



Wood Turners Worldwide

worldwidewoodturners.org and the art of making shavings

Newsletter

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VOLUME 2 NUMBER 11



Patrick Hoggard



Victor Todd



Waukeene Vinson

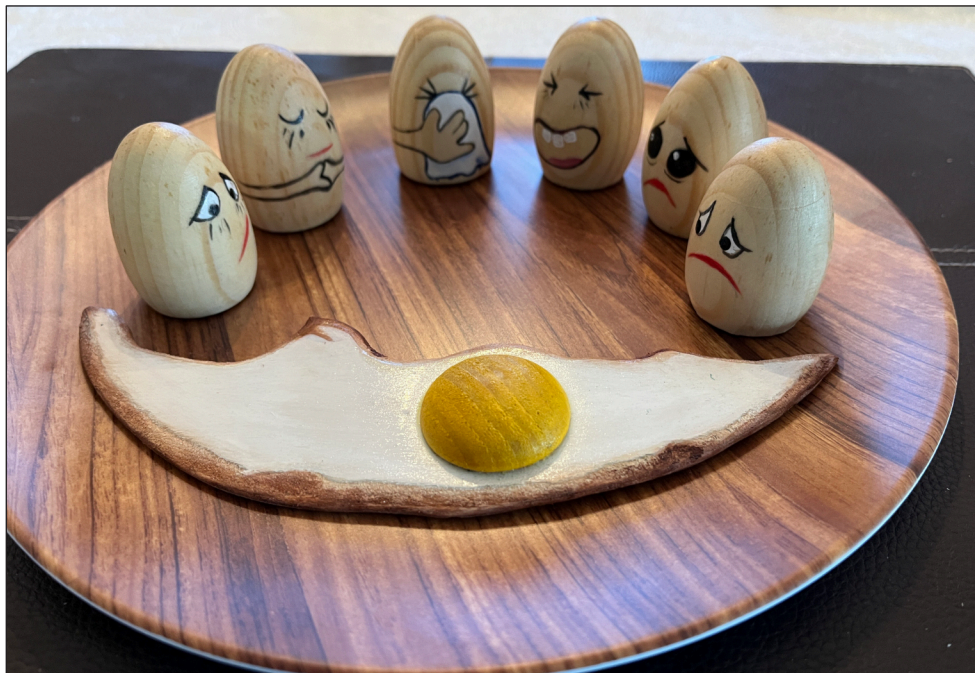


Jayson Cote

Clockwise from top left: Ash hollow vessel, colored with Speedball India Ink and sanded back, then applied red Chestnut Spirit Stain. Top is black walnut. Handles are hand carved from black walnut; Ambrosia maple platter; Club challenge to turn a 2" x 2" x 2" cube - mesquite; Cherry lidded box with black walnut lid.



Jon Moore



Ruby Cler

Tgis page, clockwise from top left: Spalted maple vase; Eggbert died last Fryday. Fortunately he wasn't beaten and landed sunny side up. He's now on a better plate; Maple vase, dyed with 2 coats of black dye, then one coat of eggplant dye; Vase inside a vase; Cherry box with a quilted maple insert in the lid. **Facing page, clockwise from top left:** Cherry three-cornered box with maple lid; Maple calabash with leather embellishment; Silver maple bowl and plate made from the same piece of wood, pyrography embellishment; Walnut intersecting spheres.



Scott Medori



Al Dawson



Leonard Davis

Your art belongs in our newsletter! Email hi-res images to editor@worldwidewoodturners.org. Include a brief description and make sure you identify yourself!



Kirk Kapp



Lonnie Weidner



Jim Duxbury



Bambi Golombisky

Laser Engraving for Wood Turners Final

... Continued from Volume 2, Issue 10
By Todd Phipps

Fire Safety: Preventing Burns and Accidents

Laser engravers work by generating high-intensity heat, vaporizing the surface of the material to create engravings. While this process is controlled and precise, it carries an inherent fire risk, especially when engraving flammable materials like wood, fabric, or acrylic. If left unchecked, excessive heat can lead to overburning, smoldering, or even ignition, putting both your workpiece and workspace at risk.

To ensure a safe engraving experience, it's essential to understand how to prevent fires, manage heat buildup, and respond quickly if an issue arises.

1. Never Leave the Engraver Unattended

One of the most important safety rules when laser engraving is to always stay nearby while the machine is running. Unlike traditional woodworking tools, where stopping the tool immediately halts the work, a laser engraver will continue burning a stationary area if something goes wrong.

Monitor the engraving process at all times to catch any signs of overheating or excessive charring.

Pause the engraving if you need to step away, rather than risking a potential fire.

Set a timer or reminder so you never forget that the machine is running.

Warning: Fires can start in seconds. If a piece starts smoldering or glowing red-hot, stop the engraver immediately and inspect the material before continuing.

2. Use Proper Engraving Settings to Control Heat

Overheating happens when the laser lingers too long in one spot or when power settings are too high for the material being engraved. Different materials require different settings, and improper adjustments can result in:

Deep burns or charred edges that can weaken wood and lead to ignition.

Warping and cracking in materials like acrylic or thin wood.

Excessive smoke buildup, which can interfere with laser operation and increase fire risk. Adjust power and speed settings properly—use

lower power for lighter engraving and higher power for deeper etching.

Enable "air assist" if your engraver has it—this directs a small stream of air to reduce heat buildup and prevent flare-ups.

Perform test engravings on scrap material before running a full job to make sure settings are safe.

3. Keep Flammable Materials Away from the Engraver

Many workshops contain flammable dust, paper, rags, or chemical finishes, all of which can ignite easily if exposed to heat or stray sparks.

Regularly clean the workspace—remove any sawdust, scraps, or loose fibers that could catch fire.

Keep aerosol sprays, varnishes, and chemical finishes away from the engraver—some are highly flammable.

Ensure the engraving area is clear of loose materials—place your workpiece securely to avoid unintended burns.

Warning: Acrylic, while commonly engraved, is highly flammable. Always monitor acrylic engravings closely, as excessive heat can cause it to catch fire faster than wood.

4. Have Fire Safety Equipment Ready

Even with precautions, fires can still occur. Being prepared with proper fire safety equipment can mean the difference between a minor flare-up and a serious accident.

Keep a fire extinguisher nearby—a Class ABC or CO2 extinguisher is ideal for laser engraver fires.

Use a fire blanket—if a small flame appears, a fire blanket can quickly smother it without the mess of an extinguisher.

Have a metal tray or ceramic tile under flammable materials—this can help contain heat and prevent a fire from spreading.

Install a smoke detector in your workspace—this provides an extra layer of protection in case you don't notice smoke right away.

5. Let Materials Cool After Engraving

Even if a fire doesn't occur during engraving,

some materials retain heat and can smolder for minutes after the process is finished.

Allow time for cooling—before handling, check if the engraved area is still warm to the touch.

Avoid stacking freshly engraved pieces—if there's residual heat, placing them together can increase the risk of smoldering.

Inspect your workpiece after engraving—if you notice any glowing embers, stop and let the piece cool down fully.

Final Thoughts on Fire Safety

While laser engraving is generally safe, it involves real heat and fire risks that must be taken seriously. By monitoring your engraver, using proper settings, keeping flammable materials away, and having fire safety equipment on hand, you can dramatically reduce the risk of accidents and engrave with confidence.

Always remember: safety first—your projects and your workshop depend on it.

Never Leave the Laser Engraver Running Unattended

This can't be emphasized enough—never walk away from a running laser engraver. Unlike other woodworking tools that may stop when turned off, a laser can continue burning even if the software malfunctions or the machine doesn't turn off properly.

- Stay close by and monitor the engraving process. If you need to step away, pause or shut down the engraver.
- Use a webcam or monitoring system if you're working in a separate room. Some engravers allow remote monitoring, but it's still essential to be able to react quickly in case of an emergency.
- Inspect the workpiece after engraving – Some woods can continue smoldering after the engraving is done.

Final Thoughts on Safety

Laser engraving is an amazing tool for woodturners, but like any power tool, it requires responsible use. By ensuring proper ventilation, eye protection, fire safety, and material selection, you can engrave with confidence and avoid unnecessary risks.

By taking these precautions, you'll not only keep yourself safe but also ensure that your engravings are clean, crisp, and trouble-free. With the right setup and awareness, laser engraving becomes an

enjoyable, efficient, and safe addition to your woodturning shop.

Space Requirements for Laser Engraving

Before purchasing a laser engraver, it's important to assess your workspace. Unlike wood lathes or other heavy-duty tools, laser engravers don't require a lot of physical strength to operate, but they do need a dedicated area with proper ventilation, power access, and storage for materials.

1. How Much Space Do You Need?

Laser engravers come in various sizes, from desktop units to larger, industrial-grade machines. Before buying, consider:

Desk space or a dedicated workbench – Most engravers need at least 2-3 feet of flat workspace.

Storage space for wood blanks – Keep your engraving materials organized.

Enough room for ventilation equipment – If using an exhaust fan or filtration system, account for its placement.

2. Electrical & Computer Setup

Most laser engravers run on standard 110V outlets, but they require a stable connection to a computer or tablet to process design files. Make sure your workspace has:

A reliable power source – Some high-powered engravers may need surge protection.

USB or Wi-Fi connection to a computer – Most engravers use dedicated software for controlling engraving depth, speed, and power settings.

Conclusion: Preparing for a Successful Engraving Experience

Getting started with laser engraving is more than just purchasing a machine—it requires careful preparation, a safe workspace, and an understanding of how different materials react to the laser. By taking the time to set up proper ventilation, fire safety measures, and material selection, you'll ensure that every engraving project is both successful and safe.

By now, you have a solid foundation in why laser engraving is valuable for woodturners, the essential safety precautions, and how to choose the right materials for the best results. With this knowledge, you're well on your way to adding intricate designs, custom branding, and fine details to your turned pieces.

How to make a floating bottom for a segmented bowl

By Bob Grinstead



glue block and floating bottom blank

Bowls that have a bottom larger than 6" sometimes split or come loose from the next ring with the movement of the wood. All wood shrinks and expands over time.

If you make a floating bottom you will not have that issue. The center piece of wood is not glued in and floats inside of a ring of wood.

The bottom starts with a 3/4" or thicker segmented ring. I usually start it on a glue block with a paper joint. You can make the ring as large as you want and the ring should be about 1.5" or more wide. This usually gets turned smaller as you finish the bottom of the bowl.



part off 1/3rd of the bottom ring

Turn it round and sand flat. Turn the inside of the ring round.

Using a thin cutoff tool, cut the ring in thirds, leaving 2/3s on the glue block. Keep the cut off piece (1/3rd) for later, this will become part of the inside of the bowl.



1 string of glue on glue block



base ring with dado

Sand what is left of the ring on the glue block flat.

Turn a dado on the inside of this segmented ring about 1/2" wide and 3/16" deep.

On another glue block, Glue a solid piece of wood (it can be glued up to get it the correct size) wider than the inside

of the dado on segmented ring.

Turn this round to fit inside the dado. Make it a little smaller than the dado, this leaves room for the wood to move, and thicker than the dado is deep. I like to make this about 3/8" thick or more for now.



floating bottom sized to fit dado and about 1/4"

Sand this flat and remove it from the glue block. The sanded side will be the bottom of the bowl.

Place a small piece of tape on each end of the disc on the end grain. There is less movement in this

floating bottom taped and finished

direction. This will keep the finish off the wood.

Finish the sanded side, it will become the bottom of your bowl. The finish is to keep glue from sticking to this side of the disc.

Remove the tape. Using a





floating bottom with finish

small amount of glue on the previously taped area, glue the disc in the dado of the segmented ring. Only glue the taped off sections, do not glue the complete ring. You want it to be able move with changes in humidity.

Once this has dried and using tail stock support, turn this

floating piece flush with the segmented ring.



tailstock support

Use a push cut toward the headstock to cut this down till it is flush with the ring. If you push toward the center it will probably break the small glue joints. Once you have most of the wood removed, take the tailstock away and finish the floating plate.

Sand the ring and floating bottom flat. This will be the inside, bottom of your bowl.



bottom trimmed flush

Using the ring you cut off earlier (1/3 piece), glue it in place over the segmented base ring on the glue block. Taking care not to let the glue get in your dado or on the floating bottom.

Sand flat. Turn the inside lip of the ring smooth.

The floating bottom is complete and you are ready to start adding layers to the bowl.



glue ring over sanded floating bottom



Tom Dresch

Above: Vases embellished with trans-tint dyes.

Wood Turners Worldwide

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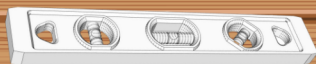
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September 17-20 2026
Wisconsin Rapids Wisconsin

Tuition Cost \$160

Includes all training &
Evening Meal

Hotel Accomodations are now available.



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More details to come!!!

Level Up Coach: Martin Clarkson

My name is Martin Clarkson, I am a professional woodturner from Lincolnshire, England. I live and work in the UK. I have been turning full-time for 10 years, designing and making a variety of products, mainly consumer goods, all from a variety of woods, in a variety of price ranges.



Over the years, I have learned a lot about the techniques of different countries and cultures: the tools and lathes used differ from place to place, the turning itself, the tools used and the handling of the products have evolved over time, but the techniques themselves have remained the same.

I joined this community because I believe that many of you here will be able to inspire and show something new through your work; and of course, I hope that I can inspire you in the same way with some of my own work.



Ian Govaerts



Waukeene Vinson