

ROY'S CORNER

Eccentric turning - turning a single piece multiple times, upon different axes each time.

Oval or elliptical turning - turning a piece using an accessory mounted to the headstock that changes the centre of rotation of the piece in time with the rotation, so that a cutting tool held in a fixed position on the tool-rest cuts an oval rather than a round path on the workpiece

Therming - mounting a carrier between centres, and then mounting the small workpiece (s) to the carrier, so that the axis of the headstock/tail-stock does not pass through any of the workpieces, and each workpiece gets cut only on one face. As noted in Wood-turning Methods by Mike Darlow, the etymology of the term "therming" comes via a corruption of the name of the Greek god Hermes, who was often represented as a statue set atop a plinth with a construction characteristic of thermed work.

Segmented turning - a method of woodturning where the wood blank is constructed from many individual pieces of wood (segments) which are glued together before being turned. Many interesting patterns can be generated through the process of gluing and shaping on the lathe.

Green or wet turning - turning wood while its moisture content is above equilibrium. Often done when the wood is newly felled. May be turned to finished thickness, in which case the differential shrinkage of the wood will result in a finished piece that is not perfectly round. Alternatively, it may be "rough turned". Rough turning involves turning the piece only to its general shape, leaving enough thickness so that after turning it can be allowed to dry to equilibrium moisture content and distort. The advantage over first drying the wood then turning is that a rough turned piece dries faster, will probably distort instead of split as massive wood is wont to do, and that wet wood turns better, since it creates less dust. Rough turning is inexact science: turning wood too thick will lead to splits, turning wood too thin will lead to distortion that cannot be removed, because not enough thickness is left. Once dry, it is mounted on the lathe a second time and turned to its final form. Rough turning is typically used on most functional work and some artistic pieces.

Natural edge work - pieces which include the outside of the tree trunk or limb as the edge of the piece. Typically artistic turnings, usually bowls or hollow vessels, and usually green turned to final dimension. May include the bark or not, but pieces with bark should not have any bark damaged or missing.

Ornamental turning - also known as OT, a method in which the piece is mounted upon a rocking headstock, and a spinning tool is used to cut out exotic and decorative patterns. The device is called a rose engine lathe.

The origin of woodturning dates to around 1300BC when the Egyptians first developed a two-person lathe. One person would turn the wood with a rope while the other used a sharp tool to cut shapes in the wood. The Romans improved the Egyptian design with the addition of a turning bow. Early bow lathes were also developed and used in Germany, France and Britain. In the Middle Ages a pedal replaced hand-operated turning, freeing both the craftsman's hands to hold the woodturning tools. The pedal was usually connected to a pole, often a straight-grained sapling. The system today is called the "spring pole" lathe (see Pole lathe). Spring pole lathes were in common use into the early 20th Century. A two-person lathe, called a "great lathe", allowed a piece to turn continuously (like today's power lathes). A master would cut the wood while an apprentice turned the crank.

The term "bodger" stems from pole lathe turners who used to make the chair legs and spindles. A bodger would typically purchase all the trees on a plot of land, set up camp on the plot, and then fell the trees and turn the wood. The spindles and legs that were produced were sold in bulk, for pence per dozen. The bodger's Job was considered unfinished because he only made component parts. The term now describes a person who leaves a job unfinished, or does it badly.

During the industrial revolution the lathe was motorized, allowing turned items to be created in less time. The motor also produced a greater rotational speed for the wood, making it easier to quickly produce high quality work. Today most Commercial woodturning is done by computer-operated machinery allowing for Mass-production that can be created with accurate precision and without the cost of employing craftsmen. Despite this, there is still a demand for hand-turned products. Woodturning is also a hobby enjoyed by many people.

Modern professional woodturners are typically either "production" turners producing large quantities of functional pieces, or artistic turners producing smaller numbers of pieces, often enhanced after turning by carving, piercing, colouring, applying pyrography, gilding, or a number of other techniques to produce objects for the art market.

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