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SOMETHING NEW!

I am up and running with live, remote, online 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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FEEDBACK

Please check out the testimonials within the Questions section this month.

CALENDAR

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Topic of the Month: Drying Double Turnings

I am using a question from a YouTube subscriber as the topic for this newsletter.

Hey Lyle,

Hope you don't mind my coming to ask another question...

It has to do with your philosophy of preparing roughed-out bowl blanks...and it's this: After hollowing the blank to your satisfaction,

is there any other treatment of the blank besides stuffing the hollowed out void with shavings, then storing all of that in a dated paper bag with more shavings?

Reason I'm asking has to do with seeing another YouTube turner rough-out a bowl blank, then paint it with Elmer's Glue-All (white glue)...in addition to filling the void with shavings, then doing the bag-thing with more shavings.

I hoped you could give me your take on this.

Do appreciate the assist. Thanks!

George on YouTube

Hi George from North Carolina,

I want to use your question as a topic for my newsletter. The answer will be a bit lengthy to cover your topic adequately. I seldom double turn. I prefer to turn green wood to the finished piece knowing that it will not be round when it dries. I cherish the character the pieces have from the drying process. If you want it round when you get done, than you must double turn. Dry wood is harder to turn, it's dusty, tools need sharpening more often, and it is just not as much fun. I never turn hollow forms dry.

If you really want to double turn, there are many methods to help speed up the drying and help prevent cracking. Cracking is a big disappointment after waiting months to dry only to discover cracks. Cracks are not acceptable to me. They are not safe to turn and even glued up or filled it is still a crack and unnatural. In order to double turn successfully we need to slow the drying process way down. One of the things that cause cracks is uneven moisture content. If the outside surface of the vessel dries out and the inside of the vessel is still wet it will crack. The trick is to control the moisture loss. If it dries too fast, it cracks. If it dries too slowly, it will mold. I am not a big fan of the process you described in your question. The shavings usually will promote mold. To double turn successfully takes constant attention for months. It will likely fail if you stuff it in a bag and come back six months later.

Some methods to use are an alcohol bath, boiling, liquid soap solution, kiln drying, glue and Anchor seal treatments, waxing, and others. All these methods work well in some situations and fail in others. They all have specific guidelines for use and a learning curve to go through. Sorry I am not an expert on these techniques because I don't use them. There are experts you will have to search for to help you. For an example Dale Larson has perfected a boiling method for handling the difficult madrone burl from the great northwest. The Hawaiian and Florida turners have success with the soap solution with Norfolk Island pine. Will these methods work as well for other wood varieties? The jury is still out; there is much disagreement about the issue. Most drying methods have been promoted and used successfully by some, and others use the same methods with less success.

The production turners use kiln drying successfully. Many have tried to make shop built kiln driers. Here again there are specific directions and technology used to measure moisture content and extract the water at a controlled rate. Some might try to build a homemade kiln by putting a light in an old refrigerator, but the failure rate would drive you crazy after a while.

My first piece of advice is to learn about turning wet to finished wall thickness. There are some limits to this. I don't do lidded boxes from wet wood. The lids will not fit when it dries. I don't chase threads, or do platters that will warp. Most of my bowl turnings have natural edges that mask the fact the bowl is not round anymore.

My second piece of advice, if you still want to double turn, is to do some homework, do some experimentation with woods in your area and see what works. What is the goal? No cracking? Speed up drying time? Prevent molding? How you prepare the blanks will have a huge impact on success. Do not leave the pith in any piece. The more wasted wood removed around the pith the better success and minimum of warping you will have. Make sure there is no cracks in the wood before you start. Getting the optimal wall thickness is an art in itself. I wish I had a fool proof method for you but there are too many variables.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

JAMIESON SIGNATURE BOWL GOUGE DIMENSIONS

Hi,

Just want to confirm that your Signature Jamieson Grind Bowl Gouge is 5/8" diameter not flute width. I'm pretty sure this is the case, but want to confirm before I order.

Thanks, Steve

Hi Steve location unknown,

Nice to hear from you, thanks for the inquiry. Yes, the tool is 5/8" diameter. My flute is a little wider and deeper than the other "1/2" inch gouges but the diameter is the same 5/8".

HOLLOW FORM TOOL MARKS

I received a note from Arlin about tool marks. He is a veteran with some physical limitations.

Hi Arlin from Iowa,

For tool control to clean up tool marks, make sure you have your hand on the tool rest for support and an anchor. Only use one hand and stand next to the lathe not at the end. Only use your fingertips to clean up tool marks. Make sure you have fresh wax on all the sliding surfaces of the hollowing tool and tool rest. It takes a little practice but it is just like writing a line on a piece of paper. Use your fingertips to draw with the cutter in a nice smooth line. If you have a tool mark, or bump, practice the movement with the lathe off to get a feel of where you are going to cut. A sharp tool, slow movement across the surface, and a good anchor should take care of any tool marks. Relax and let the tool system do all the work.

OTHER GLUES FOR GLUE BLOCK METHOD

This method looks to be very secure, but is all that CA glue necessary? Why not use Titebond? Is it just the time factor? Can you drill out the tenon from the glue block and reuse the glue block or does it go to waste? I can clearly see that this method works well, I just wonder if there are other ways to do the same.

Gil on YouTube

Hi Gil location unknown,

As you must know, there are a lot of methods that work pretty well. Here, I am after security and stability. The thick CA glue is forgiving, gap filling and provides a solid grip without vibration, because CA is brittle and hard, not spongy. Titebond will work but the tolerances would need to be close with a good fit and take time to cure. It is faster and easier to use CA. Why not?

Yes, the glue block can be used multiple times before it will need to be replaced.

TURNING WET WOOD

Truly a beautiful piece and thank you for sharing the selection of the axis process you use. Really makes sense after seeing the final shape. I am surprised to learn that you take a wet blank to finished piece with only a couple days between the turning and final sanding/finishing. Is this your normal process? Thanks so much for sharing.

Cheers, Gord on YouTube

Thanks Gord location unknown,

Yes, I only turn green wood. Most of the time I can do a piece in one setting with only a few hours wait. It will not be round but most of my pieces are natural edge so it masks the fact it is not round. I cherish the fact the wood enjoys a character from the drying process. The trick to doing it without cracking is twofold. Make a uniform wall thickness, don't have cracks in it before you start, and don't have the pith in it.

OOPS! that's three tricks☺!

CHUCK PROBLEMS

(Barry called with vibration and off axis problems while using a chuck for drilling, so we talked through using small wood held with a glue block. He is turning finger size rings that are lined with pewter using a small diameter exotic species of wood. The solution was to turn a recess in the glue block and a tenon on the ring blank for a more secure hold using CA glue. Here is a YouTube video using this method for a lidded box. <https://youtu.be/Yv26HJQxp3U>)

Lyle,

Just a note to say it worked well to glue the stock into a faceplate-hardly any vibration and once the drill was started it provided support-was surprised how hot it got though-had to stop and cool off the wood.

Barry location unknown



WHERE TO USE THE CARBIDE CUTTER

Lyle,

Don't mean to bug you but I have been doing some fun turning lately using your hollowing apparatus.

My daughter thought it would be great if I would turn and inlay the zodiac signs for the kids and grandkids, attached is a picture.



The Osage Orange I cut more than 30 years ago and was extremely hard. I had it on a long enough piece that I would be able to cut 4 turnings from the same piece. Problem with that is that cutting end grain on something so hard and dry would be a problem for hollowing out as the usual tool would grab and throw the piece out of line. By using your hollowing system and using only the small round disc carbide cutter it was no problem. One finger control and never a grab! The walnut was also very old but much easier to cut. I added a rim of pewter on some by cutting a narrow groove (wider at the bottom so it won't fall out) heating with a torch and pouring in the groove. Has to be one even pour. It shaves nicely with the cutting tools. Long story to say I would never go back to hollow turning without your apparatus.

Barry

Hi Barry location unknown,

WOW!! Thanks for the photos very nice work there. It is always a pleasure to hear from my students and others, to see what they are doing, and get feedback. Thanks for taking the time to write. I use the carbide cutter all the time; it's faster and easier than the HSS cutter. You have the process down. Using a faceplate and the carbide cutter will be easier and faster for both hard wood and questionable soft punky wood too. Enjoy!

SPECIFICS FOR HOLDING WOOD ON THE LATHE

Lyle,

I've watched your videos and looked at many of your newsletters, but have not found answers to the following questions.

1. Threaded glue blocks – Where do you rank them in your secure methods for attaching a workpiece?
2. Glue block size – do you follow the 40% rule of glue block diameter to workpiece diameter?
3. Material – what are your preferred U.S. domestic species? Which should not be used?
4. End grain – Can/should a glue block be used with an end grain/spindle orientation blank when hollowing?
5. CA vs. Hot Melt glue – do you have any thoughts/experience using hot melt glue instead of CA?

Thanks, Jerry

P.S. Instead of drilling a small through hole for a piece of coat hanger wire, I drilled a 7/32" hole and use the stem of my sharpening jig for alignment.

Hi Jerry from Arizona,

Nice to hear from you, thanks for the inquiry. Looks like you have done some homework; sorry you did not find the answers you were looking for. Some of it is in my Bowl Basics DVD, but I'll go over some of it for you here.

- 1) I would prefer to use a faceplate for a stronger, more stable platform over screwing the glue block on the spindle. The threaded method would work for many things but risk ending up with limitations.
- 2) Yes, a bigger faceplate and bigger glue block would be needed for large turnings.
- 3) The harder and the finer the grain the better wood and it will last longer. Hard maple is what I usually use. It must be dry.
- 4) No, use side grain orientation only for a stronger glue joint.
- 5) Thick CA is a must. Hot melt is rubbery and will allow vibration. Again it works for small stuff but would have limits.

Good idea for the centering pin that will work fine.

HOLLOWING A DIFFICULT SHAPE VESSEL

Lyle,

Having a problem you might be able to help with. At the Pittsburg Symposium I purchased a "I want it all Package ". My problem is that when I'm doing a hollow form like the one ATTACHED, I can't reach all the way inside, any suggestions?

Tom



Hi Tom from Pennsylvania,

The shape is very reachable. However the shape is on the difficult side depending on the size of the opening. There is a bit of a "fiddle" factor however. You will need multiple cutter configurations and the swivel will have to be moved multiple times on each. The boring bar will need all three reach capabilities. Where your arrows are, you will need the boring bar to reach over to the left as far as possible using the straight cutter assembly in the 45 degree hole of the other end of the boring bar. It just takes a little patience. You cut for a few strokes and the cutter will stall out and rub on something that is not sharp. The shaft of the cutter or the swivel will rub against the waste wood inside, or the boring bar will rub the mouth opening. When this happens, pull the cutter out of the vessel and move the cutter to a place that will cut, or change swivels, and repeat again until it stalls out again, move it again and on and on.

This process is more difficult if the entry hole is smaller. Sometimes if you give yourself just a quarter inch or half inch larger opening it can go quicker and a lot easier.

These two vessels are good examples.



They are both the same size, volume of hollowing. They are both a uniform 3/16 inch wall thickness. The top, walnut crotch piece, I made about as difficult as it gets. The opening is about 7/8 inch diameter and the shoulders are about 90 degrees flat out from the opening. The second piece is cherry burl. The opening is about 1 1/4 inch diameter and is a little sloped from the shoulders. The second piece even with the voids took me a little over one hour to hollow, and the walnut piece took me about 9 hours to hollow. The message here is that it can be done but some shapes will take longer.

Please, if this is not clear, or you don't have a good game plan, give me a call and I can trouble shoot your process. This is an example where MY process is going to give you the versatility to do any shape you want. It takes the right tools which you have, but if you choose not to follow my methods, used in my Hollowing DVD, you will end up with obstacles or limitations along the way.

PURCHASING AN IMPACT DRIVER

Hi Lyle,

I enjoy your newsletters! I am trying to decide on a driver, probably impact and cordless type to drive my screws for face plate mounting. Do you have any advice on type or model of driver? I have a Robust American Beauty, so am turning large pieces from time to time. I didn't want to buy the largest most powerful impact driver if a lighter less costly one would be adequate. I don't plan to be changing tires on Mack truck, assuming that take more torque.

Thanks, Jon

Hi Jon from Hawaii,

Good question! I use an impact driver ALL the time for work big or small. Make sure it is an impact driver not a drill driver. I would look for a sale at a big box store. The size in watts is not important. My small one I bought 15 years ago is still working fine. You should be able to get one for \$100.00-\$120.00 range on sale. For hobbyist work it will do the job. The more expensive models would last longer but I doubt they will work any better

MOVING THE BACK REST FOR HOLLOWING ON A DIFFERENT LATHE

Hi Lyle,

Thought I would share with you a couple of exciting things I discovered with your boring bar system this morning. My 16" lathe is down due to spindle bearings. I'm using my 14" Jet in the meanwhile. I wanted to do a bunch of pencil holders from some sycamore I found recently so after turning a cylinder I stuck your system on the lathe not knowing how it would work with the bar tilted down toward the headstock and it worked beautifully.

The second great thing was when I made my final few cuts. I just used my left hand this time keeping the cutter lightly touching the wood. I finally got that whisper cut you talk about and the inside looks

fabulous. If my day gets any better I may go buy some lottery tickets. Thanks again for a great system and great video tutorials.

Jim

Hi Jim location unknown,

Thanks for sharing your good fortune. I don't want to burst your bubble....but....what you tried was the norm years ago with hand held boring bars. The extra angle was considered an insurance policy to prevent a catch. It's all about never violating the 90 degree rule. Are you using the HSS or carbide cutter? Here is where the thinking fails. When you have the handle up as your describe, it works as long as you are cutting with pressure toward the headstock. Now think of a bulbous shape and we have the swivel way around to the left to undercut the shoulder area. Now the cutting pressure is pulling toward the tailstock. What angle is the cutter now? It is angled "UP". Not good! This is a catch waiting to happen. A violent catch could blow up the piece big time! Very dangerous! Best case scenario is you will get some ugly vibration.

Now let's go back to your set up, as I advise, and figure out what is wrong with your cutting and surface on the 16" lathe. You should be able to just use your left hand and fingertip control and make light controlled cuts that result in a hissing sound and a very smooth inside surface. I cannot trouble shoot the problem from the information you supplied so far, but something is not right with the set-up, the sequence, the direction of your cut, the sharpening, the tool rest position. Lots of things can become the obstacle. So please go back to the installation instructions to double check everything. Then view the DVD and see if your process is different from mine. I am betting you will find a thing or two that contributes to your difficulty. If not, please, call me and I can help you figure out what is wrong.

HELP WITH CARVING TECHNIQUES

Lyle,

I have been interested learning some wood carving. Do you have any suggestions on what books or tools or classes?

Thanks,
Richard

Hi Richard from Texas,

I am completely self-taught. I kind of just went after it and figured it out. There would be a bunch of YouTube videos that might help you now that I didn't have back in the good old days.

There is likely a local carving club in Waco. Some will specialize in hand carving and some carve with rotary tools. They will usually be versed in carving ducks, birds, or fish. The skills involved can work on turned objects.

It takes a wide variety of tools. In the carving I do on my figurative sculptures, I might use 20 different tools to get the job done. There are two different tool sets, one for green wood and another for dry wood. I think the hardest thing about carving is the skills needed to paint the finished piece. The painting, coloring, or dying can take longer than the carving sometimes.

FEEDBACK

Please check out the testimonials with in the Questions this month.

CALENDAR

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.

Check out my website calendar for more specifics. I am doing classes in my studio/workshop in Traverse City, Michigan continuously.
(<http://lylejamieson.com/calendar/>)

November, 2016 – Virginia

June, 2017 – Missouri

August, 2017- Texas

October, 2017- Ohio