tools) I prefer a diamond-coated stone (usually diamond applied to a mild steel plate). For gouge flutes, the diamond-tapered rod or cone works quite well. Be careful with diamond coated systems, as not all are of the same quality. Cheaper stones often incorporate fewer diamond particles or a type of industrial diamond that breaks down quickly. My caution: You get what you pay for.

Develop your honing technique

I have seen many variations of honing techniques:

1. fixing the honing stone to a flat surface and working the tool back and forth along the stone.

2. bracing the tool against the tail-stock lock and moving the stone along the edge (tool is stationary).

3. placing the butt end of the handle firmly upright on a bench or the lathe stand and again moving the stone along the tool.

When honing, support the turning tool handle solidly against the body when honing. The grip above keeps the tool stationary.

I prefer to stand solidly with the tool against my body, then, move the stone along the tool (see photo *above*).

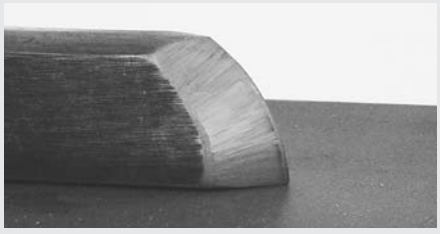
As for the actual honing process, I always begin at the heel of the ground bevel. Next, I start the action of honing with a back and forth motion from the heel towards the edge. When I feel the bevel adequately I lower this honing action towards the cutting edge until I feel that second point of contact. Always maintain this two-point contact, i.e. the hone bridges the slight concave region between the heel of the bevel and the area just below the cutting edge. Remember, you are honing the bevel and not the edge. If the tool is a gouge or hook/ring type of tool, I finish by honing the inside flute. The nicety of this last operation, at least with gouges, is that I have another built in honing guide: hold the slipstone or rounded rod flat in the flute–again, not touching the edge itself, but focusing on the two planes that trap the area we call the edge.

HONING STRATEGIES

Gouges: Hone the outside bevel. Then hone the inside flute with a slipstone, round rod, or cone.

Skews: Hone four faces on these tools: the two ground bevels (begin here), the top edge that will refine the long-point, and the bottom edge that will refine the short point (see photo *at right*).

Parting tools: Use a flat hone to work both ground sides. On thin kerf-parting tools, hone the flat sides to refine the corners.



Skews have four surfaces to hone: two ground bevels and two side edges that define he short and long points (shown above).

Ring/hook tools: These come two ways: ground bevel inside and ground bevel outside. On both styles, work the outside surface with a flat hone. If the ground bevel is outside, work the inside of a hook tool with a narrow slipstone. Choose a round honing rod for ring tools. If the inside is ground--a tapered or round stone in a drill are favorites--hand-hone the surface with the same stone for grinding.

Continued