

There are many articles and videos on how to turn an egg shape (see end of this article for a few good ones). This article describes an easy, step by step method that only depends on the turner requiring a lathe with a chuck, a spindle gouge, a parting tool, some sandpaper and maybe a scraper.

Remember that no two eggs are exactly alike. Slight differences will never be noticed. Check out a dozen eggs, see if you can find two that are exactly alike.

**DO READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ALL THE STEPS – EVEN IF IT TAKES MORE THAN ONCE, BEFORE STARTING TO TURN.**

## MATERIALS:

- Blank: 2" (50mm) x 2" (50mm) x 4" (100mm)  
If you are hesitant about working near the chuck, use a piece that is 5" (130mm) long. Any kind of wood can be made into an egg. For your first few, choose wood that is expendable.
- Sandpaper. Start with the grade that will easily remove your tool marks, then have a sequence of papers that ends with about 400 grit. This is suitable for most finishes.

## TOOLS:

- Spindle gouge: 1/2" (12-13mm) is a good choice. A skew chisel can also make one. . .
- Parting tool: 1/8" (3mm) narrower is not necessary but suitable
- Scraper: suitable for smoothing spindle turnings
- 1.75" (45mm) parting gauge. Can also use calipers set to this dimension

## STEP 1:



- Mount the wood in a chuck that can hold the wood chosen. For safety you can bring up your tailstock live centre.
- Turn a 1.75" (45mm) x 5/16" (8mm) tenon on the exposed end. If you did not use a live centre

to start, put in a small dimple on the end of your blank for holding the point of a live centre that will usually be required in later steps.

## STEP 2:



- Turn blank to round
- Mark off the egg. Leave about 1/4" (7mm) off the end of the egg at the tailstock end that will be removed later.
- Dimensions of a typical chicken egg:
  - Length: 2.2" – 2.3" (56 – 58 mm)
  - Maximum diameter: ~ 1.75" (45mm)
  - Maximum diameter: ~ 45% from blunt end of egg.
    - For our egg: 2.2" (56mm) length;
      - maximum diameter will be 1.0" (25.4mm) from blunt end of egg.
  - Mark off egg transition and end points as shown. Note double lines on outside markings. These show that parting tool groove must be on the 'outside' of the egg dimensions.

## STEP 3:



- Bring up tailstock live centre for support.
- Part maximum diameter location to 1.75" (45mm). Remember to centre your parting tool on the line.
- Part the two outside points to something less than the above, but do not make these too small, you will need support when turning.
- Remove waste from tailstock and headstock end of eggs. See photo for details.

## STEP 4:



- Begin turning by first, removing 'corners'
- Second, begin shaping the egg. Develop the shape while there is still lots of material to remove. This way you can correct any errors without having to change from a chicken egg to a pigeon egg :)
- See photo for how you should finish this step.

## STEP 5:

- Part the two ends a bit deeper

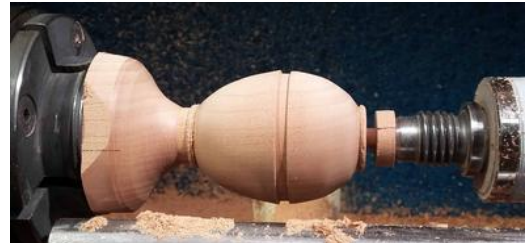


## STEP 6:



- Remove waste from both ends down to the new parted level.
- Continue to shape the egg, follow the curve(s) you want to see in the finished egg. Remember to still leave some wood to remove later as you can still make corrections at this point.

## STEP 7:



- Part the tailstock end to about 14" (6.5mm).
- Now you see why you needed some extra length at the end.

## STEP 8:



- Shape the blunt (tailstock end) of the egg to final dimensions.
- DO NOT cut into the mark left by the parting tool for the maximum diameter until the very last cut. Even then, only lightly touch the blunt end half of the maximum diameter parting.

## STEP 9:



- Finish shaping the entire egg as far as the two partings. Again, only touch the maximum diameter lightly and only with the last cut.
- Pull back the live centre.
- Trim off the stub by using your spindle gouge on it's side, but do leave a small nib. It's easier to trim off a nib than to reshape to remove tearout.
- Remove the nib carefully and clean up the end.
- Sand the entire egg, up to the headstock parting.

## STEP 10:



- With spindle gouge, slowly remove more material from the headstock end.
- Work primarily from the headstock, where there is more support.
- Remove material until you have about 1/4" (6.5mm) left.

## STEP 11:



- Now you need to be able to use your spindle gouge with one hand. If you are handy with a skew chisel, this step could be done with more finesse. If you are left handed, this step is easier :)
- Start turning the connection between the egg and headstock while holding the egg VERY LIGHTLY between your thumb and first two fingers.
- When you reach the smallest diameter that you are comfortable with, use the tip of your spindle gouge to part off the egg, leaving a small nip at the end of the egg.

## STEP 12:

- Using a sharp knife, carving tool or other sharp tool, trim off the nib.
- Sand the end of the egg.

## STEP 13:

- Apply your favourite finish.

## STEP 14:

- Now that you have made one – think about making more. A bowl full of one egg is a very lonely sight.

## ARTICLES:

Mike Brazeau

Good method if you want to make dozens:

[www.ghwg.ca/techniques/Wooden\\_Eggs\\_with\\_the\\_Use\\_of\\_an\\_Egg\\_Chuck.pdf](http://www.ghwg.ca/techniques/Wooden_Eggs_with_the_Use_of_an_Egg_Chuck.pdf)

Craft Supplies

Simple method:

<http://blog.woodturnerscatalog.com/2013/03/turning-an-egg/>

The Highland Woodturner

Curtis Turner

<http://www.highlandwoodworking.com/woodturning-tips-1202feb/curtis.html>

## VIDEO:

This one guaranteed to foster shop envy and describes a method to turn any shape:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nc62pP9Vf2Y>