

# Great Falls Woodturners News Letter

Volume 3, Number 2.

March 2012

## Woodturning Fundamentals

I have attached the first **Woodturning Fundamentals Newsletter** from the AAW at the end of this newsletter for your information and use. Please take advantage of joining the AAW and you too can sign up for the Woodturning Fundamentals Newsletter. Happy Turning! - Sam

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### [Woodturning Fundamentals Info](#)

[http://books.google.com/books/about/Fundamentals\\_of\\_Woodturning.html?id=51\\_32RO1dCUC](http://books.google.com/books/about/Fundamentals_of_Woodturning.html?id=51_32RO1dCUC)

<http://www.finewoodworking.com/SkillsAndTechniques/SkillsAndTechniquesArticle.aspx?id=28765>

<http://www.fundamentalsofwoodworking.com/woodworking-resources/Woodworking->

### [Articles/burl-bowl-for-new-woodturners](#)

**(Lots of good info in this site)**

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## Shop Tip – Sam Sampedro

### Kelton Hollowing Tools



Some time ago I purchased a set of Kelton Hollowing Tools and put them aside until I was ready to get serious about creating hollow forms. Recently I decided to turn hollow forms and started using the tools. I did create a few hollow forms and my tools required sharpening. Having not remembered the process by which they are sharpened, I sharpened them on the grinder. I first sharpened the side edge and then came the fatal mistake, sharpening the top by performing a slight grind on the top of the tool.

What I found out after doing the sharpening was there is a thin coating of hardening on top of the tool which, of course, allows the tool to retain its

sharpened edge. Well, it is now gone forever and the tools are ruined. I confirmed this with the Kelton Company in New Zealand via email.

I now have to re-invest in a new set of tools so I can continue my venture into hollow forms. I wanted you all to be aware of this so I may prevent one of you from making a critical error in taking care of your Kelton Hollowing tools.

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## Demonstrations

**February 14<sup>th</sup>** - Sam Sampedro demonstrated turning a Banksia Pod. Although this particular 'turning blank' appears to create a huge mess, it is easily cleaned up. The finished product may be a small end result, but it can be enhanced with your choice of filler to create an interesting conversation subject. After turning the small vase I came home and proceeded to fill a few of the holes with crushed turquoise stone. The pod I had turned earlier was filled with key blank brass shavings which gave it an interesting appearance. Try turning one and then fill the slots with your choice of filler.



Banksia Pod with Turquoise (left) and with Brass

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**March 3<sup>rd</sup>** - **Randy Gazda** and **Terry Hill** teamed up to present an incredibly interesting demonstration on **Constructing Feature Ring Blocks** which are used to create wonderful segmented art pieces (Please see the Photo Gallery below). The demo was a four hour presentation that seemed to pass like it was fifteen minutes. They had the attention of the attendees from the time it started until the very end. After grabbing our attention with a short lecture, Terry kicked it off by showing us actual construction and then turned it over to Randy who also did the actual construction of a block. This went on for some time and then it got even better with attendees actually doing it hands on. This was one of the best presentations the club has seen and it was obvious that a lot of preparation went in to it with materials, time and money. The club thanks their dedication to bettering our skills at this interesting subject.



Randy Gazda and Terry Hill at Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> Demo



Feature Block Demo Attendees

**March 6<sup>th</sup>** – Over the weekend **Randy Gazda** glued the feature ring blocks into a ring and then glued all the rings together to make a turning that was worked on at the club meeting. The bowl was turned and then given to **Chuck Kuether** who volunteered to sand the bowl in order that it could be finished. **Wayne Petrini** volunteered his services to finish the bowl. **Rich Charlson** will then sell raffle tickets at the **Western Art Show, particularly at the Jay Contway gallery**. Stop by and see Rich's art at the Contway gallery. As you can see from the above, this was a classic Great Falls Woodturners group project that will benefit the club.



Randy Gazda turning Club Bowl to be raffled



Randy Gazda and Chuck Kuether

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# Utah Woodturning Symposium

Make plans for May 17-19<sup>th</sup> to be part of the highly acclaimed Utah Woodturning Symposium! Engage with today's top professionals and up and coming woodturners in a friendly, informal learning environment with over 80 demonstrations to choose from and a full schedule of Special Events. There is something for everyone!

This year's Demonstrators: Nick Agar, Sally Ault, Trent Bosch, Rex Burningham, Kirk Deheer, Douglas Fisher, Brian Gisi, Kurt Hertzog, Allen Jensen, Stuart King, Mike Mahoney, Art Majerus, Giulio Marcolongo, Brian McEvoy, Johannes Michelson, Stuart Mortimer, Ken Nelsen, Dale Nish, Binh Pho, Richard Raffan, Malcolm Tibbetts, Joe Wagner, and Tom Wirsing.

Special Exhibition: View an extraordinary exhibition of Selected Works from the Dale Nish Collection.

It is not often one is able to view turnings from so many of the world's greatest woodturners all under the same roof. Take this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to view an extraordinary exhibition of Selected Works from the Dale Nish Collection at the Utah

Woodturning Symposium Instant Gallery.

The Dale Nish Collection is not only a collection of spectacular woodturnings from around the world but is also a treasury of stories and friendships Dale has made with woodturners over the

past 50 years, such as; Ray Allen, David Ellsworth, Dell Stubbs, Bonnie Klein and many, many more.

Recognized for his guidance and support of up-and-coming woodturners Dale has influenced the world of woodturning for the better, encouraging turners to believe in themselves. The Dale Nish Collection reflects his influence on many unknown turners as well as the early works of some of today's top professionals.

Be inspired by the woodturnings on display and the stories behind them as you experience this extraordinary exhibition of Selected Works from the Dale Nish Collection.

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## Kudos Korner

### Special Thanks

Special Thanks to **Randy Gazda** and **Terry Hill** for their hard work and demonstration of creating Feature Ring Blocks. Also their time and effort in creating a vessel for the club to raffle.

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The Great Falls Woodturners thanked Rich Charlson for his untiring contributions of his time

and knowledge to the club with a gift certificate to the Bar S.

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Thanks to all the members who contributed this month to the various activities that requiring extra funds.

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## Welcome

Welcome to **Arlie Owen** and **Richard Owen** on their visit to the club on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

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## Calendar of Events

March 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 P.M. – Demo by Wayne Petrini on finishing

April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 P.M. – Regular Club Meeting. Demo by Chuck Kuether on an Inlaid Box

April 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 P.M. – Demo at COT. Demo by David Stratton

May 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 P.M. Regular Club Meeting. Demo by Reb Bishop turning a Blind Box from juniper

May 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 P.M, - Demo at COT. Demo not determined.

June 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M. – Regular Club Meeting. Demo to be determined.

July 10<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 P.M. – Regular Club Meeting. Demo to be determined.

Please Note the change from July 3<sup>rd</sup> to July 10<sup>th</sup> due to the Fourth of July Holiday. Some folks will want to take advantage of the holiday and make it a five day holiday weekend for two days vacation.

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## Items for Sale

Randy Gazda - I have a Delta 12 1/2" planer for sale. Model 22-560. \$200



Work Light (like Barry was selling) slightly used - \$8.00. Sam Sampedro 761-4145

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## Perpetual Bowl

At the Feb 14<sup>th</sup> Club meeting, **Dave Manix** won the raffle for the Perpetual Bowl turned by **Randy Gazda**. Dave will have the honor to bring in the next perpetual bowl for some lucky winner.



Turned by **Randy Gazda** – Perpetual Bowl (No, that's not a crack on the bottom of the bowl, it's **spalting!**)

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At the March 3<sup>rd</sup> Club meeting, **David Stratton** won the raffle for the Perpetual Bowl turned by **Dave Manix**. David will have the honor to bring in the next perpetual bowl for some lucky winner at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting.



Turned by **Dave Manix** – Perpetual Bowl  
Mar 2012

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## Commentary by Dave Manix

**Please see Dave's Commentary at the end of the Photo Gallery. (I left it as a single page without columns for ease of reading.)**

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## Shop/Safety Tip – Sam Sampedro

Several times since September 2011 I have mentioned that Stuart Batty indicated at his Symposium in Billings that if you put a taper on the edge of a tenon it would preclude the tenon from breaking off of the object to be turned. On March 2<sup>nd</sup> I was turning a bowl that I had tapered the edge of the tenon and the tenon broke off which, of course, allowed the bowl to leave the lathe and bounce across the shop. Since this apparently proves that theory has flaws, it apparently does not matter if the tenon is beveled or not. Just wanted to give you a heads up to preclude a false sense of security in turning.

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## Shop Tip – Paul Snyder

I ran across this metric/ standard "ruler" when I was looking at a plan that was "British" and giving measurements in metric. I wondered how to convert the measurements and this showed up. Thought it might be useful to others.

Please see the Metric to Inch/Standard handout at the end of the newsletter.

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### Shop Tip – Terry Hill

Here's a good place to shop for sandpaper: **Online Industrial Supply**. Check them out at the following site:

<http://www.onlineindustrialsupply.com/>

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### Shop Tip – Barry Rockwell

Instead of using the liquid sealant to seal the ends of fresh tree cutting pieces, use shrink wrap to accomplish the same end. (This comment was relayed to me in a conversation with Barry – Sam).

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### Shop Tip – Randy Gazda

If you have Pony Pipe Clamps and they start to slip, you can get some more life out of them by rotating the clutches (there are four or five silver parts on the lower part of the clamp). Simply remove the lower part of the clamp from the pipe and remove the wire spring. Once you have the clutches out rotate the middle ones to the top and bottom.

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### Shop Tip – Randy Gazda

Dust Collection and your shop vac: If you add a cyclone to your shop vac you will not have to clean the filter very often and you will have more suction all the time. There are several versions available including ones by Rockler and Onieder. I waited years before purchasing one and now can't believe how I got along without it. My shop vac is quieter and should last longer as it isn't working as hard with a clean filter. You can also do this same thing if you have a single stage dust collector, definitely the next step for me.

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### Editor's Comment:

My thanks to the following individuals who helped with the content of this newsletter:

**Paul Snyder**  
**Dave Manix**  
**Terry Hill**  
**Barry Rockwell**  
**Randy Gazda**

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## Photo Gallery



**Jerry Hall**



**Randy Gazda**



**Russian Olive – Sam Sampedro**



**Natural Edge Walnut – Sam Sampedro**



**American Sycamore 6" – Sam Sampedro**



**American Sycamore 4" – Sam Sampedro  
(Both the 6" and this 4" bowls came from  
the same piece of stock and were the  
result of coring)**



**Terry Hill**



**Terry Hill**



**Terry Hill**



**Terry Hill**



**Randy Gazda**



**Randy Gazda**



**Randy Gazda**



**Greg Yeager**



Greg Yeager

# **Things I have learned at the Great Falls Wood Turners**

## **By Dave Manix**

1. Use lots of glue, glue is cheap and it is your friend.
2. Make certain that your chucks and jaws and tail stocks are tight and locked into place.
3. Have sharp tools, a face shield and wear a face mask when sanding. Who knew that some “woods” are “toxic”? How many of us have discovered that we are allergic to some species.
4. When end grain is being difficult, turn up the speed and re-sharpen your tool.
5. Appreciate club officers and board members, without them we wouldn't exist. Thank you each and every one.
6. Use lots of glue.
7. The angle for platters is 21 degrees to 23 degrees.
8. Don't forget your notebook, pencil and camera when you come to meetings/classes. You will have an opportunity to research your next project. It's called research not plagiarism.
9. Review the general safety rules, no loose clothing or jewelry and no “neckties?”.
10. Do not bicker with the wife over wax paper buy her a roll when you buy yours.
11. A screw up is not really a screw up it is a design opportunity.
12. A geezer nap after lunch is okay.
13. Glue is cheap, use lots, it is your friend.
14. Try not to bring too much sawdust into the living room otherwise you may get vacuuming duty.
15. Use 60 grit sandpaper on your sander it is faster and doesn't make any difference because all the glue you use will fill the seams just fine.

16. Spray piece with denatured alcohol to raise the grain and flash off with flame.
17. Change all your light bulbs in your wood shop to fluorescent, remember Barry's friend.
18. Put candle wax or Chap Stick on box lids to make them release easier if you plan on selling them to ladies.
19. Lemon juice will bleach and clean.
20. Having trouble with torn end grain on a bowl. Seal the entire bowl with sanding sealer.
21. Don't leave grooves with wax in them. Clean the grooves.
22. Crown tools and Sorby tools have the same steel in them. Sorby has a more deluxe finish so make careful comparisons to save you money.
23. Face plates take the wobble out of large pieces.
24. If you're making salad bowls, no sanding sealer, let the salad bowl treatment soak into the wood. Use lots of glue and then lots of finish.
25. If you want to use paper between face plate and your project use painters masking paper. Just glue, glue, glue let dry and paper will release when you're ready.
26. Put a notch on your face plate and mark the piece so you can return the face plate to the piece in case you have a design opportunity.
27. Don't use plywood or MDF for faceplates it doesn't hold well. Use a hardwood. This goes to a safety issue. If the work piece comes off the lathe at 1600 rpm things get a little exciting for a few moments and it could draw blood or worse.
28. Consider a dark glue for light pieces to make the pieces stand out.

# Great Falls Woodturners Club

Video Demo Recordings Available for Purchase (\$5.00 each)

New Additions to the Video Demo Recordings are noted in RED on the first month of addition

1. Making a hollow ornament, Gordon Heikens, 9-26, 10-3-2009, VHS & DVD
2. Turning a square edged bowl, Gordon Heikens, 9-12 & 19, 2009, VHS & DVD
3. Scoop & Goblet, Gordon Heikens, 10-10-2009, DVD
4. Spoon & Lidded Box, Gordon Heikens, 10-17-2009, DVD
5. Plate & 4 Blade Screwdriver, Gordon Heikens, 10-24-2009, DVD
6. Finishing & Buffing, Chuck Kuether, 11-3-2009, DVD
7. Birch bowl turned on a screw chuck & "Jam" chuck, C Kuether, 11-7-2009, DVD
8. Christmas Ornament from 4" block, Chuck Kuether, 11-14-2009, DVD
9. Hollowing alternative, Lloyd Taylor: Tree Ornament, Chuck Kuether, 11-21-09, DVD
10. Bud Vase, George Gelernter, 12-05-09, DVD
11. Segmented Bowl, pattern-layout, Rich Charlson, 1-16-2010, DVD
12. Segmented Bowl, Base assembly, Rich Charlson, 1-23-2010, DVD
13. Segmented Bowl, Wall construction, Rich Charlson, 1-30-2010, DVD
14. Segmented Bowl, Final Turning, Rich Charlson, 2-6-2010, DVD
15. Club Segmented Bowl #1, Rich Charlson, 2-13-10, DVD
16. Club Segmented Bowl #2, Rich Charlson, 2-20-10
17. Club Segmented Bowl #3, Rich Charlson, 2-27-10
18. Club Segmented Bowl #4, Rich Charlson, 3-6-10
19. Center Saver, Lloyd Taylor, Chuck Kuether, 3-13-10
20. Suction Fit Lidded Box, 3-20-10
21. Making and Using an Oland Tool, Tom Krajacich, 4-10-10
22. Off Center Turning, Cecil Walborn, 4-24-10
23. Vase & Stemware bases Scoop, Gordon Heikens, 5-22-10
24. Sharpening Tools, Gordon Heikens, Chuck Kuether, 8-14-10
25. Spindle & Bowl basics, Gordon Heikens, Chuck Kuether, 8-21-10
26. Natural edge bowl, Barry Rockwell, 8-28-10
27. Selling on Ebay, Barry Rockwell, 9-7-10
28. More Bowl Basics, Chuck Kuether, Gordon Heikens, 9-11-10
29. Gift & Finials, Gordon Heikens 10-23-10
30. Thread Chasing, Barry Rockwell, 11-2-10
31. Pencil Pot, Lloyd Taylor, 11-13-10
32. Bread Knife, Randy Gazda, 12-11-10
33. Caragana Bowl 1, Rich Charlson, 2-2011
34. Caragana Bowl 2, Rich Charlson, 2-2011
35. Winged Bowl, Gordon Heikens, 8-2-11
36. Off-center Duck, Chuck Kuether, 8-20-11
37. Making your own tools, Barry Rockwell, 10-5-11

38. Icicles, Sam Sampedro, 10-22-11
39. Bowl Roughing, Barry Rockwell, 10-22-11
40. Mushroom Birdhouse Ornament, Barry Rockwell, 11-1-11
41. Multi-axis turning & miniatures, Cecil Walborn, 11-19-11
42. How to safely mount wood on a lathe, Jerry Hall, Tom Krajacich & Sam Sampedro, 12-6-2011
43. Natural Edge Bowl, Sam Sampedro, 2-14-12
44. Creating Bocks for Feature Rings, Randy Gazda & Terry Hill, 3-3-12

# Great Falls Woodturners Video Library

## (These videos are available to check out at no cost)

New Additions to the Video Library are noted in RED on the first month of addition

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### Professional Turner's Videos

Mike Jackofsky – Making a Hollow Vessel – 2 discs

Lyle Jamieson – Bowl Basics The Easy Way – 2 discs

Lyle Jamieson – Hollow Forms The Easy Way

Mike Mahoney – Heirlooms: Making Things That Last

Mike Mahoney - On The McNaughton Center Saver

Mike Mahoney – Nested Madrone Bowl Set

Richard Raffan – The New Turning Wood With Richard Raffan

Malcolm Tibbetts – Lessons in Segmented Woodturning – Volume 2

Malcolm Tibbetts – Lessons in Segmented Woodturning Volume 5 – More Functional Projects

### Manufacturer's Videos

Jet Mfg. – Lathe – Safety, operation, tools, sharpening, projects

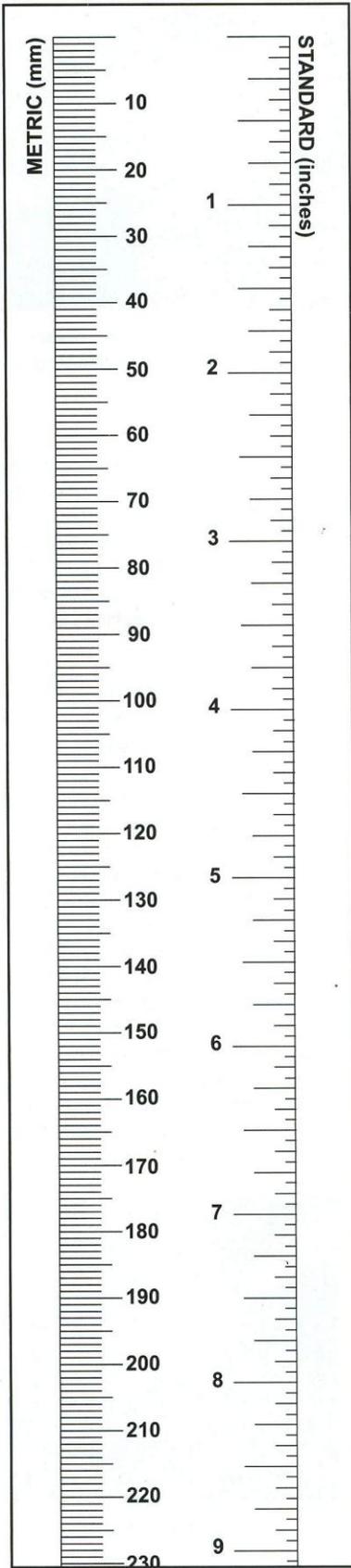
Oneway Mfg. - The Wolverine Sharpening System

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### Books

Lathe Fundamentals – Rick Peters – Popular Mechanics Workshop

**Metric / Standard Ruler (from Paul Snyder)**



# Woodturning *FUN*damentals

American Association of Woodturners

January/February 2012

## Quick Links

[Woodturner.org](http://Woodturner.org)

[Products](#)



## Questions & Answers

**Q:**

I am a woodturner and a member of the Chippewa Valley Woodturners Guild.

I would like the listing of the FDA-approved wood finishing products such as oils, etc. Thank you,

Dennis from WI

**A:**

The topic of food safe finishes is a recurring theme for many woodturners and woodworkers who envision placing their projects in contact with food, drink, or any materials meant to be consumed. Some of the concerns raised about whether something is "food safe" or not stem from invalid assumptions about the nature of the available finishes used to protect the wood, accentuate its figure, and reduce infiltration of moisture and

Dear Charles,

## Welcome to Woodturning Fundamentals!



I am pleased to announce a new educational program, free for members of the American Association of Woodturners. It is called "Woodturning Fundamentals." Created by our Program Director, Linda Ferber, it will be an easy-to-find and easy-to-use area of multimedia materials on all facets of woodturning.

We will release new materials every other month alternating with the publishing of the American Woodturner, our journal. Between these two, there will be new materials to enjoy each month. In our content, we'll include past journal materials, specially created articles, tool and equipment reviews, educational video clips, tips and tricks, and questions & answers.

If you are an AAW member, you can opt-in for this program's announcement **emails at this link**. If you aren't a member, you can find out more about becoming a member of the AAW at **this link**.

The contributors to Woodturning Fundamentals include Nick Cook, Rob Wallace, Beth Ireland, Keith Tompkins, Mark Knierim, Joe Herrmann, Linda Ferber, and Kurt Hertzog. With materials from these folks and the 25-plus years of our woodturning educational archives, you can be sure there will be plenty of great woodturning fundamentals.

Please share this information with your fellow AAW and club members. Encourage them to participate in the program and join the AAW if they aren't already members.

We welcome suggestions for content, improvement, and questions for the Q&A in our Woodturning Fundamentals program. We look forward to hearing from you.

Best,  
*Kurt Hertzog*  
Chair - Chapters and Membership Committee

other materials from the food into the wood. While in their liquid state, most finishes should be considered "toxic" and unsafe for human consumption due to the presence of solvents used to carry the actual finish into or onto the wood surface. However, once the finish has "matured" to its final state, many would argue that nearly all finishes are "food safe," specifically with regard to direct contact with food, such that no undesirable chemicals will leach out of the wood and finish into the food material being consumed. If you don't eat or drink the finish, it's food safe!

[Read the complete answer from Rob Wallace](#)

## Please submit your [Questions and Suggestions](#)

### AAW Project Books

These 8.5"x11" books are full of ideas, inspiration, and instruction! Each book features articles from *American Woodturner*.

[Please click here to access product details](#)

#### Special offer:

##### Project Book I:

1987-1992 \$5

##### Project Book II:

1993-1995 \$5

##### Project Book III:

1996-1998 \$10

##### Project Book IV:

1999-2001 \$10

##### Project Book V:

2002-2004 \$10

## Sharpening Tip

When discussing the fundamentals of turning, proper sharpening techniques must be at the top of the list. Many problems new turners experience can be traced back to improperly sharpened tools, so in this segment, we will discuss sharpening the skew chisel. After all, what tool could be more troublesome?

Read the rest of the tips from Keith Tompkins [Sharpening the Skew](#)

## Safety Tip

The Mid-South Woodturners Guild has established a Video Safety Group which posts lathe safety videos.



Turn Safe 3 - Dress for Safety

Supporters of the project include: Woodturners America, who originated the idea of the fund; the AAW for its strong financial support; the West Tennessee Woodturners for significant funds; and many individuals who have contributed generously.

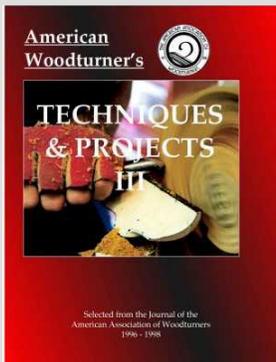
## Skill Building Tip

Stop! Don't do that! Twenty Ways Not to Turn a Bowl

-by Nick Cook

When it was suggested that I write this article, I wondered if it was because someone thought I didn't know how to turn a bowl. I was assured that I drew this assignment not because I'm inexperienced at bowl turning but rather because I have had so many woodturning students.

I have been teaching woodturning for more than 20 years, and many of the classes have been basic, for beginners, or an introduction to woodturning. You can ask anyone who has been involved in one of these classes and they will tell you that my most frequently used direction is: "Stop, don't do that!"



Read the rest of [Twenty Ways Not to Turn a Bowl](#)

Article reprinted from *American Woodturner* Spring 2006

## Video Tip



### Quick Trick to Finding the Center

Beth Ireland has been a production woodworker/woodturner for twenty-eight years. She received her MFA in Sculpture in 2010 and uses her turning skill to create sculptural art work as well as traditional architectural pieces. She has just completed a one-year project traveling around the country, teaching traditional hand skills, in a van renovated to be both shop and living space. Learn more about Beth at [bethireland.net](http://bethireland.net), and [turningaroundamerica.com](http://turningaroundamerica.com)

## Woodturning Fundamentals Committee Members

[Nick Cook](#)

[Linda Ferber](#)

[Joe Herrmann](#)

[Kurt Hertzog](#)

[Beth Ireland](#)

[Mark Knierim](#)

[Keith Tompkins](#)

[Rob Wallace](#)

**The following article was obtained from the Craft Supplies USA Site and is the property of Craft Supplies USA. Permission to use it was obtained by Great Falls Woodturners.**

## **Determining Safe Wood Lathe Speeds**

*By Dale Nish*

Using the correct lathe speed should allow the blanks to be turned with little or no vibration, allowing the tools to produce a clean surface. This allows for a safer woodturning experience.

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Vibration is usually caused by speeds high enough to cause the unbalanced blank to vibrate the lathe, as the piece is trying to fly off the lathe due to centrifugal force and the lathe holding system is keeping the piece in place. The vibration is caused by the works being unbalanced in weight. Unbalanced work can be caused by a turning blank not being centered properly on a faceplate or chuck, square stock not being centered on the drive center and revolving center or stock which may be unbalanced due to an area of the blank being heavier than another, usually due to moisture differences in the wood. Another common cause of vibration is turning blanks which are physically unbalanced, such as natural edge bowl from logs or burls. Low speeds are needed to reduce the vibration until the work becomes balanced, then speeds can be increased for more efficient turning.

### **Suggested Turning Speeds**

I have found from experience that appropriate lathe speeds can be determined using a simple formula. This method works for me, and I use it all the time to determine lathe speeds when I begin to set up to turn a piece.

**D = Diameter of stock in inches**

**RPM = Revolutions per minute of the headstock spindle**

**6,000-9,000 – just numbers used to determine lowest speed or highest speed**

**D" x RPM = 6,000 to 9,000**

Example- A bowl blank is 8 inches in diameter.

8" X 750 = 6,000

8" X 1125 = 9,000

If the lathe is a step pulley drive system, choose a setting around 750 RPM to 1100 RPM, staying lower around 750 RPM if you can.

If the lathe has a variable speed control system, set it around 750 RPM until the work is turned round, then increase the speed, but I wouldn't recommend going above 1100-1200 RPM.

Several years ago I visited a friend who had been turning large lamps and platters which he was selling at craft shows. He had retired from the construction industry and was involved in a "useful hobby" and he was quite successful. He and his wife traveled to shows in their motor home and were enjoying retirement. He was in his shop turning 20" platters glued up from different species of colorful woods. The joinery showed a few heavy glue lines and the occasional small gap, but the quality was good enough for the customer he was selling to. I mentioned that 800 RPM was much too fast for platters that size, and turning outboard with a light floor stand was dangerous in itself. He didn't feel that either the lathe speed or the floor stand was causing any difficulty and his comment was, "I've never had any problem." A few weeks later one of the platters disintegrated while he was turning it and he suffered severe head injuries from which he never fully recovered. When I last saw him, he was in a wheel chair, on an oxygen bottle and was watching his shop being sold at a garage sale. This was an accident that never needed to happen. In more than 45 years of teaching, mostly woodworking and turning classes, I've never seen a smart accident.

Now, let's look at the small diameter works, as there are large numbers of small capacity lathes owned by woodturners. Most will have a maximum swing of 8 inches and as noted previously, small bowls of 8" can be safely turned at around 750 RPM if held securely in a chuck or on a faceplate.

- 6" bowls will require a speed from 1000 to 1500 RPM.
- 5" bowls or projects require a speed from 1200 to 1800 RPM.
- 3" stock from 2,000 to 3,000 RPM
- Stock 2" or smaller in diameter usually will be turned at speeds 3,000 or higher, often at the top speed which the lathe will turn. However, caution must be practiced at all times and if the lathe speed seems too high, slow it down.

**All the speeds suggested are for stock which is sound, no defects or checks, and has not been laminated. Safe turning practices are not limited to the recommendations listed above. It is your responsibility to become properly trained and educated prior to attempting woodturning.**