

Gouge Safety

Woodturning Safety Rules

- Wear a full-face shield at all times for protection.
- Make sure the tool is on the tool rest before starting a cut.
- Always keep tool support as close to the work as possible.
- Make sure the lathe is set at a safe speed before starting the lathe.
- Always sharpen a new tool prior to use to ensure it performs properly.

WARNING: Failure to follow these basic rules can result in serious injury or death.

Guidelines for Using Gouges

Today's gouges feature long shafts and extended flutes for longer wear. However, this does not mean these gouges are designed to reach a significant distance beyond the tool rest! Reaching too far beyond the tool rest results in vibration, increases the likelihood of a serious "catch" and in some cases may result in the tool shaft or handle breaking causing serious injury. The chart below lists gouge sizes and the recommended distance that a gouge can safely reach beyond the tool rest. Not working within these recommended distances can result in serious injury or death.

Max Reach

"Max. Reach" indicates the maximum distance that the tool can safely reach beyond the tool rest.

BOWL GOUGES:

Gouge	Shaft Dia.	Max. Reach
1/4"	3/8"	1 1/2"
3/8"	1/2"	2 1/2"
1/2"	5/8"	3 1/2"
5/8"	3/4" or larger	4"

SPINDLE/DETAIL GOUGES:

Gouge	Shaft Dia.	Max. Reach
1/4"	1/4"	3/4"
3/8"	3/8"	1"
1/2"	1/2"	1 3/4"
9/16"	9/16"	1 3/4"

ROUGHING GOUGES:

Gouge Size	Max. Reach
3/4"	1 3/4"
1 1/4" or larger	1 3/4"

Roughing Gouges are for spindle use only, NEVER use for bowl turning as the tool may break resulting in serious injury!

Handle Size

Tool handle length should be at least 5 times the maximum distance you intend to reach beyond the tool rest in order to provide the needed leverage for proper tool control. Example: For a maximum reach of 3" over the tool rest; your handle must be a minimum of 15" in length.