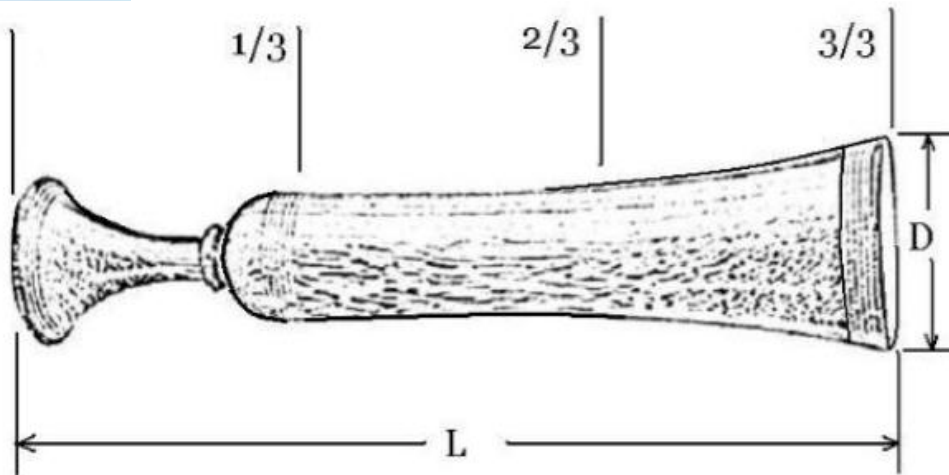


Goblet Turning Procedure – Tall or Long-stem Goblets/Vases



I make this series of goblets from 3" square and 10" to 14" length from a variety of woods but mostly exotics.

I usually don't know what shape the piece will look like until I start turning and it depends on the wood grains. I always try to stay away from knots or inclusions in the wood, especially at the end that I want to use for the cup, unless it is my intent to have those unique features for character or design. Caution must be taken when cutting into knots or voids and sometimes may need to be stabilized with super glue. The outside of the cup is turned first, as I stand at the lathe, the chuck holds the foot and the cup is always to the right.



I believe it is important to consider the “Golden Mean” when designing any type of woodturning. The chances are considerable that the end product will appeal to the public eye more so than if you do not and if you want to sell it, the chances are that it will be money in your pocket.

After I have turned the size and shape of the cup to my satisfaction and sanded it, I start turning the inside. It is completely turned down to almost 1/8" wall thickness to the base of the cup, leaving material for sanding. The thickness of the cup wall depends on how deep it is but I never go thicker than 3/16". It is now finished to completion on the inside, including sanding sealer and wax, before returning to finish the outside. Be sure to measure and mark on the outside of the piece where the bottom of the cup is.

I place a bull-nose (large) live center in the tailstock and bring it up snugly for security to finish turning the outside. You may want to cover the center with a paper towel to prevent marring the inside. I already know the depth and thickness of the cup, so I continue turning the outside of the cup to match the pattern of the inside. Use your calipers if you're unsure of the thickness. After I have finished the cup, with either a continuous flow or an added feature, I move on into the stem.

I always try to make the diameter of the stem in proportion to the size of the cup and the total length of the goblet. If the goblet has a long stem, I work toward the foot or base at the chuck, turning down about 2 to 3 inches at a time until I reach the finished stem diameter. When I reach the base, I try to match the design that I have under the cup or similar. If it is a continuous flow with no particular design, I do the same as I move on into the foot. Finish sand and seal before cutting it off, sanding with the grain. I cut the piece off or nearly off at this point and be sure to leave enough stock to finish the bottom of the foot.

At this point, I place a padded mandrel securely in the chuck. I have pre-made several mandrels for different size cups, covered at one rounded end with padding and a tendon at the other end for chucking. I like to use "lamb's wool" fabric for padding. Slide the goblet cup onto the mandrel and bring your tailstock up, with a live center, to support the foot. You can turn the bottom down with your own signature design but be sure to make the outer bottom edge flat for the basic support of the goblet. The center of the foot is cut shorter so as not to interfere with level support. Until you master turning the bottom to completion, a Dremel tool or carving knife can remove the center nub where the tailstock was supporting.

You have now completely finished the goblet from turning to sanding and polishing with your favorite waxes or lacquers. I usually coat the piece with sanding sealer before removing from the lathe and take it to my 3-wheel, Beal buffing pad system.

I always take care to work the piece as I move from the cup at the right, to the foot at the left, so as to maintain strength or support at the left or drive-chuck end. Imagine turning the thin stem first before you bore or turn the cup! Ooh mamma, not very possible! I always take care that I have the support of the tailstock as much as needed, and the only time I don't is when I bore the cup. I have not had any trouble doing this, without the use of a centering support, but if you feel safer, use it.

Care of the goblet. If the goblet is to be used for drinking from (which is usually not recommended), care must be taken to ensure that the piece has cured at least a month before using. Any liquids must be completely removed after use and a light coating of a food safe or salad bowl finishing wax should be applied regularly. If you want to use a wooden goblet often for drinking, expect it to turn dark inside and may become unsafe.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to email me at: dananddonna@comcast.net. You can also find this in PDF format on my web site.

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