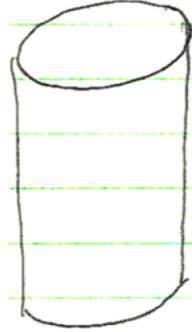


# Jim Tanksley – Turning Big Natural Edge Mesquite Bowls

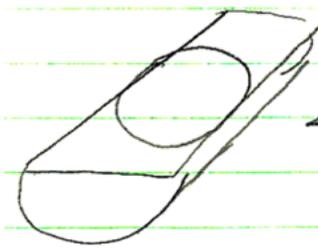
## 1. Cut the log.

- a. Determine if you are going to cut up the log for side grain turning or end grain turning.
- b. Side grain cut the log in sections with the max being about 4" longer than

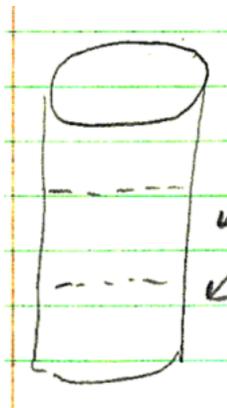


your lathe will turn.

Split the log in half. Use templates (disk) made from plywood or plastic to determine size



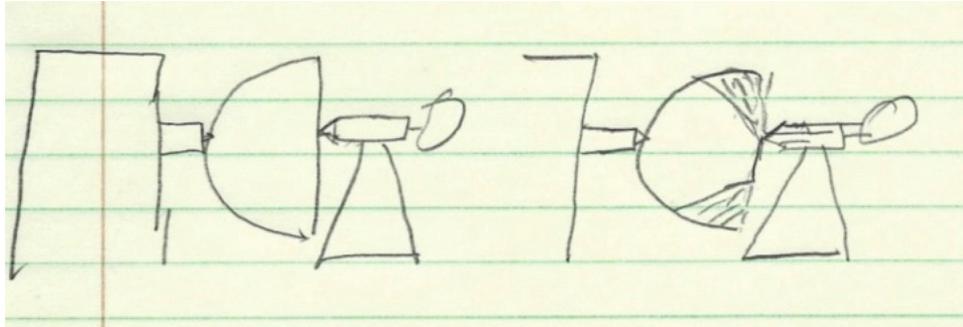
- c. End grain the diameter of the log determines the max size of the bowl, cut the sections into lengths from 8 to 12".



2. **Seal ends** with anchor seal immediately. Spray with insecticide to prevent bores
3. Prepare the wood for the lathe
  - a. Side Grain Bowls- use the bandsaw and cut the half log into a circle, **lay the flat part down when cutting.**
    - i. Re-seal the ends with anchor seal

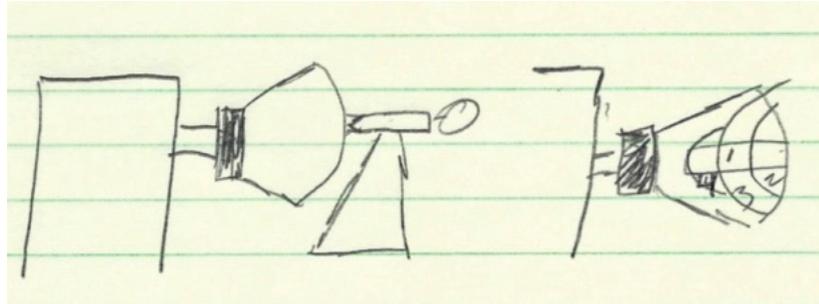
## Turning Big Natural Edge Mesquite Bowls

- ii. Side Grain – take a forester bit and drill through the bark on the curved side to allow the spur drive to seat into solid wood. Mark the flat side turning location at the point where the bark side is perpendicular to the ways.
  - b. End grain – mark the turning point on both ends and drive your dead center or spur drive in with a rubber hammer.
4. Turning the Bowl
  - a. Side grain bowls- face the barkside towards the headstock.

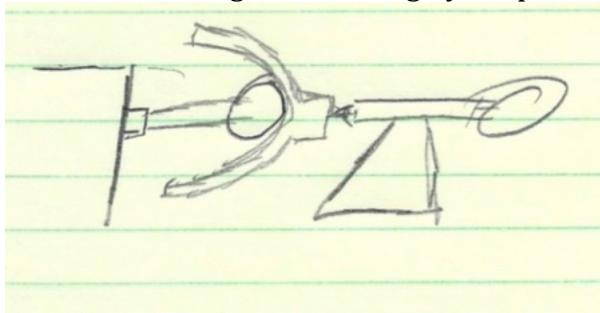


- ii. Remember your ABCs – Anchor the gouge, ride the bevel, cut-keep the flute closed so you don't get a catch
    - c. End grain bowls are the same as spindle turning. You cut from the top towards the bottom. Mesquite is very forgiving though, you can really cut either direction. ***Be careful with the top edge bark, always cut towards the bottom.***
    - d. Turn a tendon for your chuck. Be sure the top of the jaws are square with the wood and the tendon doesn't bottom out. Depending on your chuck you may have to taper the tendon.
    - e. Reverse the wood on the lathe and put in chuck.
    - f. Start hollowing out the bowl. If it is side grain your cuts should be from the outside towards the center. If it is end grain cut from the center towards the outside edge. Depending on the depth of the bowl you may want to drill a hole in the center within a ½ in of the bottom. Continue your cuts in a step fashion. Once you get to the wall thickness you want at the top make your final cut and don't go back. Feather each section as you take your final cuts. I use a bowl gouge with 40-degree angle grind for the sides and 60-degree angle for the bottoms. Use a scraper with a negative rake to avoid catches.

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- g. Reverse the bowl and use a jam chuck or vacuum chuck. Use the center point, which was established when you started out turning between centers, to align the live center in the tailstock. Tighten firm but don't over do it. The bowl should turn close to true, if not re-adjust. Take your time and include a ring or two to sign your piece.



***This document is intended to be high level instruction to provide a understanding of the process, suggest taking a lesson or at least spending a day with an experienced turner when you try your first big natural edge mesquite bowl. Remember woodturning can be dangerous always wear gloves, eye protection, make sure the lathe is on a low speed when starting, don't wear long sleeves, use dust protection, etc. Practice at your own risk, no liability to author. Have fun turning***



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