

Layered Segmented Miniature Bowls

Earl Martin

Introduction

I have enjoyed seeing Jim McPhail's miniature layered bowls. However, I wanted to do something a little different. I decided that turning a miniature layered bowl with a segmented center would be a nice variation on Jim's technique. My problem was that I did not want to invest the time in cutting, fitting and gluing segmented pieces together to create a segmented center band.

Turning at Frank Penta's shop, I discovered an easy process he and his fellow turners use for making up the segmented layers. Once the process is learned there is an infinite variety of designs that can be created.

This instructional handout will focus on the wood selection preparation and assembly of the center segmented band. Additionally, I will describe how to combine accent bands that give the finished bowl additional visual interest. Once you are comfortable with the basics, you can move on to a variety of different designs.



Design Considerations

Color, Variety, Unity and Shape

The key to a beautiful bowl begins with the variety, color and unity of the woods in the bowl. Shape will become important as you turn the bowl. The focus of the bowl is the use of segmented wood for the center band of the bowl.

Center Segmented Band

Wood Selection

For the most impact in creating the segmented piece select woods of different colors, texture and thickness (ie. yellowheart, cherry, bloodwood, redheart, maple, walnut, or zebra wood). Select wood that can be cut into 3" wide x 12" long pieces.

Wood Preparation

1. After selecting your wood cut the pieces 3" wide by 12" long.
2. On the table saw rip the 3"x12" pieces into various widths 1/4" to 5/8" thick.
3. Plane and sand the wood in a drum sander so that the pieces are smooth and flat in order to have a smooth gluing surface.
4. Shuffle the wood pieces until the colors and thicknesses give a pleasing appearance.

