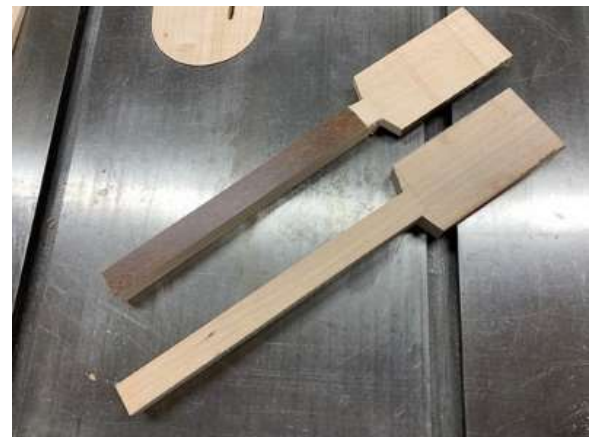


Spatula Demo, Jan 18, 2024

This demo showed a way to make a spatula for cooking, but the methods could work for pancake flippers, salad forks, BBQ grill scrapers, carved spoons, or anything you can think up. The examples in the photo are both white oak, the one above is about 4 years old with heavy use. The other is new, unused.



Start with an appropriate wood choice: something without large pores or that would absorb liquids or flavors from cooking. My favorites are white oak, maple or cherry. Cut a 2 x 12 inch blank from 4 quarter stock. Lay out a handle that is as wide as it is thick, centered, and bandsaw about 8 to 9 inches from one end.



Lay out a tapered paddle that is about 3/8 inch wide where it meets the handle, and bandsaw that out. You don't have to saw out the tapered section at first; you can save it for the end, or keep it thick for more secure work holding while turning, or for alternate utensil shapes.



Mount the blank between centers (or in a scroll chuck), and begin turning at a relatively high speed, above 2000 rpm because the handle is a small diameter. Shape the handle end to a pleasing shape, turning the diameter where the handle meets the paddle to the thickness of the tapered paddle. You're going for a smooth transition between the two sections (see the final photo). Turn the edges of the paddle to a smooth curve from the handle to the business end. Decorate the handle as desired; wire burning is an easy method. Sand the handle at this time as needed.



Remove the item from the lathe, and sand the paddle end to remove the bandsaw marks and bring it to a workable thickness at the end, with a smooth transition to the handle. Sand the corners of the paddle to a smooth radius, one larger than the other. Finish sanding for smoothness, rounding all sharp corners and removing any tool marks.



Most utensils I've seen have no finish, but you could add any food-safe finish you wish, and refresh the finish when you think it needs it.