

STEPS TO TURN A TWIG POT OR SMALL BUD VASE



The Twig Pot or Bud Vase is a great project for those wanting to learn Spindle Turning. It is very simple turning project, easy to turn, and can make a great gift

Spindle turning is basically shaping wood on a lathe that is positioned between the headstock and tailstock with the direction of wood grain aligned horizontally. The wood is normally held by a center drive in the headstock and a free spinning live center in the tailstock. The wood to be turned is placed between these centers in the center of each of the wood. A lathe chuck can be used instead on the headstock if the wood is properly sized to fit in the chuck.

The wood normally used for the Twig Pots is 2" square and about 6" long. It can be any type of wood as long as the grain of the wood is horizontal between the headstock and tailstock. A standard test tube {10mm x 75mm} can be added if there is a plan to put live plants in the vase.

Use the following steps to turn your Twig Pot project.

1. Choose your turning blank, as mentioned above. 2" X 2" X 6". It can be any wood you choose.
2. Mount the blank between the centers, or in the Chuck (in the headstock) and the live center in the tailstock.
3. Turn the wood so that it is round and smooth. A Spindle Roughing Gouge works best for rounding, but a Skew or Bowl Gouge can also be used. On the opposite end of where the hole in the vase will be, turn a tenon that will fit into the Chuck.

4. If not already in the Chuck mount the blank securely in the Chuck using the tenon turned in Step 3.
5. Re-true (round) the blank after securing the tailstock, with live center point holding the blank to keep it steady.
6. Pull the tailstock back away from the blank. Mark the center of the blank using a Skew or centering drill bit. This will be where the drill bit will be and make the wood more stable when drilling the vase hole and keep it from wandering.
7. Using a Jacobs drill chuck, with a 11/32" drill bit, drill the vase top hole" creating a hole 3 1/4" deep.
8. Clear the hole and check to see if the test tube fits comfortably.
9. In order to have the test tube fit properly and give a clean fit, use a Skew and taper the top of the hold so that the tube lip fits neatly in the recess down in the top of the hole.
10. Using a cone center on a live center, put it in the tailstock and sliding the tailstock back to the hole, center and tighten it holding the wood securely.
11. Determine what shape your vase will be and mark off the sections of wood with a pencil to indicate where you will cut to achieve your desired shape.
12. Starting at the tailstock end start removing wood using a Bowl Gouge or Spindle Gouge.
NOTE: Vase top cannot be narrower than 1" due to the hole in the middle of your wood blank.
Keep the lower 1/3 to 2/3 of the spindle larger than the top to keep weight low so vase won't fall over as easily.
13. After you finish with the top portion then start shaping the bottom to your design.
14. Blend the curves to make them smooth and flowing.
15. Once you have the shape to your design, start sanding the vase on the lathe using sandpaper grits from lower numbered grits to the higher numbered grits. **CAUTION – Move the tool rest away from the work piece PRIOR to sanding.**
16. After sanding apply a finish of your choice to the Twig Pot.
17. Now it is time to remove the turned place. This will be done using a Parting Tool.
18. Using the Parting Tool, safely cut a groove near to the Chuck until there is about 1/4" left. Remove the rest using a saw.
19. After removing the Twig Pot, sand the bottom and the nub in the middle.
20. Apply finish to the bottom and you are FINISHED!

Get some small flowers – real or plastic, and enjoy your turned vase!

Thanks for attending,

Gordon Kincheloe