

Some Solutions to Storage of Lathe Tools and Turning Needs

As I got deeper into turning I found I had a growing accumulation of chucks, jaws, tool, sandpaper, jigs, wax sticks, small bottles of finishes etc. too numerous to mention. I had to get organized.

First I built a small four-drawer cabinet on casters. It is very simple construction of $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{5}{8}$ plywood. A three sided box with no face frame, with a top and bottom, measuring 29" high, 22" wide and 18" deep. Drawers are mounted on good quality glides as they get heavily filled, and drawer depths are top to bottom, 4", 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and 6" respectively. The top drawer is segmented into 9 sections for smaller items. A key element was a rim about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " high around the sides and back edge of the top to prevent things from rolling off it. It is shown here with my second project, a lathe tool carousel.



The carousel is 15" in diameter and about 15" high. The top has a ring of 18 holes spaced 20 degrees apart and an inner ring of 11 smaller holes. There are a few $\frac{3}{8}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " holes for keys, centers etc. even further in towards the center. It is on a Lazy Susan base and has a mid level support about 8" up from the bottom and about 8" in diameter to support miniature turning tools.



The center column was turned to about a 3" diameter from a spruce glue-up 4"x4"x14". A tenon about 2.5" long and 1" in diameter was turned 8" from one end. It was parted at the top of the tenon and the top piece remounted and drilled with a Forstner bit to accept the tenon. A 1" center hole was drilled in the middle shelf and it was slipped over the tenon and then the whole assembly glued together. The top tray then mounted with screws and glue on the 3" diameter end, as was the base, before mounting on the Lazy Susan. I have found this combination of cabinet and carousel useful and it can be moved easily between lathes. After a couple of years, my tool count has exceeded the capacity the capacity of the carousel, so only the tools that are actively used are stored in it.

I was starting to work on a cradle last spring and the idea of a project oriented tool stand came to me. Initially I made it to mount of the base of my old Delta Homecraft. As I started some longer spindle work, I realized I had to make it independent of the lathe as it was in the way of the tailstock lever. My rural mailbox had been broken off by a delivery truck, so a short length of pressure treated 4x4 was readily available. Here is an empty view of the stand. Some feet about 12" long were fastened sequentially around the 4x4 to hold it upright.



The tool support and tray measures 15" x 15" and the rear support about 15" or as to suit your tool lengths. The top rail was drilled at 5 positions with a 1 1/4" Forstner and then sawn in half to give the dished portion for tool. It holds only 5 large tools, usually more than enough for whatever particular project I am working on. In the right hand side is a 1 and a 1/2" wide piece of spruce drilled with 1" holes to accommodate miniature turning tools, both purchased and homemade. On the left side, a piece of 2x4 spruce drilled on edge with some 3/4" holes as well as 3/8" holes, accommodates things like spur and live centers, Jacobs chuck, scroll chuck levers, drill bits etc. The center tray holds sandpaper scraps, CA Glues, finishes etc. It changes with the project. I have also found it useful to take the stand to guild meetings for demonstrations.



The rear support is tilted back about 15 degrees and the lower portion is dimpled with a Forstner to accommodate the tips of the tool handles.



This is my setup for Christmas Ornaments. This stand could easily be re-sized to make it slightly larger, but the idea is to not overload it and keep tools and supplies readily accessible.