

Woodturners of the Virginias Safety Rules

1. Make woodturning fun – Getting hurt is not fun.
2. Protect yourself and others – Eyes, hands, feet, lungs, ears and body with shields, gloves, boots, air filters, ear protectors and stout clothing. Secure loose clothing, hair, jewelry and other items to keep them from getting caught by spinning tools.
3. Keep cutting tools sharp – Dull tools are no fun to use and cause injuries.
4. Mount workpieces securely on the lathe – learn to assess and safely deal with wood defects.
5. Never turn on a machine unless you know, precisely, what will happen when you do. Never leave a machine running unattended.
6. Know and practice the laws of woodturning.
7. When in doubt, stop and ask for help no matter your level of experience.
8. Stay alert – take frequent breaks.
9. Use common sense – if something doesn't feel safe and comfortable, it probably isn't.

Laws of Woodturning (after Keith Rowley)

1. Lathe rotational speed must be compatible with the size, weight and length of the wood to be turned. Diameter of the workpiece in inches times the revolutions per minute should not exceed 6000 as a starting speed. (e.g. 8" x 750 rpm = 6000)
2. The cutting tool must be on the tool rest before engaging the workpiece AND remain on the tool rest whenever the tool is in contact with the workpiece.
3. The bevel of the cutting tool must engage the workpiece first and rub the workpiece behind the cut.
4. The portion of the edge cutting the workpiece must always receive direct support from the tool rest.
5. Always cut "downhill" or with the grain of the wood. Cut into side grain like sharpening a pencil with a knife – avoid end grain.
6. Scrapers must be engaged in the trailing mode with the handle higher than the cutting edge.

"Life is too short to turn crappy wood!" Dale Nish