Woodsmith PLANS

Turning a Platter

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Push your skills and create a showstopper. With an ogee below and a curved rim above, this platter will add a natural look and feel to your dinner table.

The platter is probably my favorite subject to turn. The form is open, showing off the grain in the wood. The peice itself is utilitarian, while the beautiful double curve of the ogee on the outside and a rim that gently curves into the inside makes this piece aesthetically pleasing and ergonomic to hold.

PREPPING THE BLANK

To start, I find the center of the blank using a pair of dividers or compass by scribing four arcs into the surface. Imagine a clock and scribe the arcs from 12, 3, 6, and 9 o'clock into the center of the blank, keeping the point of the compass on the outside points. When you make the four arcs, it will form a cross that indicates the middle.

Cutting the blank round on a band saw will make the initial balancing of the blank much quicker and easier. Even just cutting the corners off to make an octagon will be far faster to turn than from square.

MOUNT THE BLANK

There are several ways that the blank could be mounted on the lathe. I use a screw chuck for diameters up to 12". For blanks larger than 12", I prefer to use a 6" faceplate. This gives me more support when turning towards the outside of the platter.

When the blank is mounted securely,

Mounting. Drill a centered hole in the blank, slightly deeper than your worm screw. Mount the blank on the screw center. A screw chuck is a great choice for any blank under twelve inches, while a faceplate will give more support for larger blanks.

Truing. Use a push cut to true up the rim of the blank. Truing this piece will ensure the platter stays symmetrical as you shape it.

make sure that the blank is tight against the face of the screw chuck. I start with the speed approximately 1600 to 1800 rpm. The speed you can turn at depends on the blank being used. For example, if the blank has half sapwood and half heartwood, there will be a harmonic and vibration due to the different densities within the blank. As a guide to speed, I prefer to turn as fast as I feel safe, without any vibration.

FIRST CUTS

Using a ½"-long grind bowl gouge, I proceed to true up the outside edge of the platter using a push cut with the bevel, "floating" behind the cut, but in contact with the wood. Then, I true up the face which will become the bottom of the platter. I do this with a draw cut—drawing the tip of the bottom wing of the long grind bowl gouge towards me. I do this until I have a clean, flat face on the blank. With the blank now true on the edge and face I prepare a recess that will house dovetailed jaws in a chuck. This will hold the platter when turning the rim and hollowing out the platter.

I measure the diameter of the chuck jaws with dividers and transfer the measurement to the wood. To make the recess, I use a parting tool to make two or three plunge cuts into the blank, side-by-side. These are about 3/16" deep. This leaves enough room to get a bowl gouge in there and remove the rest of the waste. The inside of the recess needs to be slightly dovetailed, and I do this with a parting tool ground at 10° to match my dovetail jaws. Be sure this cut is clean and accurate, as it makes a huge difference to how true the platter will run when remounted.

CREATING THE FOOT

The full diameter of the foot is approximately one-third of the diameter of the platter. From the outside edge of the foot, I make a cut with the parting tool about 1/16" deep, and then remove the excess 1/16" wood from the foot to the edge of the platter. This defines the foot and is the final thickness of the foot when the platter is finished.

Pulling. A draw cut, from center to rim, trues the face of the blank. Pulling cuts will give you greater control over your gouges.

Measuring. Set a pair of dividers to your chuck jaws. This will hold onto the recess in the foot of our blank.

Scribing. Transfer the jaw measurment to the blank, scribing with the left divider leg while keeping the right leg in line.

Recess. Use a parting tool to form the recess in the platter, following your scribed markings in the piece.

Foot. Define the outside edge of the foot, cutting half as deep as the recess. The foot should take up the inner third of the platter.

Waste. A bowl gouge removes the rest of the waste in the recess. To avoid tearing out the recess, use smooth, easy cuts.

Shaping the **Back**

The double curve of the ogee will give the platter a natural feel and look. Remember to watch the profile when cutting.

AN OGEE VIA GEOMETRY

An ogee is easy to create via geometry. It's simply a sine wave after all. I start by making a few layout lines to follow as I turn. Divide the area between the foot and rim into thirds. The finished rim is about ⅛" thick. I mark this rim thickness with a pencil line about 3/16" from the back face. This extra thickness allows extra for any changes in the curve that may be necessary. Remember, you can take wood off, but you can't put it back on!

Now that I have the reference marks, I use a draw cut from the line closest to the foot to the rim line.

Here, I'm making a simple flat to remove the bulk of the waste. Once the flat is made, I use a push cut to form the first part of (the hollow) of the ogee curve. This cut is from the rim towards the foot and is against the grain. Yes, I cut against the grain. I do this because it allows me to cut in a position where I can see the profile develop and allows me to see the curve I am cutting. This is a push cut so remember to ride the bevel.

FINISHED OGEE

After the flat has been formed into a soft curve, I mark a pencil line at the halfway point between the outer edge of the foot and the rim of the bowl. This is the "inversion" point of the sine wave and where one curve transitions into the other. You can see this in the drawing.

Then, using a draw cut with the grain and again looking at the profile whilst cutting, I remove the waste wood from the high point left after the initial curve cut. These cuts will extend out to the edge of the platter in order to remove any "tear out" from cutting against the grain when forming the initial curve. This is the reason for leaving the extra thickness towards the rim. It allows for these clean up cuts. Here, I prefer the draw cut as I can take off hair-like shavings when refining the ogee curve and I am also in a position where I can look at the profile whilst cutting. A light shining on the edge of the platter allows me to see any high points and refine them.

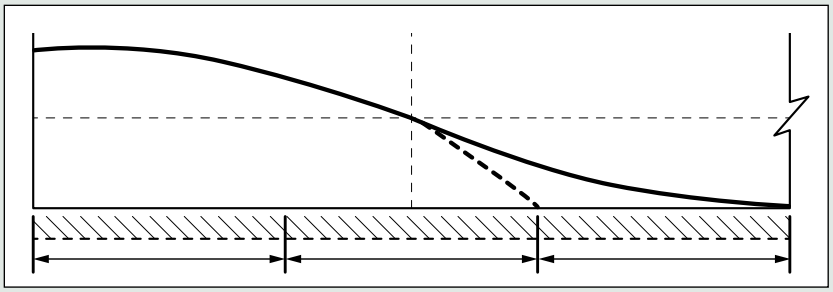
To determine if the ogee curve is correct and balanced, I replace the pencil line and then look at the profile closely. I am looking to see if one curve is exactly the other but just opposite and 50/50 in proportion.

Dividing. Mark the rim thickness and divide the distance from the foot to the rim into thirds.

Outer Curve. Connect the inner third mark to the rim by creating a large bevel, leaving the rim at 3/16" thick.

Inner Curve. Make a push cut from the rim to the foot, creating the curve of the ogee while keeping your eye on the profile.

The Ogee Simplified



Ogee. The ogee is essentially a sine wave, inverting its curve halfway through. Dividing the area into thirds will help you create the curve piece-by-piece.

Inversion. Make a mark halfway between the foot and the rim. This is where the ogee curve will invert itself.

Blending. Once the two curves have been shaped, use a draw cut to form the ogee and blend the two curves together.

FINISH THE BACK

Now on to sanding and finishing. Many turners have their own preferred finish and there are so many products out there that it can be very confusing. The finish I use is very simple and looks great.

Depending on how good of a finish you get from your finishing cuts will dictate the grade of grit to use first. I usually start with a 180 grit and work through to at least 400 grit, maybe finer if the wood requires it. The sanding speed of the lathe is anywhere from 500 to 900 rpm. I like to power sand, and generally use a 2-inch sanding pad and electric drill. Again, there are many on the market and I have tried several brands some of which are better than others but tend to gravitate towards the "Skilton" brand sanding pad, which I have used for well over 20 years now. They're available in 1, 2 and 3-inch diameters and are designed to be used with Velcro-backed discs.

There is some discussion amongst woodturners that sanding against the grain by turning the lathe in reverse will give you a better finish. I have never found the need to do this as I tend to like to raise the grain between sanding grits with either water or denatured alcohol.

After sanding, I apply a liberal coat of sanding sealer. My mix is 70% Zinsser's wax-free shellac mixed with 30% denatured alcohol. I find that this diluted mix is drawn further into the pores of the wood and after the first coat is dry and the second applied and dried the wood, it will be sealed for an application of natural Danish oil. After wiping a coat of Danish oil, I let it set for a few minutes before wiping away any excess. I'll let the surface dry and apply as many coats as I feel it is necessary letting each one dry in between to give me the depth and sheen I am looking for.

The number of coats you'll want to apply depends on the density of the wood and the figure. When the last coat is applied and fully cured, I buff the surface with a soft lint free cloth. If sanded and finished correctly, you'll have a deep sheen and the oil will emphasize the grain and chatoyancy in the wood. It's a beautiful silky-smooth sheen.

Raising Grain. Use denatured alcohol to raise the grain before sanding. This'll give the piece a smoother finish afterward.

Sanding. Power sand the back of the platter through 600-grit. Where you need to start will depend on your finishing cuts.

Finishing. Apply sanding sealer and let it dry before coating in Danish oil. A few coats of oil will add depth to the grain.

Finishing the **Top**

To finish out platter, we'll need to mount it by the foot recess, shape the rim, then hollow out the "bowl" of the platter. Using a sharp gouge here can save you plenty of sanding time later.

REMOUNT THE PLATTER

With the outside finished, the platter is removed and remounted in the dovetail jaws. The dovetail jaws slip into the recess and you can open the chuck to expand the jaws, holding the platter in place. Make sure that the platter turns true and square. If it doesn't and it wobbles, you'll have an uneven thickness on the rim. With the platter held in the chuck, the face can now be trued up and turned to the thickness desired for the rim. Again, I use a draw cut, as I find I have more control drawing the tool towards me rather than pushing it away. There's a reason Japanese saws and planes work in the same manner!

When you have trued the face and turned it down to the desired thickness, we can now work on the rim itself. I create the rim at this stage in particular, because it's possible when you start to remove the waste from the center of platter that tension and stress will be released within the blank. This can cause the platter to move slightly, becoming warped or oblong. If the platter moves, it's difficult to sand the rim evenly when the rim is running out of true!

MAKE THE RIM

My preferred proportion for the rim is a third of the radius of the platter. The rim itself is also not flat— it has a slight curve and is angled in towards the hollow of the platter.

After marking out the rim width, the rim itself is divided into thirds again. The outside third is turned away first, using a draw cut. Here, you're looking for a slight curve towards the outside of the platter, with the pencil line being the high point. On the inside edge of the rim, use a push cut towards the center to turn the inside two thirds curving down towards the center.

The design of the rim is intended to do two things. Aesthetically, it draws your eye into the piece. But, it's also ergonomic as well. As you hold the platter, your thumbs rest on the curve and it feels "right." Once the rim has been turned and shaped, I sand it and apply sealer so that it's ready for the Danish oil finish later.

NOW, ON TO THE HOLLOWING

As I mentioned before, I prefer the rim to be approximately a third of the radius. To give me a defined starting point for hollowing, and a clean entry cut. I use the parting tool to make a small groove where the rim transitions into the hollow. This will also allow for the bevel of the bowl gouge to rest on it when cutting away from the rim into the middle of the platter.

I start hollowing from the middle and go as deep as the hole left by the screw chuck, then work my way out to the edge of the rim of the platter. This technique leaves some material in the middle that supports the platter, whilst getting the first half of the hollowing done. Where the inside edge of the rim meets the hollow, I make a small undercut with a $\frac{3}{8}$" micro bevel bowl gouge. This leaves a very pleasant, ergonomic feel to the platter. When I am happy with the lead in curve from the edge of the rim to where I had previously hollowed, I continue to remove the rest of the waste wood, working the bowl gouge from the outside into the middle. This cut is in the direction of the grain and, if your gouge is sharp,

Mounting. Mount your chuck on the lathe and expand the jaws into the recess. Accurate dovetails will ensure a good hold here.

Rounding. Use a light draw cut to slightly round over the outer third of the rim, keeping the pencil line as the high point.

Rim Curve. Make a push cut to angle the inner $\frac{2}{3}$ of the rim towards the center of the platter.

Defining. The rim should be rounded, flowing toward the center. A light cut with a parting tool defines the edge of the rim.

Finishing the Rim. Sand, seal, and finish the rim. It's best to do this before hollowing, in case the rim moves afterward.

Entry. Start hollowing the platter from the centercut. Leave some waste to keep the blank sound as you cut.

Hollowing. Work back towards the rim, finishing the interior in sections at a time to minimize any movement in the rim.

leaves a nice finish.

Be aware that the platter is being held in a recess and that the leading curve into the platter does not go too deep. If it does, your last couple of cuts can enter the recess and leave you with a hole in the platter! If you need to, you can use a curved scraper to refine and blend any high spots on the inside of the platter.

After the inside is completed, I sand and finish the inside curve in exactly the same way as the outside working through the grits of abrasive, sealing and then a light coat of Danish oil.

If all goes well you should end up with a beautiful, ergonomic and aesthetically pleasing platter!

Final Cuts. Make smooth push cuts from the outside towards the center, being careful not to break through the recess.

Finishing. Once you've reached the desired shape, sand, seal, and oil the platter, then let it cure before using it.

MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

- ½" long grind bowl gouge
- ⅛" parting tool
- ⅜" micro-bevel bowl gouge
- 1" round nose scraper (if necessary)

Finishing

- 2" Skilton sanding pad
- 2" sanding discs (120 to 400 grit)
- Shellac and denatured alcohol mix (70% Shellac/30% denatured alcohol)
- Danish oil
- (4) Bun Feet
- (8) ¼" Shelf Pins
- (12) 1¼" Pocket Hole Screws
- (7) #8 x 1¼" Fh Woodscrews
- (4) 1"-dia. x 1" Dowels

Custom Color

You can add some color to your platter as well with some stain and spray laquer.

Staining. To achieve these colors, I used two alcohol-based stains: a dark blue and a light blue.

Before sealing, apply the dark blue and sand it back. This reveals parts of the unstained wood. Apply the lighter blue stain next, giving the depth of blues you can see to the right. Lastly, add a coat of spray laquer for sealant. Once it's cured, sand down any overspray and you'll be left with a glass-smooth finish.

Sharpening Turning Tools

Sharpening wood cutting tools is a subject that has been discussed many times in the past. And, I am sure, it will be discussed many times again in the future. Sharpening and "what is sharp?" is all relative to what you are cutting.

Depending on the tool to be sharpened, and the method used, of which there are many, we are all looking for the same thing. A sharp edge to cut the wood efficiently.

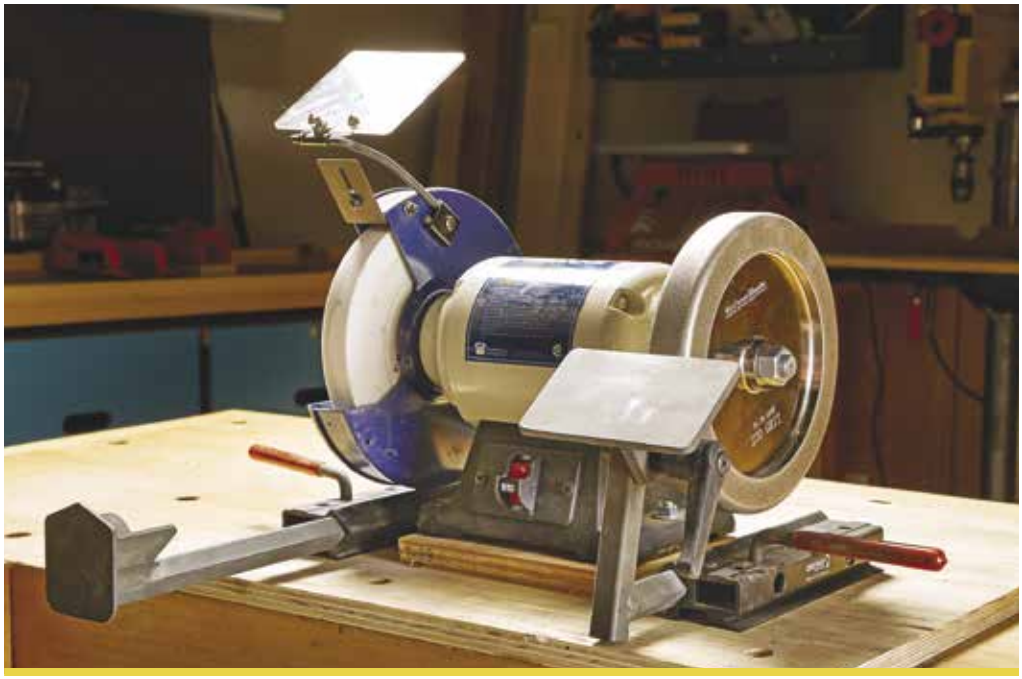
Woodturning has changed tremendously over the last 36 years that I have been teaching and demonstrating all over the world. The type of turning, the woods we have access to, as well as the tools and techniques have all evolved.

TURNING THROUGH THE AGES

Years ago, woodturning tools were made of carbon steel and one could achieve a really sharp edge, but it would not last for repetitive production work like stair spindles. The tools mainly used were a skew, spindle roughing gouge, a parting tool, and a few sizes of spindle gouges. Bowl gouges are relatively new, as bowls and plates were formed using a scraper and were superseded by the more economic ceramic tableware.

Over the years, tool design and different steel alloys have evolved. After carbon steel, HSS (High Speed Steel) was introduced, one could get a sharp edge that would last longer than carbon but not get quite as sharp. Now there are several different steels available from various manufactures, some of them sharpen easier using different products available.

SHARPENING AS A SKILL. Sharpening is a skill in itself and has to be learned. Many years ago, before the introduction of sharpening jigs for woodturning tools, they were sharpened on a grinder and honed by hand using a sharpening stone to keep the edge keen.



A basic turning sharpening setup is shown here. The *Oneway Wolverine system* includes a V-cradle and a platform. Both of which slide into receivers mounted below the wheel to adjust for different tools and bevel angles.

With some of the grinds that are popular now, "long grind bowl gouge" for example, have swept back wings that can be used in a draw cut fashion as well as a traditional push cut. This new grind in particular can be very difficult to grind freehand and that's when a jig is a great help.

WOLVERINE JIG. There are many jigs systems available but the one I use is the *Oneway Wolverine system* with the standard *Vari-Grind* jig. The advantage of this jig is that it is generally quicker and easier than freehand grinding. It also gives you repeatability, as you will get the exact same grind every time, and this saves steel!

GRINDERS. Most of the grinders in the UK, my birthplace, use 6"-dia. wheels and work perfectly fine with the *Oneway* jig system. But, I prefer the 8"-dia. wheels here in the US as the bevel is slightly less concave (therefore stronger) from the wheel.

While most woodturners use a dry grinder for sharpening their tools, some have 'wet' grinders such as the *Tormek*. They work well, but I am more of a traditionalist and prefer *Norton* aluminium oxide wheels.

Adjust the V-cradle out until the angle of the tool bevel matches the profile of the wheel. Then, lock it in place and turn the grinder on. Rest the butt of the tool in the cradle and rotate the cutting edge on the wheel to sharpen it.

SPINDLE ROUGHING GOUGE

The spindle roughing gouge (SRG) is designed to turn a square blank round, between centers. To sharpen them, two ways are pictured. To the left, you can see the first method using the long arm support. The handle sits in the cradle and the tool is rotated left and right to sharpen the bevel.

▲ Adjust the V-cradle until the bevel on the spindle roughing gouge matches the curvature of the grinding wheel.

▲ An SRG can also be sharpened with the adjustable tool rest and is the safest way to sharpen an SRG with a CBN wheel.

▲ The spindle gouge can easily be sharpened using the *Vari-Grind* jig. The tool is rocked back and forth to sharpen the entire bevel.

The second way to sharpen an SRG is to use the adjustable platform, as you see in the center photo above. Note that when using a diamond wheel or a CBN (Cubic Boron Nitride) wheel, this is the only safe way to sharpen a SRG. Using the V-cradle with a CBN wheel can cause the tool to pinch and damage the wheel.

I sharpen the SRG at approximately 45°. A few degrees here or there either way makes very little difference, so don't be too concerned if you are slightly off on any of these tools. It's more important that the tool is sharp and gives you the results that you're looking for.

THE SPINDLE GOUGE (40-45°)

For a spindle gouge, I prefer to use the *Vari-Grind* jig and sweep the wings back. You simply set the protrusion of the tool and angle of the jig, and set it in the V-cradle. Then, the tool can be rocked left and right to sharpen the end and wings. You can see this in the right photo above. For detail work and to reach into tight areas, I may lower the angle from 40-45° to 35°.

THE SKEW CHISEL (25-35°)

To sharpen a skew chisel, I rough shape the bevel on a belt sander by raising and lowering the handle. Then, I hone the edge using either a waterstone or a diamond sharpener. Note the profile of my skew at the cutting edge — the once flat bevel is now rounded. I do this so that the tool wants to come out of the cut. This modified profile reduces the risk of "catching" the tool.

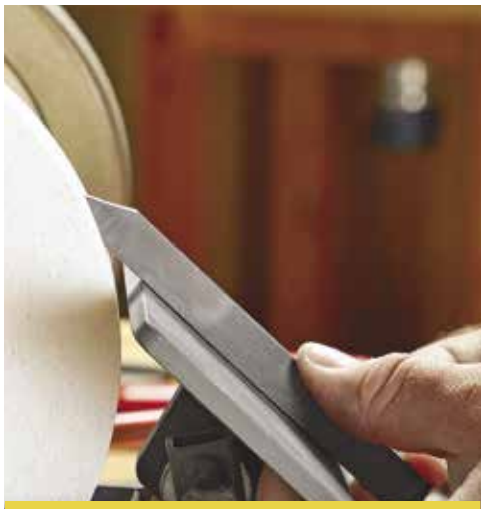
I find this profile much easier to hone and keep sharp and rarely needs reshaping. It should be razor sharp for the best results. Traditional flat bevels can be sharpened with a guide like on a bench stone.

THE PARTING TOOL (25-30°)

Possibly the easiest tool to sharpen apart from the scraper is the parting tool. Just make sure

▲ The first thing I do on a skew chisel is to round over the bevel shoulders. Use a belt sander. Start with the bevel "line" on the belt and raise and lower the tool handle to round over the bevel face.

▲ For final sharpening after shaping the skew, I go to an oilstone. Then, it's just a simple matter of putting an edge on like you would a normal bench chisel.



Match the angle of the tool rest so the parting tool is resting on the wheel. Then, sharpen both sides of the parting tool keeping the end square.

Traditional scrapers are easiest to sharpen upside-down. The tool rest is angled down to drag a burr off the top (cutting) side.

Negative rake scrapers are sharpened long bevel (bottom) first, then the shorter second bevel for a 70° edge.

you evenly grind either side and that the end of the tool is square. An angled tip can affect the cut quality. You can grind this using the V-cradle, or on the platform, like you see above.

THE SCRAPER (70-80°)

For traditional scrapers, I prefer to sharpen the tool upside down and therefore drag a burr off of the top side. The tool rest plate is tilted slightly down into the wheel and gravity helps hold the tool down and produce a larger friable burr. You can see this in the middle photo above.

The negative rake scraper is also popular and has two bevel angles. The sum of the angles equals about 70°. This is achieved by first grinding the initial bevel angle and then grinding the top of the tool upside down to produce the negative rake (right photo, above).

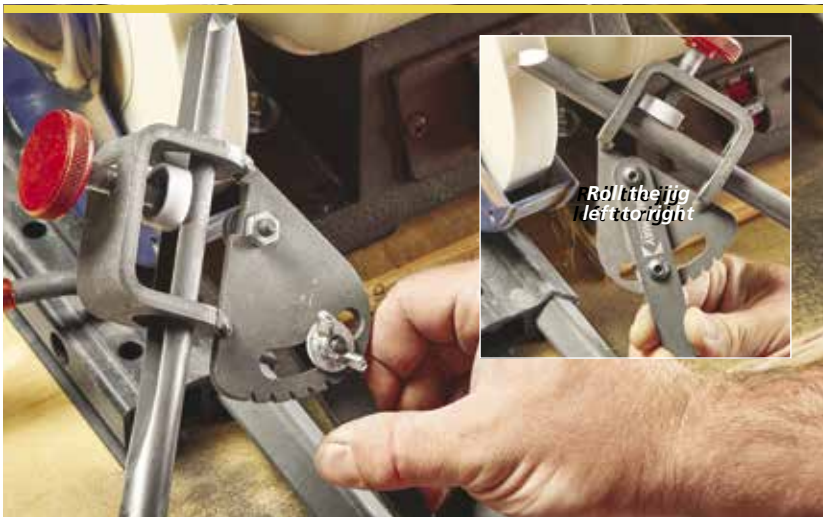
THE BOWL GOUGE (40-50°)

Possibly the hardest tool for beginners to sharpen is the bowl gouge. As with the spindle gouge, I use the *Vari-Grind* jig with the arm to sweep the wings back on my gouges. To set a consistent angle, I set the bowl gouge in my *Vari-Grind* jig and set the protrusion using the V-cradle. I line up the bevel with the end of the cradle (left photo below). For most of my bowl gouges, I center the wing-nut on the jig on the second notch.

For the standard and bottom feeding gouge, I grind freehand. However, you can also use the tool rest to sharpen these. You cannot use the *Vari-grind* jig because the bevel angle is often too obtuse to safely use a sharpening jig. It can cause a pinching or grabbing action.

In my opinion, at the end of the day, it does not matter how you sharpen your tools as long as you get the end result you want. And that result is to work the wood as safely and efficiently as possible. Because all woodworkers know how important a sharp tool is.

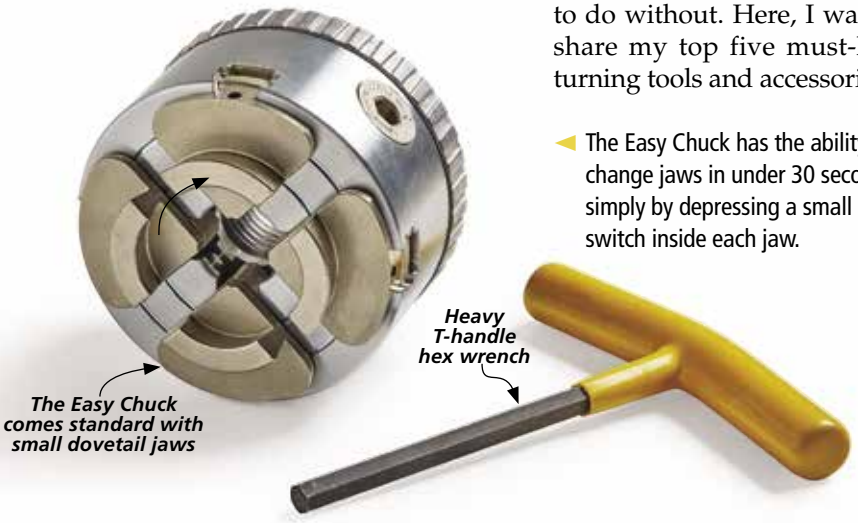
Setting the protrusion is what will give consistent results with the *Vari-Grind* jig. I use the V-cradle as a gauge to get the same setup every time.



Sharpening a bowl gouge starts with one wing. Then, in a smooth, fluid motion roll the tool from left to right sharpening the entire edge. You'll know the edge is sharp when the sparks travel down the flute as you sharpen.

Must-Have Turning Tools and Gadgets

I don't think that there's a facet of woodworking that has nearly the amount of gadgets and gizmos that woodturning has. From tooling to chucks, there's countless options. However, there are a few pieces of my every-day turning set that I wouldn't want to do without. Here, I want to share my top five must-have turning tools and accessories.



◀ The Easy Chuck has the ability to change jaws in under 30 seconds simply by depressing a small switch inside each jaw.

THE BEST QUALITY CHUCK

By far my most used form of wood holding on the lathe is my chuck. The chuck I prefer is shown here. It's the *Easy Chuck* from *Easy Wood Tools*. Yes, it's a pricey investment, but it's probably the last chuck I'll ever buy. It's designed and made in the USA. And the quality of construction is second to none. But, there's one feature that I really appreciate.

As you can see in the lower photos on the next page, the *Easy Chuck* has a variety of jaws available for it. Instead of being screwed on, the jaws release with a small push button. This means that you can have a new set of jaws in place and ready to use in less than 30 seconds.

▶ The *Jimmy Clewes* quick-release collet is my go-to tool system. The *Thompson* tools can be bought with a handle or fitted with a collet for use with the quick-release.

QUALITY TOOLS

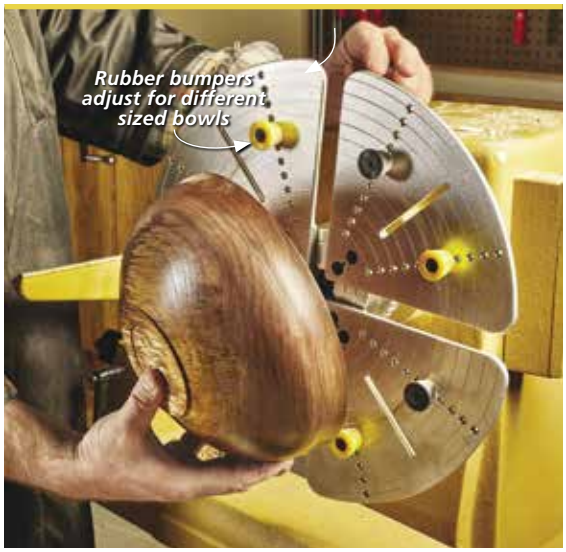
The amount of tools that some woodturners have is amazing to me. Contrary to what people working in the shop with me might say, I like things to be clean, organized, and clutter-free. So, when I started building my turning tool collection, I decided to put together one quality set that covers almost all of my turning needs, but didn't take up a ton of shelf space.

CLEWES SIGNATURE SERIES. The set I settled on can be seen above. It's a group of tools from *Jimmy Clewes* and *Thompson Tools*. The basic set I use is the *Clewes* signature series. It includes two bowl gouges, a box scraper, parting tool, spindle gouge, a shear scraper, and a hollowing tool. One of the things I like about this set is that the tools are made for Jimmy by *Thompson Tools*, who is regarded as making some of the best turning tools available. They're made from CPM 10V steel, which sharpens easily, but also has good edge retention.

To this basic set of tools, I also added a skew chisel, scraper blank, along with a spindle roughing gouge. In my mind, these three tools, also from *Thompson Tools*, offer some of the the best bang for your buck. I also like the fact that the tools are sold with or without a handle. Which means, they fit into any number of handle systems, including the quick release collet.

▲ The basic set I use is a spindle gouge, bowl gouge, parting tool, two scrapers and a hollowing tool.

QUICK RELEASE. The real icing on the cake about this system is the quick release seen above. It's sold with or without a handle so you can turn one that fits you. The tools slide into the collet, and the cam action of it locks the tool in place with a quarter of a turn. The nice part about this system, and the speed of this one in particular, is I can have all the tools I'm using sitting on the lathe bed without worrying about a long handle that I might accidently knock onto the ground damaging the tip.



▲ The jaw options from *Easy Wood Tools* range from large jaws (the *Big Easy* is shown above) that will hold a bowl by its rim, to small jaws for specialty tasks.

▲ Smaller jaws, like the set of *Easy Reach* Dovetail jaws shown above, are perfect for reaching inside of a small hollow-form, or for holding pen blanks as shown here.

The right angle head of the drill allows you to reach the sanding pad inside of bowls and get silky-smooth finish with a minimal amount of effort.

POWER SANDER

Sanding, in the world of flat woodworking, is made easier by random orbital sanders. In turning, I find that having the ability to power sand speeds up the finishing process and gives me better results. For a power sander, I use an inexpensive right angle drill from *Harbor Freight*. It allows me to reach inside of a bowl and smooth out lumps, bumps, or tool marks left. The cheap version is perfect for what I need without a huge expense. That allows me to spend my money on what really matters — a quality pad and sandpaper.

SOFT PAD. When power sanding, I found that a quality pad makes a world of difference. The pad I use is a *Skilton* 2"-diameter pad combined with *Mirka Gold* 2" sanding discs. See Sources on page 15 for where I purchase mine. (It's the cheapest place I found, and I buy a nice sized 50-pack of each grit). I also like the fact that they offer a 2" disc holder that is a "protective pad." It works perfect for placing on the back of sandpaper and using it to hand sand tight areas. Say goodbye to hot fingers.

Place the cordless lamp anywhere you have a metal surface, for light just where you neeed it.

EXTRA LIGHT

Now it's time to switch gears a little. The three items I just talked about are larger purchses. But, sometimes it's the small things that make a world of difference. In this case, my first budget grab is a flexible magnetic light like you see in the lower left photo.

LED POWER. What I like about a light like this is that the magnetic base is easy to remove and position just where I need it on the lathe. It can be placed on the headstock, the bed, or the tailstock depending on what operation I'm doing. The flexible arm allows me to direct the powerful LED beam just where it's needed. The model I purchased also has a sliding focus tube. This allows the beam to be adjusted for either a wide, slightly dimmer light or a narrow, more intense beam.

TWO CONSIDERATIONS. When looking at magnetic lights, there are two things to consider. The first is the neck length. You'll want to make sure to pick up a light with as much neck length as you can so you can bend the head to where it's needed. The second thing to consider is if you want the light to be

corded or battery powered. I opted for a battery model. The less cords I can deal with, the better in my opinion.

MAGNETIC HELPERS

Even though I'm not a production turner, I like to be as efficient as I can while I'm turning. That involves keeping as many of my most-used tools close at hand as possible. Here's where my final must-have accessories comes into play — magnetic tool holders.

BAR FOR TOOLS. I use a pair of magnetic tool holders on my lathe. The first is the bar style shown above. It snaps right to the side of the lathe bed and provides me a great place to store tools and items like the chuck key, calipers, dividers, and even a metal-bodied pencil.

The second holder is a small magnetic dish. Mine usually, lives on top of the headstock. It's the perfect spot to corral small or non-metallic items like the sanding discs I'm using: a small diamond hone, or allen wrenches. Being magnetic, it stays in place and doesn't vibrate off the lathe.

I use a magnetic bar on the tailstock side of the lathe to hold dividers, chuck keys, and other accessories. The magnetic tray (left) is perfect for holding loose sandpaper while finishing.

As you can see, this is just my personal, short list of must-have items when I'm turning. If you pick up one or two of the items from this list, I think you'll find that they make your time at the lathe just a little more enjoyable.

MAIL ORDER SOURCES

amazon.com

Easy Wood Tools
easywoodtools.com

Harbor Freight
harborfreight.com

Jimmy Clewes
Jimmyclewes.com

Thompson Lathe Tools
thompsonlathetools.com

Turning Wood
turningwood.com

Woodturners Wonders
woodturnerswonders.com

Project Sources

SHARPENING TURNING TOOLS

- **WoodTurners Wonders**
  Spartan CBN Wheel . . . . Varies
- **Amazon.com**
  Wolverine Jig B01JAPC6D4

MUST-HAVE TURNING ACCESSORIES

- **Easy Wood Tools**
  Easy Chuck 60610
  Reach Jaws CJ210
  Big Easy CJ516
- **Jimmy Clewes**
  Beginner Tool Set . . . . . .
- **Thompson Lathe Tools**
  Spindle Rgh. Gouge 114SRG
  Skew 1SK
  Scraper Blank 1SC
- **Amazon**
  Magnetic Light . . B07L6T1N1K
- **Turning Wood**
  Sanding Mandrel TS-1
  Mirka Sanding Discs . . . varies
- **Harbor Freight**
  Right Angle Drill 60610