

# trivet pursuit



Behind the complex maze of intersecting grooves that make up these turned kitchen accessories lies a very simple idea.

**T**he idea for this turned trivet was sparked by a tablesawn one given to a friend of mine. Square and dadoed halfway through its thickness from each side, it got me thinking how I could make something similar on my lathe. Playing with the design on and off for about a year and a half, I started with a square trivet dadoed from one side and turned from the other, then tried a square turned from both sides, followed by an oval design. Finally, a round woven rattan trivet belonging to my mother provided the inspiration that clinched the design.

My method incorporates a simple offset turning technique and uses only a parting tool. The key is an auxiliary faceplate that holds and indexes the trivet blanks. Once you make it, you'll tear through your shop scraps making trivets by the dozen.

*Reuben Everett*

## Prepare the trivet blanks

**1** To create trivet blanks, plane 6½"-wide stock to ½" thick, and cut it into 6½" lengths. Glue and clamp together pairs of these squares with the grain of one piece perpendicular to the grain of the other. (We combined maple with cherry and ash with walnut. You also can use a single piece of ½"-thick stock or, if you're feeling adventurous, try ½"-thick solid-surface countertop material, such as Corian.)

**2** To make a pattern for accurately trimming your trivet blanks to shape, cut a 6½" square of ¾"-thick medium-densi-





**Tool:** Parting tool  
**Tool Rest:** Center  
**Speed:** 800–1,200 rpm

When forming the  $\frac{7}{16}$ "-deep recess that will hold the trivet blanks, stop the lathe periodically and check its depth with a combination square.



As you near the finished diameter of the recess, check it with a trivet blank. Increase its size in small increments until the blank fits snug and still allows for easy removal.



To keep the trivet blank from rotating in the recess during the turning operations, cut a piece of 120-grit sandpaper to size, spray it with adhesive, and stick it in the recess.

depth as shown in **Photo D**. When you get close to the circle line, start checking the diameter of the recess, as shown in **Photo E**. With the recess complete, adhere a piece of 120-grit sandpaper, as shown in **Photo F**.

**6** From  $\frac{1}{4}$ " hardboard, cut four  $\frac{5}{8} \times \frac{3}{4}$ " retaining tabs, and drill countersunk holes in each, where shown on **Drawing 1**.

### Now start turning trivets

**1** Make copies of the top and bottom trivet patterns from the *WOOD Patterns*® insert. Adhere the top patterns to the trivet blanks with spray adhesive. Then remove the machine screws from the auxiliary faceplate and mount a trivet blank, as shown in **Photo G**.

**2** Start your lathe, and use your parting tool to cut the top face of the trivet, as shown in **Photo H**. Repeat these turning steps on all the trivet blanks.

**3** Remove the machine screws and retaining tabs, pop out the trivet blank, and peel away the pattern. Then reinstall the blank. To hold the insert in place, reinstall the machine screws *without* the retaining tabs. Finish-sand the top face of the trivet, as shown in **Photo I**. Now finish-sand the top faces of all your trivets.

**4** Once again, remove the machine screws. Using the vertical centerline for reference, offset the insert  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to the right, where shown on **Drawing 2**. Using the holes in the insert as guides, drill new  $\frac{3}{16}$ " holes through the backer. Now trace the curved edge of the backer on the back of the insert. Remove the insert, and carefully bandsaw it on the traced line.

**5** Place the insert in its new position, and fasten it with the retaining tabs, machine screws, washers, and nuts. Clamp the cutoff in the void created by offsetting the insert,

where shown on **Drawing 2**. Drill countersunk screw holes and drive the screws.

**6** Adhere the bottom patterns to the trivet blanks with spray adhesive. Then mount a blank in the auxiliary faceplate recess, and align one of the pattern index lines with the faceplate horizontal centerline. Secure the blank with the retaining tabs.

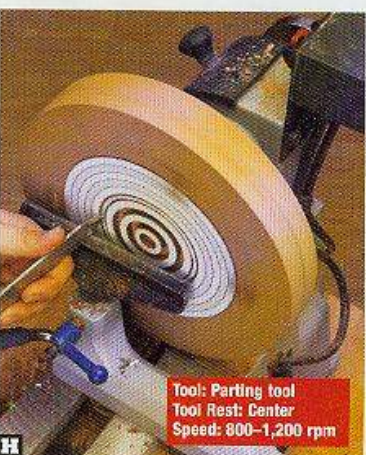
**7** Start your lathe, and use your parting tool to cut the first set of concentric grooves, as shown in **Photo J**.

**8** With the first set of grooves cut, move on to the second set, as shown in **Photo K**, and turn these grooves, as shown in **Photo L**. In the same manner, turn the last set of grooves. Repeat these turning steps on all the trivet blanks.

**9** Remove the machine screws, retaining tabs, and the insert cutoff. Center the insert and secure it with the machine screws. Place the cutoff in its original

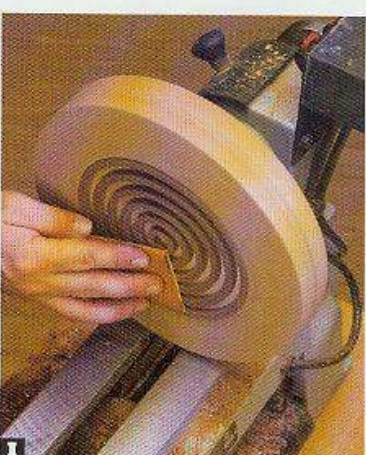


Position the trivet blank pattern side out in the auxiliary faceplate recess. Fasten it in place with the four retaining tabs and the flathead machine screws, washers, and nuts.

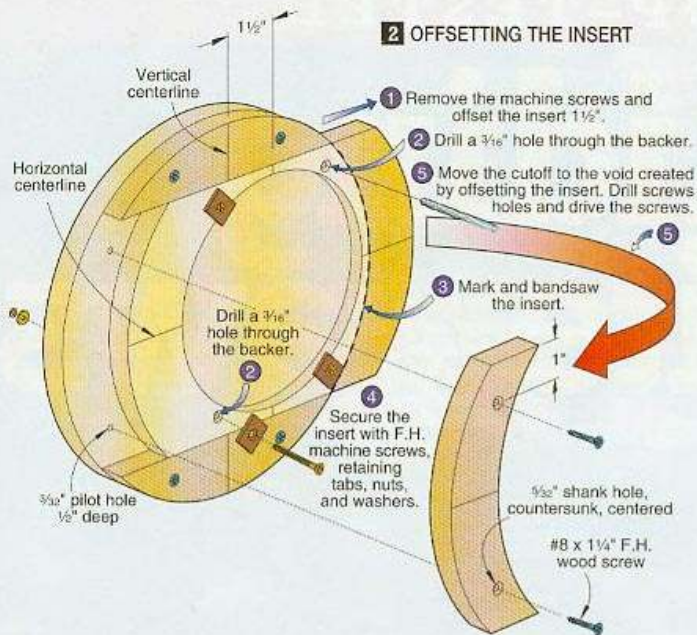


**Tool:** Parting tool  
**Tool Rest:** Center  
**Speed:** 800–1,200 rpm

Cut into the blank, removing the pattern's shaded portions to a depth equal to half the trivet thickness. Stop just as you reach the different wood species of the bottom layer.



Holding the trivet in the auxiliary faceplate recess by pressing a piece of sandpaper against the trivet with your hand, switch on the lathe and finish-sand its top face.



## 2 OFFSETTING THE INSERT

position, drill pilot holes in the backer, and screw the cutoff in place. Remove the bottom patterns from the trivets and finish-sand the bottom faces as you did the tops. (The insert and its cutoff are now in position for a new batch of trivets.)

### Finishing up

**1** Use a hobby knife to trim away any flakes of wood left in the voids formed by the intersecting grooves.

**2** Chuck a 1/8" round-over bit in your table-mounted router, and rout the top and bottom outside edges of the trivet. Finish-sand the round-overs.

**3** Apply three coats of penetrating-oil finish, following the directions on the container. Let the finish dry for several days. Now take a few trivets into the kitchen and start cooking. 🍴

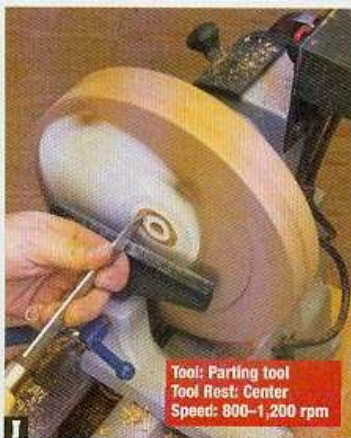


Photo: Don Montoux

### Reuben Everett

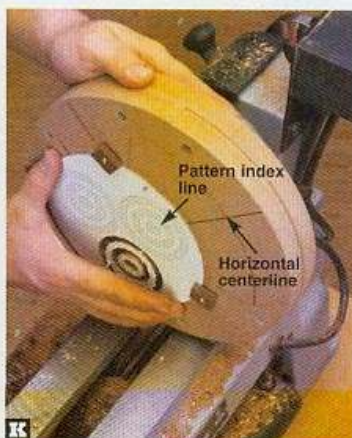
Retired after 33 years as a heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration service technician, Reuben now pursues his love of turning by making bowls, boxes, pens, and trivets that he sells through galleries. He also does architectural turning, producing balusters, newels, and column bases. Reuben taught turning at the Hermitage Foundation Museum in Norfolk, Virginia, and served as president of Tidewater Turners of Virginia. He was a demonstrator at the 2002 and 2003 symposiums of the American Association of Woodturners.

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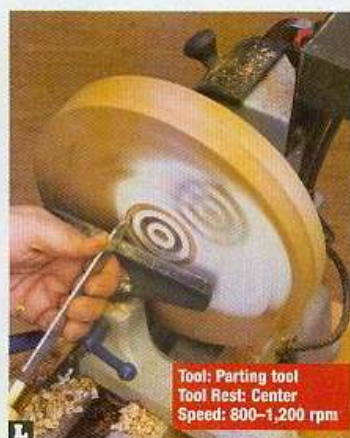


**I** Tool: Parting tool  
Tool Rest: Center  
Speed: 800–1,200 rpm

Cut into the blank, removing the pattern's shaded portions. To avoid catching the tool in the grooves cut from the other side, use a very light touch as you near the final depth.



**K** Loosen the retaining tabs. Rotate the trivet blank 120°, aligning the pattern's next index line with the auxiliary faceplate horizontal centerline. Tighten the tabs.



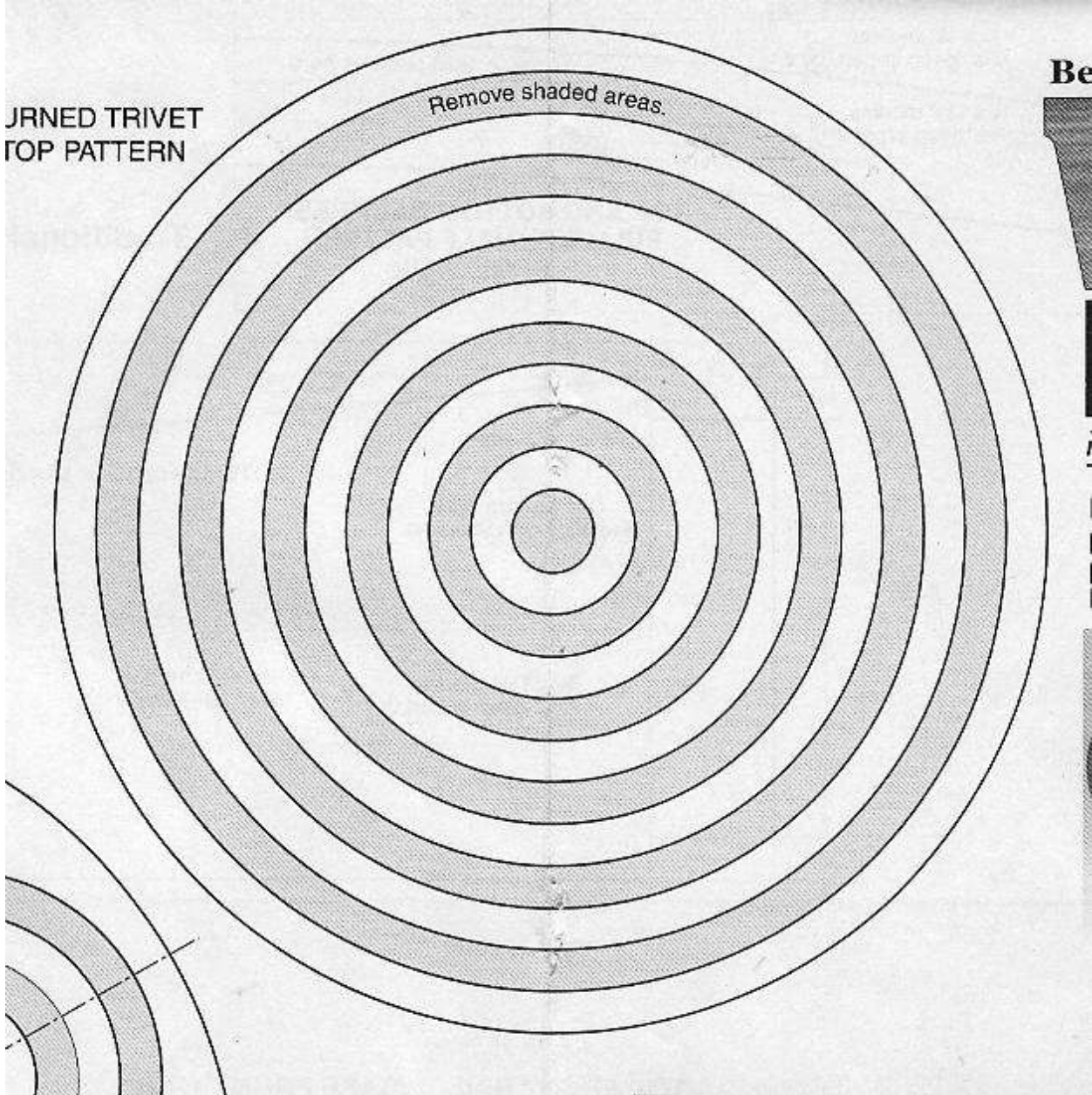
**L** Tool: Parting tool  
Tool Rest: Center  
Speed: 800–1,200 rpm

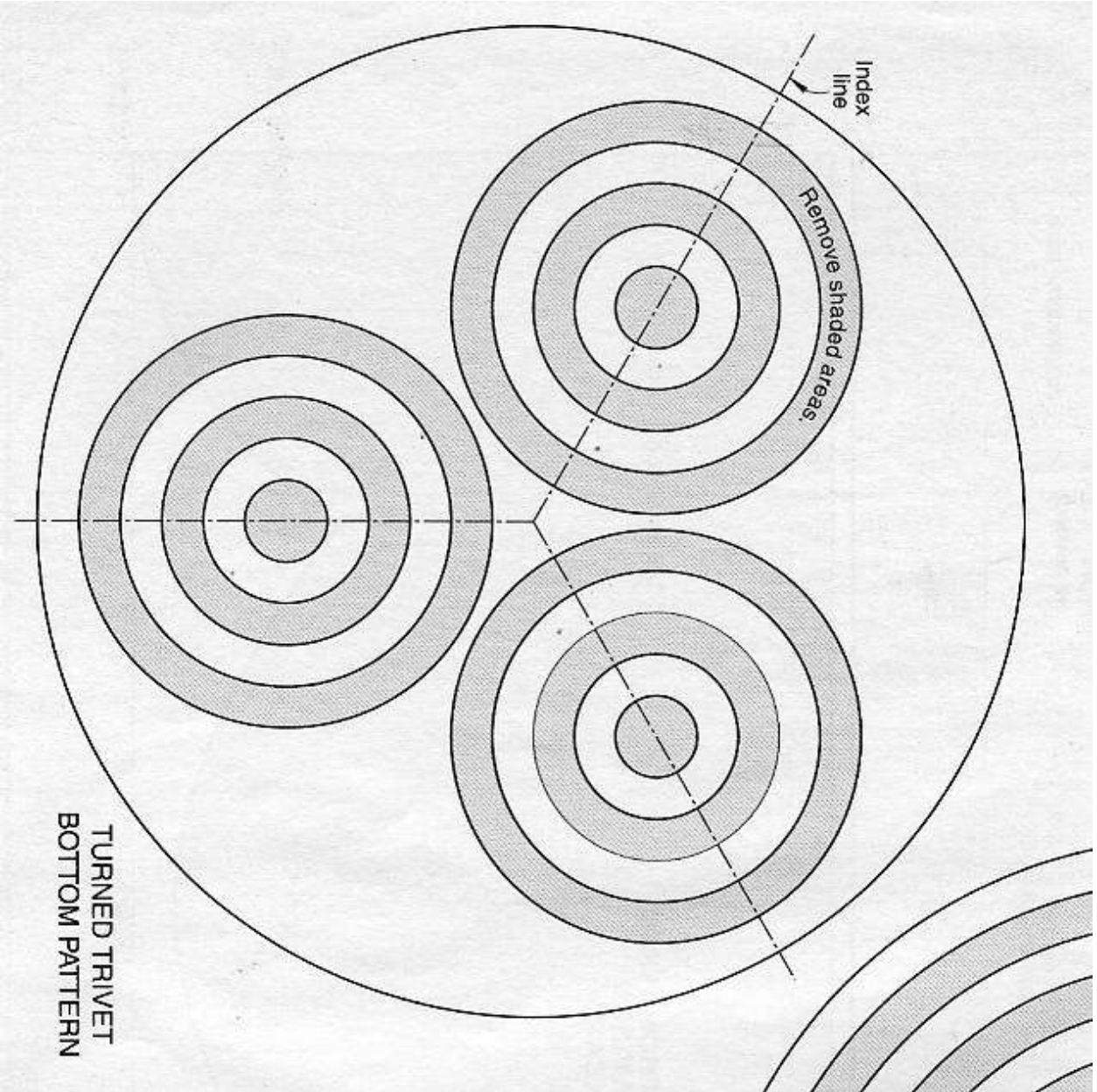
With the trivet blank rotated to center the second set of concentric grooves, once again use your parting tool to remove the pattern's shaded portions.

URNED TRIVET  
TOP PATTERN

*Remove shaded areas.*

Be





TURNED TRIVET  
BOTTOM PATTERN

Index  
line

Remove shaded areas