

Turning a Bamboo Pen Blank

Bamboo is a unique material that has a unique linear grain pattern. The pen blank consists of multiple strands of bamboo laminated together to create the blank. The laminating process may create small voids in the blank that may be left alone or may be filled. The voids may be filled with things like clear CA glues, powdered stones, powdered metals or colored epoxies. If you are going to fill the voids we would suggest that you not stain the blank. Because the glues used for filling will seal the cell of the Bamboo and thus not allow the stain into the sealed areas.

Drilling

1. To avoid splitting the blank when drilling, cut the blank about 1/2" longer than the pen tube of the kit. Drill the hole deep enough for the pen tube without drilling through the entire blank. Trim the undrilled bottom of the blank off with a saw.

Turning

1. Bamboo can be turned with regular woodturning tools. To help avoid splintering of the blank use a shearing cut with a small gouge. Cut "downhill" toward the bushing on each end of the blank. Once you have both ends turned down to the bushing you can start to turn the middle to your desired shape.

Dye the Blank

1. Sand the turned blank up to 220 grit. Apply the dye (water or alcohol based) to the blank and allow it to dry. Start sanding again with 180 grit until you have achieved your desired shade. Sand with the remaining grits and apply finish to the pen.