

NaI (New and Improved) Realistic Cigar Pen

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Nal (New and Improved) Realistic Cigar Pen

By Bill Bettag AKA Wood Butcher - July 2016

The original tutorial I did on this pen style has worked well but there has been an issue with it from my perfectionist point of view. The glitch is that the threads don't always line up as they should due to the multi start thread and so the assembled pen often ends up off center just a bit. This may not bother some but it frustrated me hence this different approach.

The first major change is the kit used to make the pen, I used a **Magnetic Vertex Rollerball** from PSI (https://www.pennstateind.com/library/PKFP50xx_ins.pdf) and modified it as will be shown later.

The blank I used a stabilized Thuya Burl and non-stabilized Buckeye Burl for the ash. As in the previous tutorial, glue the piece of ash blank to the cigar body blank and allow it to thoroughly cure. I usually glue up several and keep them for future efforts. The longer the body blank the better but 6 inches is about minimum. Other woods I have used are Teak, Maple Burl, Redwood Burl (makes a lighter weight pen) Amboyana Burl and a few others.

Modification of the Vertex: The upper pen part from the kit is modified by knocking out the finial using a transfer punch of appropriate size and a small hammer. Next remove the clip by cutting and filing flush and smooth.



Original kit part



Finial removed



Clip removed

Scuff the upper pen kit part with sandpaper so the epoxy will have something to grip, I used 320 grit. Assemble the parts as they will be used shown below and on the PSI instructions shown as a PDF above.



Scuffed

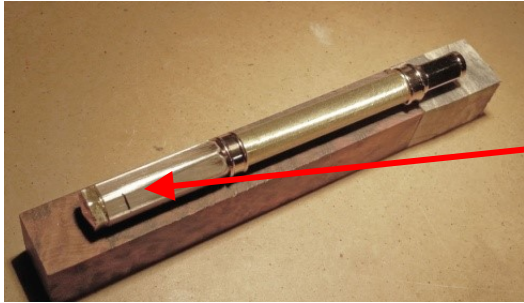


Parts assembled and placed on the blank

If you see that your glued up blank is going to be too short you can remove 3/8" of the "cap" end where the clip was but don't shorten more than that.



Be Very **Careful**, don't cut the wrong (threaded) end.



This shows how the shortening helps, see the cut mark on the part?
The blank could be 3/8" shorter.



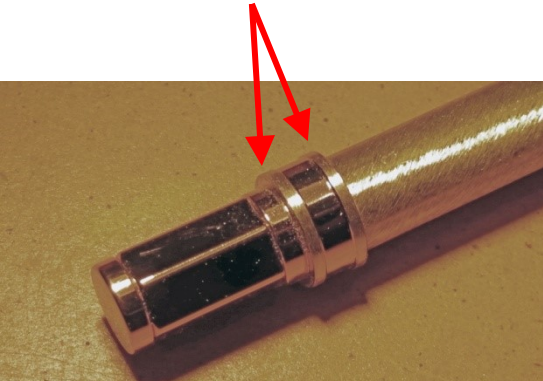
This is the test blank I used to size the drill bit I would need to get this to all fit together, 1/2" worked well.



Cut the blank to the correct length.
I found that using the pen parts worked better than measuring, I'm measurement challenged so this helped.

Careful with the placement, don't get this part wrong.
The cap end IS NOT the ash end.

I used a small belt sander to reduce the diameter of the decorative rings on the parts, you could file or grind them to get this results.



Ready to drill. I highly recommend drilling on the lathe for accuracy and alignment. Remember, a 1/2" bit, not the 10.5mm used for a normal pen. Chuck 'em up and drill on slow speed.

BE CAREFUL AND DRILL ONLY TO THE DEPTH NEEDED OR YOU WILL DRILL THROUGH.

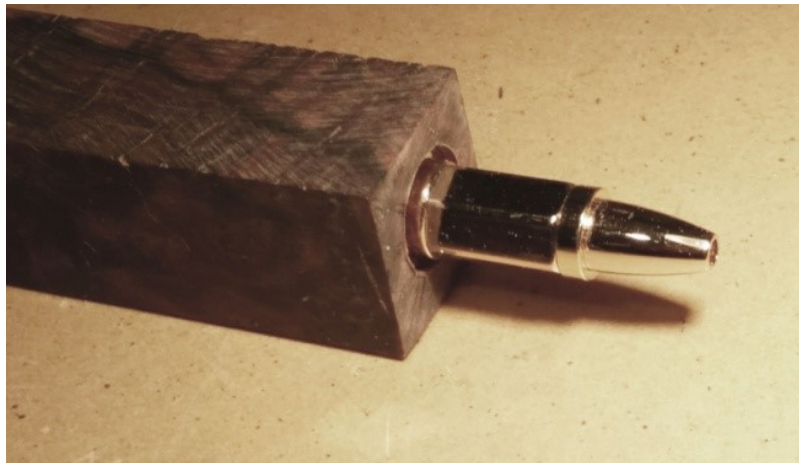


Marked and ready

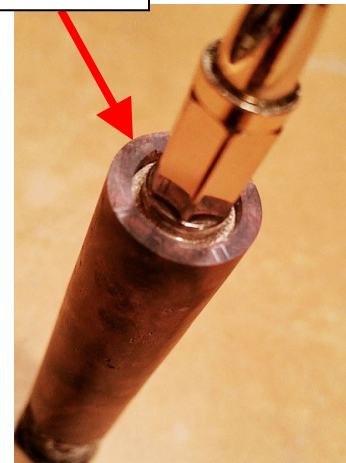


Boring

This is how it looks dry fitted (dry fit everything) and this is where I realized that there needed to be a recess for the other/upper part to seat into. I cut the shallow relief with a parting tool after the hole was drilled. Note, this is the ash end of the cigar.



Recess



This is how the parts go together and they are now ready for gluing. I used 5 min. epoxy and a popsicle stick to put glue into the bottom of the hole and a light coat on the half of the parts going into the hole. think this out before you smear it all over because you will get squeeze out if you use too much and apply it in the wrong place. IF you did cut the cap part shortening the pen by 3/8", you will want to place some painters tape on the open end going into the drilled hole or it will be an issue.



OK, now we turn the pen. The epoxy has cured overnight so I assemble the pen without the refill. I turned between centers but you could use the 4 jaw chuck if the blank is long enough. Go slow, you go slow, the lathe goes fast, I use about 2200rpm but find your own comfort speed and get it round. You need pressure from the live center on the tail stock to prevent slipping but too much will break the ash end, I don't want to say how I know that. I turned with the ash toward the tail end but either way would work. If the two parts insist on slipping you could apply a small dab of hot melt glue to stabilize while you turn.



Turned and ready to work on the ash

Everyone asks about the ash and how much work is it. I think the ash is the easiest part and is fun to do. The instructions for how I do it are on the first tutorial as are a few other tips. Remember that part of the hole you drilled on the ash end is actually in the ash, go slow when "tearing up" the Buckeye while creating the ash effect or you will cut through to the hole.



Finished pen



Same thing conservative view

Final thoughts:

The magnet for this kit is not super strong so the cap could come off while it is in your pocket and, since it's a rollerball, it will ruin a garment by wicking out a lot of ink. As you can see the joint is almost invisible, I put the band close to it as camouflage which also helps. I used a stabilized blank so no finish was applied. If you use an unstabilized blank I would suggest a few, maybe 3 or 4, coats of thin CA then sand with 3200 Micro Mesh. I didn't apply that so you will have to work out how to get the CA on without gluing the whole thing together in which case you have an interesting pointer/prop.

Thanks for looking and have fun with this.

Wood Butcher, Bill Bettag