

GGW Learn to Turn Course 2026 Draft

Checklist

- Membership application completed
- Course fee paid 03-1552-0112830-000
- H&S Declaration signed
- Lunch organised
- Closed in shoes, no loose clothing, no loose hair below shoulders
- Dust mask (optional)
- Note paper (optional)
- Course convener advised of any relevant health issues (eg allergies / asthma)
- Agree to group emails about course rather than “bcc”
- Have sketch of design for candlestick (or use supplied design)

The Geyserland Guild of Woodworkers Learn to Turn course is run over two separate days from 8.30 am to 4:00 pm at the GGW Clubrooms of Linton Park Community Centre, 16 Kamahi Place (drive through the gate on the right to the back). Day one is spindle turning (think candlestick) and day 2 is faceplate turning (think bowl). The fee is \$200 which includes tuition, tools and materials, and Guild membership for the rest of the financial year (which is needed to have insurance / indemnity). Please arrive by 8:30 am so that training can start on time. If you are already a Guild member or member of the National Association of Woodworking this cost will be deducted from your course fee.

Please complete your membership application and arrange payment prior to attending the course, or on the day. We prefer you pay by direct credit to Geyserland Guild of Woodworkers account number **03-1552-0112830-000**. Please include your name in the transaction details. You will need to complete a health and safety declaration at the course if you have not already done so.

This is a hands-on training course with a significant part of the training being at a lathe making turned items. The tutor for the day is in charge of the clubrooms. If in doubt about anything, ask your tutor. Other GGW members will be present to assist the tutor.

Bring your lunch as there is nowhere handy to buy lunch. Tea and coffee are provided. There are toilet facilities but they are “mediocre”. Bring some notepaper and pen if you like. Safe clothing and hair rules are listed below. A woodturning smock or overall (short sleeved, or with elastic or buttoned cuffs at the wrists if long-sleeved) is recommended to keep shavings outside your clothing, otherwise choose non-fleecy clothing that does not attract sawdust and shavings. It is also highly recommended that you bring a dust mask with you as the Club does not provide these. We do provide face shields.

You will be introduced to the tools of the craft and instructed on workshop safety; tool sharpening, timber selection, mounting wood on the lathe, and other aspects of woodturning. During this course you can expect to make a couple of spindle turned items and a small bowl.

Day One of the course is focused on spindle turning and you will be making a dibble (or a spurtle as an option), and a candlestick stem (the base of the candlestick will be made at the faceplate day). Feel free to have a look at some candlesticks and prepare your own design (if online google “candlestick design” NOT “candlestick patterns” and look at images). Nothing too ornate but at least one bead (outward

bulge) one cove (inward curve) and one “s” shape, and not less than 2cm diameter at the narrowest. Your candlestick blank will be about 400mm long including ends for mounting so your design can be any length up to about 300mm.

All the tools that you will need will be provided. However, you are encouraged to bring and use your own tools if you have them, and to discuss these tools with the tutor. Wood, sandpaper and finishing products will be provided for this course.

Read and observe the safety rules posted in the clubrooms. In summary:

While at the lathe:

- No loose clothing; hair above shoulders: either tied up or in a hat; no open-toed footwear
- Face shield to be worn (on top of prescription glasses; the Guild has a face shield at each lathe)
- Ensure that the lathe belt, belt cover, head lock, tool rest, and tailstock are secure
- Check your wood for defects that might cause large chips to fly
- Check the lathe speed
- Always ensure that people are well clear of the work area before switching the lathe on
- Always ensure that the wood is well attached to the lathe and free to spin before switching the lathe on. Keep your work area tidy and clear of hazards to others who may be moving through the area from time to time.

Other tools

- During the course you must be supervised if at the sharpener, drill press or bandsaw.
- Face shields are not required at these tools, but eye protection must still be worn.

Learning Objectives

Safety in the Workshop

- of all people at all times

Lathe setup

- Learn parts of lathe
- Speed selection and adjustment
- Lathe cleanup, lubrication and protection

Tools

- Identify parts of a gouge
- Learn to sharpen a spindle roughing gouge
- A spindle roughing gouge is NOT for faceplate turning

Timber

- Identify Grain direction: spindle turning grain is parallel to the lathe bed, faceplate turning grain is perpendicular to the lathe bed
- Check timber for splits, knots, soft areas etc
- Ensure timber is mounted so weight is balanced
- Identify 5 timbers eg Rimu, Kauri, Rewarewa, Macrocarpa, Pohutukawa
- Introduction to softwoods and hardwoods

Bandsaw

- Learn to adjust cutting height

- cut square ends to spindle for mounting
- cut round blank safely for bowl
- cut round pieces safely

Spindle Turning between centres

- Make a dibble or spurtle by using a spindle roughing gouge, skew chisel, spindle detail gouge and parting tool
- Learn to make a spindle tenon and mount a spindle in a 50mm chuck
- Learn to make a bead, a cove and an ogee for a candlestick
- Homework: Complete your second spindle item

Faceplate turning

- Make a small bowl using a 45 degree bowl gouge
- Learn to cut downhill with the grain
- Mount with a screw chuck, make a tenon, reverse the bowl and remount in a 50mm chuck
- Homework: Make a base for the candlestick, or a tealight

Finishing

- Sandpaper selection
- Applying a simple finish
- Discuss finishing options

Getting your own equipment: ask before you buy online

- Types of lathe
- Headstock threads and adapters
- Chuck brands are not interchangeable
- Gouges: quality, high speed steel
- Sharpening systems

After the course

- Homework: Make a wig stand for the cancer society

Safety when Turning

- Face shield
- Safe clothing and local environment (other people, tripping hazards, lighting etc)
- Safe timber (no faults / instability, also consider if toxic eg yew, irritant eg silky oak, or allergenic, eg rimu)
- Safe mounting of wood on lathe
- Safe speed for the timber
- Safe tool rest height
- Rotate timber before turning on
- Avoiding catches: ABC

Safety at the Bandsaw

- Eye protection
- Safe height adjustment
- Base of timber flat
- If round held securely in a V
- Hands not in front of blade, use a pusher
- Hands on the surface of the bandsaw bench