

Trent Bosch

Notes on Turning and Sculpting Wood

Objective

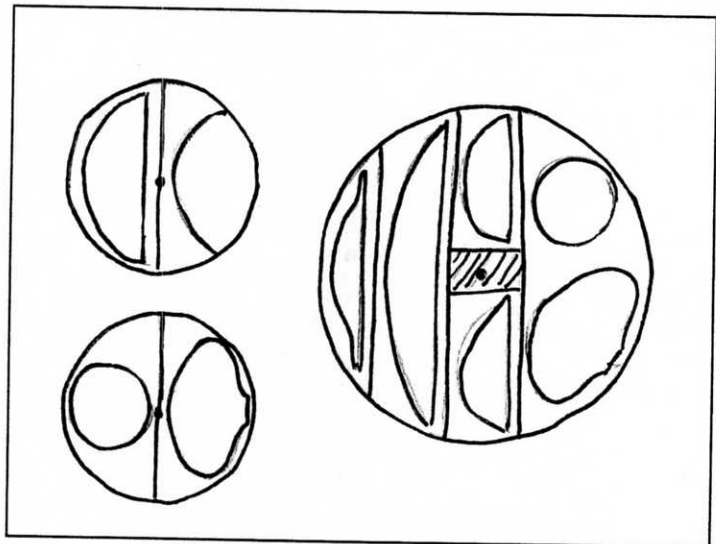
Over the past 15 years I have been exploring the creative possibilities and the unlimited potential that turning and sculpting wood has. This information sheet is to be used as a supplement to my hands on classes and demonstrations. My objective is to broaden your knowledge base and to expand your potential creative possibilities. There are many ways to approach woodturning below are some that work for me, you need to find what works best for you and as always enjoy the creative process.

Materials

I use mainly green (the wetter the better) domestic hardwoods, Acquired from arborists or individuals removing trees due to development, old age or storm damage. My favorites in my area include silver maple, ash, honey locust, elm etc.. I rarely turn down a piece of wood even if it is not one of my favorites (you never know).

Cutting The Material

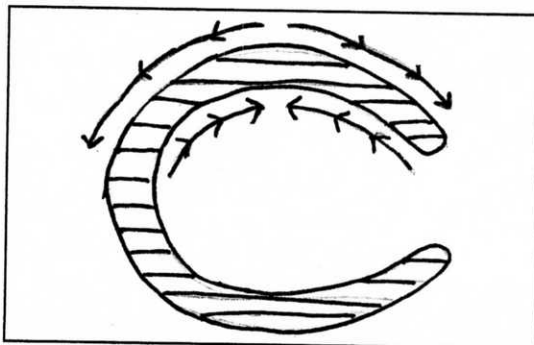
Starting with the log allows you to have complete control over the process giving you the ability to lay out the grain in any manner you see fit. I usually begin by removing the pith (center of the tree). This will remove an area that is prone to cracking, although this is a general rule there are certain situations where the pith being included will create interesting grain patterns.



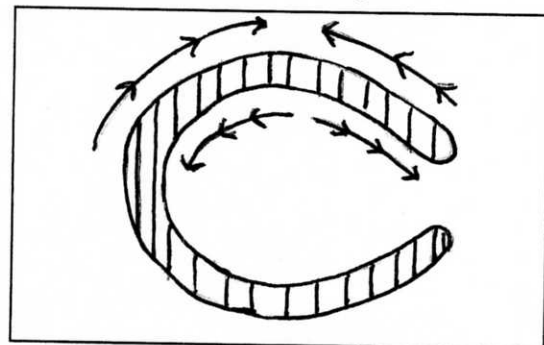
Layout of various forms in small and large logs

Grain Structure

Paying attention to the grain structure of the wood is important for two reasons. 1) The aesthetic success of the piece relies on thoughtful layout. 2) Cutting the wood the proper direction will allow for much cleaner cuts which in turn cut down on sanding time.



End grain Direction of cut



Face grain direction of cut

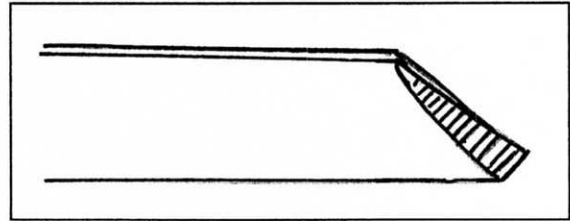
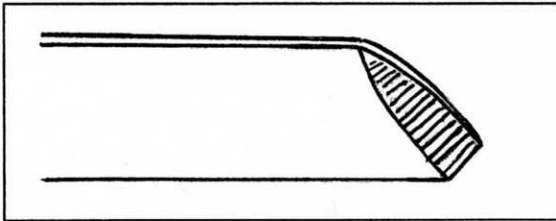
Tools

My basic tools include: 5/8" bowl gouge, swept back grind, 3/8" bowl gouge finish cut grind, 3/8" spindle gouge, fingernail grind, double ended scraper, and hollowing tools.

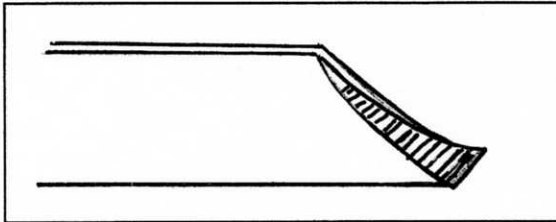
I use the sweptback grind bowl gouge about 85%-90% of the time I am on the lathe.

Sharpening

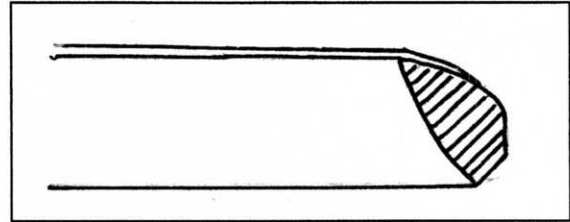
- Wheels: 60 grit works best (bread knife theory)
- Grind very carefully like you are grinding your fingernail. It does not take much pressure at all.
- Jigs are great if they get you the grind you want. To get the best results with jigs do not change the set up. Consistency is a very important Part of using jigs



Best grinds for the swept back grind gouge, with a 60 degree bevel angle



Grinding too much on the sides.



Grinding too much on the front.

Slow speed versus Fast speed

Slow speed (1725) is better to learn on or for doing grinding by hand.

Fast speed (3250) is for use with jigs and more experienced grinding.

The height of the grinder is important. Get it up higher so you can see what you are doing. I set the height of my lathes to about 2" above my elbow. This is also where I put my grinder

Tool Usage

Ride the bevel, ride the bevel, and ride the bevel!

Doing so gives increased control and will slice the wood off rather than rip it off.

