STEPS IN TURNING A TOOL HANDLE

♦1.Cut a blank from any hardwood to a square 1 ¾ " x 1 ¾" x 12". The blank may be shorter or longer depending on tool and preference.

♦2.Mark an approximate center on both ends of blank, x will mark the spot and place blank on the lathe between centers. Round the blank completely and true the tail stock end.

♦3.At the tail stock end, use a parting tool to cut a tenon for the Ferrell. Use the Ferrell to mark the length of the initial cut on the handle. When you get close to 7/8", place a box end wrench on the tool rest and apply it to the tenon until it is 7/8" thick on the end. Cut the tenon to 7/8" and fit the Ferrell to the handle. Place some medium CA glue on the tenon and push the Ferrell in place. Let dry and then turn the handle. (Note: if your ferrules are made of ¾" copper unions, then the i.d. is 7/8". If the ferrules are made of ¾" copper pipe, the i.d. just a smidge above 3/4" so a ¾ inch box end wrench doesn't work well. If in doubt, use a caliper to measure.)

♦4.Using your spindle roughing gouge or a spindle gouge, shape the handle. I like to place a favorite commercial handle nearby and compare the shape as I cut. When you cut, watch the upper horizon to ascertain your shape, don't watch the cutting edge of the tool.

♦5.Once the handle is mostly shaped, turn the lathe on slow speed and using a detail spindle gouge, trim the copper or brass Ferrell. Sand with 150 grit but remember this is a tool handle not piece of fine furniture. Turn the headstock end leaving a small nub.

♦6.Remove piece from lathe and also remove spur center from the headstock. . Place a Jacobs Chuck in the headstock with a 9/32 " brad point bit in it. The bit must have a sharp point.

♦7.The next step is a two -man operation for the uninitiated. Place handle with its rear end at the tailstock and bring up the tailstock and place live center point in the center hole from the spur center. Holding the handle firmly against the live center, bring the tailstock up towards the headstock until the blank just touches the brad point and the point enters the live center hole. Then continuing to hold the handle firmly, turn on the lathe. Start drilling the hole while slowly advancing the tailstock and the handle toward the headstock. Drill the hole about 2" deep.

♦8.Remove the handle from the lathe, cut off the nub on a band saw and hand sand. (If you have a live cone center, you can remount the handle with the hole at the tail stock end and turn off the nub.)

♦9.Pound the square tool material into the round hole and go to work.