



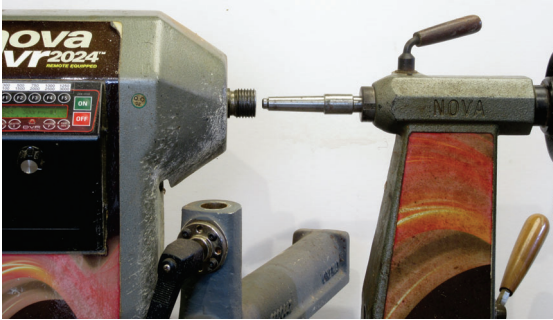
Aligning the Head

A swivel head on a woodturning lathe is a great asset for operator comfort and turning larger items. Returning the head to align with the tailstock can be a challenge. Some lathe makes boast a perfect detente pin system, but that may wear over time. Others rely on the skill of the operator. There are several ways to achieve good alignment.

1. Acruline

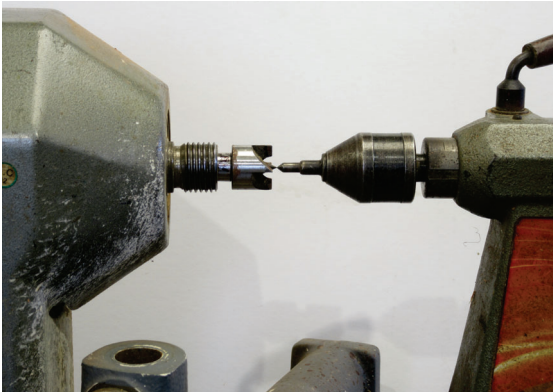


The tool made to assist perfect head to tail alignment is the Nova Acruline 2MT. To use this ensure that the Morse tapers in both headstock and tailstock of the lathe are clean and dry.



Position the headstock close to correct alignment and loose enough to rotate. Mount the Acruline in the tailstock Morse taper. If it is a self-ejecting tailstock extend the quill to allow the Acruline to be fully seated. With other tailstocks do not extend the quill. Then move the tailstock along the lathe bed to insert the other end of the Acruline in the headstock Morse taper.

2. Point to Point



If you do not have an Acruline then a quick alignment method is to place a drive spur with pointed centre in the headstock and live tail with pointed centre in the headstock. Then bring the tailstock up and rotate the head until the points align.

Be aware that the point in a drive spur may be bent a little. Also that the tailstock may be out of alignment and this can go unnoticed while a headstock out of alignment is more readily noticed.

3. Long Wood



A slightly more accurate method which reduces any error caused by tailstock alignment is to use a length of 50 x 50 wood which suits the length of the lathe bed. Position the lathe head as close as possible to correct alignment. Tighten the head securing bolt. Fit the length of wood in a chuck and rotate it at slow revs. Make a pencil dot on the exposed end as close as possible to the centre of rotation. Stop the rotation, ease the head securing bolt, bring the tailstock with a pointed centre close to the end of the wood. Do not touch the wood. Move the head to get the pencil dot and pointed centre aligned. Bumping the base of the headstock with a rubber hammer is a good way to do this. Tighten the head securing bolt. Check the alignment.

