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EASY
WOODTURNING
PROJECTS

WOODTURNING UTENSILS

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Foreword

Woodturning - An old craft is becoming more and more popular

It all started with an elastic long piece of wood. A belt attached to it to turn the workpiece clamped between two centers, the other end attached to a seesaw-like foot switch. Finished was the seesaw lathe, which still finds enthusiastic followers today. Not least because of the low speeds and forces involved, a seesaw lathe is often a first lathe for children, who can thus learn woodturning in a fairly harmless way. It allows you to try out chisels and scraper and learn which tool angle allows you to cut the wood effectively.

In the past a pole lathe was used to produce everyday items right in the forest. The lathe was assembled and disassembled on the spot and the waste wood from the still fresh and green logs remained on the forest floor. It is hard to imagine woodturning in a more ecological way than that. These first woodturners cut the wood with axes and hatchets and turned it into chair legs, struts, and other needed utensils. Furniture from that time that survived to this day bears witness to the accomplished skills of these craftsmen, who still were turning their piece of wood by power of their own muscles.

It was not until the industrial revolution that heavy cast-iron lathes emerged along many machines for metalworking, mainly used by wainwrights, the furniture industry and other wood industries. Special lathes were developed for many applications. For example, the wheelwright's lathe had

devices for dividing and drilling wheel hubs and rims, and picture frames were turned on face lathes even before the invention of milling machines. These lathes were usually driven by leather belts placed on smaller or larger drive pulleys depending on the desired speed. This way, different speeds became possible using steam or water power engines. In addition, woodturners could now turn their workpieces in one session, as it rotated continuously. With the invention and inexpensive production of electric motors, the lathe became independent of the central power source used for the whole workshop. This made it interesting and affordable even for hobbyists.

However, the craft of woodturning did not stop at this stage of development. Electronics, computers, pneumatic equipment and new steel types for tools became available and allowed an enormous increase in production speeds. Finally, these semi-automatic and fully automatic machines heralded the end of hand turning. The classic craft of woodturning was and still is in danger of dying out. Curtain rods, dresser knobs, children's toys - once made in the woodturner's workshop, are now produced in automatic lathe shops in a matter of seconds.

An ever-growing community of recreational turners is trying to counter this trend. They partly use old machines that nowadays still can be found very cheap on second-hand markets. With great attention to detail, enthusiasts restore cast-iron lathes and equip them with electric motors if still belt-driven. They not only love woodturning but also value old mechanical engineering, which in some aspects is superior to today's amateur lathes. The main difference to today's constructions (with a few exceptions) is the bed and the feet. In the past, these were mostly made of heavy cast-iron. This weight resulted in less vibration. Today, many manufacturers make do with sheet metal and tubular steel

constructions. Using such a lathe, as it can be found in various DIY stores, an enthusiastic woodturner will quickly lose interest.

I therefore advise every interested layman to first attend a woodturning course before getting down to business with the advice of a “master” and the woodturning friends he/she has made. For what applies to the quality of a woodturning lathe applies equally to the choice of tools on which one could spend even more money. No matter how great the urge to set up a woodturning workshop as quickly as possible, I advise against it! A woodturning course at the beginning will save you money. Because only here can aspiring woodturners learn what tools they really need.

Today there are companies that specialise in the production of quality lathes and tools. Quality has its price. A good new lathe can quickly exceed thousands euros. If you add accessories, you are easily approaching the price of a small car. However, if you have been bitten by the woodturning bug, you will not shy away from the price and rave about the smoothness and power of your purchase.

This book is not intended to teach the basics of woodturning. It does not intend to be a manual for the correct use of lathes. Rather, it tries to recall objects of everyday use that have perhaps been forgotten in modern days. The fact that these often shapely and practical objects still have their function is proven, for example, by beautiful door wedges, rolling pins, wooden mallets, etc. They all have one thing in common: they work beautifully and are ergonomically shaped. The more we like to touch an object, the longer it can be found in our household. Nowadays, these wooden objects often are replaced by plastic resulting in a limited lifespan as a standard. How delightful it is when an old chisel finds its way into your hands at a garage sale,

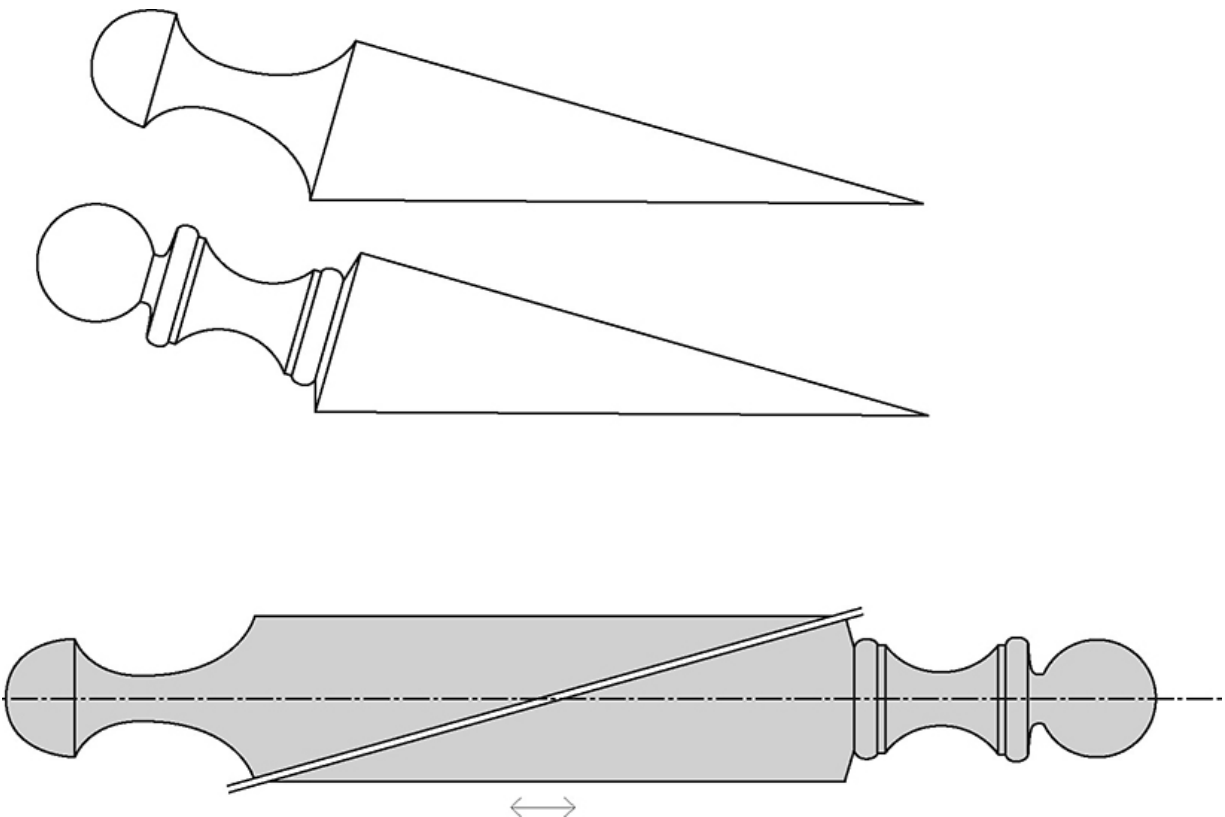
its handle polished by touch and its frayed end telling of heavy use. That is exactly the feeling this book wants to convey - to recall and revive forgotten utensils!

Wedge

A door wedge is made from tough wood, e.g. ash or robinia. Two wedges can be made at the same time on the lathe. If the wedge is used with the saw face downwards, the knob lifts off the ground and can be conveniently gripped by hand.

A scantling is clamped between the centers. Handles are turned on both sides. The middle part remains square.

When the turning is finished, the scantling is cut diagonally into two wedges by saw.



Mallet

Ash is suitable for the head, ash or another tough wood for the handle. If it is a light mallet, the head can also be made of other hardwoods or be glued together from several pieces of wood. The handle is sawn and wedged at the top. The head of the mallet is slightly conical so that more weight lies at the end of the tool. In addition, the cone shape improves the impact effect when clubbing from the wrist.

If the mallet is worn, it can be over-turned. This way it can still be used for light work at the end of its lifespan.

The handle of the mallet is shaped into a knob at the end to prevent slipping.

The usual dimensions and weights of a mallet range from approx. 120 mm diameter with a weight of approx. 1 kg to approx. 180 mm with a weight of approx. 2 kg.

The scantling of the head is bored through and then turned on the outside.

The handle is created as normal spindle turning.