

# Segmented Kitchen Utensils



This spatula can be made easily and quickly using 3/4 to 1 inch boards of common hardwoods. With a few simple tools you can make the spatula from start to finish in 20 minutes or less. It is ready to use in the kitchen or put on display. You can use different colored woods to enhance the look. They sell well and make great presents.

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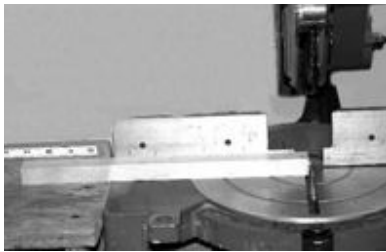


## Instructions

1. Cut strips of wood for the center shaft of the spatula. The strips should end up with a square cross section. So for a 3/4 inch thick piece of wood, cut it 3/4 inch thick. The strips of wood should be straight.



2. Cut the strips to length with some type of saw. The ends should be as square as possible. The length is a personal choice. Most spatulas are 12 to 14 inches long. You will need about 1/2 inch of waste material on one end. The spatulas could be longer if you want long ones.



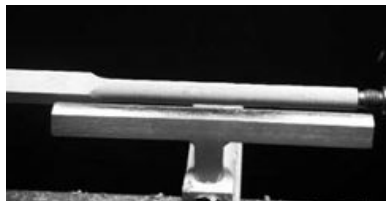
3. Using a ruler, mark about four inches from one end. This will be the end that you will leave square so you can glue the sides on later.



4. Place the piece of wood between centers. I prefer a drive center without spurs in the head stock and a live center in the tail stock. If the piece of wood is off center, the size of handle will be greatly reduced. I place the 4 inch square section next to the head stock.



5. Using a roughing gouge, spindle gouge, or skew, turn the wood down to a cylinder to the right of the 4 inch square section.



6. Make marks with a pencil from the right end at 1/2 in., 1 in., 6 1/2 in, and 7 in. These marks define where the beads are located in my design. You can make a straight shaft or any design you wish. Note that I leave 1/2 in on the right end for waste.



7. Take a skew and create v grooves at the four pencil marks. Do not make the gooves near the head stock deep or this will weaken the wood and cause vibration or breakage.



8. Using a spindle gouge or skew turn away most of the waste portion on the right end. Doing it now gets it out of the way so the bead is easier to form.



9. Using a spindle gouge, skew or other tool form a bead. Now is the time to deepen the v grooves to make a full rounded bead. Roughness will be sanded out later.



10. Use a skew or spindle gouge to make the curve next to the upper bead.



11. Use a roughing gouge, spindle gouge, or skew to form the shape of the handle. The shape is your choice. I form a shape similar to the shape on most turning handles.



12. Form the upper bead.



13. Form the curve on the other side of the upper bead.



14. Reduce the shaft next to the square part down to a diameter similar to the other side of the bead.



15. You can take time to get smooth cuts or you can sand off any roughness. Choose which is fastest to you and which one you would prefer to do. If you sand, either use a power sander, sandpaper with a piece of foam as a backer, or a strip of cloth-backed sandpaper. The grit of sandpaper you start with depends on the roughness of the wood. I usually start with 80 or 100 and finish with 120 or 150. I am not trying for ultimate smoothness as I am trying to save time.



16. Stop the lathe and look at the surface. If there are visible scratches, try sanding by hand with the grain (down the axis of the lathe).



17. Remove the central shaft of the spatula with the waste end piece still attached. You are ready to cut and attach your side pieces. Try contrasting colors and shapes of wood.



18. You are ready to glue the side pieces to the central shaft. I used Titebond III because it is water-resistant and your spatula will be in liquid. You do not want joint failure. I was getting joint failure using it in oil and realized the glue was softening due to heat. My research showed the most heat resistance glue is polyurethane glue which I now use exclusively. I apply an bead of glue to one surface and spread the glue evenly on the surface with a throwaway stick. It does not matter which surface is covered.



19. You can get a better bond if you will rub the pieces together.



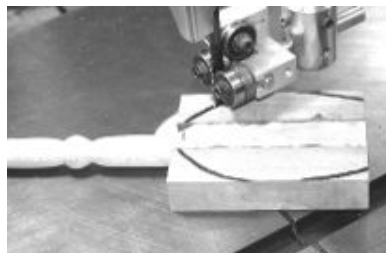
20. Use two clamps of your choice to join the pieces together. Let dry for several hours.



21. Choose a basic shape for the head. You may wish to sketch out the shape on the head.



22. If you have a bandsaw, you can save yourself some time by cutting down the line of the design or at least remove some of the material. It can be removed on the lathe if you do not have a bandsaw.





23. Place the spatula back between centers. You will use a spindle gouge, bowl gouge, or skew to remove material from the head. You will want the lathe speed at 1500 rpm or more. Although this looks to be very dangerous, if you slowly move your tool into the wood, the wood will cut easily. Watch the top of the shape and not where your tool is cutting.



24. Slowly cut the shape you desire and blend the head part with the handle.



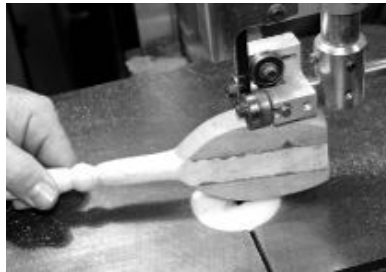
25. The sides of the head are ready to be sanded. Either hold a piece of sandpaper at the ends while holding it next to the wood or use a backing material like foam behind sandpaper that you apply directly to the wood or use a power sander.



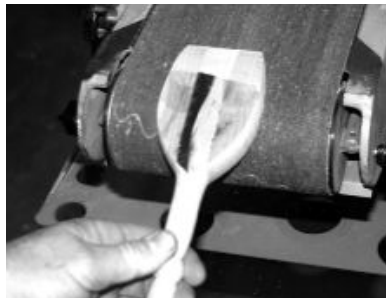
26. Use a skew, parting tool, or gouge to turn away the waste end of the handle. Try to cut the end cleanly so as to not have tear out. Use sandpaper to clean up the end of the handle.



27. Using a bandsaw to remove material from the head will cut down on sanding. Be sure to use a sharp blade and hold the handle firmly as you pass it through the blade. Do not try to cut to the exact shape.



28. Use a beltsander or other power-sander to speed the sanding process. I use a coarse grit around 60 to get the shape and return with something around 120-150 to finish sanding.



29. Film finishes like lacquer, polyurethane, and shellac tend to wear off over time so mineral oil or a nut oil such as walnut oil work best. Vegetable oils do not dry and produce undesirable results over time. Walnut oil from the health food store is inexpensive. Walnut oil will dry unlike some other oils but beware that some people have a nut allergy to this oil.



Safety of wood:

There is a lot of information available about toxic woods. The discussion for the most part is about wood in dust form. Some discussion relates to contact with the wood. There is very little discussion on wood with an applied finish. Some woods are irritants causing eye and nose problems along with skin irritation. Others cause allergic type reactions in those people that are sensitive to them. Statistics show that 2 to 5% of all people develop sensitivity to chemicals in wood. Spalted should be avoided due some severe reaction in certain people. Willow and birch contain chemicals similar to aspirin. There are a few direct toxins that should be avoided altogether such as Oleander, Sassafras, and yew. Things would seem to be further complicated by the fact that woods such as maple, listed as safe for food service by the Food and Drug Administration is listed as a common strong lung sensitizer that can cause pneumonia.

This gives us an indication that the toxicity lists may not be particularly applicable to making eating utensils. The FDA says any smooth hardwood similar to hard maple is approved for certain food applications such as spatulas.