

‘Decorating Elf’ Tool – HS900

Thank you for purchasing the Henry Taylor Decorating Elf Tool (HS900). These instructions are to help you make the best use of the tool.

IMPORTANT: Woodturning is a potentially dangerous activity. Improper use of tools and/or equipment, products or materials as well as not following recommended safety guidelines can result in serious injury or death. It is your responsibility to make sure you are properly trained in all aspects of woodturning and to follow safety guidelines and manufacturers recommendations regarding the proper use of the product to ensure your safety. If you have questions regarding proper lathe operation, tool use or safety guidelines, please consult an expert.

Preparing the surface for concave texturing.

The techniques apply for both side & end grain. Here, we assume that you are using the Henry Taylor Coving Tool (HS901) to help you prepare the cove easily – it has a negative rake and produces an excellent finish. However, a small spindle gouge may also be used. Practice the techniques on a variety of timbers before committing yourself to the “finished” article. With practice, a wide variety of patterns can be achieved with just one cutter.



Fig 1

Working on End Grain: (Box, Maple, or Cherry are ideal timbers – easy to decorate and the patterns are easily seen). The workpiece should be roughly 2” (50mm) diameter. Hold the workpiece in a suitable chuck, turn it to a cylinder and face off the end, leaving a fine finish (**Fig 1**). Mark the centre of the end face with a small pencil mark (point of reference). Create two similar coves, leaving a generous gap between them. Position the tool rest so that the cutting edge of the Coving Tool is slightly below the centre when the tool is horizontal. The tool is held horizontally and worked from side to side taking light cuts to generate the cove. Don’t be afraid to stop the lathe and check the form and depth of the cove. Once practised, a cove matching the cutter’s profile is quickly achieved. The finish generated from the Coving Tool is far superior to that of a normal gouge; and the coves do not require sanding. Sanding is not advisable as the definition and crispness is lost, and the abrasive grit residue can shorten the life of the cutter.



Fig 2

Important: (Fig 2) The shape of the cove should be slightly larger than the form of the cutter, otherwise texturing will be impossible (you will just rub two grooves into the wood instead!). The cutter is driven by the rotation of the timber and it is therefore important that the cutter only makes contact with the side of the cove which is to be decorated. Avoid using the centre top portion of the cutter where the vanes meet; otherwise the two opposing sides of the cutter will be working against each other.

Decorating: The first two decorative patterns can now be generated. With the Decorating Elf in the upright position (**see Fig 2**) the pattern produced will be a very shallow curve. With the tool in the horizontal position (**see Fig 3**), an almost straight pattern is created. Selecting a position between these extremities will give you a varying range of patterns.



Fig 3

Step 1. Set the speed of the lathe to approximately 800 revs/min (when decorating a workpiece with an outside diameter of 2” (50mm)).

Step 2. Set the tool rest so that the brass body of the Decorating Elf can be comfortably rested on the toolrest while in both the vertical and horizontal positions, as in Figs. 2 and 3. As a guide, we suggest setting the toolrest approx. 1/2” (13mm) below the lathe centre height. **The cutter is always used above the centreline.**

Step 3. With the work rotating, place the tool lightly on the side of the cove to position the decoration. Once positioned, firmly press the tool into the cove: this may require substantial pressure and the pressure needs to be maintained for several seconds to create a suitably crisp, deep pattern.



Fig 4

Step 4. The cut pattern requires cleaning and burnishing for best results. Set the lathe speed to approx. 1200 revs/min and, using the Natural Hogs Hair brush supplied, clean the surface (**see Fig 4**). Apply a reasonable amount of pressure. (Note that the supplied brush is natural hog's hair - synthetic fibre brushes may melt under the frictional heat generated by the burnishing operation). The resultant clean and crisp design can be embellished further, for instance by using the Henry Taylor Point Tool (HS902) or by applying a finish of your choice - or both.

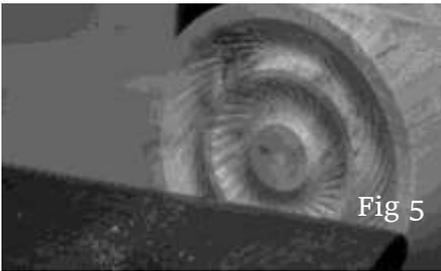


Fig 5

If you have followed these instructions diligently, the workpiece should now appear similar to that in **Fig 5**. If you are not happy with the patterns, simply take the coving tool and "rub them out" prior to repeating the process steps from 1 to 4.

If you are happy with what you have created, try producing patterns on the opposite sides of the coves.

Creating Decorative Patterns in Side Grain (e.g. on the side of spindles).

Producing attractive patterns on spindles is exactly the same as creating them on end grain. Simply follow steps 1 to 4 as detailed above.

It pays to experiment: for instance, by holding the tool almost vertically (**Fig 6**) and then almost horizontally (**Fig 7**).

Hints:

5. At least initially, leave a generous distance between the coves: breaking through into the next cove could destroy your pattern.
6. Reduce the speed of the lathe when using the Decorating Elf and lower the tool rest.
7. Avoid using the centre top portion of the cutter where the vanes meet.
8. Clean and burnish your decoration with the Hogs Hair Brush supplied

Your side grain workpiece should now appear similar to the one shown in **Fig 8**. Experiment further by presenting the Decorating Elf to the wood at different angles and compare the results. Also try decorating the opposite sides of the coves. Don't forget that you can embellish/punctuate your decoration with the Henry Taylor Point Tool HS 902.

Once you feel at ease with the Decorating Elf, try decorating both small and large detail - and in other materials.

Once you have mastered the use of the spherical cutter supplied, you may wish to extend your repertoire by using the alternative cutters available from your Henry Taylor dealer: ask for the HS903 "Cylinder" & HS904 "Bud" cutters.



Fig 6



Fig 7



Fig 8

The Decorating Elf works not just on Wood but also on Acrylics, Bone, Antler, Alternative Ivory and similar materials.

Experimentation may be required to achieve suitable turning and decorating speeds with these materials.

If you would like more information on how to use this tool, there are numerous video demonstrations of these techniques available to watch on YouTube. Visit the YouTube website and search for 'Henry Taylor Decorating Elf'.