

Going beyond the surface – carving in 3D

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Carving a turned vessel can be challenging, fun, frustrating, rewarding, and/or puzzling. Things to consider in getting started are:

- Choice of wood (fine-grained woods are easier to carve than coarse and open-grained woods; soft wood is easier to carve than hard and dense wood).
- Shape of vessel and design elements.
- Wall thickness of turned vessel.
- Design layout and inspiration.

Once these considerations are done, there are some logistics considerations.

If turning green wood, the time to wait until the piece is sufficiently dried to be able to use rotary power tools for carving. (Green wood can be carved with hand tools and/or non-rotary power carvers).

Laying out the design and removing the negative space, if any. Be sure to use the wood grain to add strength to areas that might be susceptible to breakage.

- Method of carving – roughing out vs. fine tuning.
- Burs to use for roughing out vs detail work.
- Holding the piece while carving.
- Ergonomics and repetitive stress injury potential.
- Dust control and safety.
- Finishing the detail work and applying a finish.

Tools for negative space removal: Drillsaw burs.

Tools for roughing out: Foredom flex shaft carver with saburrtooth and/or kutzall burs.

Tools for fine carving: micromotor carver and burs from www.bursforcarving.com.

Tools for fine-tuning details: Leather punch, double-stick carpet tape, flat-surface mandrel; sandpaper, micro-files and diamond rasps.

Finish: 1:1 mineral spirits and varnishing oil.

