

**OUR NOVEMBER DEMONSTRATION  
HIP TO BE SQUARE WITH ROBERT LOVE**

The square bowl was introduced to attendees at the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Central New York Woodturners. **Robert Love** was our demonstrator for the evening. Robert began his talk by discussing and showing the four common variations – the uplifting bowl, the slump style, the suspended style, and the heavy square bowl (see photos right).

With reference to wood selection, Robert suggested dry, tight grain domestic species such as maple, white oak, walnut, or apple or use an exotic like olive, padauk, etc. Any of the stabilized blanks you can purchase will work also. As is common with any project, some woods are more difficult to work with when turning square. Also, because you are alternately turning long grain and end grain, you may encounter tear out on the long grain edge. You may want to glue a sacrificial thin piece of wood – like a paint stirrer – on the long grain edge using a paper joint to counteract the tear out. If you don't, keep your tools extremely sharp and using shearing angle cuts when turning the edges.



Moving on, Robert talked about preparing the wood for turning, an important step in creating the bowl. He noted that you should start with a square piece of wood in order to obtain perfect edges. Then, find the center of the block and mark it with an awl to identify clearly its location. Once the center mark is located, mount your face plate onto the wood. It is important to center your wood so that each point of the wood is centered and clearly visible. It may not seem important but when you turn the piece, you will obtain a very different look if you don't start on center.

Robert showed a couple centering jigs that help you get the face plate mounting perfect. One was a jig he purchased from Don Pencil which he no longer sells. The other was a unit he



made (see photo). If you don't want to use a face plate, you can also use a steb center with your chuck and tail stock to hold the piece while you create a tenon for your chuck or even use a worm screw.

Everyone asks about speed. Robert noted that this is one project where high speed makes for easier cutting. As usual, work at a speed with which you are comfortable. Also, make sure to test your tool rest position when the lathe is not turned on, and then again with the lathe turned at a slow speed with you standing on the safe side – away – from where the piece is turning.

You are finally ready to apply your tool to the wood. This is one instance where you need to apply your ABCs of turning – Anchor the tool, rub the Bevel, and Cut. In this instance, anchor the tool, rub the bevel,



pull back until you are not rubbing then advance in and make light cuts with your bowl gouge. Slowly, work light cuts along the edge and shape

the bottom of your bowl. While shaping, be sure to be extra careful when nearing the edge of the bowl. As you are shaping the bottom you will also be creating a tenon to match your chuck, whether it be straight or dovetail. Before removing from the lathe, mark the center on the bottom as it helps when re-centering to finish the bottom.

Also, before moving on, sand the bottom. You can perform some light power sanding on the

lathe with the lathe on BUT it's dangerous, it can cause the leading edges to be rounded over, and did I say it's dangerous! So, while we all hate sanding, your other option is to learn to get clean cuts. If you are going to sand, leave the piece mounted on the lathe, lock your head stock to prevent the piece from turning when sanding. Use an electric drill mounted sanding pad with a soft interference pad.

Ready to move on? Making sure your center is still marked, remove the piece from the



Square Bowl Styles



Uplifting Style Bowl



Slump Style Bowl



Suspended Style Bowl



Heavy Style Bowl



3 Sided Style Bowl



Our November Demonstrator  
Robert Love

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face plate and mount it in the chuck. Work the back edges a little at a time. Take time to stop the lathe periodically and check where you are in your process. Try to maintain



Once you've finished cutting, sand as needed to clean up tool marks and soften the edges. Then reverse mount the piece and shape your tenon into something pleasant or remove it altogether. Sand as needed and finish.



*When reverse chucking, use a mouse pad or other foam material to protect your piece. Or consider purchasing **Rubber Chuckies** @ [rubberchucky.com](http://rubberchucky.com). They have various cone sets that you can use!*



an even thickness along the square edge and remember that the edge is sharp, like a saw blade. A

There are several videos on YouTube about making square bowls along with a couple of articles elsewhere. Each has its merits and can be useful. Just remember, some people post videos on the internet that involve pretty scary actions. Always think twice about what you see and whether it is wise to use the techniques presented. One excellent source to videos that meet minimum safety standards is the American Association of Woodturners (AAW) **Video Source**. Available to AAW members, an easy search tool then links you to videos in the broad topics. This is one great resource available to all AAW members!

thought on cutting ... as John Jordan says, *let the wood come to the tool*. Also, use a push cut into the center because if you use a draw cut outward, you could easily hit



Thanks Robert for a well thought out, organized, and comprehensive presentation!



the outer edge and whoops!

Written by: *Barbara Raymond-LaPrease*  
Photos by: *Doug North*



Use the AAW Video Source tool to find turning videos that meet minimum safety standards!  
Not a member? Use the new 60 day Guest Membership option to explore what they have available!

[www.woodturner.org](http://www.woodturner.org)

**OUR NOVEMBER WORKSHOP  
SQUARE BOWLS WITH ROBERT LOVE**

The November Saturday workshop was held at Eight Acres Event Center on the 12<sup>th</sup>. We had six members who attended the workshop and enough mentors to help everyone. Half of the attendees worked on square bowls while

the other half received excellent instruction on skills. Each walked away with new knowledge and appreciation for turning. It really helps to have additional hands available at the workshops. Remember, mentors do not pay.



*The sacrificial wood was flying so Chad improvised with a second face shield.  
Below, Charlie shows Chad another option!*



Mentors really help insure that workshops run smoothly and safely!



*Greg & Mark Help Bruce  
It's great when there are multiple mentors!*