

Turning a Wooden Spatula

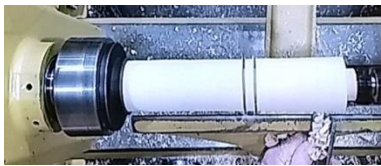
By Bob Goulding



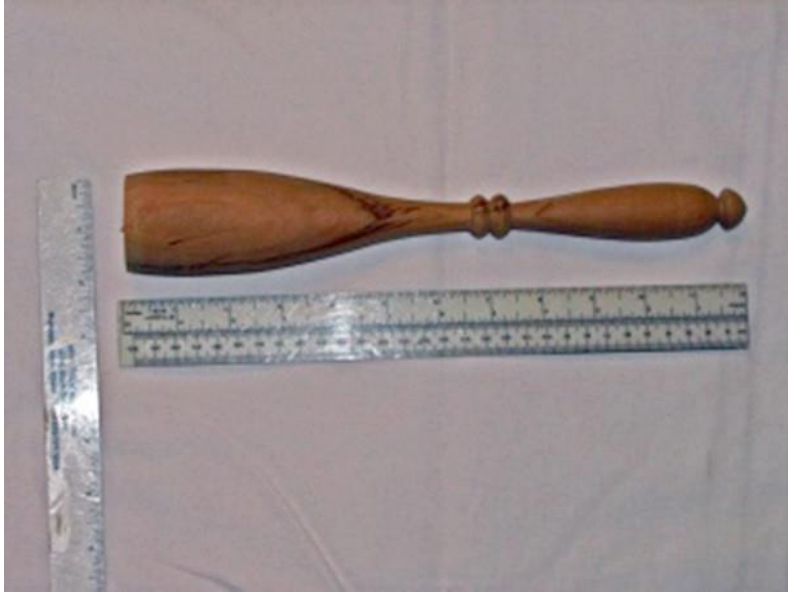
This spatula makes a great stocking gift, at Christmas, for anyone who cooks. Once your favorite cook uses this spatula, she will never use a wooden spoon or plastic spatula again.



Start with a block of wood or a straight branch, about 12-13" long and at least 2"x2".



Mount it between centers and rough it into a cylinder. Turn a tendon on the end and mount it in a chuck.



Turn the piece into a “club”, about 2” in diameter at the chuck end, with a nice handle about 5-6” long and $\frac{3}{4}$ ” to 1” in diameter. They should “flow” smoothly from handle to blade with a shaft about $\frac{1}{2}$ ” in diameter. It’s nice to add a bolster between them, on the shaft, and a cap on the butt end of the handle. With a cutoff tool, separate the butt end of the handle from the tailstock. Finish sand the handle, bolster and shaft while on the lathe. With a cutoff tool, separate the piece from the chuck.



Clamp it by the handle with a wooden hand screw and draw the blade shape on the “club” with a pencil. The blade should be a little less than $\frac{1}{4}$ ” thick, with a slight curve, and flow smoothly into the shaft.



Use the band saw, with a fine tooth blade, to saw away the scrap and form the blade.



You want to have a nice curved blade, flowing through the shaft to the handle.

The easiest way to finish shaping the blade is on a belt sander, but it can be sanded by hand.



The curved end of the belt works nicely on the upper surface of the blade and the flat part of the belt works well on the bottom of the blade.



The belt sander and a sanding block finish smoothing the blade and flowing it into the shaft.



See how the handle flows through the shaft into the blade?



Apply an oil finish. Let it soak in for 15-30 minutes. Reapply and after 15 minutes, wipe dry with paper towels or rags. You can buy "block oil" to use on this, cutting boards and salad bowls, at Gourmet shops for \$8-\$9 for ½ pint or go to Walmart and buy a pint of Mineral Oil for about a buck, in the pharmacy department. It's exactly the same stuff. If the spatula is not left standing in water or put in the dishwasher, and is oiled once or twice a year, it will last for a very long time.

Wooden Spatula
Template

