

Spheres: Four ways to “make it round”.

I signed up for a demo on turning spheres last month. The only problem was that I’d never turned one before. Fortunately, the web is a fountain of Good Stuff, and I was able to find good articles and HowTos. After filling my brain (courtesy of Google). I found the following different ways to turn a sphere:

Turn more or less “by eye”. Turn your cylinder, measure, mark the center, mark out the width to match the diameter, then start turning!

<http://www.woodturner.org/community/youth/projects/Sphere.pdf>

<http://woodturninglearn.net/articles/bocceball.htm>

Using a jig. This one is a no-brainer if you are doing production work. The jig attaches to the banjo, and holds a scraper that you move in an arc (well, technically, a hemisphere). The better models have adjustments so that you can turn several sizes within a given range. Here’s a couple of links:

<http://www.lindsaylathetools.com/sphere/SphereTurningJig.pdf>

http://vermec.tripod.com/PDFs/Sphere_Cutting_Jig.pdf

Using the “Measure-with-calipers-and-do-the-math” method.

<http://syzygypens.com/blog/2009/02/25/turning-a-sphere/>

Using the Batty/Burchart/O’Connor method (the one I wound up demonstrating).

Turn the cylinder, then flip it (between centers) so that the end grain is facing you. Use a parting tool to cut a groove. Back to normal orientation, then just turn until the groove is gone.

http://www.woodturners.org/tech_tips/round-balls-instructions.pdf

Using the “Shadow Jig” method. Pretty much shine a light above the lathe bed, and have a circle drawn onto a piece of white hardboard/cardboard. Turn your block until the shadow matches your drawn circle. Below is a jig that makes it pretty easy.

<http://davidreedsmith.com/Articles/ShadowSphereJig/ShadowSphereJig.htm>

If you think that spheres aren’t all that interesting, take a look at this:

http://www.woodturner.org/gallery/Sphere_v2.pdf

<http://www.davidreedsmith.com/demo/eccentricospheres/eccentricospheredemo.pdf>