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Paper Knife

by Frans Brown

No need to buy any expensive kits, this project sheet will show you how to make a fantastic paper knife with only wood and your skills!

Preparation

Select a piece of your wood stock, preferably tight grained and fairly dense.

Cut square lengths of around 1"x 10" and mark centres.

Clearly define area 1" at each end of the blank this is no turn area and is needed to support the blank after turning to cut out the blade part of the knife.

Turning

Mount and turn between centres with the intended handle at the headstock end of the lathe.

Begin turning at a safe speed remembering to only make the portion you have marked in the centre area of the blank round. Once this area is round, mark out the proportions of handle to knife blade (around 40% to 60% looks good) you can up the speed a little at this point if you wish, to form the handle shape and the profile of the blade.

Now is a good time to sand and finish only the handle.

At this stage you should have a turned shape something like a small garden dibbler.

The Blade

This is easiest formed first by marking 3/16" (4mm) each side of a centre line drawn through the blade centre, then shaping to the marks can be done entirely with a sanding disc or belt sander, but more efficiently, with the square edges against the fence on a bandsaw using a push stick with just over 1" of the saw blade and cutting carefully to the line.

Shaping the blade should be carried out on a sander, aiming for a smooth elliptical shape cutting or sanding away the remains of the guide squares at each end.

Finishing

Treat the shaped blade to a final hand sanding through the papers finishing the same as the handle.

Options

The blade can be turned separate to the handle, still with squares to help the shaping, but allowing smaller pieces of exotic woods to be used for the handles.

