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This is the first newsletter in a long time. Sorry for the delay. I have devoted much of my time on producing YouTube videos and doing Live Remote Demonstrations for turning clubs all over the world and to top it off I did something STUPID, I remodeled my kitchen! As usual it was harder than expected and took much longer than hoped. It's done now and beautiful but sucked up a ton of time.

SOMETHING NEW!

I am up and running with online Live Remote Demonstrations for your club meetings.

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.

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TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Topic of the Month: Preventing catches with tool control of the four cuts

This a question reprinted from More Woodturning magazine. Check out this excellent publication.
Question: Do you have any advice for preventing catches?
I often hear turners refer to catches as if they are normal: “Everyone gets a catch now and then” they say. I disagree! In a previous column, I discussed tool control and the four different cuts I use: push cut, pull cut, scrape cut, and sheer scrape cut. If you use these cuts properly, catches will be a thing of the past. Here are the basics of each of the cuts and when I use them:
The first is the **push cut**. The push cut with a bowl gouge is the work horse and we use it a majority of the time. It is used to "hog off". It is used on spindle work and on the inside of bowls. The push cut can be aggressive and take a large amount of wood away with each pass, or It can be a small finishing cut leaving a great finish on the wood that needs little sanding. It can also be a shaping or a refining cut. The flute is facing the direction of the cut and the handle is parallel to the floor or slightly down. None of the four cuts have the handle up with a bowl gouge. The flute is tilted, or twisted on a 45 degree angle to the wood direction so the tip of the gouge is slicing on an angle and leaves a clean surface on the wood. The direction of all cuts is always going downhill to the grain, slicing supported fibers. This slicing action will always leave a better surface and takes less sanding than with scraping mode. The first and foremost rule for the push cut is the bevel is supporting the cut. The bevel is the directional finder and the controlling factor. The bevel prevents catches. I have a procedure of lining up the bevel with the existing surface of the wood before I take EVERY cut.
I think Bonnie Klein first coined the phrase "A-B-C’s": Anchor, Bevel, and then a Cut. My modified A-B-C’s goes like this: (A)nchor, Line up the (B)evel, then make a (C)ut. This process does two things. First it gets the bevel lined up with the existing surface. The existing surface will give you the direction the cut will be advancing. You have two choices at this point: go forward with the cutting action, or make an adjustment to the direction of the cut before you proceed with the cut by swinging the handle. Without lining up the bevel before each cut, the direction may or may not be going in the right direction. The result will mean an adjustment of swinging the

handle to correct the direction AFTER the cut begins. Not good!! Best case scenario is there will be undulations or tool marks on the surface from the adjustment. Worst case is you get a catch when the bevel is not supported. So the second thing this process does is make sure the bevel is supported before the cut even gets started. A push cut without the bevel will get you a catch.

OK, now how do we line up the bevel first? Let's use a cut on the inside of a bowl for example. With the lathe running, place the heel of the bevel of the bowl gouge gently against the wood at the inside of the bowl near the rim where the cut will start. The sharp edge is now facing out into air. With the bevel rubbing gently against the wood surface, start "wiggling" it back and forth very slightly. Pushing the bevel forward and backward in small movements will allow you to see when a shaving will be produced. Now, push the handle slowly away from you, to the right, and keep the wiggle going. As the bevel now moves closer and closer to the wood surface it will make a little whisk of a shaving right at the tip of the bowl gouge. Then, and only then, is the bevel perfectly lined up with the existing surface. Proceed with the cut or pull the tool back out of the bowl to the rim and start a new pass without swinging the handle and losing the direction just found.

The second cut, the **pull cut** is on the outside of a bowl where the head stock will be in the way and I cannot use the push cut. I follow three rules for pull cuts: (1) the handle is way down, like at a 45 degree angle down and tucked into your thigh; (2) use the tip only--do not get a shaving going down on the wing of the bowl gouge; and (3) bevel support is on the side of the gouge (in contrast to the push cut where the bevel is supported at the tip of the gouge). To start a pull cut, the flute is pointing almost straight up. Bevel touching the wood, A-B-Cs again. Roll your wrist on the handle hand clockwise until you see a whisk of a shaving. At this point, the bevel is lined up with the existing surface. Pull the bowl gouge and cut in the direction the flute is facing from the bottom of the bowl to the rim. As you make the curved line of the bowl, you roll your wrist so the bevel follows the shape you want to make on the bowl. This is one of the hardest cuts to master because we don't use it very often. It takes small shaping cuts. The pull cut is not usually a finish cut and we do not hog off with it.

The third cut is the **scraping cut**. We can scrape with many tools. The rule for scraping is that the cutting edge must touch the wood at less than a 90 degree angle to the surface of the wood. When we scrape with the bowl gouge we twist the flute in and face it directly at the wood surface. We use the broad brush of the middle of the wing and stay away from the tip and the corner of the wing. This is typically used to clean up the concave area in preparation for the glue block or faceplate. In contrast, when we are doing the inside of hollow forms with the HSS cutter we are in scraping mode. We cut slightly above the center line to keep from violating the 90 degree rule. I don't use the scraping cut much because the push and pull cuts leave a better surface on the wood with less torn out grain and less sanding.

The last and fourth cut is the **sheer scraping cut.** This is scraping on a steep angle. So using the bowl gouge, we would scrape with the handle down, way down and the steeper the angle the cleaner the cut. In a bowl, I use the sheer scrape to refine and finish the outside of my bowls. The importance of grain orientation comes in here again. On a bowl, to go downhill with supported fibers we must make the cut on the outside of a

bowl from the base to the rim. I never scrape or sheer scrape on the inside of bowls. On the outside of a hollow form we need to have the angle of the cut facing downhill. Downhill on an end grain hollow form (or spindle mode) is from the largest diameter to the smaller diameter. The steep angle is peeling the fibers with little angel hair shavings downhill. The carbide cutter I have on my hollowing system uses the bevel-supported push cut and a negative rake scraping cut, both with the little 3/16 inch nanograin carbide cutter.
All this is hard to visualize from text. To see the cuts in action, see my Basic Bowls DVD, or check my YouTube clips to get a glimpse of the cuts as I make them. But the better and faster way is to seek out a mentor in your club and get some help from someone who has the skills. Or, to really kick it up a notch, come up to Michigan and take a class with me!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

USING CHUCKS OR NOT

Very surprised Lyle makes this conclusion - all aspects of the conclusion can't hold up. I would venture to say if a vote was taken by experienced turners - chucks would wins by far.

"J" from YouTube location unknown (Responding to my teaching about not using chucks)
You are correct J, most turners, even the masters in our field use chucks. Why? We were all taught by the production turners that got excited when chucks first came on the woodturning market. That does not make chucks the best or safest way to hold a piece of wood. Many turners exceed the limits of chucks, and that is my message, stay within the limits. That's another part of my message chucks have limits. Many turners don't use chucks correctly to further the weaknesses of chucks and even if used correctly a chuck is not the best way to hold wood. I can turn faster, safer, and easier with a faceplate. The limits drive me crazy! Lots of procedures work. It's not a "right and wrong" thing, just a different way of looking at the strength and stability of the chucking method you choose. If you use a chuck, you have limits.

PARABOLIC FLUTE GOUGE

Hi Lyle,
I just ordered your 5/8" parabolic bowl gouge, my second. I have a number of Doug Thompson's tools, including a 5/8" "V" shaped gouge. My question is why Doug doesn't offer a parabolic shaped gauge on his own. If the parabolic shape is superior, wouldn't he as a tool maker want that as one of his offerings? His "V" shaped gouge is awfully close in shape to your parabolic shape, which I also own.
Thanks, Rich

Hi Rich from New Jersey,
Nice to hear from you, thanks for the order. Good question. When a turner designs a tool to his specifications like I did with Doug, it is my signature gouge and cannot be sold by others. Doug manufactures my tool with all the same quality and steel as his other tools but my shape for the flute is deeper and wider than any other tool and I grind my grind on it for final sales. If you purchase a bowl gouge form him or any other maker

it will not have the same flute configuration or the same grind I use. A few other gouges are close but will not have the versatility to do all the cuts I do with mine. Mine has a larger sweet spot and is more forgiving that any other. The devil is in the details. There are subtle differences that make a huge difference in performance.

STARTING FROM A GEOGRAPHIC CENTER POINT

One of the most instructive tips as a novice turner who prepared a bunch of blanks with geographic centers. Just one question, do these balance points remain after material is taken off or must it constantly need resetting.

Hi Art location unknown,
Good question! Unless you have an unusually shaped blank the balance point will not change while roughing out. If it does go way out of balance and vibrates during turning go back and find the balance point again. The balance point will not be the final axis because you will likely adjust it to take advantage of the grain or color or scale considerations of your turning. Adjust the axis in small increments until you have it just right for a spectacular turning.

HARM FROM BLUING HSS TOOLS WHILE SHARPENING

When you're grinding - especially high spots, how careful should you be about heat? Trying to remove a high spot on the wing of my gouge I found it was really quick to blue from the heat and I'm not sure if I'm doing harm.

Pointer, etc. name and location unknown,
Great question! The bluing is not a problem with the new HSS and alloy steel tools like Thompson makes. The bluing was a problem with the old high carbon tools and the temper or hardness was lost. But we don't use those tools for turning any more. If we look at the temperature ranges at the grinder, if you get a tool to glow red hot, that is about 700 degrees. HSS will not be damaged or loose and hardness until 1,700 degrees. So it will be really hard to damage a HSS turning tool at the grinder. Nothing to worry about! What is not recommended is to quench a hot HSS tool. Quenching can make micro fractures of the sharpened edge and make it lose its sharpness prematurely.

ADAPTING A ROBUST TILT AWAY TO OTHER LATHES

I purchased the hollowing tools from you at the Chicago symposium last year and I couldn't be more happy. Maybe if I had more time.
Can I adapt the Robust swing or rotate away tailstock to my Powermatic 3520B lathe? I do not care for the Powermatic swing away.
Thank you, Tom

Hi Tom location unknown,
It will not bolt right on. It could be retro fitted with adapters and machining needed. One of the best things about the tilt away is the shock assist. That is bolted to the Robust leg support. To make adapters for all of that would be a major project. To get the benefits of the Robust features I can

fix you up with a new American Beauty. The Powermatic would be easy to sell for a good down payment on the American Beauty.

WOOD HOME BUILT FACEPLATE

I have a 1-1/4” tap and make small glue blocks. If I made one 4 inches in diameter then glued it to my bowl blank and used screws as an additional step to hold the wood could it replace the metal face plate.
I usually use 4-5, 3/4" pieces of Oak and rotate each so that the grain is turned 90 degrees from the piece it is glued to.
I’m thinking this would allow me to glue them and also use screws to hold the bowl.
Lyle

Hi Lyle from Arizona,
Good question. If I understand your question and process I think it would work just fine. The issue here is vibration. So small scale work would be quite OK but I think you could exceed the strength of the wood support easily in large scale work. You can test it. If you get vibration you will know it is failing you. Know that the steel faceplate will always be a stronger and safer method. Never use the glue block method on hollow form turning. Only use the glue block for bowls and side grain gluing only, not end grain.

SHARPENING JIGS

Lyle,
I was lucky enough to win a “day in the shop” with Allen Hockenberry. I “tested” his Jamieson bowl gouge and really liked it. He sharpens with the Ellsworth jig, and I use the VariGrind 2. I would describe myself as an advanced beginner, and while I am comfortable with sharpening, I readily admit I have a lot to learn. My question is whether I will be able to maintain the profile on the Jamieson bowl gouge using my VG2 or whether the Ellsworth jig is a better choice?

Hi Pete location unknown,
Nice to hear from you, thanks for the question. The quick answer is yes. I will try to explain. First the Ellsworth jig is not the best because of the repeatability issue. It works but will result in grinding more steel away than necessary to keep a sharp edge, or even possibly to sharpen and go to work with a dull tool. The Ellsworth jig requires the 2-4-7 set up parameters and some grinders are not positioned to do that. There might be a need to make adapters.
The VariGrind 2 will sharpen my grind but it is very hard to set up, very, very hard. The angles for both the tip and the side need to be correct.
The best solution and the easiest to use and setup is the VariGrind 1, the original. Have you seen my Bowl Basics DVD? Here is an excerpt from it on sharpening: http://youtu.be/0zUph9zEjck

USING GLUE BLOCK FOR CORING

Using CA Adhesive with a glue block can I core a bowl shaped blank. If so what problems might I face.
Lyle

Hi Lyle location unknown,

A glue block method I use is a very strong way to secure a bowl blank. But if you are doing big bowls I would suggest you put the screws from a faceplate right into the wood. You will waste a little, maybe 1/2 inch of wood, but it will be even more secure that a glue block. There are tremendous forces going on while coring so the stronger support the better.

ADVANTAGES OF JAMIESON GRIND BOWL GOUGE

Good afternoon Lyle,
I need your advice, I do not like my current gouges they seem to be light and I am not sure that they even have the right grind to practice the four cuts that you demonstrate in a video I watched on YouTube. Would you recommend your "Signature Jamieson Grind Bowl Gouge – with the 16" Thompson Handle" to be your most versatile gouge and the best one for me to purchase to practice the techniques demonstrated both on your DVD and in your class?
Jon

Hi Jon from Texas,
Yes, the process is important; however the right tools are just as important. Many of the tools out there will do some of my cuts and process. But none of them will do it all or as well as mine. I have designed my tool with a parabolic flute and grind for its versatility. I can do it all with it. Some turners use multiple tools to accomplish what I can do with one. So, yes, you are correct my tool will help you. If you have other bowl gouges we can try to match the grind and angles to get close to mine but none will be an exact duplicate. When you get my gouge make sure to set up your grinding jig to match my angles and keep the grind shape I have.
I have really fallen in love with the Thompson handle. I however take the metal shot weight out for lighter feel. You mentioned "light". We don't need a heavy tool handle any more to help absorb the punishment we used to endure in the good old days. The new methods I teach are a finesse thing not a strength thing, so I prefer a lighter tool. No need to carry around a heavy tool anymore. There are some things that I do with my gouge where I turn and sharpen with the handle removed. The wood handles can't do that.
The 5/8" diameter (called ½ inch in some catalogs) size is critical for strength dangling out over the tool rest. I can turn small things with a big tool, but I can't turn big things with a small tools. So I don't use smaller diameter gouges.

UPGRADE TO NEW LATHE

Lyle,
I watched the recent YouTube on turning the inside of a natural edge bowl and was curious about the lathe you are using. I am impressed with the Robust bearings that support the head shaft. It doesn't look like any lathe I've seen.
I am not ready yet to get a larger lathe but see that in my future. Most of the good woodturners in our club have the Powermatic or the OneWay....$4000-$5000 dollars. Any suggestions for a good lathe in that price range or lower? New or used?
Thanks, Brian

Hi Brian from YouTube,
Yes, I am a Robust dealer. I truly believe it is the best lathe made today. There are models at various price ranges. The one I use is the American Beauty.
There are other lathes out there. I have a questionnaire I developed for my Robust customers that could help you find out what your needs, goals, desires are for a lathe. Whether you choose Robust or not, it can help narrow down the possibilities and options. Give me a call.
To answer your question in order of quality and price, you get what you pay for with a lathe. The more you pay the better engineered, the quality of components and the dependability. The normal sequence of events is people start with a cheap lathe and realize how much fun it is to turn. They upgrade to a mid-range lathe and outgrow that and upgrade multiple times to get where they want to go. So I suggest getting the best lathe you can possibly afford. What is the worst case scenario? You decide in a few years you would rather go fishing. You can sell a good lathe for almost what you paid for it. No risk involved.
It is hard to find a good used lathe. If it is any good it will not be for sale. Someone has to die for a good lathe to be for sale and it is usually sold to a friend or club member before it will ever be sold in an open market.
I hesitate to offer brand names. Features vary significantly. Go for a 1 ¼" spindle, electric variable speed for sure. I will leave Robust out of the mix; it is in a class all by itself. So look at something like Jet 1642, Powermatic 3520 for good value in mid-range lathes. Other brands to look at might be Nova or Vicmarc. I really hate to do this because I will leave other manufacturers out that might work for you. I need more information to make a better recommendation.

SHARPENING JIG ANGLES FOR JAMIESON GRIND

Lyle,
I had a quick question. Can you tell me what the angle is on the OneWay jig that you use for sharpening? I now have bowl gouges from you, Doug Thompson, and Carter and Son. Everyone uses a slightly different set up with the jig angle and tool extension. I am making up some wood jigs to set up the OneWay quickly for each tool. Both Doug and C&S have a handout with jig set up information. You have probably already seen Doug's. Could I get the jig angle and skew angle from you?
Thanks in advance,
Michael

Hi Michael from Tennessee,
Nice to hear from you! Your question is unanswerable or no quick answer anyway. Do you really want a different angle on each gouge? The brand of the gouge should not be the driving force for the angle you sharpen it. YOU control the sharpening shape and angle by the work you want to do with it. It is better and easier to have the same angle on all your bowl gouges, so when you pick them up you have a "constant" to start from. It can be difficult and frustrating to have to adjust your turning to multiple tip angles and back again from one to another.
I don't know how to break it to you gently but the way others have explained the sharpening setup will not work, it will be at best confusing and will not be accurate. If you look at the Wolverine instructions it will

blow your mind and is opposite to the others. Every grinder and all brand names are different. My 10 inch industrial grinder settings will not work on your 8 inch grinder. Every jig base is different on the table or stand the grinder is on. The grinding wheel/stone is different diameters and a changing moving target unless you have CBN wheels. Using directions from Doug Thompson's grinder will have a different result on your grinder. Every time you set the jig or the adjustable arm, all the settings will be influencing the tool angles. The tip angles are different than the side angles. There are way too many variables to start at a jig setting for all different grinders. So the bottom line is you have to set the jig to the angles you want on your gouge, not grind the angle to the jig setting. Does that make sense? The thinking is backwards. We need to set the jig to duplicate the grind we already have or to the angles we desire. Even if we get lucky and your methods work to get the tip angle close to what you want, the side angles are not addressed at all and will be much different than desired. So than you correct the setting to fix the side angle and now the tip angle is wrong and the original setting you wanted will not work and around and around we go chasing our tail.

So working backward we need to have the grind on your gouge first, as a template, and set the jig to duplicate the gouge angles, with YOUR grinder and YOUR grinder stand. From there it is all about repeatability and keeping it that way. My Bowl Basics DVD has the sharpening process, it is on YouTube: http://youtu.be/0zUph9zEjck The bowl gouge, spindle gouge, and detail gouges will be set with this method. Scrapers and the skew will be sharpened by hand on the grinder tool rest not using the Wolverine jig.

If you want to send me some photos of your bowl gouge grind and I can see if you have anything near what I use and make recommendations on how to get the grind back to the original. Use a protractor and measure the tip angle for me. The side angle is not measurable, but needs to be addressed. Remember the grind I use and we worked with when I was in your shop?? Why this grind - because of the versatility! I can do most everything with it. Other tools become secondary and for specialty uses.

FEEDBACK

Lyle:
I'm attaching a photo of my first "major" hollow form which I completed last week and will show at our Charlestown Woodturners Club meeting this Wednesday evening. It's made out of spalted, Pear wood which was fairly dry when I turned it. It's 12" tall and 8 1/2" in diameter. I finished it with several light coats of satin lacquer, using #4 steel wool between coats. I'm very pleased with how it turned out. More so, I'm very pleased with my brand new Jamieson Hollowing System! Thanks so much for inventing such a wonderful system.
Sincerely, Bill

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Lyle
I just thought I'd let you know that your hollowing system I bought oh so many years ago is what has allowed me to keep turning. I have bad neuropathy in my feet and can only stand for short periods. But I can hollow sitting down. Thanks a million.
Cheers, Fred

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I love your hollowing system and I am getting the hang of it. As I told you when we spoke my primary purpose for purchasing was to make an urn for my brother-in-law's ashes. It came out great and I couldn't have done it without the system. Thanks for all you do.
Don from Maryland

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Hi Lyle,
Congratulations on reaching 1,000,000 views! I have enjoyed your video work, meeting you at the Turner's events, and using a few of your tools. I hope you also enjoy the woodturning fraternity as much as I do. As a hobby woodturner, it's no work and all play. You, on the other hand, work at it and do a fantastic job promoting the craft and good safe practices.
Thank you,
Neil from Canada

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CALENDAR

I am holding many classes for students in my Traverse City, Michigan shop, too many to list. Give me a call if you are interested 231-947-6648.

I am doing many Live Remote Demonstrations for turning clubs all over the world, again, too many to list here. If you are in a turning club have your program chair give me a call for details.