

Tips

Custom-width masking tape

Masking tape works well for painting straight lines on flat surfaces, but we turners rarely have that luxury. Typically, masking tape won't go around small radii or adhere to the compound curves found on turned forms. I needed a masking tape that would maintain clean lines in tight corners and on compound curves.

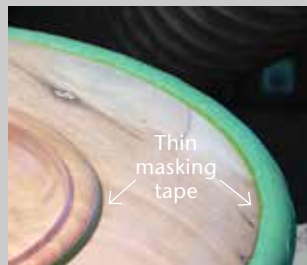
I reasoned that if the tape were very narrow, it would be flexible enough to get the job done. Narrow tape is available for purchase, but I decided to make it myself—on the lathe. By making a tapered mandrel to hold the tape roll on the lathe and supporting it with a wide live center, I was able to drive the tape roll accurately and cut it with a skew. The procedure was simple and effective, and I could cut any custom width I wanted.

I found that tape about $\frac{1}{8}$ " to $\frac{3}{16}$ " (3mm to 5mm) wide conformed to compound curves and tight corners easily. That's not wide enough for many painting situations, but it is a simple matter to add additional rows of narrow tape, with short strips of full-width tape stepping around the curve, to complete the masking.

—Ed Pretty, Canada



Cut a masking tape roll to the width you need.



Mask and paint.



Handy boot scraper

My shop is in the basement of our home. My boots have deep treads that invariably get clogged with chips while I'm working at the lathe. Out of deference to my wife, I came up with a boot scraper that tucks away beneath my lathe and has a deep bristle wire brush that easily clears the chips and lets me go upstairs without leaving a trail.

Between the boot scraper and the compressed air hose coiled up at the end of my lathe, I manage to leave unwelcome hitchhikers behind. ▶

—Ed Wargo, New Jersey



Get a grip

Adding a layer of elastic mesh sleeve is a cheap and easy way to get a better grip on your woodturning tools. My friends and students like it. You can purchase mesh sleeve from mcmaster.com (I purchased item #5969K23). It is made of $\frac{1}{16}$ " (1.5mm-) thick polyethylene plastic and comes in different sizes and colors. The mesh I bought would cover handles with an outside diameter (OD) of 1" to $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (25mm to 38mm).

—Carl Ford, New York



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—Joshua Friend, Editor