

Gavels with threaded handles

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The following summary presents one workable process of turning a gavel on the lathe and threading the handle using a standard threading kit:

HEAD

- ✓ Prepare two square blanks of proportional sizes for the head and an elongated handle. The sample shown is a 5" 2X2" for the head and an 11" 1X1" for the handle. The finished gavel will measure 3.5"X 1.5" at the head and an exposed handle of 7.5" with a .75" threaded shank.
- ✓ Begin by mounting the blank to be turned for the gavel head between centers firmly with adequate room for waste at the spur center end.



- ✓ Round and smooth the blank before establishing the centerline. Using a compass, mark the two end-points and other profile high-points



equidistant from the centerline.

- ✓ Plan and turn your design to include a slightly convex swell on each hammer face. Avoid making a fragile edge from side-to-face that might



chip out when the gavel is used.

- ✓ Using the long point of the skew in the “down” position, cut the hammer faces smooth leaving small head and tailstock pins to withstand any sanding (if needed), French polishing, and waxing. Part off by skew-point cutting the tailstock tendon to the smallest size that will still hold, then cut the headstock end carefully to completely sever that pin. Using a bench chisel, clean up both ends by hand. Sand and



finish.

- ✓ Look carefully at the gavel head to decide where the most interesting grain will show when the hammer is lying on its side. Then find the least interesting point at the center circle, mark, and drill with the proper size bit (check your threading kit for the proper size). If using a drillpress, the safest method is to make a “V-block” to secure the blank. If using a hand drill, firmly lock the headstock before drilling, and be sure to drill into the center at 90 degrees or the handle will angle from the head and



ruin the turner’s hard work.

- ✓ Thread the drilled hole with the starting cutter followed by the finish cutter. This threads the hole the entire length.

HANDLE

- ✓ Check your handle length against the completed gavel head for a pleasing dimension. Usually the handle length is slightly more than two times the head length. For the purpose of this sample, the head is 3.5", the handle will be 7.5" exposed plus a necessary 2.5" (extra length needed for the



threading process).

- ✓ Mount the handle blank, turn to round and smooth, mark the 2.5" for threading. Turn the exposed handle to a pleasing shape of smooth tapers, beads, and coves. Sand if necessary and finish with the French polish and



wax.

- ✓ Turn the threading shank to the proper size that in this sample was 0.5" (note the 1/2" wrench makes a perfect sizing tool and this sizing is critical to your threading success). Lightly wax the shank to lubricate its passage through the thread cutter.
- ✓ Part off at the tail stock and saw away any drive-center waste.
- ✓ Apply the thread-cutting box to the shank and while pushing firmly on the shank, twist the handle into the box as far as possible. Back the shank out very carefully. Remove the wooden guide from the thread-box. Very carefully re-insert the handle shank by twisting the new threads onto the exposed cutting edge to the guide beyond. Continue threading the shank



its full length.

- ✓ **Measure the depth of the threaded hole in the gavel head and cut the handle threaded shank to slightly less length carefully and squarely across the threads.**



✓ **Assemble the completed gavel and use it liberally at the next community or family meeting.**