

Shaving set

Walter Hall makes a shaving brush, razor and stand



Razors and shaving gear make great presents for birthdays, Christmas or Father's Day. In this project I show how to make a shaving brush, razor and stand from readily available high-quality kits of components using many of the techniques that will be familiar to pen makers.

Because, by the very nature of their purpose, they will be subjected to repeated wetting and drying I prefer to make them from one of the many

types of acrylic material available.

It is of course possible to make them with wooden handles, but if you choose to go down this route I would strongly recommend using a high quality acrylic or nitrocellulose lacquer on all parts of the finished item including the end grain to protect against the ingress of moisture and subsequent breakdown of the handle. Such a finish is best applied by spraying after removing the item from

the lathe to ensure good coverage.

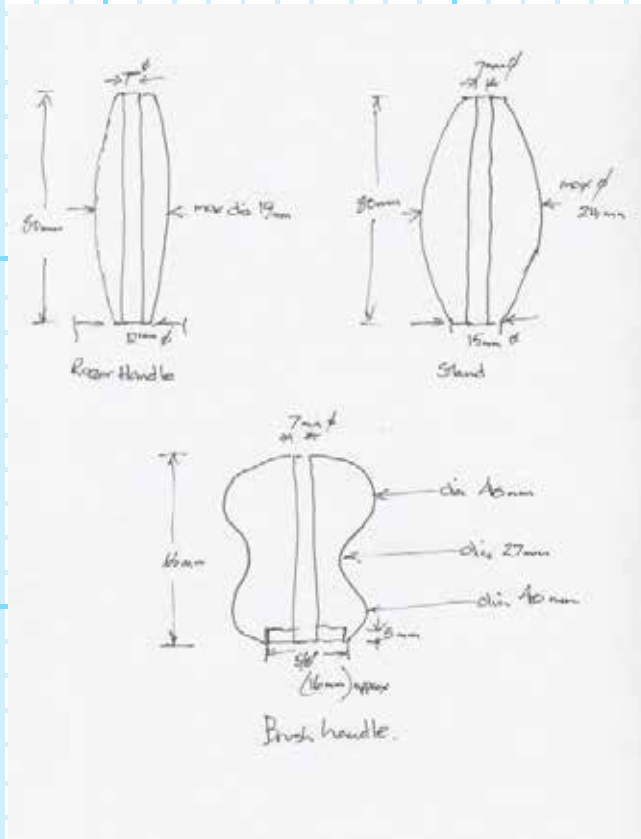
Selection of shaving brush knots is also important as these are available in a range of qualities made from natural bristle or synthetic materials. Do make sure you get the correct size to fit the kit components. You may also wish to consider the end-user's preference for razor head type. Both safety razor heads like the one use here and Mach3 types are available in kit form.

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

- Personal and Respiratory protection equipment
- Spindle roughing gouge
- Beading and parting tool
- Spindle gouge
- TCT tipped tool (optional)
- Cordless drill
- Barrel trimmer
- Drill bits
- Abrasives
- Polishing compounds

MATERIALS

- Acrylic blank 40mm Ø x 65mm
- 2 acrylic blanks 25mm Ø x 100mm
- Shaving brush kit
- Razor handle kit
- Shaving stand kit
- Shaving knot

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1 This project uses three kits and a shaving knot. The safety razor, brush handle and stand kits are all Penn State Industries products whilst the knot is a superior quality natural bristle Chinese import. The stand kit I used is fully chromed, but some have an unfinished steel underside which is best covered with a rubber sub base to prevent rusting.

2 There are many types of acrylic material available that are suitable for this project. I chose a faux ivory from Mervyn Cadman's UKpenkits.com website but imitation horn, animal skin patterns and many colours and patterns are available from a range of suppliers. You will need a large blank about 40mm x 65mm and two blanks each 25mm x 100mm

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3 It is perfectly possible to make a shaving brush handle without using a kit, but I think the chrome collar and stud finial add a touch of quality to the finished product. Begin by measuring the diameter and depth of the collar to determine the size of the hole required.

4 Mount the brush blank securely in a scroll chuck and using a suitably sized Forstner bit (in this case 5/8 inch) in a Jacobs or keyless tailstock chuck drill out the recess. Follow up by drilling all the way through with a 7mm drill to accommodate the brass tube.

5 Check that the collar is a good fit in the recess and that it sits snug and square against the end of the blank. If necessary square off the end of the blank with a gouge or skew chisel to get a perfect fit.

6 Roughen the surface of the brass tube to create a better surface for the adhesive to grip and glue the tube into the blank, ensuring the end is flush with the bottom of the collar recess. I prefer epoxy for this and use an inserter tool to prevent glue from getting into the tube or onto my fingers. Remove any excess glue from inside the recess.

7 Once the adhesive is set square off the other end of the blank to the tube using an end mill barrel trimmer. This will provide a good flat surface for the button finial to seat against. Make sure your trimmer is sharp to avoid chatter or breakout of the acrylic material.

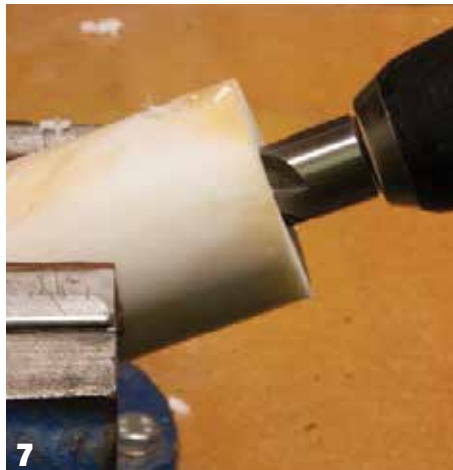
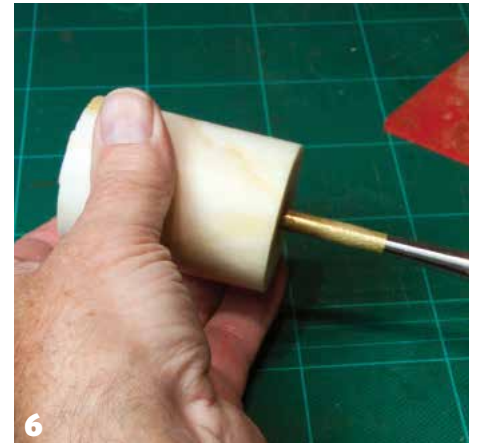
8 The blank could be turned between centres with care, but this would risk flaring the ends of the brass tube and compromising the fit of the components so it is better to use a pen mandrel. Bushes are not required for sizing but standard 7mm bushes should be used as spacers. First turn the blank to a cylinder the maximum size of the finished diameter. A spindle roughing gouge is fine for this.

9 Shape the ends using a beading parting tool or a spindle gouge. A skew chisel would also be suitable so use the tool you are most comfortable with. Remember that the only rules are to work safely and use the tool that does the job best for you.

10 The handle needs to be shaped to fit into the stand. I find the best way to ensure a good fit is to first determine the minimum diameter with a parting tool before shaping. The stand itself makes a good set of calipers to measure the correct size.

11 Once the size is set you can use a spindle gouge or other suitable tool of your choice to form the shape. The design is up to you but it should be comfortable to hold when wet and shaped to hang neatly on the stand.

12 Once you are happy with the shape, sand through the grits of abrasive to about 400 or 600. I used Abranet but any good quality flexible abrasive will do. Don't use too fast a speed or too much pressure or you may overheat the material.





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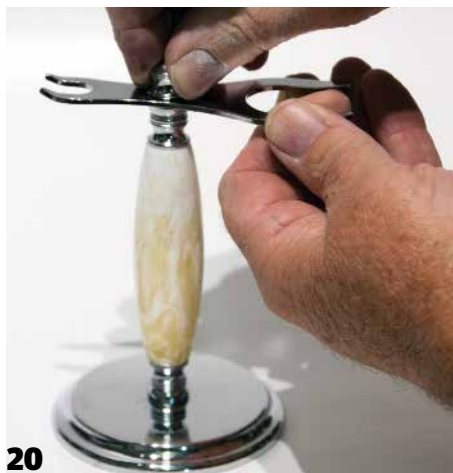
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13 When you are happy with the surface achieved by sanding, polish the work with a suitable compound or abrasive wax to a high sheen. If you prefer to use micromesh abrasive at this stage that will work too, but I find abrasive waxes or polishing compounds take much less time.

14 The best way to assemble the finished handle is using a pen press, but if you don't have one then it is easy enough to use a bench vice or even a clamp. Another alternative is to make wooden inserts for the Morse tapers in you head and tailstock and use the tailstock quill as a press.

15 All that then remains to complete this part of the project is to glue your chosen shaving knot into the collar. Again my preference is for an epoxy adhesive which provides a good reliable bond.

16 The process for the stand and he razor handle is exactly the same. Prepare the blanks by cutting to just a fraction longer than the brass tubes supplied with the kits. If using a bandsaw for this, round blanks are best clamped to the mitre fence to stop them turning and to keep fingers clear of the bandsaw blade.

17 Using the same method as for the handle blank, drill the blanks for the brass tubes. Drilling just short of breaking through and then cutting off the waste on the bandsaw will avoid breakout and leave nice clean ends to the holes.

18 Glue the tubes into place and once the adhesive is set, square off the ends with the barrel trimmer and mount on the pen mandrel. Turn the blanks to the shape of your choice, I opted for a simple single curve. A wide range of tools would be suitable for this job. I much prefer traditional tools but TCT tipped tools do work well with acrylic materials.

19 You can use sizing bushes to determine the diameter of the ends, but I find it easy enough to measure the fit using calipers. Here I am using an old Vernier gauge which has had the tips rounded to prevent catching the work. You will also not that I have reverted to my preferred spindle roughing gouge for the finer cuts.

20 The components are simple pressed together as for the brush handle and then the razor head and stand body are screwed together to complete the project. ●