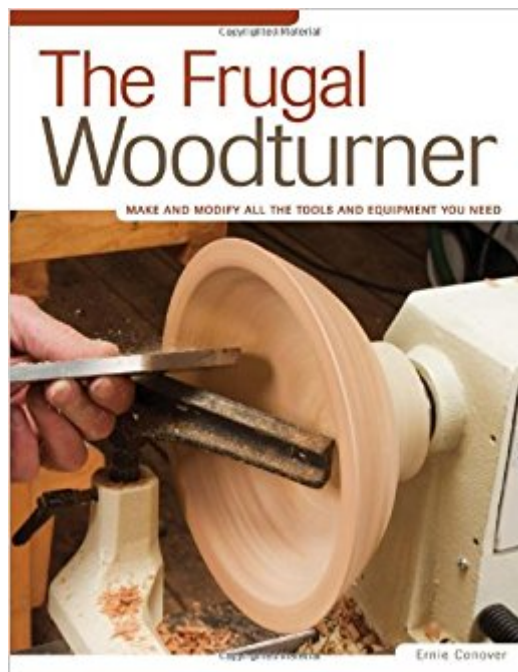




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Frugal Woodturner, The: Make And Modify All The Tools And Equipment You Need



Synopsis

Practical Ideas for a fun, affordable hobby This comprehensive guide covers all the elements needed for setting up and maintaining a personal woodturning shop on a budget.

Book Information

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Fox Chapel Publishing (August 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1565234340

ISBN-13: 978-1565234345

Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 0.3 x 11.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 51 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #538,106 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #56 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Hand Tools](#) #78 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Power Tools](#) #680 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Woodworking > Projects](#)

Customer Reviews

The overriding idea here is that woodturning is actually affordable. The cost of lathes, tools, and accessories has made the pastime seem expensive but Conover proves it need not be. A longtime author of woodworking books and a teacher at Conover Workshops, a craft school founded by his family, he compares woodturning with many other lost arts and proposes, through this book, that it needn't be lost to commercialism. He shows you how to set up an affordable workshop (three different budgets offered), have woodturning fun on a budget and how to do so with greenwood, firewood, and discarded lumber. Along the way, the craftsman achieves a heightened appreciation of the process of turning itself. The marvelous, and large, color photos seem to bring the reader right up to Conover's work bench. If you are hesitating about taking up woodturning or you feel that you are being held back in your development in the craft because of cost, this book offers a host of interesting ideas. Ernie Conover is one of America's foremost woodworking educators. He is a regular contributor of articles to woodworking magazines and a highly experienced teacher. His family owns and operates Conover Workshops which offers a range of courses in woodworking and boasts graduates from all over the US and Canada. The Frugal Woodturner covers topics such as

Choosing the Right Lathe and finding Good Tools without Breaking the Bank as well as Sharpening, finding Wood without Spending Lots of Money and Holding Wood on the Lathe. Each chapter provides general information in a concise and easily read format, plus notes on innovations that can assist with both saving money and increasing enjoyment of woodturning. For example, the chapter on tool care includes a description of a home made sharpening system while the chapter that deals with holding wood on the lathe contains notes not only on the making of a number of different styles of chuck but also their use. The book ends with a description of Simple, Inexpensive Finishes and examples of complete woodturning set-ups based on three budgets - Tight, Medium and Large. Since *The Frugal Woodturner* is aimed at helping woodturners get more out of the time they spend in their workshops, it should appeal to everyone from the beginner to the more advanced 'turner. The internationally renowned woodturner, Dale Nish, says of it that 'anyone wanting to invest in a wonderful and fulfilling hobby will find this book a gold mine of information'. Woodworking hobbies can be costly, but this book helps take the edge off expenses. Conover (*Woodworker's Guide to Dovetails*) offers original advice on making better purchases, making tools or using existing tools, and finding inexpensive materials. This specialized book works well with other titles on wood turning and lathe work. Recommended. The timing of *The Frugal Woodturner* could not be more appropriate. Today, much of our focus in making has shifted to our finished products rather than the value of the time and the methods we use to make them. Conover's thesis is to reclaim the value of being problem solvers as we relearn to make the things that allow us to make the things that fill our lives with joy. The tools, the jigs and the methods of making - it's all here. This do-it-yourself book from Ernie Conover shows how to get started on three different budgets: The Tight and Basic Budget in which readers learn how to make their own spring pole lathe and tools; the All Around Budget which teaches how to buy quality used equipment; and the Upscale Budget for readers who want to purchase new equipment. For experienced turners, Ernie's advice on making your own gouges, scrapers, and chisels is invaluable. He also provides instructions for making your own faceplates, chucks, and more, plus he shares insider secrets on where to find cheap or free wood. Ernie Conover is no stranger in the woodworking fraternity. He's the co-designer of the now out-of-production Conover lathe, author of numerous books, frequent contributor to multifarious woodworking magazines, and he operates his own woodworking school. Which, I suppose, accounted for the high expectations I had for Conover's new book. The focus of the book is, as stated in the subtitle, to show readers how to 'Make and Modify All the Tools and Equipment You Need'. The first chapter of the book focuses on three topics: the kinds of lathes that are currently available; how to make a spring pole lathe; and what to look for when purchasing a lathe. Conover's

overview of the different types of lathes is disappointing. His two page overview is much too sparse, and he fails to describe the benefits and limitations of each type of lathe. His contention is clearly that 'big is better': "Full-size lathes are the best buy in the end if you are going to pursue turning to any degree". Certainly pen turners, furniture makers looking to turn custom hardware, and hobbyist turners whose interest might be in turning small bowls and the like would be well served by a benchtop lathe. Conover, however, lumps mini and midi lathes into the same category, while virtually dismissing them as viable options: "Bench-top lathes have nearly disappeared with only a couple of models on the market". I think that Delta, General, Jet, Penn State, Shop Fox, PSI Woodworking and other manufacturers might take exception to Conover's assessment. I felt that the inclusion of plans to make a spring pole lathe somewhat out of context placed, as it is, between the discussion of the types of lathes available, and what to look for when choosing a lathe. It seems better suited as Appendix material. Making a pole lathe can, I am sure, be an enjoyable project, but, realistically, how many people are going to make and use it for their day to day turning? I doubt if Ernie does. The section on what you need to know before selecting a lathe is very good. He covers all the basics here, and, to my amusement, includes the plans for a lathe stand, which looks ideal for a benchtop lathe. The following two chapters are filled with useful information on what to look for when searching for used turning tools and accessories, and tips for sharpening your tools. I like his recommendation to buy a few tools (used, preferably), develop some proficiency using the tools, and then buy (or make) additional tools as required. There is some very good info here on the different types of turning chisels and what they are used for. Conover does recommend that carbide insert cutters be avoided, as they are "actually designed for metalworking". However, a number of companies, such as Easy Wood Tools, are now making turning tools with carbide inserts, and turners, particularly novice turners, are finding them a viable alternative to conventional HSS tools. Dismissing them at this stage seems somewhat premature. The chapter on finding free or inexpensive wood is somewhat sparse, though he covers wood seasoning, wood movement and turning green wood. Finally, at the fifth chapter, we start to get to the meat of the book - making and modifying tools (though really the focus is on accessories). Conover describes how to make two turning tools (scraper and chatter tool), handles, sharpening jig (though he doesn't use this jig in his chapter on sharpening), a faceplate, screw, jam and pressure chucks, locking nest, tapered mandrel, drill pad, soft jaw, steady rest and a vacuum chuck. You'll find a lot of good ideas here, and novice turners should be able to easily make all of these accessories. The book ends with a short chapter on finishes, and a recommendation for lathe setups for three budget configurations. Conover is a very good writer, and the book is an easy read. The photos are good and the

illustrations well done (though many seem to be much larger than warrant). Overall, the book is disappointing, though the chapter on making and modifying tools is very useful.

Spend Less and Have More Fun Turning To enjoy woodturning, you don't have to spend a lot of money. You don't need a lot of space or a lot of wood, and you can make and modify your own turning equipment from easily found or low-cost items. And, now, thanks to author and teacher Ernie Conover, you can discover all the practical and savvy knowledge you need to affordably set up a workshop and enjoy woodturning on a budget. With *The Frugal Woodturner*, you'll learn how to: - Choose the right lathe - Find good tools without breaking the bank - Be smart about sharpening - Set up a shop on three different budgets - Make your own finishes and varnish - Use greenwood, firewood, and discarded lumber Best of all, by being a frugal woodturner and crafting your own tools and equipment, you'll get a deeper understanding of-and have as much fun as-the process of turning itself.

The subtitle of this book is "Make and Modify All the Tools and Equipment You Need." That is NOT what most of the book is about. There are pages and pages and pages of general information that any but the most novice woodturner has already learned. (The book is not billed as an introduction to woodturning!) If you need to know the names of your lathe's parts -- the spindle, the tool rest, the banjo, etc. -- then this book might be for you. If you don't know the difference between a gouge, a scraper, a skew, and a parting tool, then this book might be for you. If you haven't purchased a lathe yet, you will get a couple of pages of things to consider when buying a lathe -- but it is a very shallow and opinionated treatment. If you are into old fashioned, there are 7 pages of plans for making your own (rickety) spindle lathe out of wood (and rope) -- complete with a treadle foot pump to turn your wood spindle stock. If, however, you already own a lathe, and you are a bit beyond novice, and wish to make a lot of your own tools to cut down on expenses, this book really doesn't offer you very much at all. You will find plans for a wooden lathe bench, a screwdriver scraper, scrapers made out of old files, and a few other tidbits of questionable usefulness to many readers. You can find more and better information on making your own tools -- really useful information -- by searching the Internet using Google. The publisher's proofreader was asleep for the first few pages, as all the punctuation is in superscript -- a comma becomes an apostrophe, a period sits at the top of letters instead of at the bottom. The book has loads of good pictures, and is a quick read -- one evening should do it. I got it on sale, and don't think it was worth the sale price. Check it out from your library, or better yet, just spend an hour at the library and look through it. I doubt you'll spring

for the purchase price unless you are a wannabe or a novice seeking a brief and disjointed introduction to woodturning tools. Don't expect any actual instruction in woodturning, however.

This is a hard book to rate. The subtitle is how to make and modify tools. On making chisels he spends about 2 pages on heating and bending screwdrivers without a mention why one would need bent. Lots of discussion on why a bunch of equipment is not needed other than an expensive lathe. It is an enjoyable read since it is written well, but it is short on actual info to make much for the lathe. All in all, I would say the book is worth the ~\$20 it cost, but it contains nothing of use to an experienced woodturner.

Alan Roy Underhill's "The Woodwright's Guide: Working Wood with Wedge & Edge" is a book that I have yet to read, but the author based his plans on Underhill's. Not really any information given on how to use the thing and could use, for me anyway, just a little more detail but still worth having and I don't think it'd be as rickety as one reviewer thought (mostly Oak construction). I've just skimmed through the book, think it's too light in detail on some things but some nice bits on turning green wood, making special purpose chucks (at least one not commercially available), scrounging wood supplies. Could use more "frugal" information on building your own lathe. A good book to have in your lathe books collection.

I will have to admit to you right off, I recently purchased this book and have not actually read it cover to cover. I have taken a leisurely browse through it and have read some parts of it here and there. I spent about an hour doing this after I first received it. It is loaded with pictures and all sorts of information. Since I have yet to actually turn my first project I am thinking that as I move forward in my efforts this book will come to be more useful and important to me. Since woodturning tools can be very expensive it is always a good thing to have a little help along the way with converting one tool into another. The readings I have made so far, wanting to learn some about this hobby or possible livelihood. I have already learned that on occasion one will have to make some specialized tool to either make things easier or possible at all. I am knowing that this book will gain in value as I progress. The pictures and text seem to be very plain and clear. I was able to understand what the steps were and how to go about it just from the reading of it. The author is an experienced woodturner and has made lots of his own tools and jigs to make possible some of the projects within the book. I would highly recommend getting this book if you think you will be seriously getting into woodturning.

I've had a wood lathe for about 2 years now, and consider myself at best an advanced beginner. There's a lot to be learned, there's a lot to explore, and my comments in this area reflect that state of knowledge and experience. I found Conover's book filled with useful tidbits and tips, things that I can apply now as well as info that I'm gonna have to grow into. I've been able to take information from this book directly to my lathe and put into practice, while other techniques I can visualize being of use as my skills develop. Because of my blacksmithing experience, I probably have a headstart on the toolmaking portion of this journey, but the application of tooling as it relates to turning is immensely valuable and I'm glad to have this volume in my how-to library.

I like this book so far, I haven't finished all the sections of it as it's things that should be done with the book to provide guidance and you go but so far so good. I will recommend it to anyone looking to save some money. He exposes the dirty secrets of the turning industry. For example instead of paying through the nose for that bowl gouge, take a regular one and re-cut the bevel on it. That's the big change that the manufacturers try to stick us six prices for. Lots of good tips and how too stuff in it. For 20 to 30 bucks you can get a wood tap and start making your own faces plates and chucks, The book shows you how. Not everyone will get any use from it. Making your own tools and such requires care and patience. If you have that, then get this book. If you'd rather plop down the credit card and charge into the wild woody yonder then don't bother.

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