

Cabriole Leg

Instructions

By Gary Miller

Note: It is assumed that the leg blanks will have been cut perfectly square and planed or sanded to a flawless surface and any mortises will have been cut before turning proceeds.

1. Look at the grain and mark which end will be the pommel and which the foot
Mark the outer corner top and bottom.
2. Mark the shoulder and ankle locations (see diagrams) on all sides of the blank.
3. Draw diagonal lines from corner to corner, both top and bottom.
4. Make an indentation with an awl at the intersection points top and bottom (mark them as points #1).
5. Depending on the style of the pommel determine the offset point and mark it with an awl along the diagonal line opposite the outer corner (see diagrams). Do the same for the foot (mark them as points #2).
6. Mount the blank between centres on points #1 (being right handed, I mount the foot at the headstock end).
7. With a parting tool cut a groove to the required diameter at the top of the foot and turn the foot ONLY to a cylinder.
8. Remount the blank at points #2. If the pommel is going to have a shoulder, part a groove to the required diameter at the shoulder line.
9. If the pommel has NO shoulder, turn a transitional cove from the pommel to the top of the taper with a SHARP 3/8" gouge. Start with the gouge on edge, flute towards the direction you are cutting. Taking small controlled cuts rolling the gouge to a more open flute position as you proceed down the cove. Shape the cove by watching the profile being formed NOT the gouge.
10. Part a groove to the required diameter at the ankle. Turn a taper from the pommel to the ankle (note that a SHARP skew does a better job than a roughing gouge). Set speed to at least 1500 RPM.
11. Turn a transitional cove from the foot to the ankle(see procedure in step 9).
12. Stop the lathe frequently and examine the turning during steps 8 to 11. When you are satisfied with the turning, leave the piece between centres and hand sand to eliminate any minor irregularities. If required, round off the shoulders with a small plane or rasp and sand to finish.
13. Remount between centres #1. Turn the foot to its final form and do any final sanding while still mounted. Part off to about 1/4" at the bottom of the foot. Slacken off the tail stock a bit and saw through the remaining bit.
14. You're done! You might like to do a little carving on the pommel. Apply whatever finish suits you.