



JUNE 2021 SAFETY AT THE GRINDER

Most of us use a 1750 single speed grinder with an aluminum oxide wheel to grind our turning tools. Let's start with establishing we are using a decent quality grinding wheel.

As a general rule a 60 grit wheel will be efficient in reshaping as well as resetting a good edge. When doing some serious grinding it is recommended that you use some cooling liquid to avoid burning your tool. Just dipping your tool into a small container with water will assist you with keeping the tool steel from losing the temper.

A useful diamond coated wheel dresser will allow you to freshen up the surface of your wheel. It will keep the surface flat and expose sharp cutting grit.

Nowadays we have a variety of grinding jigs which are helpful in reproducing the tool cutting shape; some are better than others, never the less be aware that they have potential problems, especially if not used as intended. So follow instructions, spend some time getting familiar with function and potential pitfalls. One of the most common is that a jig trapped tool falling off the grinding surface has the tendency of lodging itself between the grinding wheel and the guard with some dangerous results.

It is a good policy to occasionally test your grinding wheel. With grinder off lightly tap the side of your wheel, a cracked wheel will create a thud.

It is safer to use a positioning platform, this can hold desired angles and give your tool adequate support. Your platform should be kept clean and free of nicks and burrs.



You can lightly sand the surface and coat with some paste wax, rub, dry and buff. Your tool should move smoothly through the grinding action.

Safe hints:

- Never adjust your platform or jig holder while the grinder is running
- Never grind on the side of your wheel
- Use adequate respiration protection and a face shield at the grinder.
- Vacuum accumulated grit, dust and metal shavings often

It is my suggestion that you practice grinding your tools without the use of the jigs. Once mastered this will give a greater control of the shapes and cutting edges you will need as your turning improves

Safety is not an afterthought! A safe turner is a happy turner.