

# Drilling Antler

Les Elm © 2008

Drilling irregular shaped Antler can be a challenge to get the hole drilled through the center. I have found that using my lathe to drill irregular shaped Antler works for me.

Make sure that the points of the Live Center and the Drill Bit line up perfectly point to point with the lathe running. This way the drill bit will always exit where the point of the live center is positioned on the end of the Antler blank.

With Antler that has a large radius curve, I place the drill bit and live center on the ends of the Antler so the drill bit will not exit the side of the Antler.

Install a drill chuck into the head stock with the appropriate drill bit and set the lathe to run around 500 RPM.

Once I have cut the Antler blank to length I mark one end for the bit to enter and the other end where I want the bit to exit making sure the bit will not exit the side of the Antler.



Drill Bit Entrance Mark



Drill Bit Exit Mark

Using the Antler blank place a mark on the drill bit just shy of the drill bit exiting the end of the Antler blank to avoid drilling into the end of the Live Center.



Mark the Drill Bit so Bit Will Not Exit Blank

# Drilling Antler

Hold the Antler blank with a pair of pliers and place the drill bit on the entrance mark, slide the Live Center up to the exit mark and tighten the Live Center to hold the blank in position.



Antler Blank Installed Between Bit and Live Center

Grip the Antler with a set of pliers and start the lathe running at 500 RPM. Start cranking the Live Center to push the Antler into the drill bit as far as the live center will go. Stop the lathe, crank the Live Center back to zero and slide back up to the Antler and continue drilling up to the depth mark on the drill bit.



Holding Antler with Pliers



Drilling up to Depth Mark



Stop Drilling at Depth Mark

# Drilling Antler

Stop the lathe, reverse the Antler, hold the Antler with pliers, start the lathe and finish drilling the hole.



Antler Reversed to Finish Drilling Hole

Always remember that the bit will always exit exactly where the Live Center is set on the Antler end.

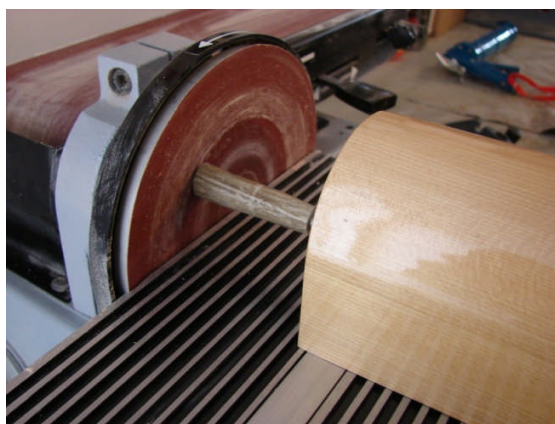


Antler Bit Entrance Hole



Antler Bit Exit Hole

Install the appropriate pen brass tube and square up the Antler ends to the brass tubes.



Squaring Up the Antler Blank Ends.