

Remounting work to finish the base or re-turn after completion

There are many occasions when you need to hold a turning either to hide the way it was originally held, or because you need to return a piece to the lathe after it has been finished.

Using a flat faceplate



Above shows my flat faceplate and some anti-slip matting you can buy from caravan stores. The faceplate is made from some ordinal pine planks, glued at right-angles to the grain for rigidity and strength. The scroll-chuck holds onto another piece of wood glued and screwed again, across the grain. The whole thing was turned to about 10" diameter. You can see in the photo that I have marked with a point-tool radiuses every 10mm, making it easy to make sure the piece of work is centralised.

This hornbeam bowl I turned some time ago has moved quite a lot and I wondered about re-turning its top surface. Inside the bowl is a cone-shaped piece of wood that is approximately the internal shape of the bowl. Sandwiched between it and the bowl is some anti-slip matting, to stop it marking the finished bowl and to stop it slipping. Also some anti-slip matting it used on the base between the wooden faceplate and the bowl. The problem with this is the base of the bowl is too small to get a good purchase. But the principle is there, as long as there is enough surface to create a grip.

Normally an open bowl or platter would work well with this large wooden faceplate because there is plenty of surface area to get a good grip on the top surface of the turning. This then allows you to get to the base to finish it properly.

Using a Jam-chuck



As the above idea of the faceplate did not work I tried a jam-chuck fitting tightly on the foot of the bowl. This time the bowl was held firmly. You can see that on the outside of the jam-chuck, which is made from a scrap of hardwood, I have put a pencil mark to indicate where it lines up with the #1 jaw of the scroll-chuck. This is so I can be sure it will rotate accurately after I have removed it and then replaced it. I have never quite understood why, when you replace a turning to a scroll-chuck randomly, that it probably will not turn perfectly, seeing as the chuck is machine-made.

After all this I found the bowl had moved so much that it was not possible to return it. But it did not matter as it has character.

Using Cole Jaws

You can use Cole Jaws which fit to your scroll chuck. The snag with these jaws is they are so time-consuming, removing your standard jaws, fitting the Cole jaws and then adjusting the rubber buttons to the right diameter for the piece needing holding. And then of course, removing them and replacing your standard jaws again. The other problem is the top surface of the turning to be held has to be flat and if it is at all delicate, there is the chance of it getting marked by the Cole jaw buttons. If there is this risk of marking then always use all 8 buttons, so you do not need to tighten the chuck too much. Then take light cuts as you finish the foot or base.

Notes

Remember that when you turn a piece around with any of these methods of holding, the piece is now turning in the opposite direction to when you initially turned it. You can use this to your advantage by giving your work a fine sanding (400-600 grit) in the opposite direction.

Be particularly aware of safety when holding work in these less-secure methods. A catch is more likely to make the piece come away from the lathe. So light, shear cuts are sensible.

Using a cone support



The cone is a simple flat-sided cone of about 10" diameter. It has a recess on the back which fits my scroll chuck, so it is held firmly. Being a straight cone means it will fit most openings of hollow forms and bowls which are not too shallow. It is automatically self-centering. As my segmented bowl is fitted in the picture, you can see that I have plenty of room to finish the foot of the bowl.

As with most of my segmented work, I initially have used a paper/glue joint, mainly so I am not wasting quality hardwood as the holding medium. Once I have finished the main turning and broken the paper joint away from the scrap-wood that is held by the chuck, I am left with a flat base and paper fibres. But this needs finishing with a very slight concave and some 'signature' rings, which are just visible in the picture. The pip that is left under the revolving tailstock centre is removed carefully with a carving chisel and going through the sandpaper grits with the grain.

Anti-slip matting used in caravans



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