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**A very Merry Christmas from our home to yours
and wishes for a Happy New Year!!
This is the perfect time to say a big "THANK YOU" to you,
my subscribers, for your support.**

Recently I had the great pleasure to have a meeting and visit with Brent English owner of the Robust Lathe facility in Wisconsin. I will be representing Robust Lathes and I will be purchasing an American Beauty Lathe soon. I was impressed with Brent and his business, his attention to details, and the engineering he put into his lathe designs. Made in the USA with a 7 year warranty is a testament to Brent's workmanship and confidence he has in his lathes. If you are thinking about upgrading your lathe,

I want to remind you my YouTube sponsor Hunter Tools has a Holiday special going with free shipping. See the description from my last YouTube Video for details.

<https://youtu.be/IeOBSLckxOk>

I am pleased to announce that Thompson Tools has joined me as a sponsor on my YouTube channel also. Welcome Doug Thompson! I will have a new video loaded soon. Go to YouTube and search for my Channel to subscribe.

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TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Topic of the Month: Tips for hollowing the inside bottom and the nub issues

A question on the phone from Gary in Colorado about my tool rest brought up the subject of just how accurate we need to be to get the nub out of the bottom of a vessel. The captured boring bar system makes it easy and fast to get the dreaded nub in the bottom of hollow forms clean and smooth. We start with a drill hole down the center of the hollow vessel so that we do not have to fight with a nub all the way down into the vessel. Using the drill hole as a start, the cuts always begin in the hole and the cut is made to the left. The cut directly to the left of the lathe or 90 degrees to the bed will make the easiest cuts when doing an end grain hollow form. Most hollow form vessels will have the grain running parallel to the bed. This cutting direction will cut into the side grain of the wood fibers. It is always easier to cut into the side of the tree and harder to cut into the end of the tree. So, I seldom make any of the hollowing cuts pushing the boring bar into and pulling out of the entry hole with the cut happening parallel to the lathe bed. The only time the cuts are in and out is to clean up tool marks on the side wall of the vessel. Other than that, pushing toward the headstock is usually problematic. This would make a hump in the bottom and an uneven surface to deal with later.

If you choose to do a hollow form that has the grain perpendicular to the bed then the cuts might be easier cutting in and out of the entry hole, or pushing toward the headstock.

When the drill hole is gone we need to work on the bottom without a starting point. At this stage it is even more important to never push the cutter forward toward the headstock but make light cuts side to side only. The trick, the key, the important thing is to put your cutting edge exactly on the center line. Yah! I know- you have heard that before, right? Yes, but this time I'm serious. I mean EXACTLY on the center line. Close - - - is not good enough! When you are turning in the center of the bottom, the wood is actually stopped in the middle. The wood movement to the right of the center spot is moving up, and the wood to the left of center is going down. The cutter will only cut when the wood is going down. What happens right in the middle? Nothing!

Think about the height of the cutting edge as it cuts in the bottom. If the cutter is higher than the center point the rotation of the wood is moving counter clockwise and pushing the cutting tip to the left. Since the wood is not moving in a downward motion the cutter will not cut. The cutter will try to bounce off the nub. The resulting nub, if this is tried, will force the cut to the left and the nub gets bigger and bigger the more we try to cut above the center line.

What happens when we cut below the center point? The wood is moving to the right this time under the center point. It will jump or skate slightly but it will try to cut below center. The result will leave a cylindrical shaped toothpick looking shaft right at the center point that will never go away when cutting below center.

The solution (I know it's about time I got to the point) no pun intended is get the cutter dead on the center line. I know some of you try this and end up saying: "close enough" and settle for just about on center, but not quite and that's not quite good enough. How do we get the kind of accuracy needed? With the lathe off, scratch a line across the bottom with the cutting tip. Take the boring bar out of the vessel so you can shine a light in there and see the line. Is it high or low? Caution, if there is still any remnants of the drill hole that might have wandered off center, it might be hard to see where the center actually is located. Usually you will see a bullseye of tool mark circles on the bottom to see the center.

Now comes the hard part. Move the tool rest up or down to get on center. Move it up and it is too high. Scratch another line and look again, too low this time. It can be frustrating! Do this procedure a number of times and you will get lucky and land on the center line eventually.

This process is why I have manufactured a threaded post tool rest with an adjustment nut to rise and lower the tool rest in very small increments. The threads are 8 threads per inch. One revolution of the nut will move the tool rest 1/8 inch up or down. Often, it only takes a very small movement of the nut to move small increments. Scratch a line across the bottom and get it exactly on the center line.

The proof that you have succeeded will be felt when you turn the lathe on and make a pass across the bottom. It will feel easy, effortless and smooth. If you feel ANY resistance moving back and forth at the middle you are not on the center line. Scratch another line and take a closer look for the needed adjustment. Even the thickness of a hair or two can make a huge difference.

It is very important at this stage that you do not push the cutter forward toward the headstock. Just make very light cuts left and right across the bottom very gently. Pressure toward the headstock will start a nub even if you are on the center line. The wood in the very middle of the bottom is stopped or moving very slowly. This will make the cutting action difficult right near the middle. As the cut moves to the left of the middle the wood starts to move by your cutting tip faster and faster. Faster means easier and the cut will be deeper than you want and leave the nub of hard to cut wood in the middle. Cut left and right only.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CRAFT SUPPLIES VIDEO CONFUSING

Lyle,

Does this video not violate many of your rules? I'm trying not to get confused as I review your *Bowl Basics* video for the third time as I progress with a work piece now on my lathe.

http://blog.woodturnerscatalog.com/2015/11/turning-a-natural-edge-bowl/2/?utm_source=csusa&utm_medium=email&utm_content=natural-edge&utm_campaign=15-nov-inspiration-natural-edge

Best wishes,
Stan

Hi Stan from Alabama,

That's very observant of you. Yes, the process in the Craft Supplies video is much different than mine that does not make one of us wrong and one right. Everything he did works but many things he did have limitations, obstacles or unpleasant consequences. There are many methods out there. I have some sound reasoning behind my methods as I explain in my Bowl Basics DVD. You are correct it can be very confusing. I will try to give as many "WHY's" as I can to my methods to give you ways to filter out the conflicting methods.

There were many differences. Let me point out a few. The Forestner bit starting hole means the headstock position is locked in before he started roughing it out. The roughing process is an information gathering phase. I might want to move the headstock axis point.

The band saw will influence the shape, scale, and axis too. I rough out bowl blanks from the chain saw cuts. I prefer to be in control of the axis and have the ability to move the piece in multiple directions to insure I get the best turned piece out of that block of wood. My goal is not to get the biggest piece from the block.

I always start everything I do on the balance point. Not starting on the balance point means dealing with vibration and/or slow lathe speeds. Faster speeds and no vibration make the roughing much easier.

The Craft Supplies video went the wrong way to the grain multiple times. There was some justification for that to help keep the bark on, out by the rim of the bowl but he had to pay the price and needed to do more sanding. Did you notice the torn out grain visible on the outside of the bowl after he had put the finish on it at the end of the clip?

His push cut was hampered by the hump in his bowl gouge grind. My process is simpler. The hump gets in the way and is an obstacle on three out of the four cuts I do. Without the hump on the grind I can start the push cut and almost immediately have bevel supported cuts.

I never scrape on the inside of a bowl. He used a scraper multiple times and places. Many famous turners use scrapers but I prefer to slice the fibers downhill to the grain, with the bevel supported cut, on a steep angle, so I don't have to sand so much, again.

The double ended calipers are not a very accurate way to measure the wall thickness. The more uniform the wall thickness the less stress produced during drying, and the balance and feel of any vessel will be better with a uniform wall thickness.

I don't want to be critical of Craft Supplies. Many turners use some of these methods. In the beginning, simple turning can be done by using a multitude of methods. When we try to explore more complex turning the process can get in the way of success. My process is designed to open up possibilities and prevent limits from creeping up as your skill level advances.

KEEPING BARK ON NATURAL EDGE BOWLS

Lyle,

Got the laser yesterday and looked at your YouTube site. I watched the natural edge bowl DVD but did not see one for a bark edged bowl. Interested in how to keep the bark on and get it thin.

Thanks,
Stan

Hi Stan from Florida,

One of the keys to keeping the bark on is to start with a freshly cut tree. Good tool control is a must. Some have saturated the bark with CA to keep it on, but that is a little tricky cause the wood will be moving and sometimes break the glue line. I seldom leave the bark on. It gives the bowl a rustic look and I want a soft huggable look. The people that appreciate the bark edge bowls are other turners.

CARVING THE SLOT IN A YARN BOWL

Lyle,

I was asked to make some yarn bowls. Any experience? I can make the bowl but not sure how to cut the yarn slice. Thanks,
Stan

Hi Stan from Florida,

For the yarn bowls, the slot can be cut with anything. Body saw (air), coping saw (by hand), Dremel or Foredom carver burrs, or many of the tools you already have. It might be a good excuse to buy more tools. LOL! I use all rotary tools for my carving.

HOW CRITICAL IS IT THAT THE LASER BEAM BE PLUMB VERTICALLY

Hi Lyle,

Now a question for you--how critical is it that the laser beam is plumb vertically when it is aligned with respect to the tool tip?

Thanks much,
Mike

Hi Mike location unknown,

I like your question. It means you are thinking your way through the process. The laser should be pointing straight up and down, vertical. As it says in the installation instructions I step back and look at it when it is pointed at the cutting tip. I don't bother getting any closer than that. It could be off quite a bit from perfect vertical and will not affect its use. It is all about the "gap" and the gap will change minutely as you move it around to keep perpendicular. The error in the vertical position will change the gap microscopically, so it will not be an issue.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR TWO CARBIDE CUTTERS

Lyle,

I have purchased your hollowing system, and it works great. I want to get a carbide cutter for this system. What is the difference between the two you have on your website? Which one would you recommend as the first choice? Thanks,
Rick

Hi Rick location unknown,

Nice to hear from you! Thanks for the inquiry. The standard carbide cutter assembly is the "go to" tool. I use it all the time. The reverse angle is for specialty situations when you want to use grain orientation to get cleaner cuts in a side grain hollow form with large enough openings that you want to sand the inside.

HOW TO STOP END GRAIN ROUGHNESS

Lyle,

One of our woodturning members, Barb bought your boring device and I was down to see her on Thursday. She still does not have it set up but I encouraged her to get going.
Now for a question about end grain tear out?

I quite often use the boring tool to do bowls as I feel much more comfortable using that rather than taking the chance of reaching in with tool and a possible catch on bowl or my hand for that matter. But I always seem to end up with end grain tear or a surface like 60 grit sandpaper on those two spots. Outside is easy to sand out but inside is darn difficult. Craig

Hi Craig from Pennsylvania,

Glad to see you are getting some turning time. Torn out grain is an easy thing to fix. Sharp tools with good tool control and correct grain orientation will go a long way for you. All the details are in my "Bowl Basics" DVD. I use the bowl format as a teaching tool for learning all the foundation elements of turning.

I do not use the hollowing system to do bowls. My definition of a bowl shape is the fact that I can make a bevel supported slicing cut inside the bowl with my bowl gouge. Key words here are bevel support and slicing cut. The boring bar with the HSS cutter is in scraping mode and not bevel supported. That will always result in torn out grain. I don't like or want to sand that much. A scraping cut going the wrong direction to the unsupported grain is not fun or productive. This is just as important for the outside of hollow forms or bowls too.

Even better than the DVD, come to Michigan and take a class with me to really kick it up a notch. I sell a lot of tools but the process is just as important as having good tools.

IS WATCO DANISH OIL FOOD SAFE

Lyle,

I noticed in your "The Easy Way" DVD you used Danish oil. How long does it take for it to be food safe?

George

Hi George location unknown,

Nice to see you are checking out my many resources in the turning world. When using Watco Danish Oil, I let the first coat cure deep into the wood fibers for about a week. You can put a second or third coat on a day or two apart. I would let that cure for about another week for it to totally cure. I buff on a wax shine and call it done. My work is not usually utilitarian. If you can smell the solvent from a finish it is not cured yet.

SANDING DISK BRANDS

Hi Lyle,

I just found the time to read this month's newsletter. First, I want to let you know that I thoroughly enjoy your newsletters. I always find new tips, techniques and ideas that are very helpful to me. In fact I have little notes posted around my lathe and shop to help me remember them. As you probably know it is very hard to break a bad habit, so when a better technique is presented to you, you have to remember to use it and not revert back to the old habit.

Well enough of that. What prompted my email to you is your mention of Roloc Discs in the SANDING DISC BRAND article. I didn't recognize the name until I Goggled it and looked at images. I found a page of photos showing the discs I have been using for quite some time now. I get mine at Harbor Freight and they are quite reasonably priced.

Thank you for a great newsletter and source of information. Richard

Hi Richard from Washington,

The sanding disks from Harbor Freight are not usually 3M but they would likely work almost as good. The 3M brand is more expensive, but cut cleaner than most other brands. Don't know why but it works for me.

BOWL CORING SYSTEMS

Hello Lyle,

Thanks for your expert guidance and tuition through your DVDs and YouTube clips. I have followed your methods and recommendations fully and I feel sure it has saved me years off the learning curve and helped me avoid many frustrations along the way.

I take your point that wood just 'grows on trees' and is easily available. I certainly have a ready source and I shall be diverting all pieces with potential away from my firewood pile in future. Some woods and features aren't so easy to get hold of though. For me that would be the big Yew logs that I would like to work with and burrs or burls.

I wondered if you had any experience with the McNaughton center saver, or a viewpoint you could share? It would seem to be a way to make the real good stuff go further.

Thanks again,
Chris

Hi Chris location unknown,

Thanks for the update on your experiences and feedback. There are two center saving systems both are rather expensive for most budgets. By the time you buy a variety of cutter arms the dollars stack up. The McNaughton system has a bit of a learning curve and is more difficult to use. The good news it is more versatile and can do more shapes and different depth bowls. The Oneway system is easier to use but has some limitations on what shapes you can get from it. I suggest you check with your turning club members and go and take a test drive with them before you buy.

HEADSTOCK TO TAILSTOCK ALIGNMENT

Hello again Lyle,

I am enjoying using your tools and follow your system fully and carefully to create my first bowls. Here are my latest - two sides of a Walnut log.



I am having issues however towards the end of your process. Every time I reverse and remount a bowl to finish the foot, I end up scarfing up marks inside. I can even hear it moving, as an increasingly loud creaking/squeaking develops from within the bowl. I have tried re-seating and/or tightening it up, but movement still occurs. I have checked and don't believe the bowl is spinning on the leather and

glue block. It is however rocking and moving enough to mark the interior quite badly, resulting in a lot of extra sanding being needed.

I am suspecting headstock/tailstock alignment issues are showing up in this final stage with the centers so close. What do you think?

The lathe is probably older than me (and I am in my 50s!). It only cost me £70 and has helped me learn- a lot!

Perhaps though it is time to get something a little newer, sturdier and larger in order to progress?

Hi Chris from England,

Nice looking bowls there, great job. You nailed it! The headstock and the tailstock are arm wrestling each other. They must line up for a lot of reasons but for reversing it is critical. See if there is any adjustability on the lathe to fix it. Usually that's not part of the tubular bed, which is another weak link. If not correctable, it might help to use a thicker, foam type, padding to give it more cushion. It will likely still burnish a spot inside from the movement. Is it time to upgrade your lathe? If you were in the USA I would help you get a Robust.

WILL CA GLUE WORK WITH WET WOOD

Lyle,

Can you put a glue block on a wet bowl blank? I'm going to make your newsletter easy this month.

Thanks,

Shane

Hi Shane location unknown,

Easy question, yes! Green wood works well with the CA glue. The moisture helps in the curing and it will hold just as good as dry wood. No worries at all.

HOW DO YOU GET A GLOSS FINISH

Lyle,

Attached is my first attempt using your hollowing system (it made finishing it a lot easier after I was no longer comfortable with my gouge). At my level I am really quite pleased and credit you with the growth of my technique as well as the ease of your hollowing system. I was hoping that you could give me some advice on developing a high gloss finish. I purchased the Beall Buffing system which is being used on a dedicated grinder. These pieces were finished using walnut oil. I have read articles on the use of boiled linseed oil and shellac.

What are your recommendations?

Thanks again for all of the help

Ron



Hi Ron from Michigan,

Thanks for sharing your photos, very nicely done. High gloss finish starts with good tool control and good sanding techniques. I talk about this in a recent issue of More Woodturning Magazine online. The kind of wood helps and the tighter the grain the better. I can get a semi-gloss with the Beall system. For high gloss you need a buildup of finish such as lacquer or a gloss varnish of some kind. The hard part is it takes many coatings with lots of prep work between each coat. It is not the finish you use but how you apply and "finish the finish" that will get you the results you are after.

FEEDBACK

Hi,

Phil here from South Africa!

I have just finished a chalice. This is a pattern for a mold for a concrete pot. I did it in 2 parts as the final product needs to be shipped and the base fits into the body. I used a chuck and glue block for the body. It was not easy but eventually got it finished on my Nova DVR. The vibration/chatter was not easy to handle.

I then saw and downloaded your video on not using a chuck for bowl work. It made such sense. I made up a faceplate assembly for the next one and now realize what you were saying. It is now a pleasure to turn larger objects without that flexing.

Thank you for the video and advice. It has made a big improvement in how I work.

Cheers, Phil

Lyle, I received your bowl gouge the other day and put it to the test some over the last two days. It is a great bowl gouge!

I am a pretty new turner but really like a Sorby 1/2" bowl gouge, that has been my go to for segmented bowls and blanks like burls. I also tested out a Carter and Son 5/8" bowl gouge...no comparison. The Carter was too heavy and long in my humble opinion. Yours felt great from the get go, so easy to use for a kind of awkward pull cut on a steep segmented bowl top. So I thank you, you guaranteed it and you knew what you were talking about.

I set up a separate vari-grind jig just for it, hopefully following your YouTube video on sharpening; I will get it dead on.

Thanks again, Dan location unknown

Hello Lyle,

I attended your demonstration about six months ago in Spokane, WA and also was a part of your third (last) hands-on class showing us hollowing techniques. You were so sick at that last class that we figured you just going to say the hell with it, but you persevered throughout the day. We all felt bad for you and wouldn't have blamed you if you'd cut it short. I hope your drive home was uneventful and that you have fully recovered. Home is great, ain't it?

I wanted to let you know how much my turning has changed since attending your classes. I use your method of attaching a blank to the lathe using spurs all the time as well as using a glue block and CA glue for the roughed bowl. I've adopted as many of the tips you provided in Saturday's session as I can remember- pull cut, shear scrape, etc.

It was a great demo and a great class, thanks for all your help. I know you felt like crap, but you've really changed how I work at the lathe.

Thanks again,

Scott from Idaho

CALENDAR

Check out my website calendar for more specifics.

(<http://lylejamieson.com/calendar/>)

June, 2016-Atlanta, Georgia

August, 2016- Texas

September, 2016-Pennsylvania

November, 2016-Virginia