

There are many articles and videos on how to turn an egg shape (see end of this article for a few good ones). This article describes an easy, step by step method that only depends on the turner requiring a lathe with a chuck, a spindle gouge, a parting tool, some sandpaper and maybe a scraper.

Remember that no two eggs are exactly alike. Slight differences will never be noticed. Check out a dozen eggs, see if you can find two that are exactly alike.

DO READ AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ALL THE STEPS – READ MORE THAN ONCE, BEFORE STARTING TO TURN.

MATERIALS:

- Blank: 2" (50mm) x 2" (50mm) x 4" (100mm)
- If you are hesitant about working near the chuck, use a piece that is 5" (130mm) long. Any kind of wood can be made into an egg. For your first few, choose wood that is expendable.
- Sandpaper. Start with the grade that will easily remove your tool marks, then have a sequence of papers that ends with about 400 grit. This is suitable for most finishes.

TOOLS:

- Spindle gouge: 1/2" (12-13mm) is a good choice.
- Parting tool: 1/8" (3mm) narrower is suitable.
- Scraper: suitable for smoothing spindle turnings.
- 1.75" (45mm) parting gauge or calipers.

STEP 1:



- Mount the wood in a chuck that can hold the wood chosen. For safety bring up your tail-stock live centre.
- Turn a 1.75" (45mm) x 5/16" (8mm) tenon on the exposed end. If you did not use a live centre to start, put in a small dimple on the end of your blank for holding the point of a live centre that will usually be required in later steps.

NOTE: Step 1 can be omitted if you are confident that the blank is being held firmly in the chuck.

STEP 2:



- Turn blank to round
- Mark off the egg. Leave about 1/4" (7mm) off the end of the egg at the tail-stock end that will be removed later.
- Dimensions of a typical chicken egg:
 - Length: 2.2" – 2.3" (56 – 58 mm)
 - Maximum diameter: ~ 1.75" (45mm)
 - Maximum diameter: ~ 45% from blunt end of egg.
- For our egg: 2.2" (56mm) length
- Maximum diameter will be 1.0" (25.4mm) from blunt end of egg.
 - Mark off egg transition and end points as shown. Note double lines on outside markings. These show that parting tool groove must be on the 'outside' of the egg dimensions.

STEP 3:



- Bring up tail-stock live centre for support.
- Part maximum diameter location to 1.75" (45mm). Remember to centre your parting tool on the line.
- Part the two outside points to something less than 1.75" (45mm), but do not make these too small, you will need support when turning.
- Remove waste from tail-stock and head-stock end of eggs. See step 3 photo for details.

STEP 4:



- Begin turning by first, removing 'corners'
- Begin shaping the egg. Shape it slowly so that you can correct the shape as you go.
- Step 4 photo shows where you should end up.

STEP 5:



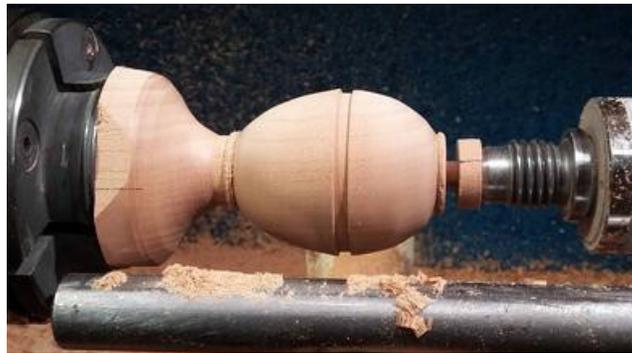
- Part the two ends a bit deeper

STEP 6:



- Turn both ends to the parting level made in step 5.
- Continue to shape the egg, follow the curve(s) you want to see in the finished egg. Leave some wood as shown as you can still make corrections at this point.

STEP 7:



- Part the **tail-stock** end to about 14" (6.5mm).
- Now you see why you needed some extra length.

STEP 8:



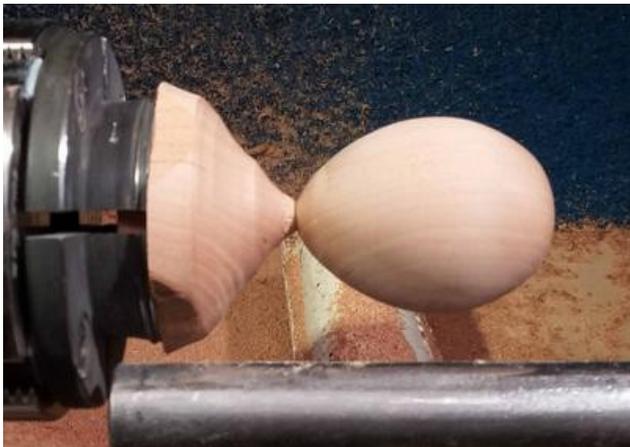
- Shape the tail-stock end of the egg to final dimensions.
- Leave the tail-stock end as shown in step 8 photo.

STEP 9:



- Finish shaping the entire egg as far as the two partings.
- Pull back the live centre.
- Trim off the end, but do leave a small nib. It's easier to trim off a nib than to remove tear-out .
- Remove the nib carefully and clean up the end.
- Sand the entire egg, up to the head-stock parting.

STEP 10:



- With a spindle gouge, slowly remove more material from the head-stock end.
- Work from the head-stock, where there is more support.
- Remove material until you have about 1/4" (6.5mm) left.

STEP 11:



- Now you need to be able to use your spindle gouge with one hand. If you are handy with a skew chisel, this step could be done with more finesse. If you are left handed, this step is easier :)
- Start turning the connection between the egg and head-stock while holding the egg VERY LIGHTLY between your thumb and first two fingers.
- When you reach the smallest diameter that you are comfortable with, use the tip of your spindle gouge to part off the egg, leaving a small nip at the end of the egg.

STEP 12:

- Using a sharp knife, carving tool or other sharp tool, trim off the nib.
- Sand the end of the egg.

STEP 13:

- Apply your favourite finish.

STEP 14:

- Now that you have made one – think about making more. A bowl full of one egg is a very lonely sight.
- IDEA: Whenever you turn a different wood species – make an egg! This way you will end up with a sample of how each wood species looks like when turned and finished. If you mark the date made on each one, colour changes over time can be recorded when next using the same species.

ARTICLES:

Mike Brazeau

Good method if you want to make dozens:

www.ghwg.ca/techniques/Wooden_Eggs_with_the_Use_of_an_Egg_Chuck.pdf

Craft Supplies

Simple method:

<http://blog.woodturnerscatalog.com/2013/03/turning-anegg/>

The Highland Woodturner

Curtis Turner

<http://www.highlandwoodworking.com/woodturningtips-1202feb/curtis.html>

VIDEO:

This one guaranteed to foster shop envy and describes a method to turn any shape:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nc62pP9Vf2Y>

Use your scrap pieces, eggs can be made in any size from Hummingbird to Ostrich.

