

## Santa Cruz Woodturners

Chucking Hack for April: Remounting a small turning for revision or repair

Sometimes a turner finishes a project, sands it dutifully down to 600, applies multiple coats of finish...only to find out that the object has deformed with changes in humidity or the release of internal tension. That happened with the box pictured below. Perhaps the turner dropped it on the concrete and put a nasty scrape right where it can't be ignored. Oops. That has either happened...or will soon enough...for most of us.

The tenon or mortise once used to grip the object during construction is long gone. How can one mount it back on the lathe, repair it, and bring it back into compliance without marring the surface with dents, scratches, or smears? Standard 4 jaw steel chucks invariably leave marks. Adjustable gripper "jaws" may not squeeze down to a small enough dimension, and they can make smudges. Jam chucks can be tricky and time consuming for certain shapes. Vacuum chucks don't live in every turner's shop.

Remounting in a steel 4-jaw chuck can work if you protect the wooden surface from the merciless teeth of the jaws. Painter's tape, Gorilla tape, even padded foam tape lack the protection necessary for the compression of a good chuck. Slippery tapes don't grab finished wood particularly well...sometimes compounding the disappointment.

One inexpensive and fast answer is rubber. A strip of car or truck inner tube, a strip of an old wet suit too stiff for surfing, or a piece of gasket material can work. It needs to be flexible, ideally at least 1/8" (3mm) thick, and not too much longer than the circumference of your object. Rubber bands usually are not wide or tough enough.



The separate pieces



Rubber strip loosely fitted in place

Loose ends protrude through a crack, allowing the jaws to close without making wrinkles that distort the fit



Ready for RPM