

*YMMV is your forum to share pointers, shop tricks, jigs, tools, techniques, suggestions, scoops, instructions, buzz, and advice on woodturning-related topics with each other.*

## Tips thanks to Cindy Drozda

I had the pleasure of seeing a demo by Cindy Drozda at a recent meeting of the Chesapeake Woodturners. All I can say is that if you haven't seen her in person, you should take any opportunity that comes your way. She's a great designer and technician, not to speak of finial and box maker par excellence. She is also an exceptional teacher, explains what she is doing very well, and provides lots of great tips along the way. Here are a few examples:

- If you want to generate some controversy, just bring up the subject of negative-rake scrapers. Everyone has an opinion, and nobody really has all the answers. Cindy is a big fan. All of her scrapers, regardless of shape, are relieved on the top. She says they are less aggressive and less prone to catching – perfect for her needs. For inside work, among others, she has one of those large, scary-looking, Stuart Batty “bayonet” types. She even uses skew chisels flat on the rest as a form of negative rake scraper. It's something to think about and play with. They work best on hard, fine-grained woods. The burr is part of the controversy; I'll leave it at that.
- A standard, commercial, thin, fluted parting tool can be used to make equal-sized, tiny little beads in fine-grained wood. This is nice, for example, on the inside of the lid of a box.
- For relatively small bowls, a parting tool can be used like a bowl saver to remove a cone of material that can later be used for a lid or a separate, smaller bowl. Be careful to keep control by having a sufficient handle length for the distance of the cut beyond the tool rest. I saw JoHannes Michelsen do a similar thing to save a mirror frame from the outside of one of his hat blanks with an impressively long handle to maintain the needed leverage. I have just purchased a carbide-tipped Sorby “Slicer” to try this for medium-sized bowls, as I'm not presently interested in going all the way to a coring system.





- Cindy uses a 3/8" (shaft diameter) spindle gouge (not a detail gouge) with a very sharp point for her fine finial work. This acts like a much smaller gouge because the flute is very narrow at the tip, but it has the strength of the larger tool.



The cutting bevel is ground at about 40 degrees, but the heel is relieved to a smaller angle to make it fit into small places.



This is the same grind favored by people like JoHannes Michelsen and Trent Bosch. With this tool, she cuts the finest details imaginable.



- A bedan makes a nice super-heavy scraper for roughing square-cut rebates working on the end of pieces, into the axis of the lathe (probably best not done on end grain!).

- Old or cheap box-end wrenches make good measuring tools for standard size tenons. Be sure to round the corners off on a grinder so it doesn't want to grab.



- She loves box elder burls as a working medium. They are beautiful and cut well. Apparently they are very common in Colorado and can be purchased online for reasonable prices.



- Liquid dyes soak into wood preferentially depending on the grain structure. If a surface is dyed and then recut to remove the surface, the remaining imbedded color emphasizes the grain pattern in what can be a very attractive way.

- 2-ply, unbleached paper towels can be separated into two very thin sheets. One of these can work quite well as a shim between a close-fitting jam chuck and the associated work piece if the fit is a little loose. Indeed, you may want to do this on purpose so the fit isn't so tight you can't get it apart when you're done.
- A simple flap sander can be made for interior sanding by attaching 2" sandpaper discs to a 1" holder and making a number of radial cuts between the outer edge and the holder.
- Don't try to sand away a central, inside nib with the lathe running. It will only make it worse because the very center is, in effect, not moving, and, away from the axis, it's moving a lot.

*Always use common sense. Things that work in one situation may not work in another.  
Follow all Safety Rules. If it feels wrong, it probably is; stop and rethink.  
Your Mileage May Vary*