



A PRESENTATION BY

The Olympic Peninsula Woodturners Guild

Tones Briggs

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Brad Stave

--AND--

A host of others from

The SawmillCreek.org Turners Forum

THE FOLLOWING NOTES and tips were originally collected in an online Turners Forum on the SawmillCreek.org website.

OPCAAW has taken the best of these, added others, combined a few and published them here, giving credit to the contributor whenever possible.

There were many duplicates, so we randomly chose one.

We offer them here in hopes that one small nugget of information might make woodturning easier for someone looking to improve his craft. Edited by Russell Neyman, Olympic Peninsula Woodturners, July 2014.

Chuck Gauge.

--Brian Finney, United Kingdom.

Get the correct tenon size for the jaws overtime. Cut a max/min gauge for each set of jaws.

You could possibly make it [to fit both inside and outside dimensions] if you wanted to - may need to use metal as the legs maybe thin, I used a scrap of hardboard and went for the simple approach.



The photographed gauge is for just exterior i.e. tenons. Gripper jaws don't do interior and I tend not to use interior. The smaller gap is

the minimum tenon diameter for those jaws and the larger gap is the maximum tenon diameter. Turn the tenon within the range and it fits the jaws, overtime.

It just saves the effort of remembering the dimensions of each set of jaws - which I can never do.

Round Wooden Templates:

I have circles of 1/4 inch plywood cut in various diameters from 4 to 10 inches to use as a guide when cutting bowl blanks on the bandsaw. If cutting a blank from a log, always put the flat side down and attach the plywood to the bark side attached wood with a nail. --Greg Just, Minnesota

It's difficult to mark irregular shapes in round circles, especially if they're burls or crotches. Take a round piece of Masonic or plywood, place it on top of the irregular surface, then sprinkle line string chalk (flour will do) marking the round blank where it falls vertically. And if there's any danger of the chalk getting blown off during the ensuing bandsaw cutting, spray it with whatever finish is handy (or hairspray) to lock it in place. – Russell Neyman

Calculating the Size of an Urn.

Max Taylor, Texas.

Using the formula of one cup of rice, sand or whatever, equals 10 pounds of cremated ashes of a pet poured into a clean white sock will give you an approximate size to make the urn to put the ashes of the pet [or human] in.

Shop-Made Chatter Tool.

--Anonymous.

This tip for a shop-made chatter tool using an old saber saw blade works great!

<http://www.sawmillcreek.org/showthread.php?p=1>

Avoiding Glue Slippage

David DeCristoforo, California

My very best, all time greatest shop tip is a fantastically simple and cheap solution to an age old problem, namely stuff creeping under clamping pressure as it slips and slides on the thin layer of glue. After years of messing with cauls and extra clamps and a million other cumbersome "solutions", I discovered in a totally serendipitous manner....sand!

After the glue is spread, a couple of grains of fine sand dropped here and there in the glue and no more frustrating slipping and sliding and creeping.

Safe Rag Storage.

--Jerry Wervey.

Rags / paper towels An empty one gallon paint can cleaned out works perfect for putting in soiled paper towels that might go up in flames including your shop cheap way to possibly save it. Cost is free essentially.

Neater Way to Prepare Glueblocks.

--Robert Baccus, Texas.

When doing a glueblock mount the block on the lathe and square the wood fair with the lathe. Glue is a dripping mess --try this. Spin the lathe (var. sp.) very slowly and apply the thick CA in rings on the glueblock. It will hold boucoco without running everywhere and allows more glue if necessary.

Several tips involving using wax:

Try dipping the tip of your screw chuck in some paste wax before you mount the blank, it makes getting the blank back off much easier, used to use candle wax but found paste wax works much better!

Also, before I start turning I always rub over my lathe bed with a block of bees wax, makes things nice and smooth!!! --Mark Ravensdale, Ohio

To lubricate screws buy a toilet bowl wax seal at the hardware and fill a plastic jar with it. Great for lubing screws! --George Morris, Pennsylvania

Keep a piece of an old candle handy for rubbing across the tool rest to make it easier for tools to glide. Use it on the woodworm screw before using, especially with green wood to make it easier to remove. Also use it on faceplate mounting screws as Bill Bohlen uses soap. --Mike Peace, Georgia

You can get small blocks of paraffin in the canning dept. at the grocery store. I keep a block near my lathe and frequently rub some on the bed and the underside of the tool rest banjo. It now will move smooth as silk. --Wally Dickerman, Arizona

[The previous] tip about paraffin is a good one but I find a wad of wax paper works for me. I rub it on the tool rest, the tool and the ways so the banjo slides easily. --Terry Quiram, Illinois

Preventing Lathe Rust.

--Mark Ravensdale, Ohio.

At the end of a turning day to prevent corrosion wipe down your lathe bed with an oily rag (I use 3 in 1 oil) over the years I have tried many different sprays both cheap and expensive but have found that a wipe down with an oily rag works best, and cost next to nothing (once the rag is soaked with oil it last months and months!) but remember to wipe it off before you start turning the next time!!!

Low Cost Drop Cloths.

--Harry Robinette, Ohio.

Cheap plastic tablecloths are about \$1.00 to maybe \$2.99 each. I use them to cover some of my equipment when I'm spraying finish or to cover whatever I'm finishing on. You can reuse them for a long time and then toss them. Also work for a cover when you're gluing up something that the glue runs off of, the glue don't stick to them very well.

Sandpaper in Strips.

--Mark Ravensdale, Ohio.

Most of the sandpaper I use is torn into strips around 3/4 - 1 1/4 inch wide, I keep rolls of these (around 30-45 feet) on a shop made holder/dispenser in all the grits I use 80, 120, 240, 320, 400, 600, 800, and 1200, using this method has saved me plenty of the stuff, I do also keep some that's around 4 inch wide for the very odd occasion I need wider, I just tear off the length needed and have found that these 1 inch (average) wide strips are used for around 95 percent of my sanding needs, when I first tried these strips I was sure they wouldn't be wide enough but they are!!!

Two Uses for Camphor:

A camphor block placed in a drawer with steel tools will protect them from rust. I have purchased in the past 2X2X1/2 blocks individually wrapped in plastic film. I would slice the film and place the block in the

drawer. It would last for months. --**Jim Hipp, Alabama**

Do you have roaches, mice, kids, cats or other pests in your shop--? Turn a nice piece of Camphor. The rodents hate it. --**Robert Baccus, Texas.**

Removing Dents from Wood. --**Jim Underwood, Georgia.**

Dents can often be removed from wood with a shot of steam or a hot damp rag. I use my soldering iron and one of those new aluminum pennies along with a folded paper towel soaked in water. Most of the dent comes right out as the water in the paper towel turns to steam. That penny conducts heat very well!

Taking this discussion to the next level, small dents can be minimized with simply a dab of spit or, for more extreme voids, holding the wood object over a pot of boiling water. – Editor.

Freeing a Sticky Banjo. **Ron Price, Oregon.**

I was cleaning off my bed ways -- no matter how careful we are, they get glue, finish and other junk on them so the banjo and free end are difficult to manipulate. I scraped, sanded, steelwooled and waxed my ways, and the tool rest was still hard to move around. Then it occurred to me: I neglected to clean off and lubricate the *underside* of the ways and banjo! A bit of CA had gotten on the washer-type fitting that clamps onto the bottom of the ways, and that was the problem.

Sanding, Final Grit, Ver 2.0. **Robert Baccus, Texas.**

This is a little off the wall but you guys try experimenting with your final sanding grits. Been turning 25 years and I've observed most people make sanding much harder than necessary. A few of my techniques for what they are worth. On soft woods sanding with 6 grits is a crock. Try like 120 and 220 if you have a good final cut. Don't be afraid to power sand with 60-80 if you have a rough final cut. On harder woods use several steps in grits. Let the wood density set your # of grits. Don't be afraid to powers and(6"--2" pads) to final grit and spend more time

with the lower grits than the finer. Finish touchup and final sand with hand paper and sponge backpad.

Finding Hidden Scratches. --**Dick Gerard, Indiana.**

To reveal whether you still have sanding scratches to deal with BEFORE applying your finish, flood the surfaces with mineral spirits. The mineral spirits darken the torn grain and/or scratches. Use carbide wet/dry from Vince's Wooden Wonders or let dry 10 minutes or so and use regular sanding disks.

A variety of tips using magnets:

To safely keep small parts and tools (like an Allen wrench) close at hand on your lathe go to HF and pick up one of their small magnetized metal bowls. Very cheap and works great. --**Ken Kimbrel, Tobaccoville.**

Keep a telescoping magnetic pick up handy, they work great to pick up the jaw screw that just rolled under the tool cabinet. I have several scattered around the shop, always dropping a screw or small metal part! --**Tom Wilson, Illinois.**

When you need to find a small metal screw or tool in a large pile of shavings use the magnet on the bottom of your shop light. It is strong enough to pull any small metal out of this no mans land. Has saved the day for me more than once for sure --**Jack Mincey, North Carolina.**

I always keep a small metal 6" ruler nearby, and was constantly losing it or 'blowing' it off into chips. I take a couple small round magnets (about size of quarter), and keep the ruler attached to tailstock with it. Problem solved.

Here's another using same round magnets...a local turner taught me this to get a consistent second bevel on a bowl gouge for those pesky transitions in bowls (Jimmy Clewes refers to it as the micro-bevel I think)...but it's just a second bevel about half way down the initial bevel to reduce burnishing when taking steep angles on inside of bowl.

Keep a couple magnets (say 2 or 3) on end of your v-block on Wolverine. I will sharpen initial bevel, the one closest to cutting edge, then lay those 2 or 3 magnets INSIDE the v-block, which pushes the gouge closer to the wheel to establish a second bevel consistently. --**Tim Rhinehart, North Carolina**

Gluing a couple of those really strong Rare Earth magnets to the end of your ShopVac wand could save you a great deal of annoyance losing a critical screw or metal part. There's always a chance that the small piece of metal will get picked up before it heads to the vacuum. Can't hurt; might help. --Editor.

Removing Machine Screws **Tom Rollins, Maryland.**

For those of us that might be experiencing arthritis in the hands, I came up with a tool to ease the process of changing the jaws of my chuck. It consists of a 1/4 inch hex spacer and the appropriate Allen wrench. It fits into my battery powered screw driver and makes changing the jaws much quicker and easier.



And... to expand on this thought:

Changing jaws can be tedious and time consuming, even if you don't have an arthritic condition! This tip (mounting a length of allen wrench in a battery-driven drill) sure makes the changeover go more quickly.

Another thought: Jaws can easily be mounted face up right on the lathe by simply sticking a six-inch piece of broom handle in your tool rest hole. This also makes removing and replacing jaw screws (or adjusting soft jaw positioning) easier. --Editor.

Speed Control Guard. **--Robert Ashton, London England.**

I suggest adding a D pull to the control panel of your lathe that sits over the variable speed dial. This will help in stopping you from accidentally brushing the dial and having a bowl go from a few hundred RPMs to a couple thousand in a few seconds. At those speeds you don't even see the pieces fly off in all directions - been there done it so I know.

Sharpening Speeds. **--Robert Ashton, London England**

With VFD's at such a low price build your own truly slow speed grinder; mine goes down to 1 RPM if I

wanted it to. I usually grind at around 10hz and it is nearly impossible to burn a tool or over grind. At such slow speeds you really have the time to grind very complex fingernail or other shapes without much if any practice because everything happens at such a leisurely pace. And! it's the opposite of what many may be thinking - you actually get results much faster than on a normal speed grinder - about 40% faster in fact YMMV. Or if that's not your cup a tea then buy a mandrel to sit on the outboard side and use that as your slow speed grinder.

Noting Grinder Settings. **--Tim Chase, Indiana.**

I find that a pencil line on the wolverine bar, gets me dialed right in to where I was and as you said in a hair further than the last turning. There are several marks along its length and I can go right to them for the different bowl gouges I use.

Avoiding Stuck Fingers. **--Max Taylor, Texas**

When working with CA glue, liberally apply paste wax, beeswax or other waxes to your fingers that will be handling the glue/filler with those fingers, refresh regularly and work the filler/glue into the work. When finished, wipe the wax off. No fingers stuck together, no sanding your fingers to get it off no torn gloves, which allow the glue to get on your fingers.

Hand lotion or Vaseline works, too, as long as there's no danger of contamination to a finished piece. Or, you could simply wear those cheap rubber gloves. --Editor.

Cheap Mixing Cups. **--Prasun Patel, New Jersey**

Yogurt containers make perfect single-shot finishing cups.

Avoiding Glue Slippage **-- David DeCristoforo, Davis, California**

“[To keep from moving] under clamping pressure... a couple of grains of fine sand dropped here and there in the glue and no more frustrating slipping and sliding and creeping.”

Penmaking Specs.

--Peter Fabricus, Ontario Canada

Pen makers desk set require a "hole for the nib." This is a difficult hole to drill so, a solution:

For the 8mm Round Top European Style Pen-- Grind a 11/32" twist drill bit and regrind it to the shape of the nib. For the 7mm Slimline Style Pen-- Grind a 21/64" twist drill bit and regrind it to the shape of the nib.

Note: Grinding a twist drill to a near point is not difficult but getting a cutting edge all the way down might be tricky. I focused on the trailing edge of each flute and thereby getting a positive angle on the sharp edge. It worked out real well and will allow me to drill a nib holder in desk pen sets or at one end of a Pen Box for use as a desk set.

Re-Mounting a Glue Block

--Tom Rollins, Maryland

Occasionally, a catch will separate the turning from the waste block and it is very tough to replace it accurately. I like to drill a 1/4-inch hole in the center of the waste block. This does two things. It helps me center the block on the piece by sighting through the hole to the center mark on the piece and then after the waste block is glued onto the piece, I drill a very shallow 1/4 inch hole through the existing hole in the waste block into the bottom of the piece.

If the waste block should become separated from the piece, it can be re-glued correctly by temporarily sliding a dowel rod through the center hole of the waste block and into the shallow hole in the bottom of the piece. After this alignment, remove the dowel rod and let the glue dry. The shallow hole in the piece is removed when finishing the bottom.

Bowl Depth.

--Jim Colombo, Arizona

Problem: Knowing the depth of the inside of a bowl or vessel.

My solution: Mount your 4 jaw chuck on the spindle. Place the end of your tailstock flush with the end of the bed. Rotate the quill as far into the tailstock as it will go. Measure from the ends of the jaws of the

chuck to the tip of the quill. That dimension will never change so you can use it to determine how much material is left at the base of your piece. I have a scale on my quill so I rotated the quill until I had an easily remembered dimension from the chuck to the zero reading on my quill.

Securing Hollow Forms.

--Faust Fuggario, Pennsylvania

When I'm finished turning the outside form of a hollow vessel, I wrap it in several layers of industrial stretch wrap. That keeps the moisture in the wood while I hollow and adds a layer of security in case I go too thin. I wrap right over the chuck and all.

A Sharper Gouge.

--Bill Wyco, Arizona.

Use a diamond hone in your flute to make your gouge razor sharp. For that matter, use a hone on everything after your done sharpening.

A Variety of Tips.

--Wally Dickerman of Arizona:

- My saying is...Use sandpaper like your rich uncle or your brother-in-law was paying for it.
- When examining the profile of a bowl or hollow form, hold a contrasting colored piece of paper behind it. White paper for dark colored wood, black emery paper or sandpaper for light colored wood. Easy to see those little flat spots in an otherwise nice curve.
- I have a 1 inch ID piece of PVC pipe of the right length to slip on the post of each of my tool rests. Always the right height, and never changes when I adjust the angle of the rest.
- I use double-stick tape quite a lot. How to remove the piece? Just turn a 1/2 inch deep piece of wood that'll slip inside a faceplate. To remove the turned piece, slip the little piece of wood inside the threaded part of the faceplate, thread the faceplate on the spindle and Voila...it easily pushes the turned piece off the faceplate.... no muss no fuss. I got \$75 from Wood Mag several years ago for that tip....you get it for free!

- I turned a plug with a hole bored in it to fit into the hose on my shop vac. I inserted a 12 inch long, 1 inch diameter soft plastic hose. I prefer to vacuum the chips out of a HF rather than blow them out. I already have enough airborne dust in my shop.
- [An] oversize wood handwheel [is] much better than the small handwheels lathes are equipped with.
- When using a screwchuck, most of the time you don't need the full length of the screw...I use a 1/4 inch plywood shim with a hole in the center to slip over the screw.
- A tip I learned from **Ray Allen**. He used it before gluing on the next segmented ring...I cut 1 inch wide x 12 or more inches long piece of 3/4 inch plywood. Using a thin line of yellow glue, I apply a strip of 80 grit sandpaper to both sides of the plywood. I make several at a time. Flattens out the bottom of a bowl blank to glue on a glue block in seconds. I do the same using 320 sandpaper to prepare a HF rim for a collar.
- To apply finish on a piece I pour a small amount of finishing oil or Deft in a bathroom paper cup. The cup is held securely in a 4 x 4 piece of 2 x 4 wood with the correct size hole bored part way through. I use a fresh paper cup to clean the brush with solvent.
- I bought a 3/4 x 10 tap from Enco for about \$20. It fits the threads on my Oneway live center. PM has the same. I've made threaded hardwood caps of various sizes to hold turned pieces without damaging them. Works great to finish the bottoms of bowls.

Blowing Chips Out of a HF

– **Steve Vaughan, Chesterfield, Virginia**

“Cindy Drozda ... was hollowing ... [and took a] clear plastic tube in her mouth... and blew all the chips out. The tube was on a string around her neck.”

Lubricating End Grain.

–**Neil McWilliams, Florida**

I was recently turning some magnolia and was frustrated by its end grain chippiness, even with

freshly sharpened tools and a light touch. Had heard about using mineral oil over "fuzzy" grain to enhance the cut. Not having any MO at hand, I used some petroleum jelly. To my amazement and joy, it worked great, without penetrating into the wood to mess up or soften a subsequent finish. That jar is now standard equipment...and that little bit of Vaseline protects your metal tools from the effects of wet wood.

Miscellaneous Tips.

–**Rick Markham, Florida.**

- Ride the bevel... Let the tool do the work.
- Use sandpaper like a 3 year old uses toilet paper. Cheating doesn't work, DON'T Skip grits!
- Take as much care on the finish as the piece, even a fantastic piece can be ruined by a rushed/improper finish. (The higher the gloss the finish, the more it will reveal sanding flaws or tool marks, DON'T skip grits!)

Mounting Big, Irregular Blanks

–**Jessie Goodwin, Florida**

My biggest time saver is a 4" forstner bit on a drill press and a stainless steel 4" faceplate. Regardless of shape, size or bark, it makes a great surface to mount the faceplate. The heavier or more out of balance the blank the deeper I drill so the plate is surrounded in solid wood and then I fasten it with 1 1/4" deck screws. I have turned many massive pieces this way. I bought the cheapest bit I could find and it has served me well for many years. The bit is easily sharpened with a stone, though it is rarely needed.

Backing up a Patch.

–**Russell Neyman.**

It's not unheard of to have a holiday or a knot pop out when turning a hollow form, so how the heck to you patch it without the repair material falling inside and creating a mess? In most cases, it's virtually impossible to reach through that narrow opening to reach the problematic area.

Answer: insert a balloon and inflate it until it provides adequate backing for epoxy, filler, or whatever you use to patch holes. Works great!



Stingy With Sandpaper.
--Curt Fuller, Utah.

Being a tightwad, and maybe even taking it to a new level, but also believing steadfastly in what [others have said here about using sandpaper like someone else is buying it, I learned this trick from a fellow 80+ year old turner in our club. I've learned that when old timers like that start talking it's always worth it to perk up your ears and listen. Anyway, he showed us all a sandpaper cutter he uses.

He said his wife keeps him on a tight budget so he has to conserve sandpaper and this really makes a sheet of sandpaper last a long time. It's just a simple piece of plywood with an old hacksaw blade screwed to the edge of it and a template for tearing a sheet of sandpaper down until it's in 1/16th size squares. You then fold the 1/16th sheet into thirds. As 1/3 gets used up, turn it over and use the next 1/3 and then unfold it and use the last 1/3. I'm here to tell you that it makes a sheet of sandpaper last forever!

Shirt Pocket Flaps.
--Tim Rhinehart, North Carolina

I pretty much live in pocket tee shirts. SWMBO was always complaining about shavings in the pockets. I solved the problem with blue painters tape. I tape the pocket closed.

Better View of Square Edges
Rob Sitze, North Carolina

When turning square bowls, or any shape that is not round, I place a white paper towel on the bed, under the piece so I can see the shadow of the edges better.

Hollow Form Tips.
--Scott Hackler, Kansas.

- There is no such thing as a tool that is TOO sharp!
- When hollowing out bowls and open forms, make one solid pass from the rim to the center or vice versa. Breaking up your cuts will likely result in tool marks that you'll have to sand out.
- For hollow forms, drill a hole (preferably with a Forester bit) to ALMOST the desired depth and hollow out afterwards, from the hole to the side of the vessel. That will allow for side grain cutting on an end grain vessel. And clear your shavings every 2-3 passes.
- Natural sunlight will reveal scratches and tool marks better than your shop light.

Old Sandpaper Joke, Ver 3.1
Paul Heely, Connecticut

Use sandpaper like someone else is paying for it. Trying to use worn out stuff just causes frustration. And I don't subscribe to the idea that worn out 120 grit is my new 180.

Vari-Grind.
Preshan Petel, New Jersey

Buy the vari-grind, but make the v-arm.

More Round Blank Templates.
Bernie Weisphal, Kansas.

I went down to the local hardware store and got a dishwasher box. I cut templates for cutting round blanks from 4" up to 16" (the size of my lathe). I use a screw in the center to mount it on the blank then cut. Cheap and easy.

Keep it Clean.
--Dick Winson, Michigan

A friend once told me that what I ought to do is first order of business when entering my shop in the morning is to take 10 things off the bench and put

them away. Of course if you use 20 items during the day.....well you get the idea.

Better Edge Visibility

--Richard Galloway, Montana

To tell if you are grinding where you want to grind on your tools, mark the surface to be ground with a felt marker. It won't clog your grinding wheel and makes it easy to see where you are removing material.

Accurate Re-chucking.

--Russell Neyman, Washington.

When you're either (a) turning a bowl around to turn the other end, or (b) a bowl comes loose and needs to be re-mounted. The problem, of course, is that it's very difficult to get it aligned perfectly. Before I continue, let me post this photo for illustrative purposes:



The tip is to use two sets of jaws in combination with a cone-shaped free center (which isn't pictured, but I'm certain all of

you know what that looks like) to be certain everything is in alignment. This is a rough-turned madrone blank, just being mounted in a four-jaw chuck. After rough turning the tenon, I left it in the large Cole jaws, placing the tenon in place but not tightening it. By moving the free center into the thread hole of the larger jaw, it centers the two quite accurately. Then, I remove the Cole, and begin turning the bowl.

This same technique works when a bowl slips in the jaws and needs to be re-chucked, assuming the lip has been turned and is true. Simply re-grip it, engage the live center, and tighten it. I'm amazed how many turners try to re-mount a bowl freehand

Uses for that Pile of Shavings.

--Russell Neyman

We all have an ample supply of chips and shavings, right? -- make great packing material. I fill shopping bags or other plastic bags with the chips, creating "pillows" that I use to cushion my bowls for shipment. Cheap way to go.

And this additional idea from another turner: A bag full of chips/curly makes a good padded holder also. Don't waste the beans & rice yeah. Try the foam/plastic fingernail files as a sanding block for working down drips--runs--nits ect. Works good on a curved bowl side. **--Robert Baccus, Texas**

Old Sanding Mandrels,

--Russell Neyman.

You know those worn out foam sanding mandrels with the hook-and-loop that won't hold onto the sandpaper any more? I haven't had much luck repairing them, so lately I've taken to simply gluing a piece of 60 grit on to it. Comes in pretty handy for grinding off a tenon nub. I'm still annoyed that another \$7 mandrel has bitten the dust, but at least I can squeeze one last bit of usefulness out of my investment.

Backing up a Patch.

--Russell Neyman.

It's not unheard of to have a holiday or a knot pop out when turning a hollow form, so how the heck to you patch it without the repair material falling inside and creating a mess? In most cases, it's virtually impossible to reach through that narrow opening to reach the problematic area.

Answer: insert a balloon and inflate it until it provides adequate backing for epoxy, filler, or whatever you use to patch holes. Works great!

Preventing Rust.

--Anonymous.

In the same way a diode works on a boat to defray any corrosion/rust, wrapping steel objects in aluminum foil will keep them from degrading.

Mounting Very Small Items

--Russell Neyman

There are times when we all need to chuck up something really small, and we simply don't have anything that fills the bill. I was cleaning up a handle on an old awl I found in the basement today, and wanted to take the metal spike portion and mount it so I could sand and spin on some finish. With that in mind, here are two ways to grab onto a small item:

- Most chucks go pretty small with no jaws mounted, and you can place a small object in the wedge-shaped moving carriages.
 - A Jacob's chuck, mounted on the power head, can hold onto something as small as a nail. Most people only think of that piece of equipment as something to be mounted in the free end.
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Funny Thought on Cuts and Scrapes.

--Anonymous.

If you are half as clumsy as I buy a large box of large bandaids and using a staple gun---staple 2-3 bandaids eye high all over your shop and 8 or 6 by the door yeah.

Tracking Depth Progress.

--Russell Neyman.

When I'm turning the inside of a bowl, at the point where I begin to check for depth, I leave a deliberate nub in the center as a reference point for the additional material I've removed. If I see a quarter inch nub, I know that I've only gone that far since I last used the thickness calipers. (There's something deceiving about looking into a vessel and figuring out if you close to the bottom; don't know why, but there's a reason turners all use the "I made a funnel today" joke.)

Cheap CA Glue Applicators.

--Russell Neyman.

I use those very thin coffee-stirring straws to apply CA glue into specific places. Works much better than the pointy applicator that comes on the top of the bottles, they're disposable, and cheap. Heck, the truth is most coffee shops will give you a couple of dozen if you're a regular customer.

Filling Complicated Grain Patterns.

--Russell Neyman.

Repairing a small flaw or void in a complex grain pattern, like curly maple or a burl, can be very difficult.

Use regular crayons in the appropriate colors, mixing and matching as necessary. You can melt the primary color into the void, scrape it flat with a razor blade, then scrape away the secondary color areas as needed, adding other colors of crayon. This surface will accept shellac and some other finishes. The crayon can be melted with a heat gun or open flame.

Jaws Smaller than Theoretically Possible.

--Russell Neyman

There are times when you find yourself in "tenon no man's land" and your well-planned foot is too small for the set of jaws planned to use. Well, in an emergency and under certain circumstances when it's safe to do so (like turning a bottle stopper) you can make the closing diameter of most jaws smaller by removing two of the four.

Note that this certainly isn't as secure as the four-jaw configuration, and engaging the free end device is a good idea.

Marking Allen Wrench Sizes

--Russell Neyman.

Locating the correct wrench to tighten allen screws is a pain in the backside, especially when it comes to standard versus metric. I remove them and spray both the screw and the matching allen wrench with a matching paint, which makes it so much easier to find the right size. I don't do this on all my tools; just the set screws on my cutters and jaws.

Plugging a Void.
--George, Puget Sound.

"When turning rather rustic wood (lots of bark, cracks and knotholes) I often will encounter a major void, especially when the heartwoods begin to dry and shrink. The quickest way to fill these is actually with a piece of natural cork, like the ones that come from a wine bottle. It's flexible, fits snugly, and will accept both a stain and a finish. Last week I had a knothole fly out, and in two minutes I had it patched and ready to continue without waiting for glue to dry. Truth is, it looks like the original knot."

Blank Cutting Markers
--Robo Hippy, Oregon.

I made a series of plywood strips about 20 inches long, and in widths from 1 to 8 inches in 1/2 inch increments. When cutting a log, I mark a plumb line front and back, and use the plywood strips to mark a parallel line for the other side of the slab. Much more accurate than eyeballing, and can lay out several bowl blanks depending on how big the log section is.

Better Set Screws
--Paul Heeley, Connecticut.

To keep from marring up the spindle on your lathe with set screws from your chucks, use brass tipped screws. I get mine from McMaster, but you can probably find them at a well stocked hardware store.



Two uses for obsolete PC hard drives:



Old PC hard drives make great lazy [susans] for spraying up finished pieces, I have several of these so I can do a multi

spray at the same time, they are beautiful balanced units & can take a suppressing load, just make up a

MDF disk & attach a cut out to sit over the bearing housing which is raised. --Pete Gray

Old PC hard drives are a great source for STRONG magnets. A pita to remove from the housing but very handy. Place about 5 of them on a piece of mdf or ply and you have a nice moveable platform to attach to your lathe bed. Only problem is that you might need a prybar to release it! Also consider using these magnets in front of your floor sweep vacuum pickups to catch metal objects before they strike the impeller!
--Lee Hoffman, California

No More Skimmed Over Cans of Finish.
--Anonymous.

Store your cans of finish upside down. If it skims over, the accidental "membrane" will be at the bottom of the can.

Determining Final Grit Sanding, Ver 4.1.
--Ralph Lindberg, Washington.

Decide what sand-paper grit is the "final" one by watching for changes in the appearance of the wood. If you can see a difference between the last grit and the current grit, keep going until you can't see a difference between the last grit and the current grit.

On soft woods, this means I might stop at 320, on really hard woods I sometimes go up to 2000 (yup, automotive wet/dry)

Controlling Dust and Wood Chips:

Hang a shower curtain to help contain the chips. --
Robert Newton.

I stole the idea of using a Roman (roll-up) shade from Dave Schweitzer of D-Way tools. I placed it adjacent to my lathe where wood chips typically fly. That way you just roll them up when you don't need them. --**Ralph Lindberg, Washington**

Avoiding Sinus Problems.
--Anonymous.

To prevent allergic reactions from exotic woods and to prevent long term issues from inhaling dust that is always present in a woodworking shop. I'd recommend a shower and a nasal irrigation system

over and above the normal dust collections system. I started using a nasal irrigation system years ago after having chronic sinus infections and chronic bronchitis for years. Haven't had a cold and have had only two relatively minor sinus infections in seven years. A link: <http://www.waterpik.co>

This is a good idea, but as several observers noted you should take care when using this procedure, be absolutely sure that the materials are sterilized and always use the proper equipment and follow the manufacturer's instruction.—Editor.

Miscellaneous Notes.

--Bill Donahue, Florida.

- PVC toilet flanges, pipes, and random fittings make decent jamb chucks.
- \$7 clip on utility light from Wal-Mart can be repositioned easily on the stand for good lighting on either side of the vessel
- Box fan with 20" pleated filter makes an ok ambient dust collector during sanding.m/sinus-health/