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Artist Jeff Powell

Instructional Pictorial For Pen Blank Use



I decided to put together this little pictorial for people that purchase my custom hand cut pen blanks, not only to assist in the understanding of how to use the blanks, but also to inspire you to add a little of your own personality to the blanks as well. Although all of the blanks look just fine as they are, some of them can be improved by the user as well, bringing your pen to an even higher level while at the same time requiring very little extra effort.

Flame Pens:

My flame pens have flames that travel all the way around the pen. There are 2 different sizes, and those are determined at the base of the flame. A 3/8" wide flame base is designed for a Jr Gent II pen section, although it can fit other pens that are in that same size range. A 1/2" wide base is for a Jr Gent II cap section, although that too can be used for other pens with diameters in that similar or larger size range. Image 1 shows what I call the base of the flames. Use a ruler and place it on the base of the flames and divide that measurement in half. This is the center of the flame. Turn the blank on its side and repeat, all the way around the pen can't hurt. Trim the top of the blank clean and then transfer those locations to the top of

the blank. This is where you drill your hole. In image 2 you see where the final tube placement should be after the blank is drilled. The lower section of the blank is for the pen and you can just drill and tube that like any other acrylic blank. For red flames like these, use red painted tubes.

Image 1:



Image2:

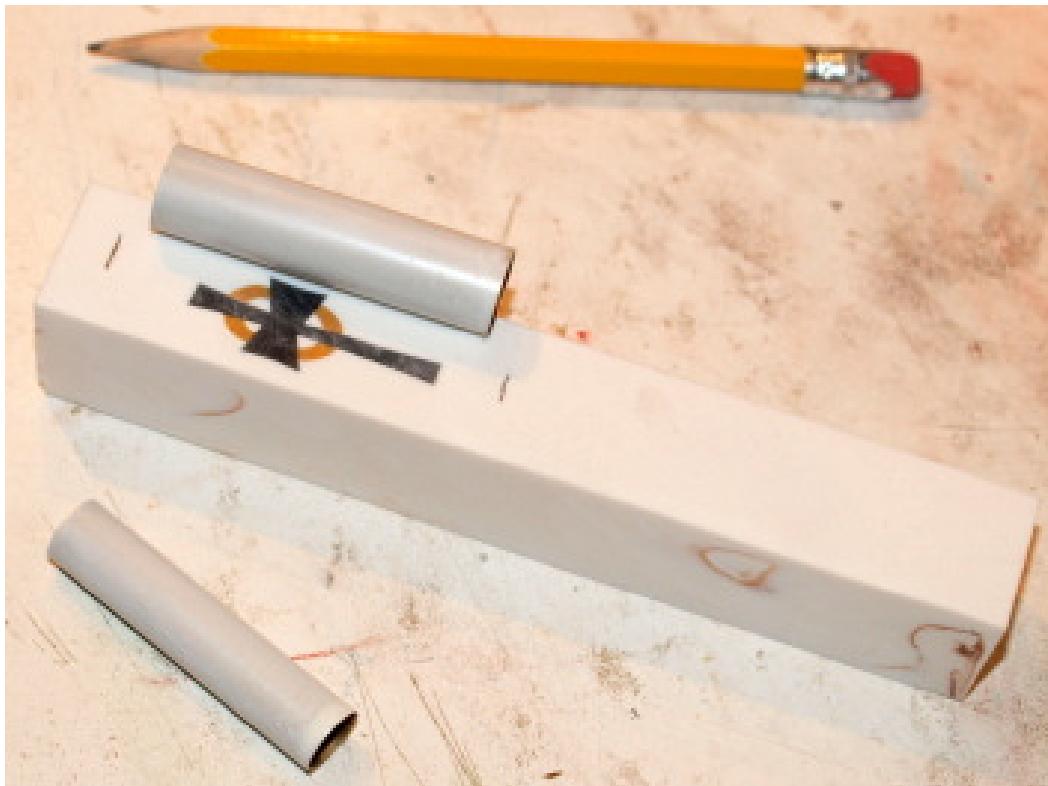


Fixed image pens:

The most common and affordable pen blanks simply contain an image near the top of the blank which appears on only one side. The final width of your pen is key to determining whether the image will fit on the pen or not. I do not make images wider than $\frac{1}{2}$ " and sometimes I have images as small as $\frac{3}{8}$ wide for smaller pens. A Jr Gent II pen cap is just a hair over $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide when spun straight across. Generally by $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide images are just a little

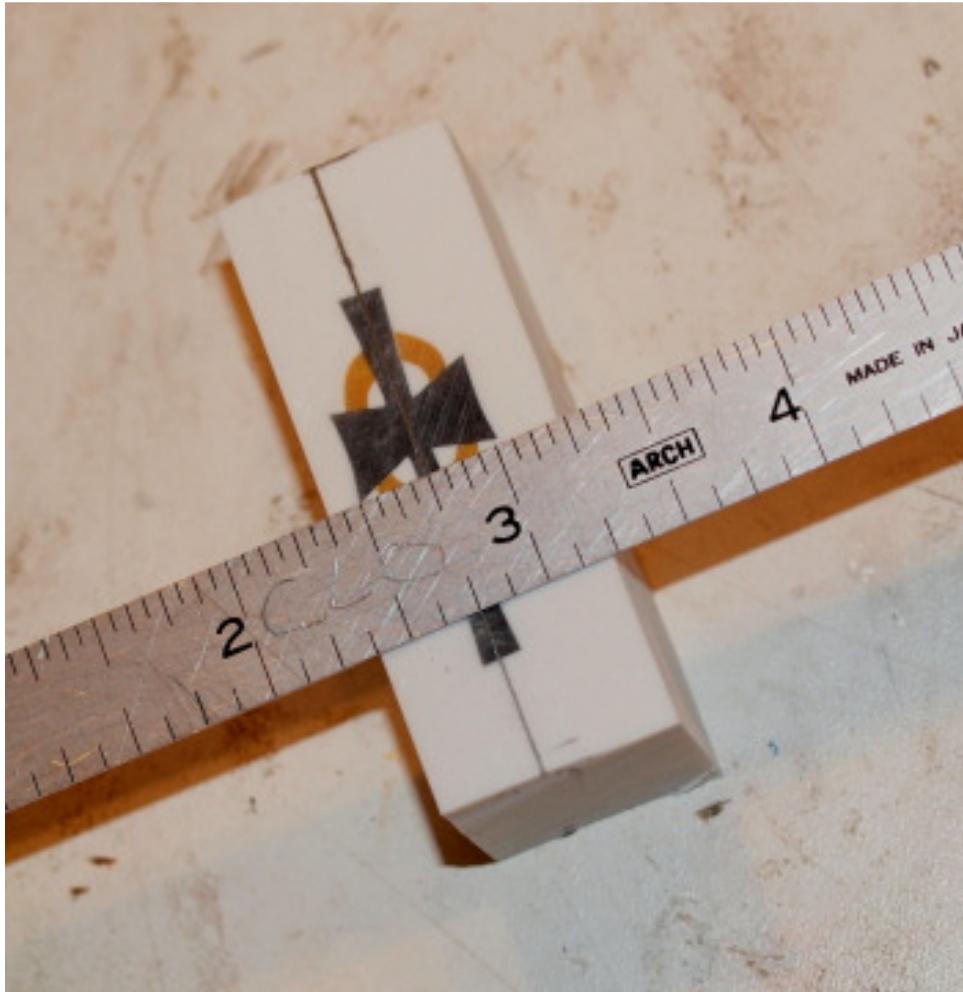
narrower than $\frac{1}{2}$ ". In my example pen, I am using one of the rare blanks that actually is $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. This image on a Jr kit cannot be spun directly straight, it must have just a little bit of arc in order for the image to not spin off the sides of the pen. I am using this example so you can physically know what to watch for when spinning the pen.

Image1:



I paint my tubes white for this pen. Always paint your tubes, better safe than sorry! I place the tube centered over the image length and mark the blank to be longer than the tube. Now cut the blank.

Image2:



This is an easier than average design to find the center. The idea is that you need to find the furthest outside point of the image on either side and then divide that in half to locate the center of the image.

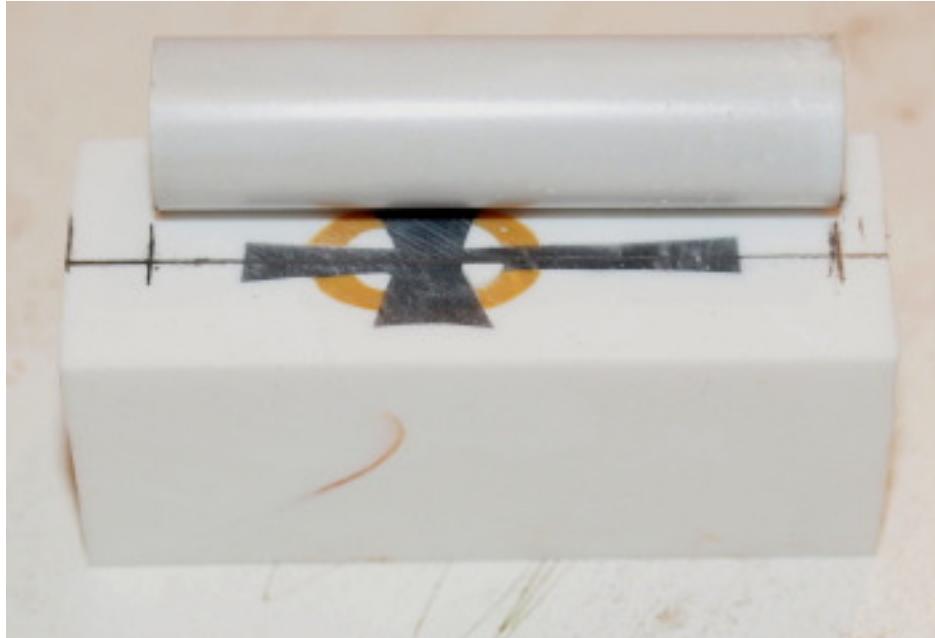
Image3:



The center of the image is then transferred across the top of the blank. The image itself is always 7/16 thick. Measure back from the face of the blank 7/16 and make a second mark. This is where you drill the blank. Drilling in the center is very important, and the wider the image, the more crucial this becomes. If this was one of my wooden versions, everything would remain the same

except that instead of measuring back 7/16, you would use the seam as your second reference mark.

Image 4:



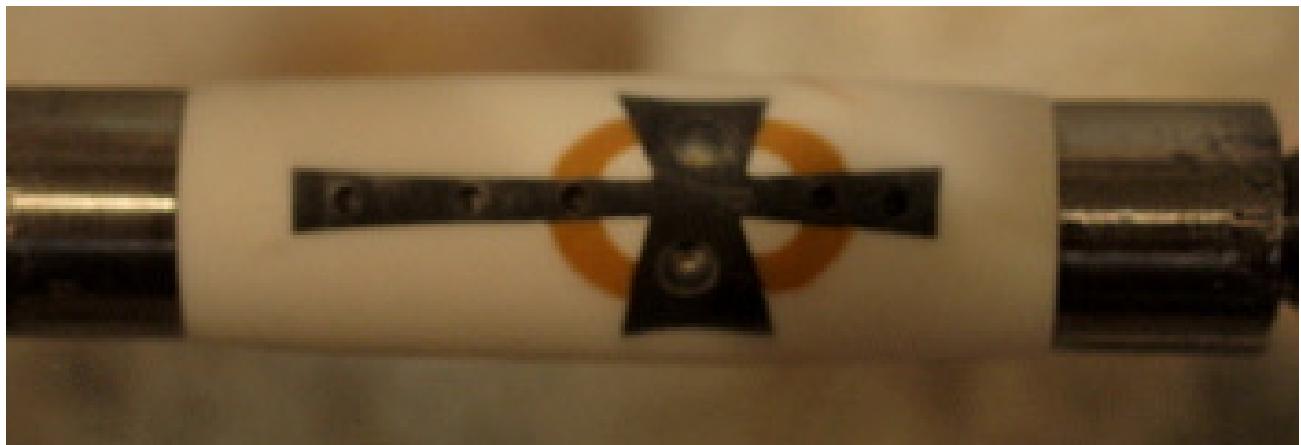
Now the blank is drilled. Place the tube back on to the blank with the length of the image centered. Mark the ends of the tube and go trim the blank. This is an important step, so when you glue in the tube, it will be inside the blank in the proper location. I always recommend 5min epoxy for gluing in tubes.

Image5:



Now I have spun the blank. Look at the sides of the cross..this is as close to a direct overhead shot as I could manage. See how the sides of the cross are only about 1/16" from the edges of the blank! The blank has a slight arc to it, and if I spin it down any more, the cross is going to blow right out the sides of the pen..so this is as close as you want to dare go!

Image6:



Now..you could have stopped at image5, wet sanded the blank and assembled your pen. Image6 is adding your own personality to the blank. I simply walked over to the drill press and drilled 5 1mm holes in the skinny section of the cross and 2 3mm holes in the sides of the cross. They don't have to be very deep. This is the type of thing I really recommend for images like Dolphins..simply drilling and filling an eye makes quite a difference in the end result.

Image7:



This is effortless. I grabbed a little jar of copper flake. With my finger, I simply rubbed the flake into all the holes until they were packed full. Over the top, I drizzled a few drops of thin CA glue over each hole to seal in the copper. Spray on some accelerator and wait 5 min, then

come back and spin off the copper and glue. Wet sand,
polish, assemble, it's as easy as that!

Thank you for reading my little pictorial. I hope that it
helps you to understand the proper use of my blanks as
well as inspires you to add a few personal touches to
them.

From, Jeff Powell

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