

# **Refining the Skill of Woodturning**

## **A Natural Approach**

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### **1.) Recognize the finer points.**

Learning to recognize the finer points of what allows the tools to properly and naturally function with good body mechanics is the key to woodturning.

"If you're turning... your body shouldn't be hurting"

The discovery of the right tools that effectively allow for your comfort, (and are dedicated to the approach being used) can have the potential to instill greater focus because you're refining the skill of a few tools, rather than too many at once.

### **2.) Don't be afraid to fail.**

The failure success rate in woodturning is a gift. Being able to shape the material quickly on the lathe allows for a faster rate in which your skill can be refined. So in this way....

"The faster you fail, the faster you gain an opportunity to grow in skill"

If you happen to ruin a piece, you just gained a lesson that can be corrected often as fast as the process started. So in my opinion, you're only limited by the level of familiarity you have with a technique or method that has the potential to yield better results next time, and a personal willingness to learn.

### **3.) Practice, Watch, and Enjoy**

The more you practice techniques that interest you, as well as watch and recognize good tool work by using proper body mechanics, the greater the depth you'll be able to learn about what inspires you to reveal greater horizons of discovery and exploration in the craft.

So with all these things in mind...  
Go make some shavings fly!

# The Body Mechanics of Wood Turning

The body mechanics in wood turning should be a commentary on our ability to bridge the gap between the body tension felt in any woodturning process towards the ease and finesse we should always feel in the execution of using the tools related to any project.

- **The Body & Tool Must Be In Alignment:**

The tools are an extension of our bodies. Our blanks and projects are meant to be shaped in conjunction with our mid section, and upper body rather than with arm strength.

- **Aggression Creates Tearout:**

Forceful, aggressive removal of stock should always be avoided, as it is a commentary on compensating for what the tool should be able to do with light minimal pressure.

- **Well Shaped & Sharpened Tools Are A Necessity:**

Regular maintenance of well sharpened, and shaped tools are critical to the success of our ability to properly align the body mechanics needed for the cleanest cuts

# Finer Points of the Skew Chisel

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## \*3 Keys

1. If you learn to effectively roll and shear cut beads and cleanly plane cut with the skew, you can do anything with this tool.
2. Understanding why the skew catches will alleviate the fear and discomfort with it.
3. Developing relaxation and finesse with the skew reinforces the skill and refinement of it's overall application

## 3 possible cuts

- Shear/Planing Cut
  - Peeling Cut
  - V - Groove
- \* General scraping should be avoided

## Planing Cuts

(Between Centers)

- Long point of the tool moves to the left at 45°
- Heel/or short point moves to the right at 45°

## Skew Catches

(Most common variety of catch)

- When the cutting action of the supported edge of the skew drifts into the unsupported edge, the tool will catch.

**Remedy:** When planing, keep the tool at 45° and never roll the handle in the direction of the unsupported edge.

## End Grain Blanks

(In Chuck)

- When truing/cleaning the end grain across the blank, always cut with the long point of the skew leading
- Down hill shear cuts will produce a straight, conical shaped line with the long point leading.
- Down hill shear cuts will produce a more rounded convex curve with the heel/short point leading.