

# Box making made easy

By Rick Hutcheson

Select a piece of wood, I prefer something with nice grain or a different color center area. Walnut and red cedar seem to be two good choices.



Turn the wood to round using a roughing gouge.



Use a parting tool and turn a tenon on each end of the blank.



Use a thin parting tool and cut off a section that will be the lid of the box. Remember a final will be made on the top so be sure to allow enough height for it.



Chuck up the top part and use a 1/4" spindle gouge to concave the inside of the lid. The depth will depend on how you plan to shape the outside of the lid.



Use a berdan tool and make the tenon on the bottom of the lid. I try to leave about 1/16" of flat area between the tenon and the concave center part of the lid.



Using a 1/4" spindle gouge shape the rim of the lid. Also start shaping the final on the top to a rough shape. You need to think about the style of final you are going to use as to how much wood to leave.



Sand the bottom of the lid and the outside edge of the rim because this is the last time it will be accessible. Apply you finish to the bottom and the edge of the rim. Don't worry about the top part of the lid until the final has been completed. The top flatter portion of the lid can be sanded later after shaping the final.



Use a parting tool to cut the lid from the waste area cutting in at the angle shown. There is a hollow area in the center of the chuck so you can cut the lid completely out without hitting any metal of the chuck with the parting tool.



Chuck the lid by the tenon so you can turn the final portion of the lid. Be delicate because there is not a lot holding the lid in the chuck.



Finish off the tenon to your shape. I used a 1/4" spindle gouge but use any tools to get the desired shape. A small skew would be useful for making some beads. The top of the lid and final are shaped as needed. After completing the shape sand to the desire finish. Your finish can be applied now.



Set your dividers to the diameter of the tenon on the lid.



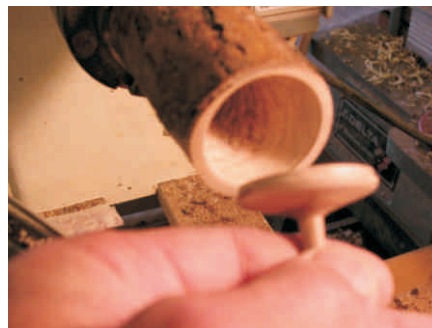
Chuck up the box blank and transfer the measurement to the top of the box. This will be you reference on how much to cut out the inside of the box.



I use a 1/4" spindle gouge to hollow out the inside of the box. A small scraper could also be used. A berdan tool is good to cut the rim to fit the lid tightly. Then using the gouge to blend in the step created by the berdan.



The lid should fit the box snug now. After sanding the lid should become a pop fit like we are after.





I like to have the lid on at times as I shape the side of the box so I can see how the fit and shape will look on the finished box.



I use a caliper to measure the depth of the box then use a parting tool to cut down to the stem of the box. Just be sure you leave enough and remember where that cut is so you don't turn the box into a funnel.



I also determine the bottom of the box at this time and use the parting tool to start that cut. Notice it is cut at an upward angle so the bottom of the box is concave.



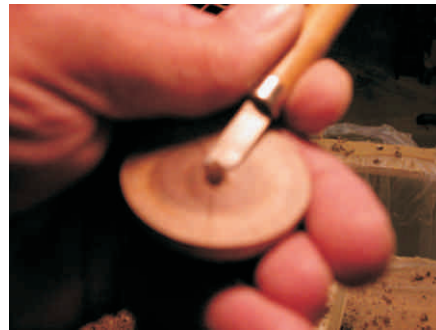
Shape the box using the 1/4" spindle gouge or a small skew. Check the wall thickness often so you do not make a funnel.



Shape the stem of the box as desired. I have used a 1/4" spindle gouge but a small parting tool can also be used for making beads on the stem. The base of the box should be slightly smaller than the diameter of the box to make it look in proportion. Complete all sanding and finishing on the box at this time.



After parting the box off the lathe I use a small carving tool to cut the stub off. Sand and finish the bottom of the box after this has been done.



## And there you have a box!

