

## *Making a Top box*

*Sally Ault*

*Use a piece of dry, hard , straight-grain wood. Hard Maple is best if you want colorful embellishment, but other woods work as well. The piece should be 3" x 7" for the box plus another piece 2 ½" x 3" more for a top if making it from the same wood.*

*Put the wood between centers and the blank, then create a tenon and put the piece in a chuck.*

*I prefer to turn the top first since it is easier to fit the box to the top rather than trying to get the top to fit the box. See my top handout for how I make a 2 piece top to save wood.*

*Layout the length of the box and mark it, then shape the outside of the box, sand, embellish and finish if desired. I like to have at least 1 ½-2" of wood extra at the chuck end of the box to use for the next steps*

*Create a recess in the top of the box base that the top will fit into. It should not be a tight fit. You can remove some wood in the top part of the box to accept the top while you are sizing the recess.*

*If you are going to embellish the exterior of the box, do it before hollowing the interior and with the tail stock in place to support the wood...since you are going to whack it.*

*Chose a forstner drill that is slightly narrower than the recess and with the drill in a Jacobs chuck, drill the depth of the desired interior. Remember that the drill will make a hole that is deeper in the center so measure well and avoid making a funnel. When drilling, be sure to bring the drill out every half inch or so to clear the shavings.*

Sand the interior with a bit of sandpaper held in long forceps. Make sure the recess is deep enough that the top is slightly lower than the rim of the base.

Part off the box leaving enough wood in the chuck to use as a jam chuck...or create a jam chuck from another piece of wood. Using the jam chuck, finish, embellish and sand the bottom of the box base.

Using the jam chuck wood, turn a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long (at least) cylinder that is the diameter of the interior of the base minus a tiny bit. Chatter and color the end to match the top and part off a disk about about  $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$  thick with a slight undercut. Stick the disk on the end of a narrow piece of wood with a wad of tape and make sure it will slide into the base to the bottom. Sand the edges if needed to insure it will slide evenly to the bottom. Put some titebond glue on the underside of the disk and slide it into place. Wait until the glue has set before you twist it off the tape so it stays in the bottom to disguise the use of the forstner bit.

Accept compliments!