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Zestful Turnings

In this plan you will be getting:

- Step by Step construction instruction.
- A complete bill of materials.
- Exploded view and elevation drawings.
- How-to photos with instructive captions.
- Tips to help you complete the project and become a better woodworker.



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Zestful Turnings

Start with several pieces of scrap cherry and maple, stir well and add a few hours on the lathe. Now you're ready for the salt and pepper. A small turning project like this is a perfect candidate for a "production run" to suit holiday gift-giving, not to mention a nice way to bring a bit of the shop into the kitchen.

Like recipes, turning projects have an organic quality to them. Most are best presented as ideas so each turner can make changes to suit a project to his or her own tastes. Our salt and pepper set is a good example. If you enjoy contemporary tableware, these shapes will blend right in with that look. You can follow the full-size *drawings* on page 111 to make exact duplicates, or take off with your own ideas to create your own style.

The construction of the salt shaker includes a useful ring joint that you may want to try out on other sectional designs like candlestick holders, vases or vessels that are made with separate pieces of wood.

Making the Pepper Mill

The first thing you should take care of before starting this project is purchasing the salt and pepper mechanisms, available from Rockler and other turning supply sources. Having the hardware in hand when you begin cutting will save you from possible mistakes.

Cut your pepper mill wood blanks slightly oversize, and begin working on the cherry top first. Drill a 3/4"-diameter by 1/4"-deep hole in one end of the cherry block, then mount it on the lathe with the hole facing the tail stock. Turn the block into a cylinder with a 1/2" gouge, then use a parting tool to form the neck. Continue with the gouge to round over the top, and smooth the surface with a skew. Increase your lathe speed to sand the cherry to 220 grit, then dismount the top and drill a 1/4"-diameter hole through the wood.

Now put the maple between centers on the lathe and



Figure 1: When you're ready to drill the cores, a wooden handscrew clamp will help keep the mill from spinning during drilling as well as align the workpiece for an accurate through hole.

turn it to shape with the 1/2" gouge. Again, use a skew and sandpaper to refine the surface. Part off the maple piece from the lathe and drill three holes into the mill: First, a 1/2"-diameter by 1/2"-deep hole in the bottom of the piece, then a 1/4"-diameter by 3/8"-deep hole in the top end. Use the

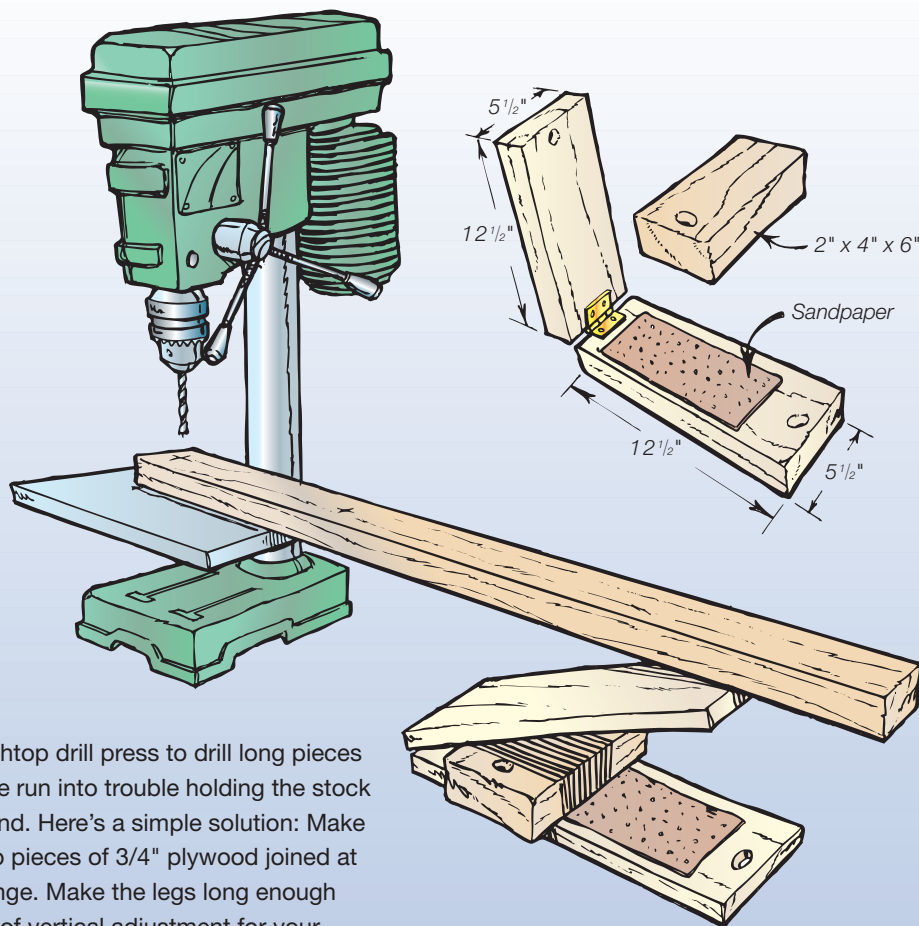
indents from the lathe drives to find the drilling centers for these two holes. The third hole is 1" in diameter and passes from the top end all the way to the bottom. To get greater control and accuracy while drilling this hole, clamp a wooden handscrew to the mill (see Figure 1).

Once these holes are drilled, insert the grinding mechanism in the mill and secure the retaining plates after drilling pilot holes for the screws. The top should turn freely when you loosen the nut, which, by the way, also allows the peppercorns to slip into the teeth of the gears so they can be ground.

Turning the Salt Shaker

Mount your curly maple salt shaker blank into the lathe and rough it with a gouge into a 2" cylinder. Next, make the ring joint by turning one end of the cylinder down to a 1½" diameter with a parting tool. Take your cherry block over to the drill press and drill a 1½"

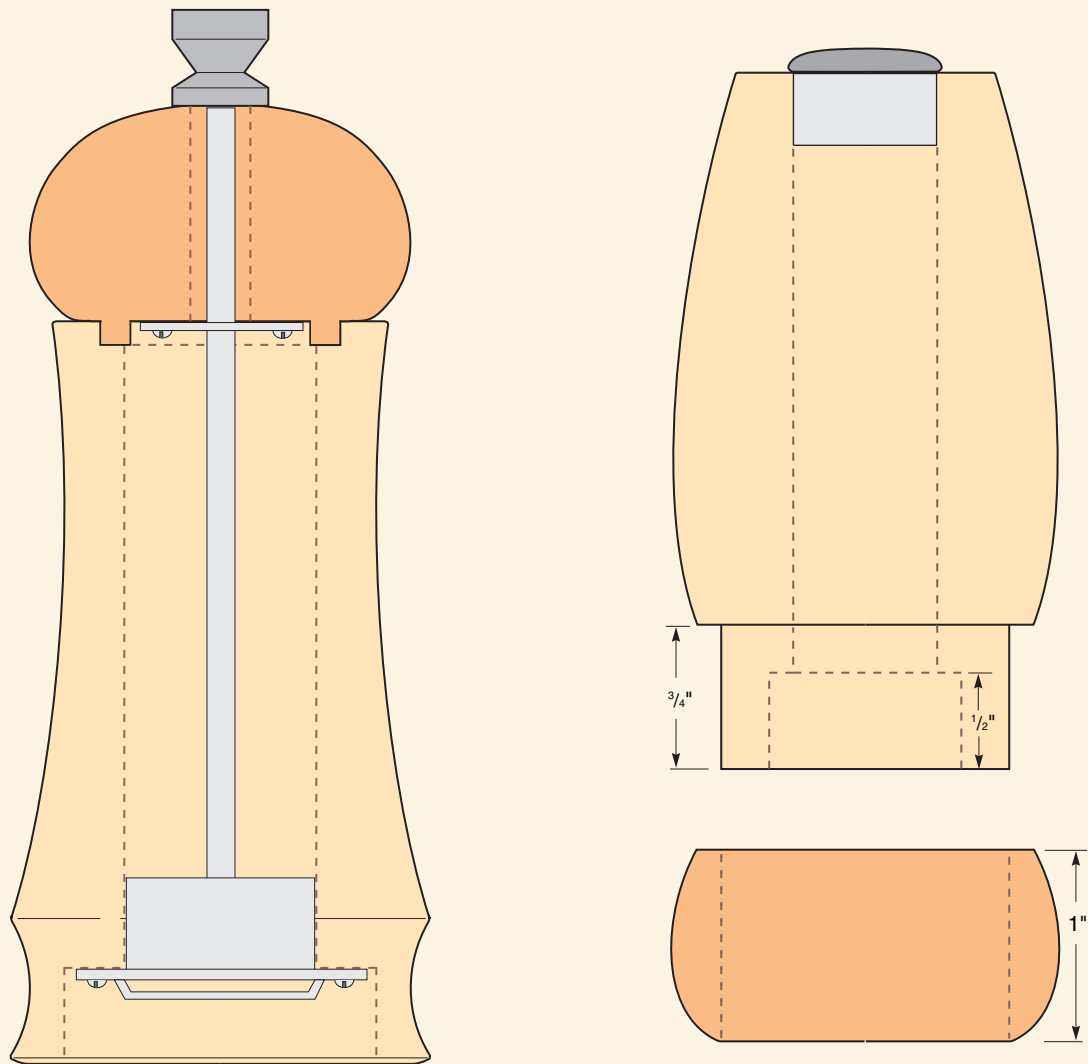
QuickTip



Drill Press Support

When using your benchtop drill press to drill long pieces of wood, you may have run into trouble holding the stock level as you drill one end. Here's a simple solution: Make a support jig using two pieces of 3/4" plywood joined at one end with a butt hinge. Make the legs long enough to cover the full range of vertical adjustment for your drill press table. A 6"-long piece of scrap 2 x 4 serves as the adjusting block. It can be used flat or on edge, depending on the angle required. Glue a piece of 100-grit sandpaper onto the lower leg of the jig, to keep the block from slipping when you put the weight of your workpieces on it.

Full-Size Drawings



hole through it. Remove the maple from the lathe and use yellow glue to secure its ringed end inside the cherry block.

Once the glue dries, remount the shaker on the lathe and turn it to final shape. Sand the piece to 220 grit, then part off the top end. Take the shaker back to the drill press to bore the holes, making sure to use the handscrew clamp again to control the turning. Drill a 1"-diameter hole 1/2" deep in the

bottom of the shaker, then turn the piece over and drill a 3/4"-diameter hole through the full length of the body.

Finishing Up

Dismantle the pepper mill to give it and the salt shaker a final burnishing with fine steel wool. Apply three coats of tung oil to the outside of the set to really bring out the curly pattern in the maple. Let the finish dry for two days

before reassembling the mechanism in the pepper mill and adding the top to the salt shaker. Once this is done, pour in your salt and your peppercorns, and cap off the openings. Your salt and pepper set is now ready for work. Bon appetit!