

TIPS

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Drilled chucking recess

I have found that drilling a 2½" - (6cm-) diameter hole ¼" (6mm) deep with a Forstner bit forms a good recess for mounting blanks for plates and shallow bowls (*Photo 1*). It is easy to do and more secure than using a screw chuck, as screws and shallow holes don't mix well. To mount a blank in the drilled hole, simply expand your chuck jaws into the recess (*Photo 2*).

Be careful when drilling a large hole. You *absolutely* need to do this on a drill press. Using a handheld drill would be a recipe for disaster with a bit this size. You also need to clamp the blank down to the drill press table. A large drill bit can easily catch and rip the blank out of and/or through your hand.

—Carl Ford, Connecticut



Prep pen tubes at the lathe



One of the tasks in pen turning is roughing the brass tubes so the glue has a better bonding surface. I find that roughing each tube by hand is time-consuming and downright unpleasant. A more efficient way is to place several tubes onto the pen mandrel mounted on your lathe. Place the tailstock against the tubes and run the lathe at a slow speed, roughing the tubes with coarse sandpaper as they turn. I made a sanding paddle by gluing sandpaper to a paddle. I just slide it firmly across the tubes as they rotate and, presto, the job is done!

—James Putnam, Wisconsin



Vibration dampening center

Tennis players use a rubber grommet on the strings of their rackets to reduce the vibration as it travels through their racket to their arm. I've found this concept also works at the lathe when I'm turning an out-of-balance piece. I place a tennis ball between the live center and the workpiece (*Photo 1*), and it acts as a vibration dampener.

A tennis ball can also be used for a light touch when centering spindle work—without scarring the work (*Photo 2*). Too much pressure from a bare cone center can split the wood of an open endgrain project. Also, I cut about 1" (25mm) off the cone center for a better fit on the tennis ball.

—Dan Lempa, Illinois



Inexpensive toolrest height collars

I have a JET 1642EVS lathe, which I use with various aftermarket toolrests. To quickly set the toolrests at my preferred height, I use a collar on the toolrest post. Recently, I came across some motor shaft collars while shopping at amazon.com (Climax C-100-BO 1" w/ set screw, for about \$2). I have found that these motor shaft collars work great as a toolrest height indicator.

—Bill Straff, Florida

