Lathe

The lathe rotates a workpiece about an axis to permit shaping, sanding, and other operations. Lathes are used to create a wide variety of things, from pens to bowls and more.

Safety Rules

1. Select stock carefully and inspect it closely before undertaking a project. Avoid using wood with knots or splits.
2. Rough out your workpiece with a band saw before mounting it on the lathe.
3. When using the lathe, you must wear a full face shield *in addition to* your safety glasses with side shields.
4. Snug the tailstock center against the work and lock it. Lubricate the tailstock center if it is not a ball-bearing center.
5. Position the tool rest a little below center of the workpiece and no further than 1/8" from it. Stop the lathe periodically as you work to adjust the rest as the workpiece diameter decreases.
6. With the workpiece held in the lathe, rotate it by hand to be sure that it clears the tool rest.
7. Never adjust the position of the tool rest while the lathe is running.
8. Before turning on the power to the lathe, make sure the lathe is set to the lowest possible speed and that the stock is secure. Stand to the side of the machine on the initial start-up in case the workpiece flies off the lathe as it gets up to speed.
9. Keep tools off the lathe bed. Keep the woodturning tools on your side of the lathe so you don't have to reach over the workpiece for them.
10. Keep the woodturning tools sharp. A dull chisel requires excessive feed pressure.
11. Hold the turning chisel firmly and brace it securely against the tool rest.
12. Make contact with the work cautiously, and then slowly make the cut more aggressive.
13. Don't use your fingers to check the work for roundness while the lathe is running, especially during roughing operations. Stop the lathe to check the progress, or rest the blade of the tool lightly against the work as it turns.
14. Clean up wood shavings and sawdust often. Sawdust can create a slipping hazard.
15. Remove the tool rest before sanding or polishing on the lathe.
16. When sanding, remember that the spinning stock will cause the sandpaper to heat up from friction. So, sand on a low speed; sand on the back side of the stock.