Cutlery Handles

Introduction & Thoughts on Design:

This project covers a wide variety of kitchen utensils including pizza cutters, carving sets, cheese knives, etc. The cutlery used with these handles is available through Craft Supplies Woodturners Catalogue in Provo, UT. The handle dimensions may vary and the size of the hole for the tangs vary but the steps for making the handles are the same. Feel free to change the size of the blanks for the handles they can be larger or smaller it is just a matter of taste and the size of the handle that appeals to you. As these items are going to be washed, they will be subject to water damage. Choosing a naturally oily wood will help to preserve the beauty of the finished piece and choosing a water resistant or easily renewable finish would also help. Before drilling the holes for the tangs of the cutlery, carefully measure all the tangs and use a drill bit large enough to accept all the tangs. The tangs will be held in place using epoxy and therefore a tight fit is not necessary as the epoxy needs room to expand.

I have found that the tang sizes on cutlery vary, so always double check them with a pair of calipers and drill a hole slightly larger than necessary. Be sure to leave room for the 5 minute epoxy that will hold the tang in place. The drill bit sizes listed below worked for the last batch of cutlery that I turned. Drill a test hole in some scrap to ensure a proper fit. The handles are turned in the same manner as the seam rippers, although, I do vary the shape of the handle according to the task it is to perform.

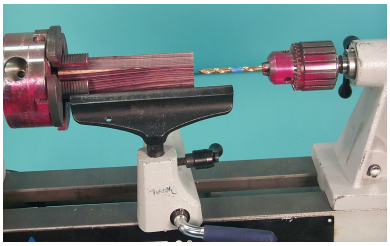
The diameter of the end of the handle that holds the tang guard should be slightly larger than the tang guard. For the cheese slicers I found this to be 5/8” or a tad less. Once again, match your dimensions to your cutlery. I recommend that you purchase the top grade of cutlery, as your time is worth more than the cost of the parts. I have found that it pays to order the parts well in advance as they are sometimes back ordered, especially around the holidays.

Materials and Suggested Sizes:

Faceshield

Item	**Drill Bit**	**Depth**	**Guard diameter**	**Blank Size**
Note: the drill bit sizes listed below fit the cutlery that I used, please check the tangs on your cutlery and use the size drill bit that fits the tangs on your cutlery.				
Cheese Slicer	11/64” bit	1 5/8””	aprox. 5/8”	blank 1 ¼” x 1 ¼”x 4 ½”
Cheese Knife	13/64” bit	1 7/8””	aprox. ¾”	blank 1 ¼”x 1 ¼” x 4 ½”
Pie Cutter	13/64” bit	2”	aprox. ¾”	blank 1 ¼”x ¼” x 5”
Carving Fork	¼” bit	2 ¼”	aprox. 7/8”	blank 1 ¼” x 1 ¼” x 5”
Carving Knife	15/64” bit	2 ¼”	aprox. 7/8”	blank 1 ¼” x 1 ¼”x 5”
Bread Knife	15/64” bit	2 3/8”	aprox. ¾”	blank 1 ¼” x 1 ¼” x 5”
Pizza Cutter	½” bit	1 ½”	aprox. 7/8” tenon	blank 1 ¼” x 1 ¼” x 5”

Procedure:

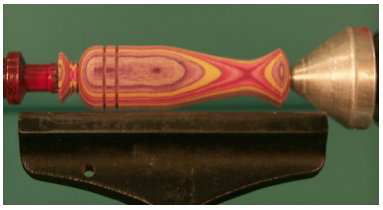


1. To turn a cheese knife, start with a blank approximately 1 ¼" x 1 ¼" x 4 ½" and mark the centers on both ends. Use a scratch awl or nail to make a dimple at the center points

2. Using a drill press drill a hole in the end that will hold the tang, using a 13/64" drill bit to drill a hole 17/8" deep.

3. Mount the blank in the lathe using a ½" steb center or your favorite drive center in the head stock and a bearing cone center in the tail stock inserted into the drilled hole.

4. Turn the blank to a cylinder, remember to leave approximately ¾" diameter where the guard on the slicer meets the wood handle and use a Parting Tool to make the tenon for the guard. Shape it into a comfortable handle, using a skew or 3/8" detail gouge. Turn some beads or coves for decoration.



5. Sand the turned handle beginning with 100 grit and ending with 1500 grit sand paper.

6. If you choose to use a friction polish on the handle, apply it now and then part off the handle. I prefer to finish my handles off the lathe using a combination of Shellac sanding sealer followed by several coats of gloss lacquer

7. Hand sand the end that was parted off and apply a bit of finish to it.

8. Test fit the cheese knife into the newly turned handle. If it fits smoothly prepare the 5 or 10 minute epoxy and have a tooth pick or similar item handy to aid in getting the epoxy into the hole and on the tang. As the epoxy will spill out of the handle when the tang is inserted, have a paper towel or rag handy to carefully wipe off the excess. This procedure can be messy, so try not to get the epoxy all over the handle. If some of the epoxy gets on the blade, it can be cleaned with acetone or lacquer thinner after it dries. Prepare a place to put the just glued up knife so that it can remain vertical. This will prevent it from sticking to the table top. Check on it shortly to be sure that the tang has not eased out of the hole due to forces of hydrolysis.