

# TURNING BOOKENDS

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CORY WHITE  
HUNT COUNTY WOODTURNERS  
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SHARE THE IDEA OF TURNING BOOKENDS IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOU ARE INSPIRED TO DO IT YOURSELF



SELECT YOUR WOOD

- ✓ Suggested diameter of at least 10" and at least 4" in height/thickness
- ✓ Heavier and denser hardwoods will work better



ATTACH FACEPLATE WITH SHORT SCREWS

- ✓ 3/4" #10 sheet metal screws work well



MAKE NOTE OF PENETRATION DEPTH OF FACEPLATE SCREWS



MOUNT ONTO LATHE  
AND SECURE WITH  
TAILSTOCK

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BEGIN TRUING UP  
WOOD

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CONTINUE TRUING  
UP THE PIECE AS IF  
YOU WERE  
ROUGHING A LARGE  
BOWL

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CONTINUE TO REFINE  
SHAPE

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TRUE PIECE ALL THE WAY TO THE FACEPLATE EDGE

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IT IS AT THIS POINT THE PROCESS CHANGES FROM MAKING A BOWL

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MOVE YOUR TOOL REST SO THAT YOU CAN BEGIN WORKING ON THE EDGE OF THE PIECE CONNECTED TO THE FACEPLATE

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BEGIN TRUING UP THIS SIDE OF THE PIECE TO BEGIN MATCHING THE OPPOSITE SIDE

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CONTINUE UNTIL YOU REACH THE FACEPLATE LINE.

✓ IMPORTANT: The amount of waste wood left on the faceplate after cutting off the piece should accommodate the length of screws used in faceplate.



REMOVE TAILSTOCK AND PREPARE TO REMOVE NUB.



FINISH LEVELING OFF FACE OF PIECE



SAND ALL SURFACE AREA AS APPROPRIATE TO DESIRED FINISH QUALITY



YOU SHOULD HAVE  
SOMETHING THAT  
LOOKS SIMILAR TO  
THIS

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TURN ON LATHE AND  
MARK CENTER POINT  
TO HELP VISUALIZE  
BOOK END OPTIONS

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USE SQUARE TO  
MARK PIECE INTO  
QUARTERS

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- ✓ One option is to later cut the finish piece into quarters, which would give you two sets of bookends that are about 5" tall, 5" long, and about 3" thick.



IF TALLER, MORE  
SUBSTANTIAL  
BOOKENDS ARE  
DESIRED, MARK IN  
HALVES, THEN DRAW  
SECOND  
PERPENDICULAR LINE  
ABOUT 1/4" WAY DOWN

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- ✓ Going this route will give you two taller bookends and a small waist block. The bookends should be about 8" tall, about 4" at the base, and be about 3" thick.



THIS THE PERFECT  
TIME TO DO MOST, IF  
NOT ALL, OF YOUR  
FINISHING STEPS

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AFTER YOU HAVE  
FINISHED, MARK  
ANOTHER CENTER  
POINT ON THE  
EXPOSED SIDE

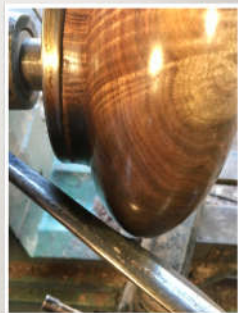
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- ✓ You will use this to draw your cut lines once you have the piece off the lathe.



NOW IT IS TIME TO  
BEGIN USING YOUR  
PARTING TOOLS TO  
REMOVE THE PIECE  
FROM THE LATHE

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WORK YOUR WAY  
INWARD TOWARDS  
THE CENTER

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- ✓ Remember, this piece has significant weight. So, you will need to stop short of parting the piece completely off.



WITH THE LATH STOPPED, FINISH THE REMOVAL PROCESS WITH A SAW

- ✓ Having a soft towel or some other type of cushioning under the piece is always a good idea in case it falls off.



YOUR PIECE SHOULD NOW LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS



AND YES, NOW MORE SANDING IS NEEDED



USE YOUR FAVORITE SANDING PROCESS TO MIRROR THE SHAPE AND FINISH ON THE OTHER SIDE

- ✓ Give special attention to blend in the same finish quality and shape curve to this unfinished surface.





YOUR PIECE SHOULD  
NOW LOOK  
SOMETHING LIKE THIS

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TAKE TIME NOW TO  
FINISH THIS SIDE TO  
MATCH THE OPPOSITE  
SIDE

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DECIDE IF YOU WANT  
2 SETS OF BOOKENDS  
OR 1 SET OF TALLER  
BOOKENDS

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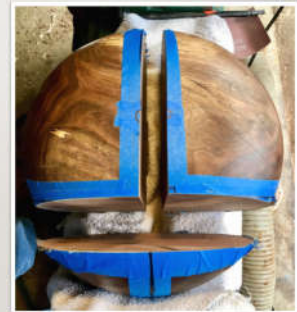
- ✓ As pictured, I am opting for 2 taller bookends.
- ✓ Lay down painters tape to help minimize cutout when cutting into bookends.



IF YOU OPT FOR 2  
TALLER BOOKENDS,  
YOURS SHOULD  
LOOK SOMETHING  
LIKE THIS AFTER  
CUTTING.

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- ✓ I imagine there are many good ways to cut this, whether using the table saw, band saw, or radial saw.
- ✓ I cut mine with my radial saw.



A NEAT BENEFIT OF TURNING BOOKENDS IS YOU CAN END UP WITH TWO OPTIONS FOR HOW THEY CAN LOOK LIKE ON THE SHELF

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DESIGN VARIATIONS ARE ONLY LIMITED BY YOUR IMAGINATION

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✓ How about wormy green ash with increasing sized concentric beading?



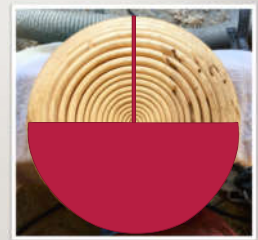
VISUALIZING BOOKENDS IS PART OF THE CHALLENGE

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BUT IMAGINING WHAT CAN BE IS ALWAYS FUN

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## REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Use heavy, dense hardwoods. Lighter, less dense woods would likely not be heavy enough for bookends.
- Wood blank needs to be at least a 10" in diameter and 4" thick.
- Creating a tenon to use in your chuck would likely be easier than using a faceplate.
- Use painter's tape to mark your piece for cutting. Tape up surfaces as appropriate for protection during the cutting process.

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