

Medium CA Only Pen Finishing

By Les Elm

Through experimentation along with some trial and error this is what I have found that works for me. I am sure that others will find what works best for them when trying this application of Medium CA Only as a pen finish.

To avoid gluing the bushings to the pen blanks and prevent bushing iron filings from getting imbedded into blank ends, I use bushings that have a smaller diameter than the Kit bushings being used. I use old Slimline bushings. In order to use the smaller diameter Slimline bushings for Kits that require a "B" Mandrel, I have turned Corian Inserts using 7mm tubes that fit on my Adjustable "A" mandrel. These inserts fit snugly inside the diameter of the tube required for the Kit I am turning.

Preparing The Pen Blank:

- Turn the pen blank just proud of the Kit bushings being used for the pen kit.
- Remove the Kit bushings.
- Install the required insert in the pen blank.
- Install the Slimline bushings on the "A" Mandrel.
- Finish turning and sanding the pen blank down to match the Kit bushings. I use a micrometer to measure the Kit bushings to match the appropriate pen blank ends.
- Fill all voids with CA by applying a bead of Med CA along the length of the blank and spread along the length of the blank while rotating the lathe by hand with the back of a small piece of used sand paper.
- Sand the blank with 400 grit and blow out any white CA sanding dust that may be in unfilled voids.
- Continue filling voids and sanding with 400 grit until all voids are completely filled.

Applying The Medium CA:

- With the lathe running at turning speed apply 6-8 drops of Med CA to form a puddle on a small folded piece of blue shop towel.
- Make one pass along the length of the blank.
- Immediately stop the lathe and quickly wipe the blank length wise with the remaining CA on the shop towel while rotating the lathe by hand. This will smooth out any turning rings before the CA has a chance to dry.
- Let dry for 15 minutes. **Do not use accelerator!** There are too many curing problems associated with accelerators.
- With the lathe running, sand with fine steel wool.
- With the lathe off, rub down the blank length wise with fine steel wool to remove any turning rings.
- Wipe down the blank with a tack cloth.
- Repeat apply Med CA for as many coats you want to get some depth to the finish, wiping down with a tack cloth between each coat.
- I usually apply 6 - 10 coats of CA to get some depth to the finish.

Finishing The CA Only:

- After rubbing down the final coat with fine steel wool, wipe down with tack cloth and wet sand from 600 thru 1500.
- Polish with Liquid Brasso or Hut Ultra Gloss Plastic Polish.