

A Turner's Hack: A Safe Place for your Gouge while Working

We have to stop the lathe to check our work in the middle of our projects, more frequently when we get to delicate places. Where do we put that sword so it doesn't roll off and spike your foot, slice your trousers...or hit concrete and ruin the grind?

Laying a vaguely cylindrical tool handle on the ways is dangerous, and laying it on a table is not much better. Tucking it under your elbow is not too safe, especially if you're wearing slippery clothing. Putting it where the cutting edge can brush against your hand, not a clever strategy. Pulling out a tray to put it in and back out is a drag, especially when you need to do it a lot.

I used scrap wood to make this device that fits between the ways. It keeps the tool secure, out of the way, easy to grab. The holder can move easily sideways to move the tailstock or adapt to different kinds of work on the lathe. It's likewise easy to hang on a nail when you don't want it around. Easy to change the shape of the opening to accommodate the tool you use most...or make several.

