

For Beginning Woodturners, “What NOT To Do...”

- Worry too much about the cost of the lathe. You **should** worry just the right amount though. The Lathe cost is the least of your expenses considering tools, finishes, wood, and so on.
- Go out and buy all of the tools, sharpening tools, finishes and woods all at once. It'll never be what you **really** need anyway.
- Expect to be making fine art right away. Woodturning is a skill. Treat it as such and develop it. It takes time and lots of practice.
- Learn to turn but not to sharpen your tools. They are complimentary skills! Learning to turn and learning to sharpen your tools are very much the same thing. The better you get at one, the better you get at the other if you give it a chance.
- Not join a club. Not ask questions. Not explore possibilities. Not pass on what you've learned

What we turn - Ash Wood

by *Andrew Hilton*

Ash is a great craft wood, but best known as the wood of choice for baseball bats. Other woods are stronger, but it has the best strength to weight ratio, and since most players do not want a bat greater than 32 oz. this becomes significant. For the same reason, it is used for tool handles, hockey sticks, and canoe paddles. Historically it was used for food bowls because it had no significant odor or taste. Curved components for chairs, snowshoes and boats capitalize on its wonderful bending properties. Really you can use it for any fine woodworking, with only your imagination as the limiting factor

Ash is a member of the Olive family. There are around 70 species in the world but only about 17 of those found in the United States. Mainly, we talk about either White or Black ash in the woodturning and woodworking industries. You don't often find this wood in large stands but, instead, it's widely distributed among other trees.

Characteristics: Straight-grained, open pored, and hard. Tough but yet elastic with high shock resistance. Quite heavy. Stable and dries well with little degrade. Pale yellow sapwood with heartwood going more to the light to medium brown tones.

Working Properties: Known for its steam bending abilities. Long straight grain fibers means that splintering can be a problem when turning it. Sharp, light cuts at shear angles works very well.

Finishes: Sands well but be careful with deep scratches. It can take time to get them out. Takes stain well. It is ring porous so you'll need to use a pore filler if you want a high gloss and ultra-smooth surface.

Durability: Quite durable without direct contact with the ground. Is susceptible to fungal and beetle attack.

Smell: No distinctive taste or odor.

