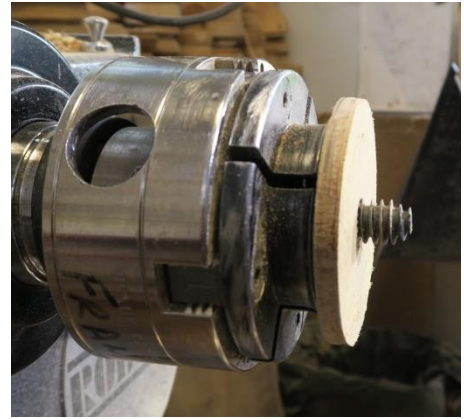


Embellishing your Platter - Notes prepared by Frank DiDomizio

Turning Techniques

Suggested Turning Sequence for Platters

- The basic tools for platter turning are
 - ½" bowl gouge
 - Parting tool
 - Scraper or shear scraper (skew)
- Drill a hole in the center on the face/front of the platter for mounting onto the screw chuck. For the oneway chuck they recommend a 3/8" hole, but I find this it too tight for most hardwoods. I typically will use a slightly larger drill bit at 13/32".
- Set up the chuck and install the screw. The full depth of the screw is typically not needed for small or thin platters and I almost always use a spacer as shown in the image above.
- Mount the platter blank on to the screw chuck and use the tailstock to assure the wood is safely held until it trued up
- True up the outside diameter of the blank with light cuts using the bowl gouge
- Mark the size of the tenon on the bottom of the platter. The tenon will be used to remount the platter into the chuck when doing the turning on the front face.
- Remove some of the wood which will be the bottom of the platter
- Using a parting tool or gouge, cut the outside of the tenon 1/4" to 3/8" deep
- If the platter blank is very thin a glue block can be used to serve as the tenon. The glue block is then removed after the face of the platter is completed
- Shape the back of the platter with a gentle curve using the bowl gouge. I typically do this with a pull cut, but a traditional push cut can also be used, particularly if the pull cut is giving you tear out. Then using a skew, gouge or scraper gently shear scrape the back of the platter surface to a state of being ready for sanding.
- The objective is to finish the back of the platter surface completely with the bowl gouge. If there are some bumps or areas that need to be smoothed out, a shear scrape cut can be used with a skew, gouge on its side or a traditional scraper all of which are held at approximately a 45 degree angle



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Turn the face of the platter

- Once the back is completed it can be sanded at this point: however, I typically wait until the face of the platter is complete and then sand both sides at that time.
- Remove the finished back platter from the screw chuck (of faceplate if that has been used)
- Mount the platter in the lathe scroll chuck clamping onto the tenon
- Using a bowl gouge, gently face off and prepare the face of the platter, establishing how large of an outer rim to leave. For decorative platters I often leave a large rim at 2/3 of the diameter for the rim and 1/3 for the inner bowl portion. I will normally use the “golden ratio” (1:1.618) to mark this out. As with the back of the platter, the front face can be cleaned up with gentle shear scraping to prepare it for sanding or embellishing.
- The steps from this point forward will depend on what is desired for the particular platter face in terms of decorative detail. If there is no embellishment to be added, then simply turn the inner bowl area and finish sand both sides.
- If the face of the platter is to be dyed or ebonized, I will typically either spray or brush adjacent surfaces with a sealer such as shellac

Finish the Platter

- Remove the platter from the chuck and use the jumbo jaws to clean off the bottom of the bowl. Alternate methods are available to finish the bottom such as vacuum chuck, mounting on a soft pad, etc.
- Remove the platter from the chuck and ensure that the piece is dust free and the surface is clean to accept the desired finish
- Gently 'hand wipe' a finish on to all surfaces of the platter or spray with your favourite finish. For embellished pieces I generally spray the platter with lacquer.

For turning the tenon off of large platters I have made up plywood extensions which allow the jumbo jaws to be extended to a larger diameter as shown in the image below.








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Embellishing Techniques

The images below show some tools and techniques that I often use for embellishing my turnings. There are many other techniques which I may not have shown such as dying figured wood, bleaching selected areas, carving specific relief areas, etc. All of these can be used in various ways to embellish platters and other turned shapes.

	<p>A small skew can be used to create beads or grooves</p> <p>A V scraper can be used to create grooves</p> <p>A piece of arborite laminate can be used to create black burned lines when held in a groove while the lathe is spinning.</p>
	<p>Black gesso can be applied to a surface and then carved through after it is dry. It is thick bodied and does not penetrate too deep. I often water down the gesso, adding 10 to 20% water to the mixture to make it flow a bit better</p> <p>India ink can be used to blacken or ebonize a surface. It penetrates a bit deeper than the gesso.</p>
	<p>A wire brush spinning opposite to the direction of the wood can create an interesting texture effect on the surface of a platter. I often use this in specific areas.</p> <p>I primarily use this technique when the piece is on the lathe.</p>
	<p>The sorby texturing tool can be used to create an grooved/carved effect by running it across the surface while the lathe is spinning.</p>

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	<p>A wood burner can create interesting burned images or texture on the platter surfaces.</p>
	<p>Rotary tools can be used to create textured surfaces. They can also be used to carve through a black gesso finish.</p>
	<p>An engraving tool with a blunt end, hooked up to a variable speed device (used for routers) can be used to create surface texture similar to an orange peel effect.</p>
	<p>An arbor tech or other carving blade can be used to create a surface effect (with cuts/grooves) when used while the piece is spinning on the lathe.</p>
	<p>A carver can be used to either create a carved texture or to carve through a surface with gesso on it.</p>

Visit my website at www.frankdidomizio.com

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I offer one-on-one classes in my Studio at Selwyn, just outside of Peterborough or at the student's home.