



International Association of Penturners

# Studies in Segmenting IV: Chevron Finials

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After some experience with constructing the basic Chevron brick and tweaking your process for making full Chevron blanks, a fun way to use some of your left-over slices of the Chevrons and add an additional visual element to a pen is to make a Chevron Finial.

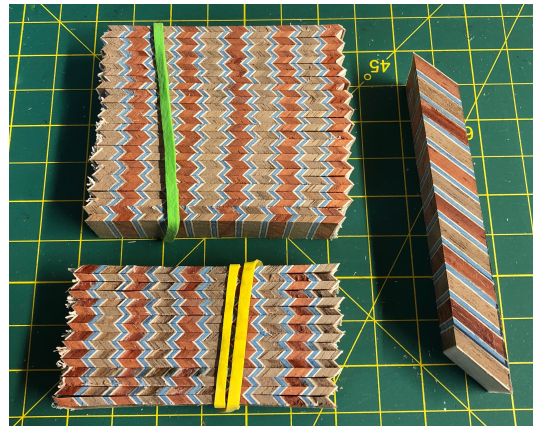
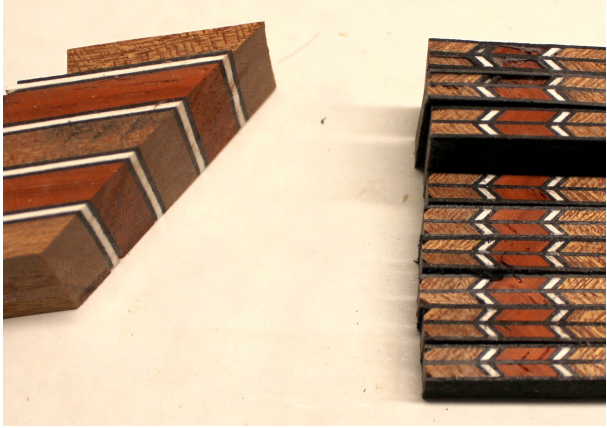
I will admit that there are “a few” challenges to be overcome for these finials, but I believe they are worth the effort. Prior experience with the first three tutorials is helpful, as is simply making a few basic finials so you understand the process and skills.

Basic custom finials.



**The dreaded Black Palm**

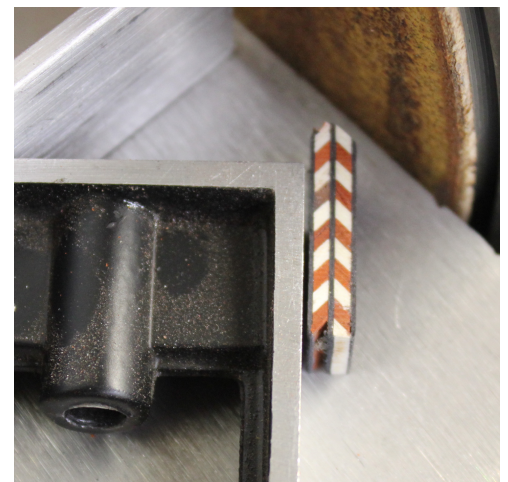
After you have made several Chevron pens, you will most likely have some leftover inlay slices - **SAVE THESE!** Any pieces as small as 1/2" will be fine, you just need 4 with matching designs. Take those to a disk sander and true-up the sides so that the patterns are at a correct orientation (e.g., they are at a 90 degree angle to the sides).



Now choose 4 matching Chevron inlays and sand one side so that the ends match and the pattern is aligned. In this photo, the top edges were sanded to meet at the Maple tip.



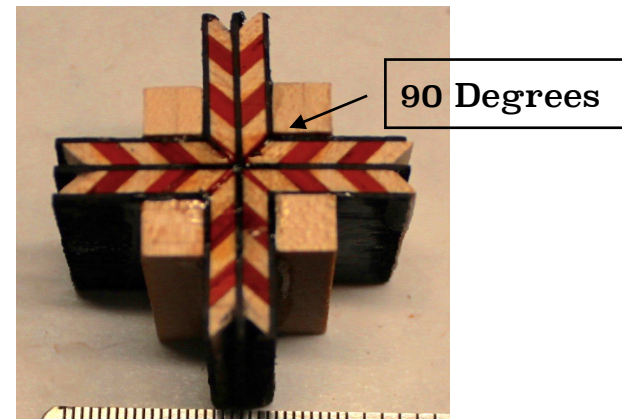
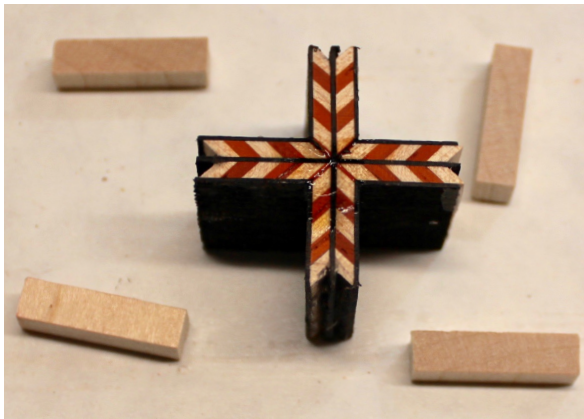
Take four matched inlays to a disk sander, and using a combination square and the miter gauge, sand one side to a 45 degree angle, flip it over and repeat. Do this for all four inlays and check the alignment. NOTE: sand the tips just to the center of the design (the black veneer).





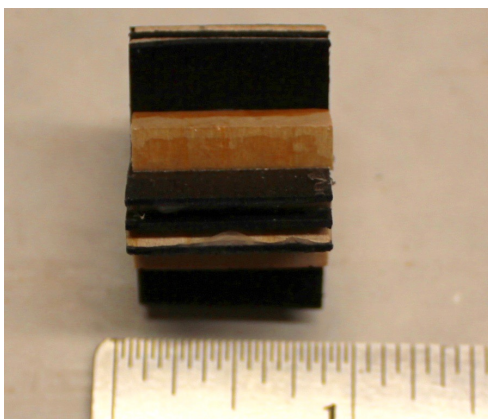
If the alignment looks good, you can begin to assemble the finial.

Cut 4 corner square segments. The dimensions are not crucial as long as the inside corners are at a 90 degree angle and there is side grain on the ends - I prefer to have side grain on all the pieces facing the top of the finial. Match the four 90 degree angled ends tips and proceed to glue the 8 pieces together. I use 2 part epoxy as you then have time to move the pieces to keep the pattern aligned. Have a piece of wax paper on the bottom or a silicone cutting mat from your kitchen...



I usually wait overnight or even longer for the epoxy to finishing setting. Going forward you will be working with a finial blank with approximately 40-50 glue joints, and will be about 1/8" thick and 3/8" in diameter. You don't want a glue joint to fail.

Sand the sides and ends to insure that the design is in alignment.





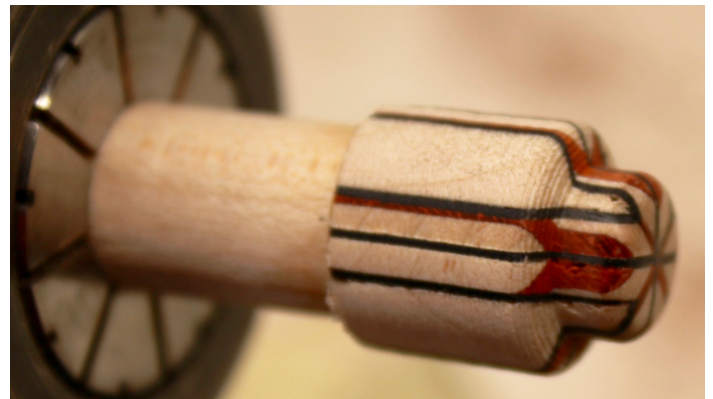
I will now use a hand-held pin chuck and 1/8" drill bit and make a small mortise in the finial blank design center. I suspect a drill press would be fine, but I don't want to be too aggressive and split the finial at the center of all those joints.



I will then place a sacrificial blank (usually hard maple) in a collet chuck, true it up, face off the end, and turn a matching tenon for the finial mortise.



Now glue on the finial to the dowel. I will bring up my tailstock to match the center of the design to the point of a sharp live center. Alignment is important, check all 4 sides. After this is dry, the fun can begin!



I believe I mentioned that there may be a "few" challenges to turn these finials, well here they come. To summarize; sharp tools, CA applied frequently, a gentle touch, continual use of your calipers to insure final dimensions and patience.

My skills as a general woodturner are very basic, and quite frankly I don't have good technique - mainly self taught. To turn these I have used a combination of spindle gouges, straight edged (not beveled) carbide (Magic Skew), a thin parting tool and

for the final parting off - a thin kerf backsaw/razor saw. This last step has been problematic as my thin kerf parting tool is still too aggressive and has resulted in ruined finials. Making the final cut by hand has been much better for me. To ruin the finial at this last step is... discouraging.

As previously mentioned, I recommend you have some experience turning basic solid wood/acrylic finials. The process is really the same. Constructing the Chevron is also fairly straight-forward. It looks daunting, but go slow and if you are willing to screw up a few, all will work out.

The real challenge for me was the final turning of the finial blank and parting it off. Oh, and the 20-30 other issues that you will discover along your journey.

Fussy little buggers, but when successful, a real accomplishment.

Final suggestion, turn off your dust collector before you part off the finial (DAMHIK).

