

Southern Turners Project Sheet

Off Centre Pen Holder



This project sheet details how to make an off-centre pen holder. These can be as simple or ornate as you wish and only require relatively small pieces of timber. The blank used in the article below is approximately 70mm in diameter and about 100mm long, however you can use larger or slightly smaller if you would like. A final note before beginning : As this is an off centre project a slower lathe speed may be necessary to cope with the unbalanced timber, and most importantly – as the timber is off centre, ensure that your blank can spin freely prior to turning your lathe on by spinning it by hand before you start each step.



Begin by marking centre (point 1) on both ends of your blank and drawing a line through the centre point. Ensure that the line is the same direction on both ends. Mark a second point along the line (point 2) on both ends. Ensure that the second point is the same distance and direction away from centre on both ends. This will be your offset. The distance used in the picture is 20mm. Mark the points with an awl.



Mount between centres on the offset points and turn a tenon on one end of your blank to suit your chuck. As your blank is well out of balance a slower lathe speed may be needed.



Mount your blank into your chuck. Next with a drill in your tail stock, drill a hole for your pen. The hole only needs to be 40mm – 50mm deep. The drill pictured is 10mm



Once your hole is drilled, flare out the end of the hole to make the inside of the trumpet part of your pen holder. Sand when completed.



Using a cone live centre in your tail stock, bring it up into the hole for support. A small amount of masking tape around the coned will prevent it marking the wood. Shape the trumpet section of the holder and sand when complete.



Remove your masterpiece from the chuck and remount between centres using a cone live centre and your favourite drive centre, using the actual centre (point 1) marked at the start on the base.



Shape the base section of your pen holder. Take care not to cut into the section of the trumpet indicated by the red arrow. This usually involves stopping the lathe a few times to be sure. Sand when completed. Having your sand paper wrapped around a soft rubber block will make it much easier and less damaging to your fingers. Part off carefully once completed.



Apply your favourite finish and your work is done.