

## Tibetan Spindles – Neal Brand

Blanks can be made from 1 inch boards. For the whorl, use a 2 inch square (2.25 inch for woods with low density) and for the shaft, use a 12 inch long square at least 5/8 inch square. It is essential that the blanks are dry and straight grain is also very helpful for the shaft.

To make the whorls, first determine the diameter. The formula I use is  $D = 2(6 I / (\pi * h * p))^{1/4}$ , where I is the desired moment of inertia (I use 30 g cm<sup>2</sup>), h is the height of the whorl and p is the wood density. This formula works as long as you are making the whorl in a parabolic shape. Another helpful formula for a parabolic whorl is  $12 * I = M * D^2$  where M is the mass of the whorl. So when you make the whorl, multiply the mass (in grams) by the diameter (in cm) squared and you should get approximately 360. Typically for whorls approximately 0.75 to 1 inch high, the diameter will be between 1.6 inches (for very dense wood like lignum vitae) and 2.1 inches (for wood with very low density like holly).

Make the whorl by mounting the blank on center and create a tenon. Then mount the blank on the lathe using the tenon and turn and finish the top of the whorl. Drill a 1/4 inch hole in the whorl only 1/2 inch deep. Next, turn the whorl around and mount on a 1/4 inch steel rod attached to the lathe using a collet or drill chuck. Turn and finish the rest of the whorl and drill a hole from the bottom of the whorl to meet the previously drilled hole. Check the weight of the whorl to be sure it is what you want.

Mount the square shaft blank with pin jaws, or if the blank is not square, mount on center and turn round first. Use a live center with no point to steady the tail end. Rough the shape of the shaft and then readjust the position of the shaft by removing the live center and carefully replacing it with a live center with a point. Turn shaft to shape. Use a 1/4 inch wrench to create a tenon on the shaft and part off the tail support so the shaft comes to a point. Sand the shaft and part it off the lathe.

With the remaining part of the shaft blank that was left in the lathe, make the support tip, including a 1/4 inch tenon. Sand and part from the lathe.

Tune the relative positions of the tips, whorl and shaft by twisting each until the best position is found. Then mark the positions. Disassemble the three parts and apply glue. Put the pieces back together as marked.

Check the spindle. One flick should cause the spindle to spin with only minor vibration for at least 30 seconds.

References:

Etsy.com

Ravelry.com look for Spindle Candy, Spindle Lore, Support Spindlers, and SpindleCrafters groups  
Fleegle Spins Supported – directly from Fleegle on Ravelry or <http://www.etsy.com/shop/TheGossamerWeb>

### Online Marketing

1. Why sell on etsy instead of ebay?
  - a. People on ebay looking for a deal, not handmade quality
  - b. People on etsy looking for handmade items
2. How do you avoid being lost in the crowd on etsy?
  - a. 8000 bowls, 5500 wood pens, 7500 spin tops
  - b. Can advertise on etsy based on searches – have not tried this
3. To get sales, you need shop traffic. How?
4. One strategy for selling bowls (or whatever) is to start in a niche market to get traffic
  - a. 21,000 views in my shop during first 6 months.
  - b. Since starting selling spindles, sold out everything else in my shop – most sales were from spindle buyers!
  - c. Plan to start making more boxes, bowls, and jewelry holders
5. How do you get started in a niche? Luck, but put odds in your favor. Tell my story
  - a. Keep interesting things in your shop
  - b. Make sure the quality of your objects are high
  - c. Respond to all inquiries
  - d. If requested to make something odd, make it!