

Ellsworth Signature Gouge

The unique tip design of this gouge will allow the turner to make rough-cuts and finish cuts on both the exterior and interior of a bowl. In most cases, this will be the only tool needed to finish the work.

Exterior Rough Cutting

1. Position the tool rest so that tip of gouge is in center of work-piece when gouge is horizontal.
2. Use the gouge in the horizontal position, not elevated like traditional bowl gouges.
3. Point the 'flute' of the gouge in the direction of the cut & cut tangent to the grain, not into it.
4. Begin cuts by using only the 'tip' of the tool (not the long edge) & presenting the cutting edge 90 degrees to the surface of the wood—like a scraper. Then rotate the tool axially, so the edge will rise into the wood and begin to cut like a gouge. Heavier cuts can be made using more of the long edge. Unlike conventional gouges, there is no bevel in contact with the wood when performing these roughing cuts!

Exterior 'Shear' Cut

Refines exterior surface so one can begin sanding with 180-220 grit sandpaper.

1. Position the tool rest as above, and within 1/4" of the work-piece.
2. Position the tool horizontally, as if one were making a scraping cut with the lower edge. The upper edge should be no more than 1/8" away from the surface of the material.
3. Before making contact with the wood, drop the handle so that the tip of the gouge is now positioned 45 degrees to the work-piece. Cut with the lower edge, keeping the upper (unused) edge 1/8" from the surface of the wood. Bevel is **NOT** in contact with the material.
4. Make slow, light cuts across the surface of the wood using the center area of the long edge, not the tip. Unlike conventional gouges, which require pressure of the bevel against the wood, pressure with this gouge is down and into the tool rest.
5. If bouncing occurs... a) sharpen the gouge b) slow down the feed rate of the tool into the wood c) put more pressure into the tool rest d) take super light cuts.
6. *Bonus!* You can perform this 'shear' cut in both directions on the wood; that is, with the grain and against the grain. In most woods, sanding can now begin at 180-220 grit!

Interior Roughing Cut

Removes interior mass in preparation for finish cut.

1. The order and direction of this cut is the same as with conventional gouges; beginning in the center and working successively toward the rim.
2. Position the tool rest so the tip of the tool bisects the center of the wood when the tool is horizontal.
3. The gouge should be positioned horizontally throughout the cut, using the right edge when cutting to the right. Again, the bevel is not used during this cut.
4. Use one hand on the tool rest as a fulcrum point, the other on the handle as a lever. Rotate the gouge clockwise on the fulcrum point, using the right edge of the tip to cut the wood.

Interior Finish Cut

Allows one to perform a single cut from rim to bottom of bowl.

1. Position tool rest height so that tip of the gouge is in the center of work-piece when tool is horizontal. The gouge remains in the horizontal position throughout the cut.
2. Begin the cut using the right edge of the tip, exactly like the roughing cut. Cut 1/4"-3/8" into the material from the rim, then rotate the gouge counter-clockwise (axially) until the flute is pointed directly up. This will allow the bevel on the left side of the tip to make contact with the wood.
3. Point the bevel on the left side of the tip in the direction of the cut and advance the tool forward, taking very light cuts of 1/16" deep or less. The area of the edge now making the cut includes the tip itself plus no more than 1/8" to the left side of the tip.
4. By keeping the gouge horizontal, and the flute pointed straight up, one can now ride the bevel to the bottom center of the bowl without the handle hitting the bed of the lathe. Be careful not to rotate the gouge to the left of horizontal when making the finish cut, as this will expose the full length of the 3/4" edge to the wall of the bowl.

General guidelines for sharpening and using this tool

Cut with the burr straight off the grinder, instead of honing the edge. Aluminum oxide (100 grit) wheels are recommended. Dress wheel frequently. Sharpen the gouge frequently to maintain the burr edge. Use extremely light touch when grinding to extend life of the tool. Always cut tangent to the grain, not into them. Don't be afraid if you get a few 'digs' when first learning to use his gouge, we all do!

Good luck and happy turning!

David Ellsworth

Additional Information

- *Ellsworth Signature Gouge* DVD Product number 066-0185
- www.ellsworthstudios.com