

# Flower Tools

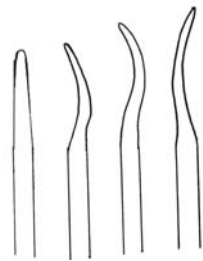
## Their Use in the Production of a Flower

### The Tools

This set of Flower Tools enables a turner to make a beautiful individual flower out of one piece of wood. It should be noted that these tools are not for the novice Woodturner. The user should have a gained considerable experience in the craft of woodturning, the application and use of hollowing tools and a good understanding of the methods of using scrapers and how to use them correctly to avoid catches. The possibility of catches developing is seen as the main difficulty when using these tools.

FIGURE 1 : *The tools from above, front and side*

**From above**



**Side View**



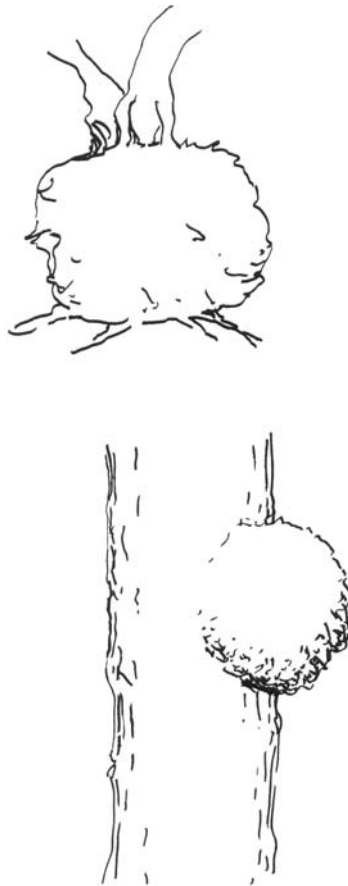
**Front Side**



## The Wood

In my workshop, in the South of France, I use special woods from Provence such as pistachio roots and burrs, strawberry tree or heather. To be successful in flower manufacture, careful selection of very fine and spherical burrs is necessary. Some may be found within burrs which have developed on tree trunks or in the roots of a tree, but it is essential that the structure of the burr selected is very fine to enable the manufacture of the delicate flower petals. Also, to avoid the petals breaking during manufacture, the wood has to be flexible and fresh. To achieve this, the wood is kept submerged in water before turning commences.

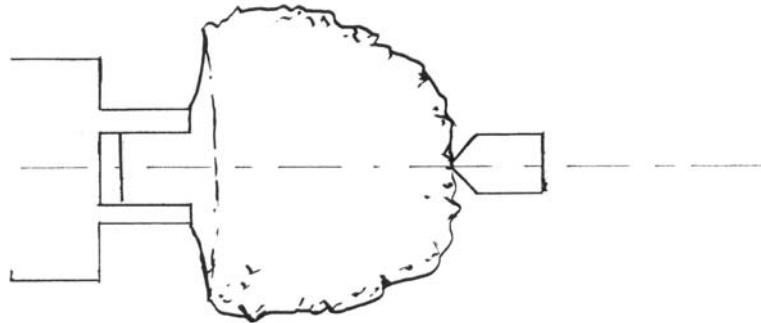
FIGURE 2 : *Roots and burrs*



## Turning

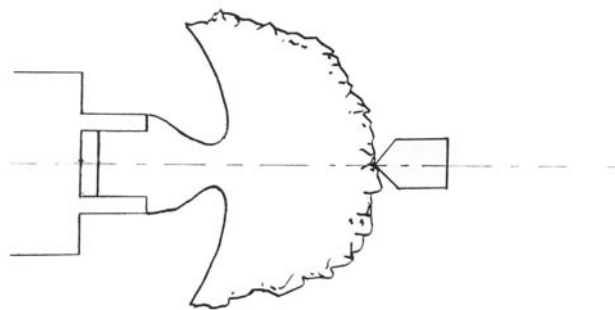
To begin, select a spherical piece of root about ten centimetres in diameter. Mount it between centres to prepare it for holding in a chuck having small jaws. Clamp the prepared piece in the chuck and bring up the live centre to provide additional support, keeping it in contact almost until completion of the turning work.

FIGURE 3: *The work piece clamped in the chuck*



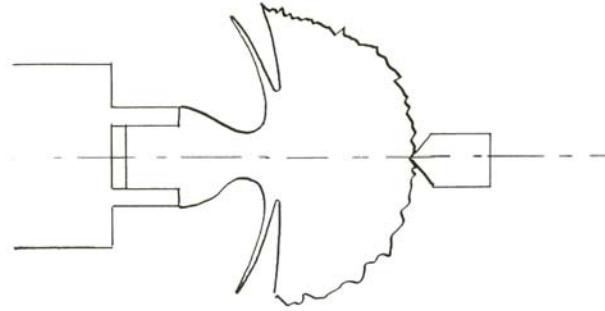
Commence the turning operation by shaping the bottom of the first petal layer using the curved tool (left).

FIGURE 4: *First curve*



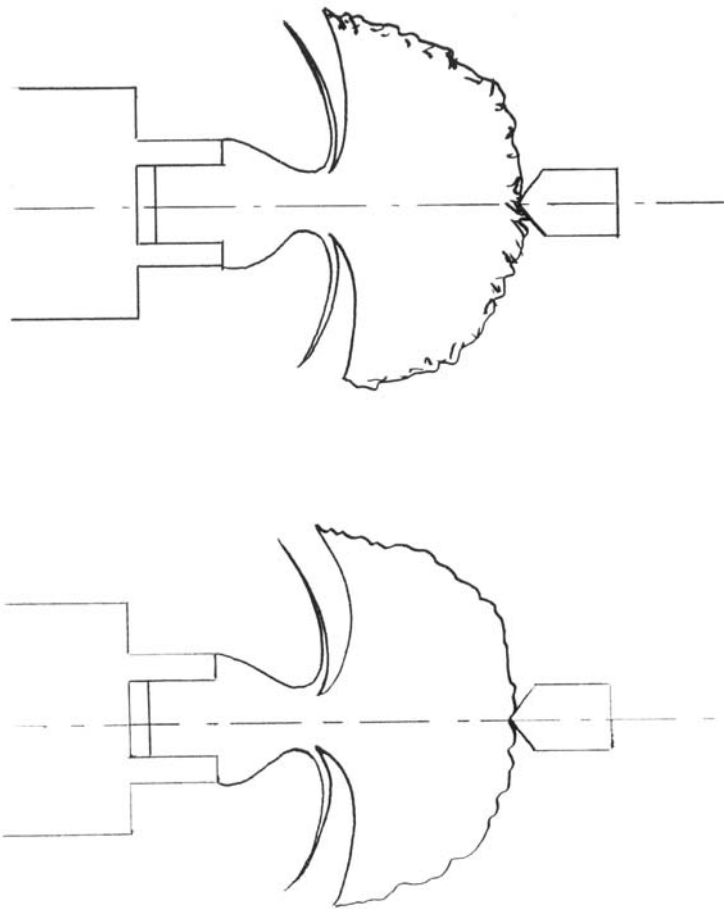
Having completed the shaping of the outside of the first petal layer, using the straight tool, continue by removing the wood between the two petal layers. The reason for using the straight tool at this stage is simply that a curved one is not necessary at the beginning of this work with the added advantage that the curved tools are saved for the more delicate curved work.

FIGURE 5: *The work after using the straight tool*



Using the less curved tool, proceed to develop the curved shape. Use the top of the tool first, then cut with the sides, right and left. When cutting on the right side, twist the handle a little to the right to avoid a catch. Similarly, but in reverse, when cutting the left side. Aim to finish to the final thickness on the rim of the petal layer before proceeding deeper to avoid vibration and chatter. Do not be concerned about the screeching noise. This is normal. These tools are inherently very noisy in use because of their length and thinness combined with the scraping process. You can use all of the left side of the tool to finish the petal layer and obtain a clean finish. To avoid the final petal breaking, the edge of the petal layer can be turned to 1 mm thick and the centre 2 mm thick. If you wish to produce different curves, this may be achieved by turning the tool handle to obtain the desired shape. If the curve required is not produced, then use another tool. In any event, you will probably need a different one to shape the bottom of the second petal layer.

FIGURES 6.7. : *The work of the curved tool*

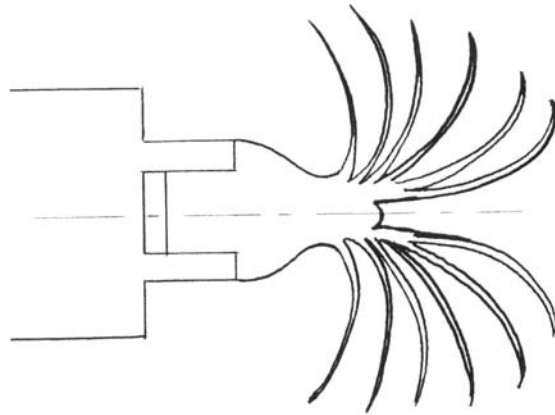


## **WARNING!**

A very important point is that the working end of the tool **MUST** be round, as well as thin, and **NOT** pointed. If it is pointed, you will have considerable difficulty in controlling the tool and it will drive right or left, resulting in the inevitable catch!

Repeat this process for the other petal layers until the flower is finished. After the last layer has been turned, remove the live centre to facilitate finishing the central button.

FIGURE 8 : *The finished flower*



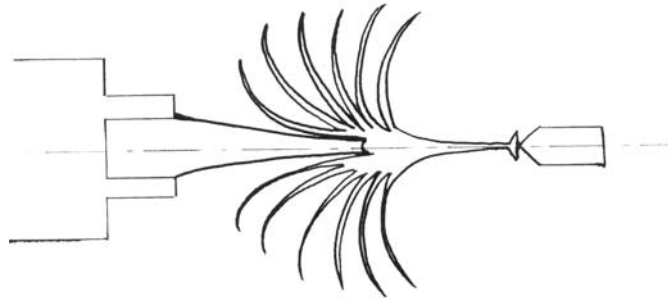
## **First Sanding**

Sand the flower on the lathe, using long strips of abrasive between the petal layers. Alternatively, using a chuck, mount a supple Velcro backing pad with attached sanding discs on the lathe. The hand held flower then can be introduced to the selected abrasive disc. The degree of hardness of the supple backing may be increased by changing the lathe speed.

## **Continuing Turning**

The flower is then reverse-mounted, this time using a wooden jam-chuck that fits on the centre of the button, bringing the live centre up to give additional support. The use of chalk in the jam-chuck will prevent the flower slipping. Using conventional turning tools, turn the stem as fine as possible.

FIGURE 9 : *The stem*

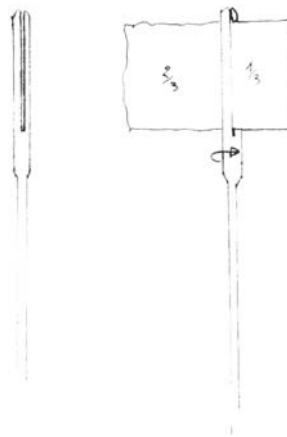


At this stage, if the flower is required to appear realistic (alive), it is necessary to cut and shape the petals with big chisels or carving knives to separate them. Subsequently, when dry, they will be free to move and appear as a real flower. The flower is then left to dry for a period of between three days and one week, depending on the weather, the wood selected and the workshop atmosphere.

## **Final Sanding**

When the flower is dry, it must be sanded. The ideal tool is a Dremmel tool called a Flap Sander. This is mounted on the end of a flexible shaft.

FIGURE 10 : The Flap Sander



Insert a piece of abrasive into the split and when rotating, the abrasive flaps against the wood. Using this method, all the edges of the petals are sanded easily, even extending to the centre of the flower, resulting in a perfect flower!

**Good Luck!**

**(et Bonne Chance!)**