

Scissors Holster

by David Reed Smith

Imagine that most of us, whether at a brainstorming session, a design class, or a demo, have been urged to "think outside the box." Even ignoring the self-contradictory phrasing of exhorting creativity in a thoroughly banal way, I don't find this to be especially helpful advice. It's similar to telling you not to think about elephants. The subconscious usually doesn't work on demand. What you need instead is a bigger box.

The more methods and techniques you know, the more ways there are for you to combine them. Theoretically, the increase is exponential. One technique that can be used to make the box bigger is the "lost wood process," where part of a turning is "lost" either by cutting away or by using a temporary waste block. However, the examples of this process that I've seen are rather daunting for a first-time try—how many of us will risk all the work in turning a hollow vessel with a first-time technique? This article is about making a scissors holster that is hopefully a much less risky (baby steps, if you prefer) introduction to the lost wood process.

A customer, who bought one of my needlecases, asked me if I could make a holder for embroidery scissors that could be hung around the neck; she even sent me a few Internet links with examples. But a way to turn a scissors holster without unnecessary bulk wasn't immediately evident, since scissors are more wide than they are thick. But as I had just been using the lost wood process to make a sphere into a fish body, within a day or so I had the idea of using the technique to get rid of unnecessary bulk and to add design interest as well.

Briefly, a blank formed with two prime wood pieces and a waste wood block is glued-up using temporary glue joints. The resulting blank is mounted between centers, and a tenon is turned for chuck mounting and then step-drilled to make a recess. The drilled blank is then mounted on a mandrel and turned. The temporary joints are separated, a magnet is added to hold the scissors in, and the prime pieces are glued permanently together. Lastly, eyelets are made and glued into the holster.

PREPARE THE TURNING BLANK

To start the scissors holster, first prepare the turning blank. A waste block is needed that is 1-1/2" wide x 3-1/2" long x 0.4" thick. The 0.4" is a fairly critical dimension. The mating surfaces need to be smooth—bandsawn isn't good enough.

The prime pieces should be 1-1/2" wide x 3-1/2" long x 1/2" thick. The inside surfaces need to be smooth (the same as the waste block). In the photos, I'm using some laminated stock made of maple, cherry, and walnut, then cut on a 15° angle. It would be sensible to try the project



first with solid wood, such as maple (in fact, that's what I did). The blanks are shown in Fig. 1.

The prime pieces will be glued to the waste block with temporary joints. In the photos, I'm using blue masking tape and *Titebond* glue because this makes cleaning up the temporary joint nearly effortless. If you would rather, use a traditional paper joint with *Kraff* paper and glue. I suggest using a nonwaterproof wood glue to make the joint cleanup a little less of a hassle. Put blue masking tape on the mating surfaces of the pieces (see Fig. 2), and remove some of the coating of the tape with 180-grit (or so) abrasive to get better glue adhesion. Spread a thin layer of wood glue on one surface of each of the mating pairs and then clamp the blank together until the glue

