

Make this

Acorn Box



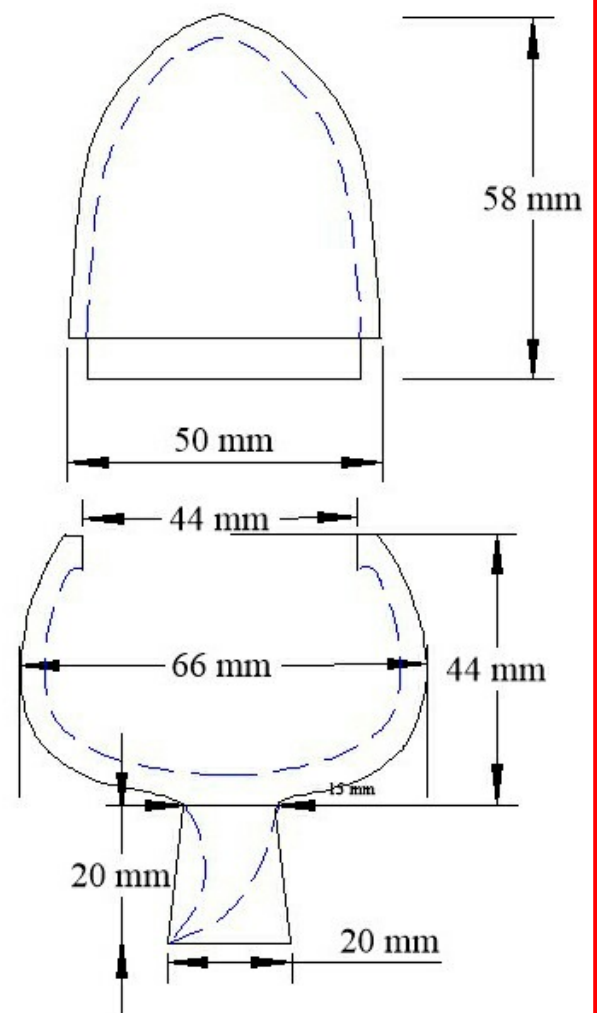
This acorn box makes a great project which is not too difficult to make.

The thing to remember is to make the nut itself a reasonably firm fit to the base otherwise the lid will just fall off.

The photo shows an example where the tail has been carved which some prefer to the other option of leaving the straight tail. I used beech for the nut and acacia wood for the base. These colours seem to work well together and the distinctive grain pattern of the acacia is pleasing. Now to make an acorn box with a straight tail.

1. Start with the base. Mount a piece of suitable wood such as acacia or oak onto the lathe and turn down to a diameter of about 70 mm. Once the work is mounted on a scroll chuck turn the first 30 mm or so of the outside shape to act as a guide when hollowing out. Avoid turning away too much timber near the headstock before hollowing out. This could cause excessive vibration when you make the hollowing cuts.

2. **Hollowing.** Mark the diameter of the entrance as it is easy to be carried away during hollowing process. If you have a suitable tool undercut the wall of the base and continue hollowing out. The swan neck tool from Simon Hope is ideal for this type of work.



3. Sand the inside of the piece and finish with sander sealer or finishing oil. Then, with a spindle gouge start shaping the exterior surface. I like to bring up tail stock support as the turning becomes thinner at the headstock end. Do not part off at this stage.



4. Now mount the blank for the part that forms the nut in the lathe and turn it to a round. This is a piece of maple. Before doing any shaping or hollowing make a tenon to fit the base of the acorn. The advantages of doing this first are:

If the first attempt is too loose there is plenty of material left to have another go. It also defines how wide you can go with the hollowing. When the nut blank fits firmly on the base move on to the next step.

5. Partially shape the outside with a spindle gauge and then start to hollow out. The photo shows the straight Simon Hope hollowing tool in use. The surface was then refined with a negative rake scraper that removed tool marks prior to sanding



6. The nut can be used as a jam chuck allowing you to part off the base. Then, finish shaping the nut with a spindle gauge, sand and finish. Now part off.

7. This time I decided on a gloss finish using sander sealer followed by wax abrasive. The nut does give that desired *plop* sound when pulled from the base. The tail was left as turned to give a comparison to the carved one above. If a carved tail is required complete the turning as shown and mark the outline of the tail prior to carving. Use abrasives to blend the tail to the body of the base.



John Hawkswell