# Other uses for honing equipment

Several areas of tool refinement also respond well to honing tools.

## Honing scrapers

With turning scrapers, you can hone to flatten or refine the top of the scraper, remove milling marks, and remove either a worn burr or grinder burr.

Why flatten the top? The topside of the scraper--the unground side--becomes one of the planes forming the edge. If it is uneven, pitted, or textured with milling marks from the manufacturing process, you will produce an uneven burr. This makes a huge difference for fine work.

If the top edge is severely afflicted with pits and milling marks, you may need to resort to a belt sander/grinder with a flat platen to clean up the surface. If the tool is in reasonably good condition, hone that surface with a flat hone (diamond is my first choice). Most of this is basic tool refinement.

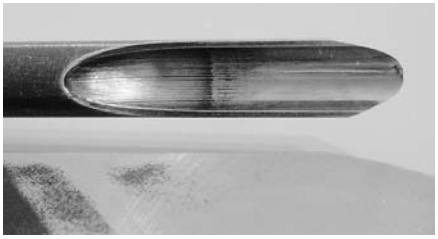
But in actual use, I also rely on a flat stone (face of the India slip or flat diamond stone) to do two operations. First, remove the old burr before pulling up a new one or for removing the heavy burr that is almost always produced by the grinder. I remove the heavy burr if my objective is to use the scraper as a finishing tool and not for heavy stock removal. Just a few passes with the stone held flat on the top of the scraper removes the old burr. Next, I use either a cabinet maker's burnisher or the flat face of an India slip stone to raise a burr--often a light burr for finish work. This is critical to producing different burrs for different situations.

Personally I use the scraper much in the same way the cabinetmaker does with their scraper: with a burr 90 percent of the time, and most often as a finishing tool.

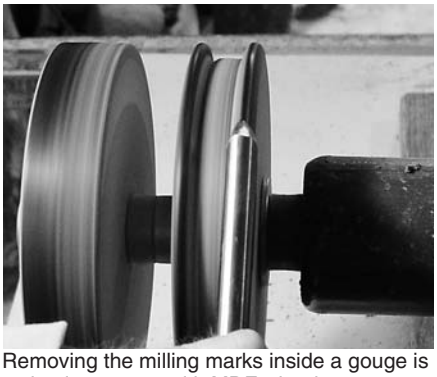
## Power-hone gouges

I've found another use for power-honing: to remove the milling marks from the inside of a gouge's flute. Today, just about all bowl and detail gouges are ground from round bars of high-speed steel. This positive development comes with one drawback: Virtually all of these tools show milling-process signs that forms one of the faces which produce a sharp edge. By removing or reducing these milling marks, you improve the tool's edge.

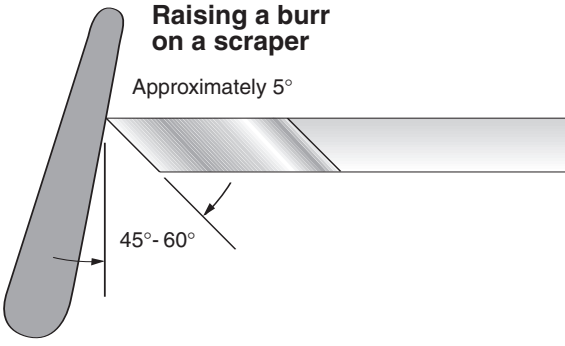
With an MDF wheel, you can remove or greatly reduce those milling marks (see top photo). I normally turn the beads from 3/4" MDF, making several different widths for the beads (see photo *above right*). Concentrate on the last 1" of the tool. Repeat the process when you have worn down the tool to the area you polished. Some specialty high-speed tools require more time and effort and even an aggressive buffing compound (gray or emery) to begin the process.



Milling marks in the flute of a gouge, above, and pits or milling marks on scrapers impact edge quality.



Removing the milling marks inside a gouge is a simple process with MDF wheels.




## Final thoughts

Any technique that reduces grinding and sanding and improves the detail of my work has my vote. Whether it's chippy grain, ornery end grain, or the desire for clean, crisp work, I'm a true believer in the benefits honing brings to turning.

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