



**Safety glasses and goggles are not sufficient when turning wood. You must use a face shield of some sort to protect your face.**

**I've** seen it too often: a person learns something new, they misapply the knowledge, and bad things result. Heck, it still happens to me far too often! Fortunately, I've survived those events, mostly intact. I would like to share some easily misunderstood concepts about woodturning with the hope of decreasing confusion and adding to your enjoyment and safety.

Some of these misunderstandings result from the plethora of new turning items currently available. Many new gadgets are excellent, but if you don't take time to understand their proper use, they'll cause problems.

### **Faceshields and Goggles**

I wish I could decree that no lathe would start until the operator is wearing a face shield! Goggles are for preventing splinters from entering someone's eye. A 9" bowl, spinning at 2,000 RPM, is much larger than a splinter. If it, or some portion of it, flies off the lathe, it will smash your face. Enough said?

### **Tool Rest Height Confusion**

The most common question I get when I demonstrate spindle turning is, "At what height do I set the tool-rest?" My answer: set your tool-rest height so that the cutting happens at or above the center line of the spindle. If it's too high, the tool won't cut but it'll still be safe, and all you need to do is lower the tool-rest. If it's too low, that's when it's unsafe. If the tool-rest is positioned at or above center, there's resistance between the wood and the tool's cutting edge. If the tool-rest is too low and the cutting action happens below center, there's no resistance, and in fact, the rotation of the wood pulls the tool away from the tool-rest. If a catch happens, the tool could be pulled away and flung at an innocent bystander.

A word about those "S" curved tool-rests. Well, two words: bad design. They don't work for their intended purpose, so don't waste your money. Instead, buy that chunk of figured wood you've been coveting.