




Texturing and Coloring Woodturnings  
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Texture and or color can add variety and interest to what might be considered an ordinary piece of wood. I have noticed that at the market people will gravitate toward the textured and colored pieces, although they may be no more complex than the beautiful natural wood bowl sitting next to them.

<p>The Merlin 2 is a redesigned mini carver. It has a number of accessories such as a chain saw disk, different profile and coarseness carbide disks, flap sanding disks, 2" round circular disks, and cutoff wheels. The new design features increased ventilation, new spiral gears, new speed control electronics, and a switch that can't be turned on accidentally while setting it down. For more detail go to <a href="http://Katools.com">Katools.com</a>.</p>	
<p>One of the easiest textures is produced using the chain saw disk. With both the lathe running and the Merlin running, drag the chain saw disk over the surface of the wood to get a spiral cut. The pattern will depend on the speed of the lathe and the speed of the Merlin.</p>	
<p>The pattern produced also looks different on end grain and side grain, end grain being cut much more uniformly than side grain. However, the side grain pattern looks great because of the variety of texture on the surface of the wood.</p>	

The carbide disks give you a great deal of flexibility in making surface textures and carving. The carbide disks come in a variety of textures and profiles. One of my favorites is the flat green disk that has carbide on the edge and one face. The edge can cut lies into the wood, and can cut quite deep, making it useful for starting spiral forms. The flat side of the green disk is useful for patterns such as the one shown in Figure X



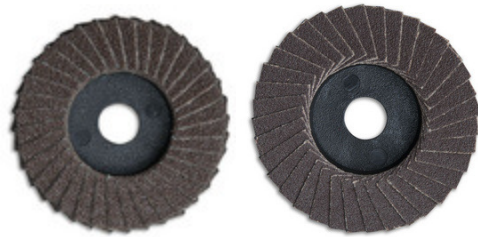
The red, yellow and garnet disks have a curved profile with different coarseness. The red disk is the most coarse, followed by the yellow, followed by the least course garnet disk. The red disk was used to create the grass pattern shown on the bowl on the right, while the garnet disk was used to create the profile on the box on the right.



The types of patterns and carving that can be done with these disks is up to your imagination.



Sanding disks of different grits can be used on the Merlin 2. These disks take the possibilities of shaping and carving even further. The coarsest disks can be used to texture, while the finer disks can be used to smooth of edges and shape curved surfaces.



60 grit

120 Grit

A new attachment allows the Merlin 2 to use 2" Velcro sanding disks, which come in a variety of grits, for finishing work.

The Merlin 2 is marketed in a number of configurations, depending on the speed choices and the accessories. You can buy either a fixed speed or variable speed version. The fixed speed version runs at the top speed of the variable speed version. Most of the time this is sufficient. However, if you want the most flexibility, the variable speed version gives you the option of slowing things down, and it costs only \$15 more than the single speed model

The two different accessory options are

**(1) Merlin2 - 110 Volt Variable Speed Universal Carving Set Includes:**

- Merlin2 Storage Bag
- 8 Tooth Chain and Disc (21008)
- Coarse Red Carbide Abrasive (10009)
- 60 Grit Flap Disc Sander (10042)
- 120 Grit Flap Disc Sander (10043)
- 240 Grit Flap Disc Sander (10044)
- Fiberglass Cutoff Wheel (10048)
- Allen Key
- Instructions

Or

**(2) Merlin2 - 110 Volt Variable Speed Premium Carving Set Includes all of the above AND:**

- Merlin Disc - Medium Yellow (10010)
- Merlin Disc - Fine Garnet (10011)
- Merlin Disc - Flat Green (10012)
- 60 Grit Flap Disc Sander (10042)
- 320 Grit Flap Disc Sander (10045)
- 600 Grit Flap Disc Sander (10046)



Variable Speed Basic Set - Katools.com



Premium Set

After texturing a piece, it has to be sanded. I find the Sanding Star mop sanders sold by Klingspor, do a good job on contoured pieces. They come in a variety of Grits from 80 to 220.



Sanding Star 4"Dia 1/4" Shank 120 Grit  
DY93167

<https://www.woodworkingshop.com/search.aspx?q=sanding+star>

Also useful for sanding are the Guinevere pneumatic sanders from King Arthur's Tools. The flex shaft kit comes with:

- Flexible Shaft, rated between 3,000 - 10,000 rpm
- Key Chuck 0-3/8" (0-10 mm)
- Inflatable Round Sander - 2 3/8" (60 mm) X 1 9/16" (40 mm)
- 4 Round Sanding Sleeves - Coarse To Extra Fine Grit
- Inflatable Drum Sander - 2 1/2" (64 mm) X 1 3/4" (44 mm)
- 4 Drum Sanding Sleeves - Coarse To Extra Fine Grit
- Micro Hand Pump
- Cleaning Stick

The complete kit includes the motor and all the drums



Flex shaft kit - [katools.com](http://katools.com)



Complete sanding solution - [katools.com](http://katools.com)

Coloring and finishes

I use a number of coloring and finishing techniques that I will describe here. There are many others, and experimentation is probably the best method of finding what works for you. I mostly use paints and dyes (spirit stains). The difference is the size of the pigment particles and the medium in which they are suspended. Acrylic paints are water-based paints that basically stay on the surface of what you put them on. Dyes are either water-based or alcohol based, and have very fine pigments that will penetrate the fibers of the wood. There are aniline dyes made from metal salts, that are quite permanent. Paints are often classified as transparent, or opaque. The transparent paints will let the grain of the wood show through, the opaque will cover the surface.



Spirit stain available from Craft Supplies  
<https://www.woodturnerscatalog.com/p/148/6338/>  
 Chestnut-Spirit-Stain  
 Acrylic paints available from Dick Blick art supplies  
[dickblick.com](http://dickblick.com)

Preparing the surface for paints and dyes -  
 After sanding to 600 grit, I will put gesso on surfaces I plan to paint. Gesso is a type of filler paint that seals the surface of the wood, and it comes in black, transparent, and white. Since it is an acrylic product, the white and transparent can be colored by adding an acrylic paint. Gesso is thick, so I apply it with a 1" foam brush, trying to get it applied as smoothly as possible. After it dries, gesso can be sanded to remove brush strokes. Gesso can be purchased in most art supply stores.



[dickblick.com](http://dickblick.com)

Acrylic paints that come in a tube are generally referred to as "heavy body" paints. Paints that come in a plastic bottle are referred to as fluid paints, and airbrush paints are a special class of fluid paints that are thinned for spraying with an airbrush. Unlike mixtures of heavy-bodied paints and water, which produce weak color and films by dilution, Golden Fluid Acrylics contain high pigment levels suspended in an acrylic polymer vehicle. The result offers fine dispersion, high tinting strength, durability, flexibility, and good adhesion (Dick Blick).



There are also specialty paints - two that I use are iridescent paints and interference paints. Iridescent paints are generally opaque, and come in metallic colors. Interference paints, have a metallic compound in them that reflects light differently from regular paints. I find they are best used over a black background. Both Liquitex and Golden make interference paints.

There is also a paint called pearlescent paint that can be mixed with other paints to create a somewhat transparent pearlescent finish. Fun to play with



Liquitex Interference Paints change their color (exhibiting a metallic look and color shift) depending upon the viewing angle. As the light hits the mica flakes, it either bounces off directly, reflecting the labeled color, or passes through to another layer and bounces out at a different refractive index displaying the complimentary color. The effect is visually similar to a thin coat of oil floating on water.  
<http://www.liquitex.com/InterferenceColors/>

Another way of coloring wood is with india ink pens or markers. Faber-Castell Pitt Artist Pens come highly recommended by other woodworkers who use them. Pigmented India Ink in multiple nib sizes and 48 colors brings great versatility to pen-and-ink drawings requiring lots of intricate details. Pitt Artist Pens are great for sketching, journaling, cartooning, and drawing. The Superfine, Fine, Medium, and Brush nibs not only replace ink bottles — they're instantly available for work. The ink is waterproof, unsurpassably lightfast, acid-free, and pH-neutral. The nib size is prominently displayed on the end of the cap. These are great for coloring small areas.  
available from [dickblick.com](http://dickblick.com)



I use is a gilt cream or liming wax. This comes in a variety of colors like gold or pewter (St Germaine). Usually available on Amazon.com or ebay.com

I apply this in a very thin coat over the finished piece to highlight certain areas.

And

PearlEx - a powder that has colored mica in it. Available from Dickblick.com

Krylon Matt finish - spray can - available at Walmart

Krylon workable fixative - A lacquer that seals the wood and can be painted over.



A few Techniques

- Texture and sand the turned form and paint it black with Gesso
- Scrape or sand off the gesso not in the carved areas



- Carve and sand the turned form and paint it black with Gesso
- Scrape or sand off the gesso not in the carved areas
- Paint or stain the areas that are exposed by sanding.



- Paint or stain the turned piece
- Carve off the paint to create a design
- Apply a gilding or liming wax if desired



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carve and sand the turned form</li> <li>• Apply black Gesso to the carved area</li> <li>• Apply interference paint over the black gesso</li> <li>• scrape off the edge of the painted area for a clean edge</li> <li>• Spray with Krylon Matt Finish</li> <li>• Buff if desired</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texture and sand rim with chainsaw disk held at two different angles</li> <li>• Paint with black gesso</li> <li>• Color with transparent airbrush paints</li> <li>• Put a light coat of pearlescent paint on the surface</li> <li>• Spray with Krylon matt finish but flick PearlEx powder into the lacquer with a toothbrush.</li> <li>• Buff if desired</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn the platter outside shape</li> <li>• Texture the rim with chainsaw disk</li> <li>• Paint with black gesso</li> <li>• Scrape off paint over the texture</li> <li>• Color rim with airbrush paints blending one color into the other</li> <li>• (this piece is not finished yet)</li> <li>• Finish turning the platter inside</li> <li>• finish with Krylon matt spray and buff if desired.</li> </ul>	

And remember - If you're not having fun, do something else!

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