

Making Beads for Decoration

by Ed Malesky

This is a quick tutorial on making beads that we can use for our Collaboration Project.

The examples shown here just give you an idea of the possibilities, but your imagination is really the limit.



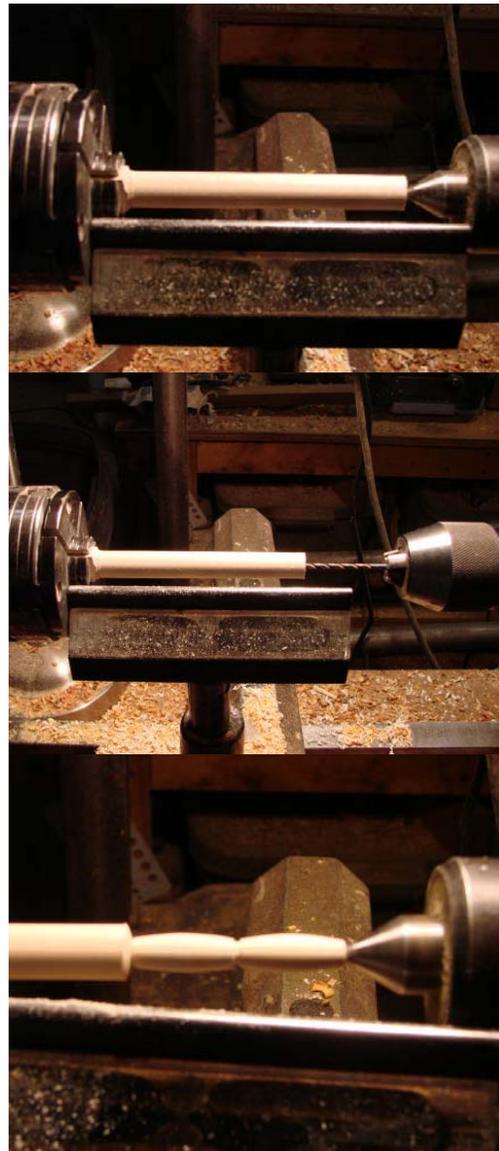
Mount a $\frac{3}{4}$ " square blank, about 6" long on the lathe. It needs to be supported on the headstock end since you need to drill a hole in the blank. I've used a chuck, but as with the finial tutorial, you can turn a morse taper on one end and drive it into the spindle.

Mount a drill in a Jacobs chuck. If you are using thread or thin cord for stringing the beads, you can use a $\frac{3}{16}$ " drill, but if you are using leather cord, you need to make the holes bigger, even up to $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Don't drill the hole too deep, since the drill may drift. Instead, drill only as far as one or two beads.

Bring the tailstock up and seat the live center in the hole you drilled. True up the blank if needed.

Use a skew or gouge to form the beads. All different lengths and shapes can be used. When making several copies of the same kind of bead, it is good to turn them side by side.



Round beads are a little trickier, but you don't need to turn them to a complete sphere. You can use a thin parting tool to separate.

Sand the tailstock end of the bead before you part it off.

Make a small jamb chuck to sand the other side of the beads. The tenon is the same size as the drill and face of the jamb chuck is rounded to help positive seating of the bead.

Here's the bead mounted on the jamb chuck. You can use a skew or gouge to clean up the parted side and then sand.

String beads on a stiff wire and use a spray finish.

