

# This week's

# TUTOR'S

# TIDINGS



Week 2

Friday 12th February, 2016

## The Use of SANDING SEALER

**Sanding sealer.** What is it? Do you use it? Why? I am often asked about using sanding sealer, about its properties and effects. The truth is that I haven't had enough experience with sanding sealer to answer confidently and authoritatively.

But I did try a **Google search** and found quite a **variance in view and opinions about sanding sealer.**

**Here's a few randomly-chosen comments about sanding sealer.**

Sanding sealer is just that, a material that seals wood before sanding. The idea is to harden and raise the fibres so that they are easily cut off and to sand with less dust and faster cut. I just went out and bought a can of sanding sealer and tried it.

I prefer it on guitar bodies for orbital sanding as opposed to lathe turned objects but that is just a personal feeling. You might want to try using your favourite finish cut about fifty percent with turpentine as a sanding sealer to see if you like the idea.

You must be patient with your finishing. Most experienced wood turners will tell you they spend more time finishing i.e. sanding than they do actually turning. I have a tin of sanding sealer which I have used only once.

There is no substitute for very sharp tools for that final cut followed by careful sanding right down to 800 or 1000 grit followed by at least 2 applications of EEE, and then if you want it really shiny Shellawax Cream or liquid.

It seals (and therefore protects) the timber. It fills the pores and hardens the fine ends of the grain so that when you sand it, the grain sands away smoothly. It provides an excellent base for finishes such as polyurethane, varnish, wax etc. I use Feast Watson sealer but there are plenty of other brands. When turning, I rub it on the work with a small piece of rag then turn on the lathe. I rub it into the turning work until perfectly smooth. Then I let it dry, sand while still on the lathe and then add whatever finish I want.

You will find that if you do not use sanding sealer that the first coat of your finish will raise the grain and then you have to sand off something that may be a lot harder than sanding sealer. Certainly on turned articles I find sanding sealer to be one of the keys to a really good finish. It's not that expensive, give it a go and see what you think.

Really there is no need for sanding sealer at all. All polishes are their own sealers. The first coat of any product 'seals' the wood. The main advantage in using a sanding sealer is to make sanding easier. I use Mirotones lacquer and also use the corresponding sanding sealer - but the only real difference between the two products chemically is that the sanding sealer contains talc to make sanding easier. I would think that if the sealer you are using is clogging up the paper rather quickly, then it's not doing its job properly, it may be an old batch would explain it not fully curing - which is what sounds like is happening.

I suggest that if you intend to use a sealer that you would probably be best with a very weak shellac solution 8-10 parts metho to a premixed shellac. (preferably dewaxed white shellac) This will raise the nap of the grain and make it stand up and become reasonably brittle. This can easily be sanded using a very fine grit (600-800 or even finer) then a wax can be applied. This will keep the shine a lot longer.

Too many wood turners use sanding sealer the wrong way, as a finish. IT IS NOT A FINISH just a means to an end. It fills the grain and in many instances hides a multitude of sins. Most top class wood turners wouldn't touch the stuff except for use on their lower quality production work which will end up being sprayed.

If you are using a friction polish like Shellawax Cream the use of a sanding sealer will hinder the final finish as it needs to be burned into the timber during application thus fusing itself into the wood rather than becoming a surface coating which is much easier to damage. Sealer will also dramatically hinder the application of most oils.

Everybody has their own preferences in everything we do. There is no one way to do everything - especially when it comes to polishing.

Personally the only time I use a sealer is when I am finishing with lacquer or whenever I use waxes etc

I either use them as sealers or a reduced mix of Shellac. Shellac is actually universally renowned as the best sealer - but how many people use it as such?

***TUTOR's Comment: "Well there you have it! The comments shown in the preceding six boxes represent quite a variance of views about sanding sealer eh. (and that's just a few of the many comments I found in a USA members' on-line discussion.)***

***While these comments provide food for thought, I recommend club members find out for themselves by giving it a go. Get some sealer and try it on a variety of woods.***

***Experience is often the best teacher. Cheers Clive***

## Tuesday session happenings



*Our No 9 lathe was temporarily out of commission while undergoing repairs.*

*No 9 is up and running again!*

*Many thanks to **BOB HOYLE**, the club's maintenance officer who is undertaking this very important and ongoing club activity.*



*JAN confidently fashions another pen*



*Always looking for adventure and new turning ideas, **DAVID** gets a lot of his inspiration from reading "Woodie" magazines.*



***CHRIS** worked with Australian Blackwood to make a very attractive, matched set of pepper/salt shakers.*



***OAK – KAURI – RIMU – WALNUT Bowl.***

*Another David Mollekin turning. Adventure, Style, Skill and Creativity!*



*DAVID'S bowl showing the lid underside and the central Walnut wood ring insert.*



*DES is keen to try another resin inlay bowl but this one presents a massive challenge!*

*This bowl will have its inlay around the outside face of the bowl . Now this is a tricky process involving a lot of planning, thinking and some homemade turning tools. GO DES!*

***DAVID**, well protected from the irritating wood dust, is at the sanding stage with his rather stunning piece of heart rimu. This bowl will feature a **3D resin inlay** mounted dead centre of the inner bowl. Woo Hoo!*



## **2016 Committee**

Have you put your name forward for committee membership yet?

The forms you need to complete are on the front table in the workshop.

Please consider volunteering and perhaps nominating a fellow member for this hugely important club work.

## Thursday session happenings



*COLIN'S* block of white mairé is now a beautiful bowl

*Learning and using good safety practices are part of the club's expectations. DYLAN sets a good example for others to follow. Goodonya Dylan!*



*Our "enhancements" theme has started well for ANDRE`.*

*A Dremel tool was used to add the feature marks on his turning.*



**COLIN** oversees **MIKE'S** use of an Easy Wood finishing tool.

Club members support each other with encouragement and ideas.



**Learning from your mates!**

**SPENCER** gets some inspiration from **ROBERT'S** natural edge turning.



*ANDRE` looks for another block of wood for another turning idea.*

*The workshop gets hot and sticky during these February heat waves.*

*A glass of cold water and a walk outside makes a welcome break for **MUHANNAD** and **CHRISTINE***



*Note the look of deep concentration on **MIKE's** face as he works on his rather spectacularly coloured wood (variety not known)*



**MURRAY** prepares another block of wood which will emerge as a salt/pepper mill before the session is over.



**MURRAY's** French style rolling pin made from kauri wood. Note the "enhancement" lines on the ends of the roller.



Another example of **COLIN's** turnings.  
This time it's a platter made from black walnut.





***DONAL and MUHANNAD***

*The club is a great place to meet new people and make new friends.*

*Camaraderie among members is strong so there's always someone nearby to lend a helping hand, share ideas or give advice and encouragement.*

***DONAL***, our new member, is well on his way and already into completing his second turning project.



***STEPHEN*** often has two or three individual turning projects in progress at any one time.

*This approach maximizes his time every session. There's no waiting if a special tool or part is required...just set that one aside and load another project onto the lathe.*



# ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING

## Wednesday 17th February 2016

At the Club's Workshop - **7.00pm**

Your attendance would be greatly  
appreciated.

See You There!

### REMINDER to All READERS of this TT

If you have any interesting news about woodturning , items such as tools, lathes and finishes for sale, items you want to buy, or any information that might benefit your fellow club members etc etc, then do take advantage of advertising in the weekly TT.

Call me 027 491 3868 or 07 849 1757

Cheers

*Clive*

