

# HOW TO DO TURQUOISE AND OTHER INLAY IN WOOD.

Ken Walston 4 March 2014

- 1) Turn item to finished shape and sand to min of 80-120 grit.
- 2) Coat item with Spray Shellac or Sanding sealer – I prefer Spray Shellac as it dry's quick and easier to sand off.
- 3) With a pencil draw on the item where you want the inlay material to go. There may already be cracks or you may want to add some new locations.
- 4) Using a high speed rotary tool and a small carving bit – carve or rout out the area for the inlay material. The faster the speed the easier and quicker it is to carve/rout out the area. Use #1171 dental bur bit, outline the area for inlay, use #703 dental bur bit to rout out larger areas – approximate depth of .06" to .12".
- 5) Using an small artist pallet knife carefully place inlay material in one of the carved out areas – pile the material proud of the surface to allow for some settling and flow when the CA glue is applied.
- 6) Using the handle end of the pallet knife, gently tamp, pack down the inlay material. This has two purposes, first to pack the material into the opening as deep as possible, second to get the smaller grains of material to settle down between the larger grains to fill the cavity.
- 7) Carefully put a few drops of thin CA glue on a uphill side of the material and let the CA glue flow into the material. If the glue is applied on top of the material it will force some of the material out of the carved area. I do not put accelerator - I think it makes the inlay material a little brittle and easier to "chip" out when sanding and finishing.
- 8) Let cure for 5-10 minutes.
- 9) Sand the built up areas with 80 grit sandpaper – being careful not to sand the wood. The objective is to sand down the inlay/glue to match the surface of the wood but not to change the wood profile. I do this sanding with a Dremel tool, a 8mm mandrel and 5/8" sanding disks backed with double stick tape.

Note: Sanding down the inlay is the most reliable method. Most inlay stone material will quickly dull turning tools. Turning tools will often catch the corner of a larger chunk of material and tear it out leaving a pin hole.

10) Place the item on the lathe and sand normally to final sanding grit you like to use.

11) During the sanding process, inspect the inlay for small pin holes that may have been created. If you have some small pin holes repeat steps 2 thru 9 for the area needing repair.