
Multi-Center Turned Feet

By John Uteck

I have to thank Don Oetjen and Ric Erkes for inspiring me



to add interest to the bottom of my bowls and platters. I had been experimenting on paper with designs for carving the feet, and came up with this idea for turning a foot using multi-centers instead of carving out individual feet.

Since I had some 13" wide kiln-dried maple that I wanted to make a functional platter from, I decided a 6" foot would give me plenty of stability. The following photographs and descriptions illustrate the method I used for turning the feet on multi-centers. As usual for platters, dry wood is preferred.

If you want to try this multi-center turning for a different sized foot, you will need to sketch it on paper first, and work out the sizes for the off-center grooves. Remember with the 1" offset centers, the maximum platter diameter you can turn is 1" less than the height of your spindle (or 2" less than your swing diameter).

1. Mark the center of your blank on what will be the top of the platter.
2. Draw a 1" radius circle.
3. Draw a circle to your desired finish size – 6-1/2" radius for this platter. Keep your compass set at this setting.
4. Mark off 6 equal lengths along the outer circle using the same compass setting from step 3.



5. Connect every other mark to the center, marking off three equal sections.
6. Drill a 3/8" hole, 1" deep (depending on your screw chuck), in the center, and at each of the three locations on the 1" center circle.
7. If you have a bandsaw, rough cut a round blank.



8. Mount the blank in the center hole using a screw center, then tighten it so it completely seats on the chuck jaws.



9. Rough turn bottom of the platter, and true up the edges. Keep the foot area oversized, say 8" diameter, and at least 1/4" thick.



10. Remove platter from screw chuck, and re-mount in one of the off-center holes.
11. Layout the first off-center groove. Mark the new offset center on the bottom of the platter using your live

center and bringing the tailstock up to the wood. Running the lathe at slow speed, measure and mark a 2-1/2" radius circle, and a 3" radius circle from the center point.

12. Cut a groove about 1/4" deep between the two marked lines, and sand the groove through to your final grit.



13. Remove platter from screw chuck, and re-mount in second off-center hole.
14. Layout the second groove using the same method as the first groove. Mark the new center, then measure and mark a 2-1/2" radius circle, and a 3" radius circle.
15. Cut a groove about 1/4" deep, and sand the groove through to your final grit.



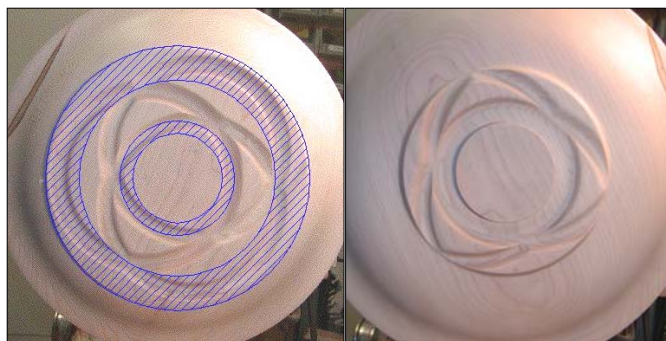
16. Remove platter from screw chuck, and re-mount in third off-center hole.
17. Mark, cut, and sand the third groove like the other two.



18. Remove platter from screw chuck, and re-mount in center hole.

19. Mark the center, then measure and mark a 1-1/2" radius circle. This will be the tenon that you will chuck onto for turning the top of the platter.

20. Cut a groove about 1/4" deep, and 1/2" wide to the inside edge of the feet.



21. Finish shaping the bottom of the platter and outside edges of the feet as you desire. Sand to your final grit.

22. Remove the platter from the screw chuck, reverse, and mount on your chuck, clamping onto the tenon.

23. Turn the top of the platter to your desired profile and thickness, and sand to your final grit.



24. Reverse turn the platter (I used a vacuum chuck) to remove the tenon, and sand through to your final grit.

25. Sign, date, and finish your platter.

