

# Using A 3/8" Pin Chuck to Turn Bottle Stoppers

by Ron McKinley

from an idea and help from Douglass Turner, supplier of the pin chucks

*In this example I'm using silicone stoppers and wooden dowels from Craft Supplies U.S.A.*



*Mark the centers of your blanks. Lengths can be any size up to about 3". I like to start with 1 1/2" square stock.*



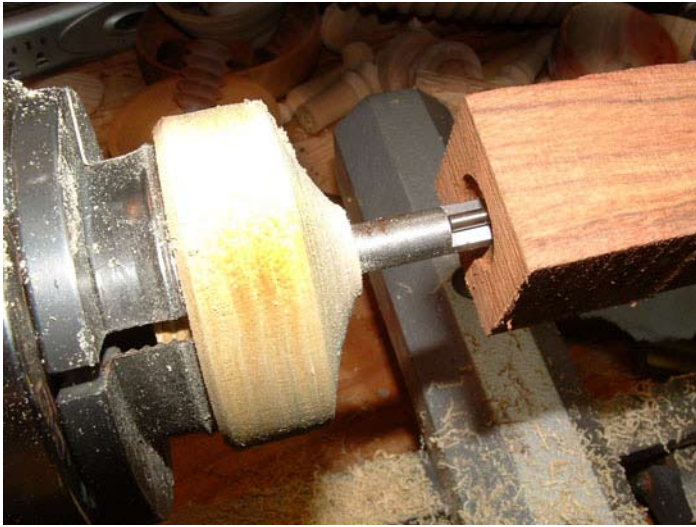
*Drill a 3/4" countersink about 1/16" deep. Then drill a 3/8" hole 1" deep on one end of each blank. The countersink is to let the silicone stopper "seat" into the wood and hide the glue line.*



*Find a thick piece of waste wood and turn a tenon to fit your 4-jaw chuck. Then using the lathe and a drill chuck in the tailstock drill a 3/8" hole about 1" deep. Lightly sand the pin chuck and epoxy it into the blank using 5-minute epoxy and let it cure for at least an hour. I prefer 3 or more hours to make sure it has reached full-strength.*



*Mount the tenon of the waste block/pin chuck into your 4-jaw chuck and turn the block down to give you plenty of room to shape the end of the bottle stopper.*



*Insert the pin chuck into the blank then install the small pin and push the block home and tighten by turning it clockwise. Note: The pin is easy to lose so be careful. If you do lose it in the sawdust and clutter just find a small nail about 1/8" in diameter and cut it to size.*

*Turn, sand and finish on the lathe. I like to start shaping at the headstock end and when I'm ready to shape the top (tailstock end) just remove the tailstock and you can shape, sand and finish with no interference from the tailstock.*

*Remove the piece from the pin chuck by twisting the piece toward you and pulling away—careful that you don't lose the pin!*

*Push the large end of the dowel into the silicone stopper and it holds by friction. Then glue the 3/8" end of the dowel into your finished piece. When the finish is cured (overnight or a few hours here in the Mojave Desert) buff and wax using the Beal Buffing System. Enjoy!*



*Bring up the tailstock (lightly) to add support while you're rounding the block to a cylinder and then start shaping it. Use any design you like. For ideas go to Ruth Niles' website and you'll find dozens of ideas and you'll also see her Stainless Steel stoppers. <http://www.torne-lignum.com/stoppers.html> then click on Designs at the bottom of the page.*



*These are the first three I made using the silicone stoppers and dowels from Craft Supplies U.S.A.: <http://woodturnerscatalog.com/> The woods are left and right, Granadillo from Mexico and Brazilian Rosewood in the center.*