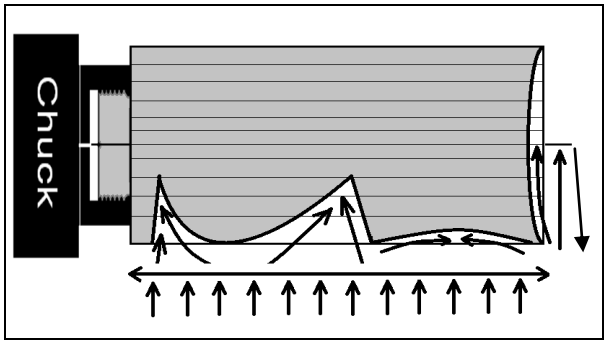
SKEW SKILLS:"Making the Cuts"

(Peeling, Planing, Paring, Vee, Rolling, Coving)

Eric Lofstrom – Eric@EricLofstrom.com

The skew is possibly the most versatile spindle turning tool, capable of creating the finest cut surface. The most challenging part of using the skew is to understand & mind the laws of physics. Its simplistic design will highlight your ability to present the tool's edge.
ALL basic SPINDLE cuts can be done with the Skew: Planing, Peeling, Paring, Vee, Rolling, Coving *(see photo below)***.**



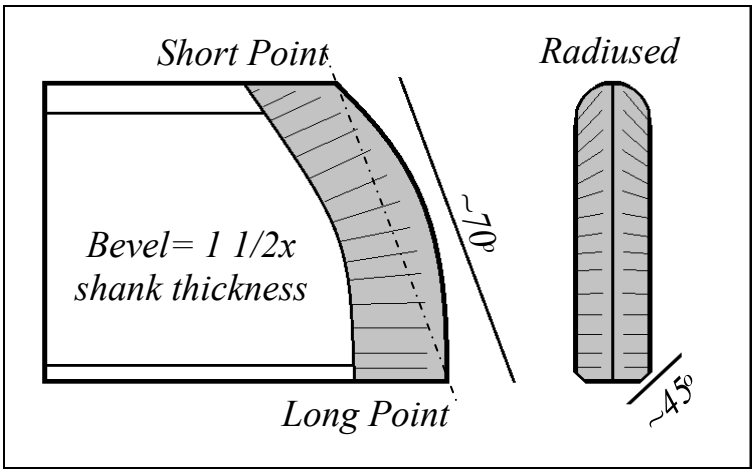
SHARPENING/ GRINDING- *(use a platform for max. accuracy)*

a. **Determine the platform angle-The** platform angle & resulting tool angle DEPENDS ON SHANK THICKNESS. Adjust the platform so bevel is approximately 1 1/2x the thickness of the shank; for example, if your skew shank is 3/8" thick, then your tool bevel on each side should be approximately 9/16" from edge to bevel heel.

c. **When shaping the bevel, make sure to check for balance & symmetry**- A balanced & symmetrical edge which is centered on the shank will maximize tool predictability when making critical cuts.

d. **When dressing the edge, first approach the grinder w/ the wheel stationary**– Use a dark color, permanent felt-tip pen to coat the bevel. This allows you to see where the grinding wheel makes contact with the bevel. Lay the tool shank on the platform and rotate the wheel by hand, bringing the bevel into contact. Observe where the wheel makes contact & adjust as needed.

e. **Hone the edge w/ a diamond credit-card hone & strop for a razor sharp tool!**



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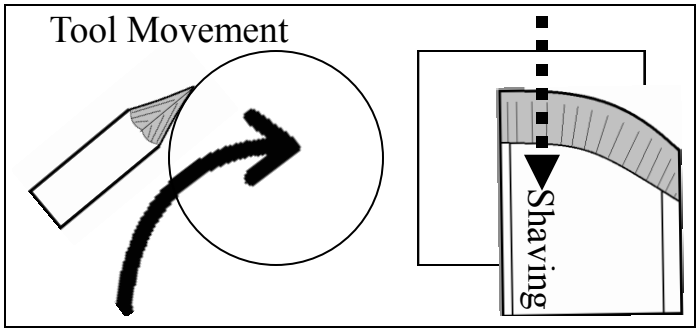
PEELING CUT- *(bevel-supported)*

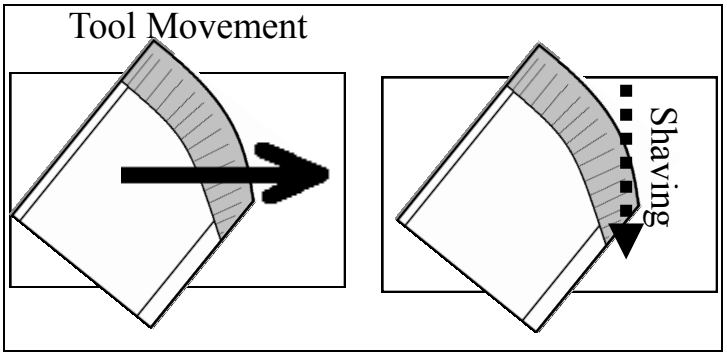


a. **Used to rough the blank into a cylinder-** Allows for FAST wood removal on the lathe. Can also be used by skimming the bevel & feathering the cut to refine a surface.

b. **Much like peeling an apple–** Present the flat edge section near the long point so it goes under the skin, then arc forward to keep the same edge presentation as the diameter decreases.

c. **Start w/ the HANDLE LOW–** Glide the bevel behind the edge & drop the handle at end to maintain control.

PLANING CUT- *(slicing action often leaves a beautiful, optically clear cut)*



a. **Used to refine a flat/tapered section**– this can be both a roughing/ finishing cut. Cut is along lathe axis.

b. **Very forgiving cut**, provided you maintain bevel contact behind the cutting edge & isolate lower 1/3 of edge.

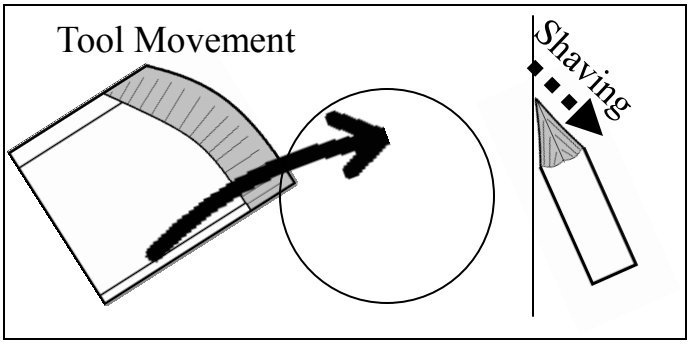
c. **Short point down is my preferred method**, although it can also be performed w/ long point down.

PARING CUT- *(finishing cut)*

a. **Used to clean-up the end of blank**– Allows for ultra-smooth cut endgrain. This is a refining cut, make small passes.

b. **Steer the bevel in the direction you are cutting, allow for** *~5° CLEARANCE ANGLE- DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GLIDE THE ENTIRE BEVEL AS A "SKATE" & "CATCH" OF MAGNITUDE WILL OCCUR!!!!!!!*

c. As with the peeling cut, **use an arcing motion toward center axis** as the cut continues with decreasing diameter.



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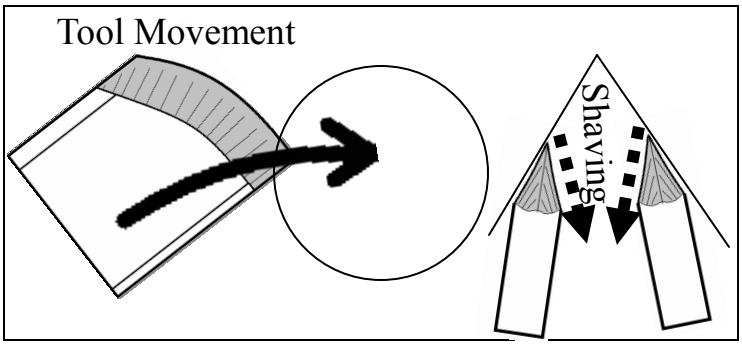


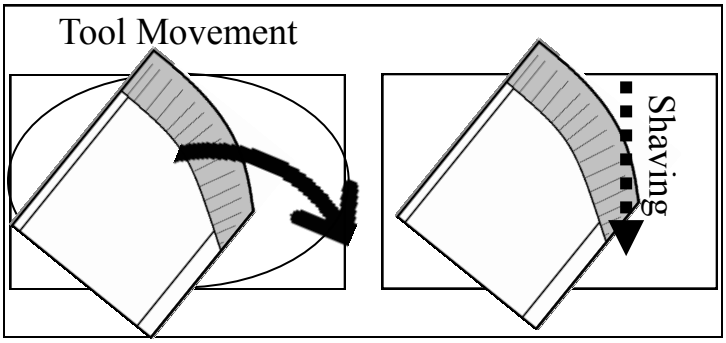
VEE CUT- *(essentially a pair of angled Paring Cuts)*

a. **Used to layout critical features on a spindle**– Creates a very clean cut using the long point to score fibers. **Arc into the cut**, as w/ a Peel Cut.

b. **A DEEP Vee Cut can be used to cleanly part the blank**– alternate sides working one side then the other to relieve shaving & allow ejection during the cut. Repeat until approx. 1/8" diameter. Then, sneak up on a clean part SLOWLY to avoid plucking fibers at smallest diameter.

c. **End w/ tool shank perpendicular to lathe axis, edge vertical** & **maintain a ~5° clearance angle** as in the Paring Cut.

ROLLING CUT-*(short point leads)*

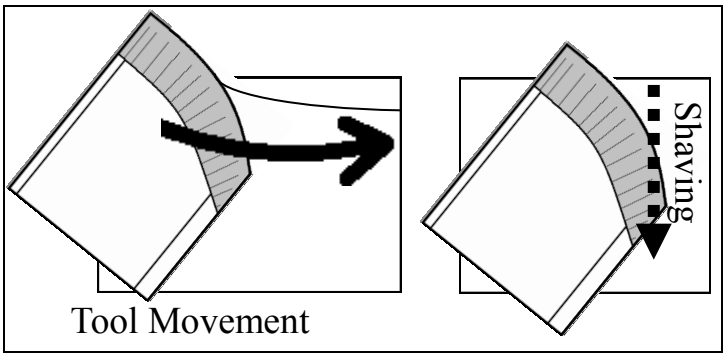


a. **Used to create a 1/2 Bead or convex curve**– combine with an equal cut on the opposite side to create a bead.

b. **Performed as in a Planing Cut w/ a roll of the tool on its axis.** Begin w/ tool on its side, presenting the bevel then the short point to the wood.

c. **End w/ edge vertical** & handle perpendicular to lathe axis for max. control.

d. For small/ detailed rolling cuts, use the long point to maintain sight of engaged edge.



COVING CUT- *(a <u>concave</u> Rolling-Cut using the short point, best results w/ convex-beveled skew)*

a. **Used to create a <u>shallow</u> 1/2 Cove or concave curve**– combined with an equal cut on the opposite side creates a cove.

b. **Performed as in a Planing Cut w/ a roll ("scoop") of the tool on its axis.** Begin w/ tool resting on edge (in-line w/ short point) steering the short point in a "scooping" motion to the smallest diameter.

c. **End w/ edge horizontal**, w/ handle angled slightly to lathe axis to keep long point above the blank.