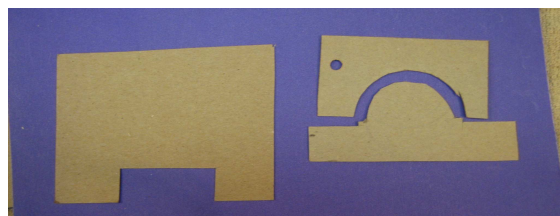


Turning a Christmas Tree Ornament



North Florida Woodturners
Program 10/2008
Walt Wager

Templates



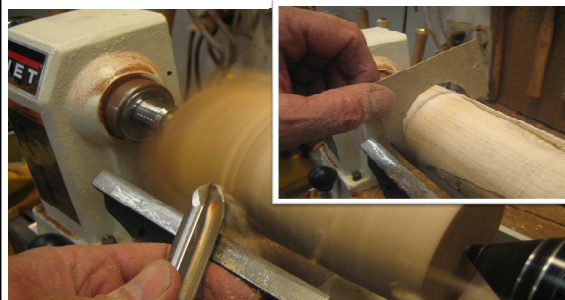
Templates can be easily cut from cardboard. The template on the left is to size the tenon for the scroll chuck. The templates on the right are for the outside dimensions and inside dimensions of what will become the body of the Christmas ornament.

Getting started



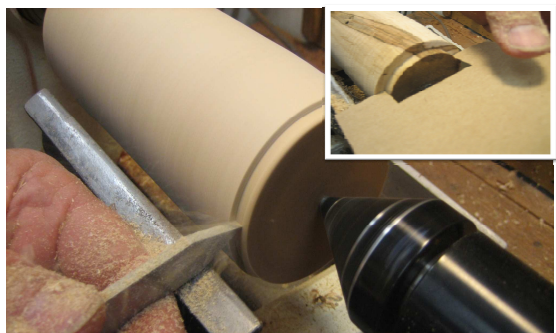
Start with a blank that is about 2" longer than the sphere you are going to create (if you want a 3" sphere, start with a 3 x 3 x 5" wood blank).

Shaping the Cylinder



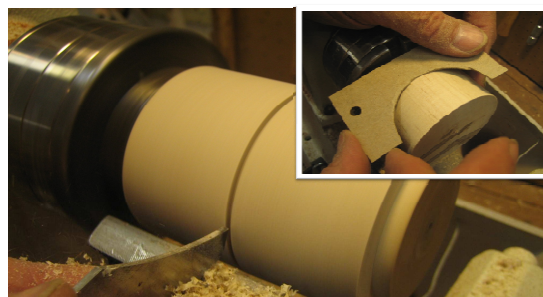
Start with a length of wood that is about 2" longer than the diameter of the ornament, and shape it into a cylinder. I use a cardboard template to check the diameter of the cylinder – the same template will be used later to check for the length of the cylinder when making it into a sphere.

Turning the Tenon



Next turn a tenon for the chuck on each end of the cylinder. Insert shows cardboard template cut to the diameter for my chuck to check the size of the tenon.

Part Cylinder with Tenon on Each End



The cylinder with tenons on each end is put into a scroll chuck and parted in half. The inset shows how the half left in the chuck will become a part of the sphere of the ornament.

Hollow Inside of First Half



Next, hollow the inside of the sphere. Here I am using a small scraper, you don't have to be too careful – no one will see the inside after it is glued. I use the inside template to check how deep I am hollowing because I will be turning the outside later.

Cut Shoulder for Reverse Chucking



I cut a shoulder on this piece so I can reverse chuck it and turn the outside. I use the template to check the depth again.

Turn Outside Half Round



1. The reverse chucked piece is now rounded



2. and sanded



3. Drill a 3/8" hole



4. completed half

Starting the second half



1. Get a measure of the inside



2. Mount the second half and cut a tenon

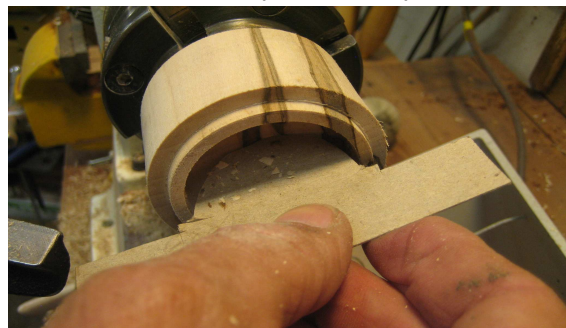


3. Check the fit



4. Hollow inside of the second half

Check Depth and Shape



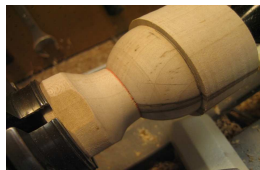
Here the template is being used to check the inside shape and depth of the second side. When finished this piece will be removed from the chuck and mated to the first side like the top of a box.

Create Jam-chuck jig



This is a jam-chuck created to hold the first piece while the outside of the second piece is being rounded.

Turn outside of second half



1. Mount jig in scroll chuck and jam chuck both pieces



2. Turn the second half of the sphere



3. Turn detail for the top (leave room for hook eye.)



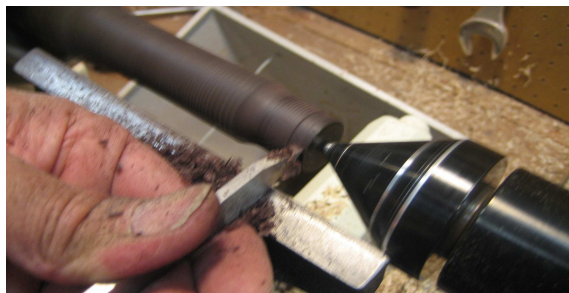
4. Burn detail lines into the sphere

Final Sanding on Lathe



Do your final sanding of the top piece. You already sanded the bottom, remember?

Turning the finial

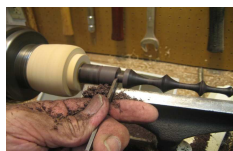


You can use penstock for your finials. I have a small chuck I use for holding the finial blank, but you can also cut a tenon and glue the end into a waste block to hold it

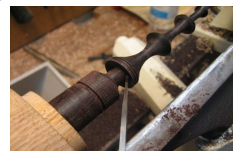
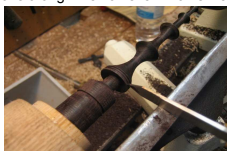
Tenon glued into a waste block



Here a tenon about 1/2" long was glued into a scrap block. You want as secure a hold on the finial blank as possible.



I use a revolving center to support the end of the finial while I am turning. I start at the end and gradually work toward the headstock leaving as much support as possible as I move along. A small skew works well here.



The tenon on the finial will be 3/8" to go into the hole on the sphere. You have to undercut the base to accommodate the curve in the sphere. I ground a parting tool to a thin point especially for these cuts.

Finish and Assemble Ornament

