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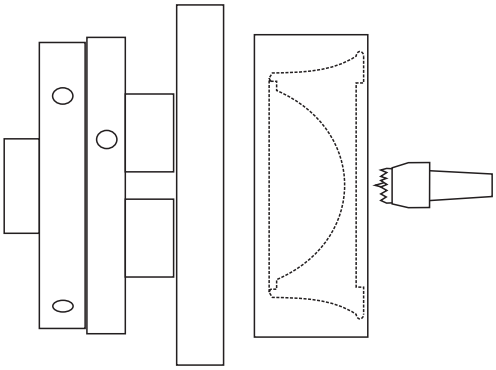
TURNING TOMORROW'S TREASURES

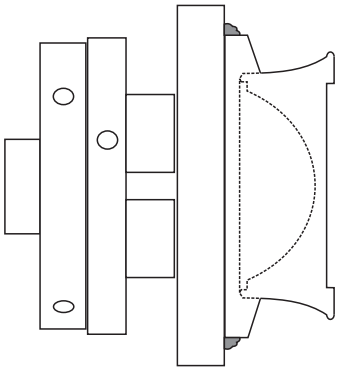
Counter Bell Box

Designed by Kieran Fitzgerald

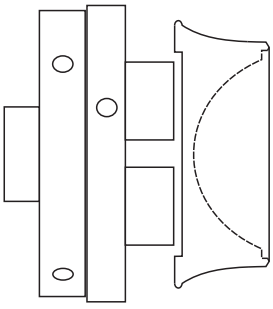
This project uses two cross-grain pieces of wood, each 80 x 80 x 30mm with the grain along one of the longer axes, to make the body and bell and a further piece 20 x 20 x 50mm to make the finial. The woods used may be very different colour and texture, as are the parts of a counter bell in a shop.
A further thin piece, on a faceplate or held on a chuck with a spigot, is used with hot melt glue for the initial mounting of each part of this project.



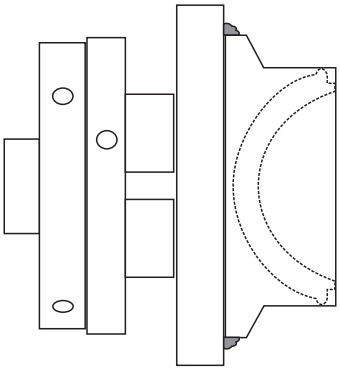
Mark the centre of the face that will be the base of the box. Place the project wood against the wood in the chuck and hold it in place with the tailstock at the central point. Use hotmelt glue to secure the project to the faceplate wood.



Dress the bottom and make as much as possible of the project wood round. Cut a recess in the base 2mm deep and 54mm diameter. Cut the overall diameter to 72mm.
Make the outer 4mm of this surface into a small bead and begin the curving cut towards the headstock. Sand all these surfaces. Remove the box bottom from the glue block.



Remount the box bottom on the chuck using the recess on the bottom and the chuck in expansion mode. Trim the wood to the desired height and complete the outside shape. Cut the mortise into which the lid will fit. Hollow the box. Sand all these surfaces.



Mount the wood for the box lid on the glue chuck. Turn it to a cylinder that is a little larger than the upper edge of the box bottom.

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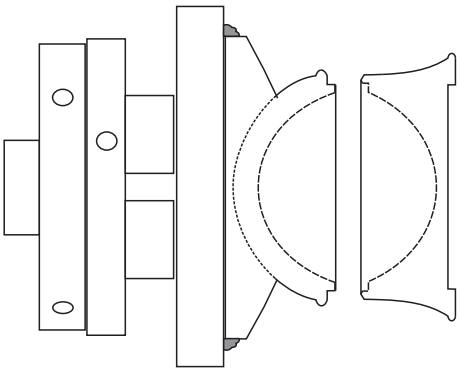
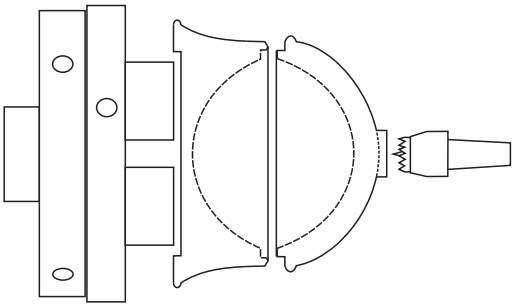
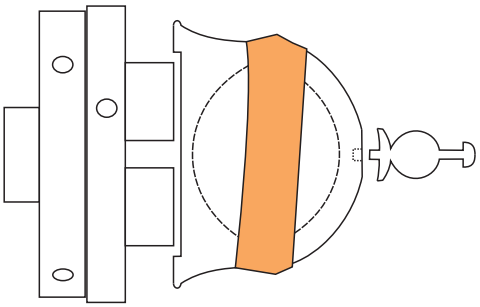


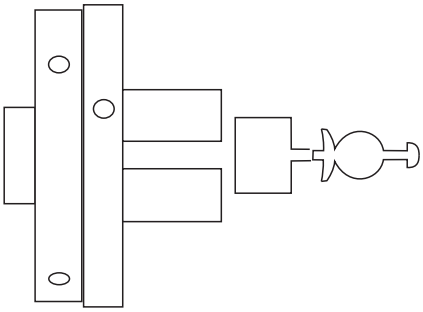
Cut a tenon on the box lid that will fit the box bottom. Hollow the lid. Turn a small bead on the outer edge of the lid and start the curve of the top. Sand all these surfaces. Remove these pieces from the chuck.



Mount the box bottom on the chuck. Fit the lid to the bottom and hold it in place with the tailstock. Turn as much as possible of the outside of the top to shape. Sand this surface.

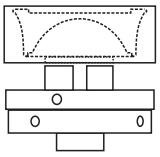


Apply tape to hold the lid to the bottom. Remove the tailstock. Finish cutting and sanding the curve of the top of the box. Make a little flat (if needed) and cavity to fit the stem of the finial. Keep these box parts on the chuck until the finial is fitted.

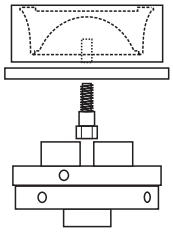


Use smaller chuck jaws to hold and turn the finial. Sand and finish this before parting it off.

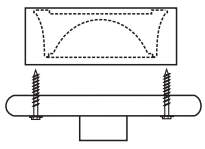
The glue chuck is excellent for mounting small projects.
You can try alternatives.



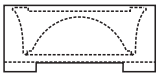
Drill a dovetail for smaller jaws



Drill a shallow hole for a screw chuck. Use a packer between wood and jaws.



Use a faceplate if the screw holes are beyond the circumference of the finished work.



Start with a thicker piece of wood and drill a dovetail or cut a spigot.