

# Turn a Twig Pot Handout

[MikePeaceWoodturning.com](http://MikePeaceWoodturning.com)

A twig pot or weed pot is great for beginners or experienced turners alike. This basic twig pot can be turned without the use of a scroll chuck by using a faceplate or threaded wood glue block. It is a great project for getting your creative juices flowing and tap into that right brain artistic side that you may not think that you have! From there move on to the more challenging multi axis variations.



## Wood

Start with a wood blank of most any size depending on your design. The wood can be green or dry. For me this might fall in a range of about 3" square and no more than 5" long. The size should be appropriate for a small dry flower or a few twigs. I prefer to select a piece of wood with some character. This could be figure, color, spalting, or a knot or bark inclusion. A scrap of burl would be nice. If you like to cut up pieces of wood and glue them back together, you can do that too!

## Design Considerations

- You might want it tall and thin or short and fat.
- Neck treatment- thin, flaring or cut on the bias
- Embellish as desired by coloring with patinating wax or dye
- Add beads or texture if desired
- Other options include keeping a natural edge or
- Turn multi axis



## Steps for a Basic Twig Pot

1. If you have a scroll chuck, mount between centers to rough turn round and add chuck tenon. If you don't have a scroll chuck, mount your twig pot blank to a face plate with a sacrificial glue block. A threaded wood faceplate works well also.
2. Mount in scroll chuck (or thread on faceplate or glue block and blank) and shape. A 3/8" spindle gouge is ideal. Before getting the neck too thin, face off top and chamfer the mouth.
3. Use a Jacobs chuck with 1/4" drill bit to drill a hole almost to the bottom but no more than about 3" deep.
4. Part down at the base with a thin parting tool leaving at least 1" of wood. Finish shaping the bottom curves.
5. Sand through the progression of grits from 120 to 320. Use a friction polish now if you wish or finish off the lathe with your favorite finish. I like Minwax Antique Oil for almost everything.
6. Part off with slight undercut at the base.
7. Sand off the bottom and add your name. Add finish. When dry, add dry twigs or flowers!



## Rectangular Twig Pot

A variation on the Basic Twig Pot is turning a rectangular twig pot. I use a blank about 2.25"x3"x5" of rough surfaced timber. A piece from a pallet might work.

### Steps:

1. Mark a line about 1/3 of the way in from the long side on top and bottom.
2. Mount between centers centered on those lines so grain is parallel with

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the lathe bed.

3. Slightly round over what will be the bottom, which is now toward the tailstock, and make a tenon for your chuck. This could be the base.
4. Follow Steps 2 and 3 from Basic Twig Pot above. Finish shaping the neck and then step 5 from basic twig pot above.
5. Remove from the chuck. You could stop here or cut off the tenon on the bandsaw which I what I prefer



## Multi Axis Twig Pot

Now turn a multi axis twig pot with the same basic steps as the Basic Twig Pot but with some additional steps. Use a heavier 1/2" spindle gouge or perhaps a 3/8" bowl gouge.

### Keep a few things in mind:

- Sand before you change axis. You can't go back to sand!
- Make sure the wood will clear the tool rest with each mounting and axis change.
- Consider turning at a bit higher speed to get a cleaner cut.
- Protect your eyes by wearing a face shield even though it is a small spindle project.

**Twig Pot Turned on Two Axes with neck turned on a different axis than the body.**

### Steps:

1. Mark lines corner to corner and move out from the center along one of the lines 1/2" to 5/8" or about 1/2 the distance from the center to the corner and mark for drilling. Personally, I think having the neck out too far does not look as good. You want an offset just enough to be obvious that the neck is off center. Drill 5/8" deep hole for wood worm screw 1/2" from center on drill press
2. Turn round between centers and add a tenon.
3. Use a 3/16" plywood donut spacer to mount on WW screw and mount the blank.
4. Turn the neck w/ TS support and cone center. Chamfer the center of the mouth.
5. Remove TS and use a Jacobs chuck and 1/4" drill bit and drill a hole stopping at least 3/8" from what will be the bottom and no more than 3".
6. Decide if you want a bit of a flare or straight neck. Refine the mouth and bring up TS and round over body and refine shape of the neck. Sand before changing the axis.
7. Mount in a scroll chuck and refine bottom and top of body. Pickup the cut from where the body starts to round and cut almost straight in. You will stop the cut at the base of what will be the thickest part of the neck.
8. Sand and part off.
9. Sign and add finish.



*This looks nice from a tree branch with bark still on it.*



*Ash with brown patinating wax*

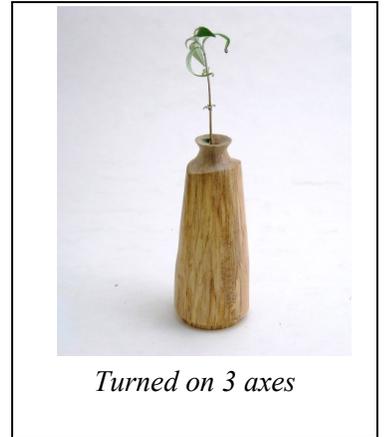
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## Raffan Style with three axes:

### Steps:

1. Start with a blank about 2 1/2" square and about 6" long. Draw lines from corner to corner and mark the centers on the blank on top and bottom.
2. Turn it round between centers and add a tenon to the end that will be the bottom. Remove from the lathe and on the end that will be the top, move out from the center 3/8" on one of the lines used to mark center, and use an awl or center punch to mark the two new centers. I use the mark left by the cup on my Powermatic live center as a reference to mark where it crosses one of the lines used to mark the center.
3. Re-mount between centers with drive center on the bottom in the original center hole and live center in one of the new center points. Start a taper about 1 1/2" from the bottom toward the neck.
4. Re-chuck and follow steps 2 and 3 from the Baic Twig Pot.
- 5.



*Turned on 3 axes*

A tip from my Mother-in-Law is to spray the flowers with hair spray to help preserve them.

You can watch my full video series on Twig Pots here on my YouTube channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo35V7i3n7k&list=PLG3S-gdoXeXXzLqve\\_hcqwjPzxa1dhCJQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo35V7i3n7k&list=PLG3S-gdoXeXXzLqve_hcqwjPzxa1dhCJQ)