

Small Wave Bowl by Arnie Moore

As I discussed in the November newsletter, I attended a segmented woodturning symposium in Nevada in October. One of the demonstrators at this symposium was John Beaver who has developed techniques for “wave” bowls. John is a gallery-quality turner as well as a frequent demonstrator, especially in the Western states. Just enter “John Beaver wave bowls” into your search engine and you can see many examples of his very fine work. The project I will present in the remainder of this article is based on techniques he demonstrated but I have simplified his technique a bit since this small wave bowl does not require techniques required for more sophisticated wave bowls.

The Process

1. This particular bowl was made from a 4” diameter, 3” tall bowl blank such as those sold at Woodcraft and other suppliers. You may choose to utilize a rectangular block 4” long by 3” tall by 3” wide. Kiln dried wood is fine for this project. Older bowl blanks cut from wet wood are OK but I would avoid very wet wood that will warp as it is turned.
2. If you are using a circular bowl blank, true it into a cylinder before beginning. If using a rectangular block do not turn it yet.
3. Drill two holes in the blank in the inner waste area so you can later register the two sides of the cut with nails easily. This will prevent slippage during glue-up. See *photo 5*.
4. The success of this project depends upon making a smooth circular cut on the bowl blank with a bandsaw. If you have a very steady hand you may cut freehand but I chose to cut with a simple jig. Do not try to smooth a bad cut later by sanding since both ends of the cut will be used and must match. *Photo 1* illustrates a jig with a cradle for a circular blank. If using a rectangular blank no cradle is required. As you can see I clamped a base board on my band saw table and used a nail to create a 3 ½ “radius with a swing arm which was attached to the cradle. If using a rectangular blank you may choose to attach the arm to the blank with two-sided carpet tape. This tape may also be used to hold a circular blank in the cradle. Set up this jig carefully and make a practice cut on scrap. Try to orient the curved cut with the grain pattern. *Photo 2 illustrates* I cut the cradle before I cut the blank. *Photo 3* shows the cut blank.
5. Next cut pieces of veneer to a dimension of about 4” long (in grain direction) and about 3 ½” wide to allow extra length for the curve. I used two pieces of white veneer sandwiched between two layers of black. Each black layer contained two pieces. *Photo 4 shows cut veneer*. For your first bowl one piece of white between two pieces of black may prove to be more flexible and easier to clamp.
6. Dry fit the bent veneer layers between the two cut pieces of the bowl blank. Drill register holes in the veneer. Use Tightbond original or an equivalent wood glue to spread on the blank surfaces and between all layers of veneer. Clamp tightly for at least an hour. I allowed the blank to dry overnight before turning. *Photo 5* shows the veneer layers glued in the block with the register nails still in place. Remove nails prior to turning.
7. You may turn this blank as you would any small bowl. John Beaver noted bowl shapes where the rim curves inward are more pleasing for wave bowls than straight sided or flaring sided shapes. *Photo 6* shows the completed bowl.