using it. I do not like the effects of it. The wood becomes, for lack of better words, plasticized. The wood looks lifeless and it is very hard to get a good finish. The surface is often blotchy looking. The result is very few turners use it.

HOME BUILT KILNS

Lyle,

Your recent newsletter indicated that the refrigerator, light bulb setup caused lots of cracking. That is what I was contemplating so I was wondering what exactly caused the problem assuming the wood is uniform.

Bill from Missouri

Hi Bill,

Again, I am not an expert on kilns because I don't do that. The problem with home built kilns is the regulation of the heat and moisture loss. If the heat gets too high and the drying is too fast the blanks will crack even with uniform walls. So that gets a little complicated. There are even tricks to how the blanks are stacked in the kiln for best results. You need heat control and humidity control. With that, what settings are going to work? I do not have that information. Sorry, you will have to find a good source to learn the details. Many of the well-known turners have done, or are doing, production turning with kilns, like Trent Bosch and Mike Mahoney. They might have YouTube clips or DVDs on building and using a kiln. Turning green is a lot more fun and there are never failures.

KEEPING CARBIDE CUTTER SHARP AND WHEN TO REPLACE IT

Hi Lyle,

I have a question about the cutting edge lifetime of the carbide cutter in the hollowing system for the following scenario:

Very dry Maple burl wood, hollowing 7" deep to a final inside diameter of 4", starting from a 1" diameter drilled hole? I have done three such hollow forms and I felt that the cutter was not sharp after the completion of each.

Does that seem about right? I'm OK with that, I'm just trying to get an idea of how many extra cutters I need to have, I figure I can rotate each disc three times before replacing. Like you, I sharpen my HSS tools a lot and want the sharpest edge possible.

Again, I love the system!

Best,

Dan from Colorado

Hi Dan,

Please go back over the written article about the carbide cutter techniques, back page #2. There might be more information there that will help you. In there, it tells how I use the cutter by rotating the cutter to random locations often. So you might rotate the cutter a hundred (?) times before replacing it. The idea here is to use the entire 360 degrees around the cutter equally. Other than that there is no way to know where it has been used and where it is sharpest. Over a long period of time the whole edge will deteriorate. But they last so long that it is hard to tell when it is dull. A carbide cutter will certainly not dull in three vessels, unless it is full of voids and dirt. Yes, dry wood will dull the cutter faster than wet wood.

How do I know when it needs replacing? It will work well even dull in the bevel supported and hogging off cuts. It is in the negative rake scraping mode where you will see some deterioration of the finish surface with a dull cutter. When this cut leaves a little torn out grain or fuzz behind it would be beneficial to replace it.

FEEDBACK

Hi Lyle,

I just wanted to thank you for the great live remote demonstration, lots of great information. I think it went very well even with the technical problems, they have to be expected dealing with this technology, but a good recovery by you. (Lyle stepped on the wire and disconnected one of the cameras) I got very good feedback from the group and I think another meeting will be in order in the future. Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas!

Gary from New Hampshire

Lyle,

Your generosity with your time amazes me. You're not the only one in the woodturning community to be so generous, but you consistently go well beyond what mere courtesy would demand.

Thank you. David from Wood Central

Mr. Jamieson, I just wanted you to know that the basic hollowing system I purchased from you worked like I charm! It did get a little scary at the end, being a good 11" out over the tool rest but I couldn't have done it without your system. I do see a need for the carbide tool as I did leave the interior of this cremation urn a little "ribbed". Thank you for inventing such a surprisingly easy system to use.

Don location unknown

Lyle,

Just finished your Oct newsletter and did enjoy the read. I am busy turning local woods (South Texas ebony, cedar, cypress) and, today, a purchased piece of tupelo (too soft even with fresh edge

on one of the carbide disks I picked up at SWAT. Just a note if you could pass it on to "Richard" of Waco re: carving. He might want to check out Mary May's online carving school. I subscribe and really enjoy the lessons.

Thanks, again, for all your assistance.

Ralph from Texas

Lyle,

I keep coming back and watching your lessons, learning something new each time. Then I try to apply it to my turning, each time understanding a little bit more. Thank you for the great and thorough lessons.

Joel from YouTube

CALENDAR

I am doing classes in my studio/workshop in Traverse City, Michigan continuously, just call or email to set up your one-on-one class: 231-947-2348 or lyle@lylejamieson.com.

January 3, 2017 - Remote demo, Big Apple club, New York

January 16, 2017 - Remote demo, South Kansas club, Kansas

April 12, 2017 - Remote demo, Cheam woodturners, England

June 23-16, 2017 - AAW Symposium, Kansas City, Missouri

August 25-27, 2017 - SWAT Symposium, Texas

October 13-15, 2017 - Ohio Symposium, Ohio