Turning an Egg

Supplies Needed

- 2” x 2” x 4” Blank
- 4-Jaw Chuck
- Revolving Center
- Sandpaper/Finish
- Dye (Optional)
- Cotton Rag
- KC Wire Burners (Optional)
- Buffing System (Optional)
- Eye and Ear Protection
- Cotton Swabs (Optional)

Turning Instructions

1. Mark the center on each end of the blank. Mount the blank in between centers on the lathe.

2. Turn the blank into a round cylinder. Using the long point of a skew chisel laying flat on its side, cut a 1/4” long dovetail tenon on the end of the blank. The tenon profile should match your chuck jaws.

3. Mount the cylinder in the chuck, gripping the tenon with the chuck jaws.

4. Shape the large end of the egg blank. After the large end of the egg has been shaped, shape the small end of the egg.

5. Make sure to leave about 5/8” tenon on the small end of the egg to provide support while sanding and coloring.

6. Sand the egg by hand or with a power sander, which ever you prefer. Sand up to about 400 grit.

7. Before you start to dye the egg, it is important to determine the area you want to color. Lightly mark the area to be dyed using a pencil. Using the long point of a skew chisel laying flat on its, cut a small groove in the egg slightly smaller than the diameter of the wire burner to be used. This groove will be used to create a transition line between the dyed and natural area of the egg.

8. Place the wire into the groove and apply pressure to create the burn line. This line helps prevent the dye from bleeding beyond the desired area and adds a nice decorative touch.

9. Lightly sand the egg with fine paper to remove smoke residue from the surface of the egg leaving a crisp, burned line.

10. With the lathe running slowly (50 - 100 rpm), apply an even layer of dye using a small rag or cotton swab. Apply as needed until a uniform color is achieved.

If turning Natural Eggs not to be Dyed, Proceed to Step 12
11. After allowing the dye to dry, lightly sand the dyed area with 400 grit sandpaper. The goal is to sand through the dye enough to allow the wood figure to show through the dye. Sand evenly in order to keep the remaining dye uniform in color.

12. Turn the 5/8” tenon down to about 1/4” or smaller (depending on your skill level) and gently sand the newly turned surface. Gently support the egg with your free hand while sanding to prevent the egg breaking loose.

13. Using a small rag, finish the dyed area of egg using Myland’s friction polish or similar finish. Start with the dyed area first. Be careful not to overlap onto the unfinished wood as the rag may transfer the dye.

14. Using a clean rag, finish the remaining area of the egg being careful not to overlap the dyed area.

15. Lightly sand (400 grit) the egg once the finish has dried.

16. With the lathe stopped, apply coat of paste wax to the egg. Turn the lathe on then gently buff the egg using a soft cloth to produce a satin luster. Gently support the egg with your free hand while sanding to prevent the egg breaking loose.

17. Carefully part off the egg using the long point of a skew chisel or small back saw. Make sure to support the egg while cutting to prevent the egg from contacting the tool rest or dropping on the floor.

18. Mount a foam backed power sanding pad with sanding disc in a chuck and gently sand away the nub on the end of the egg. After working through various sanding grits, finish and wax the sanded area.

Optional Finishing Method

1. To get a high gloss finish, we recommend using a cotton wood buffing system. Note: Hold the egg securely in your hand as the buffing action will have a tendency to grab and throw the egg across the shop.