

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTHONY BAILEY

Tormek TNT Woodturner's Kit test

Mark Baker tests the Tormek TNT-708 Woodturning Kit sharpening system and finds it lives up to his expectations



Tormek's wet stone sharpening system has a well-deserved reputation for being high quality and because of the water-cooled cutting, and the facility to hone work on a leather strop system, it certainly has a lot of advocates in the world of woodworking – a fair share of those in the field of woodturning.

The Tormek sharpening system has just been made even better with the advent of the Tormek TNT-708 (Touch n' Turn) Woodturner's Kit.

This kit, dedicated to turners, has been a long time in development and its arrival has certainly been met with wide acclaim. It provides

a comprehensive mix of products that enables a turner to fully utilise the Tormek machine to its maximum potential. It also addresses the comment from the people who say the Tormek is slow and fiddly to use.

The perfect cutting edge

Tormek make no bones about the fact that initial shaping of a tool can take a while (on any sharpening system). They do, however, make a very clear distinction between shaping and sharpening. By sharpening on a water stone system, the cutting edge produced is better, and by being a purer cutting edge, the edge will last longer and will produce a finer finish

Mark Baker found the Tormek Woodturning Kit quick and efficient

off the tool than tools sharpened with bench grinders.

A tool sharpened on a bench grinder can be pretty ragged on the cutting edge and many will hone it to create a finer edge. The Tormek will do this in one hit and can be honed further on the leather to produce an even finer edge. Tormek claim, "An important benefit of the minimal steel removal is that your precious tools will last 8 to 10 times longer."

Let's see if this stacks up and how the new package works. I think the best way of tackling this is to look at each item in the kit and comment on its use accordingly. ▶

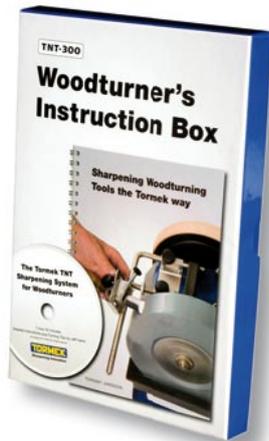
Tormek test

INSTRUCTION BOX WITH DVD AND HANDBOOK

A 120 minute DVD (TNT-300) is presented by American turner Jeff Farris. This informative and comprehensive guide to sharpening with Tormek's TNT system is an integral part of the TNT-708 package.

Covering a wide range of turning tools, each chapter features detailed demonstrations of how to get the best out of the TNT system. At certain points in the DVD, additional interactive menus become available, enabling the viewer to access key points of information in even greater detail, such as specific uses and techniques for different tools.

The instruction handbook by Torgny Jansson on the Tormek TNT system is one of the best I have read in eons. All credit to the designers and author. It is clearly illustrated, concise and easy to follow.



The TNT-708 Woodturner's Kit

TURNING TOOL SETTER (TTS-100)

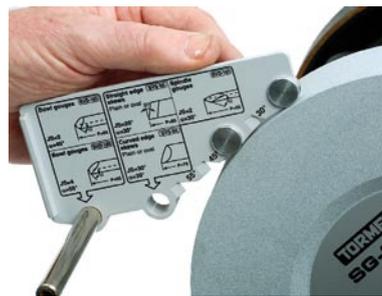
For setting the geometries on gouges and skews

The tool setter is one of the items that now makes re-sharpening tools as simple as one, two and three! Consisting of a high-impact plastic template, it has angles (to gauge what angle the tool is currently ground to), etched setting details and two location holes (to show what angle of grind requires what hole to be used on the universal tool support). On the reverse side, it has a bench hook and pre-set stops to determine the length of tool projection when using the tool jigs in this kit.

The unit has two stainless steel wheels to set the universal rest at the right distance from the wheel. This will ensure constant grinding angles no matter what the diameter of the wheel.

The stages for setting are: select the angle required, set the length of projection, set the tool rest to the correct distance from the wheel in conjunction with the jig, and then

sharpen the tools. It is much simpler than the system previously advocated and I had no problem following these steps. The chart is a helpful reminder for the process and grinds practicable.



Jig setting distance



Jig setting blade protection

Tormek TNT Selection Chart

Shapes achieved on gouges and skews with the TTS-100 setter.

Bowl gouges

1	$\alpha=45^\circ$		JS 2 P 65 Hole A	Standard profile. Only lightly swept back wings. For turners of all skill levels.
2	$\alpha=45^\circ$		JS 2 P 75 Hole A	Irish profile. Swept back wings.
3	$\alpha=40^\circ$		JS 4 P 65 Hole A	With long swept back wings. Somewhat aggressive. For professional level turners.
4	$\alpha=55^\circ$		JS 6 P 75 Hole A	The larger edge angle is beneficial when turning deep bowls.
5	$\alpha=60^\circ$		JS 2 P 65 Hole A	"Ellsworth" shape. Wings are pronounced convex.

Spindle gouges

1	$\alpha=30^\circ$		JS 2 P 55 Hole B	For tight spots, detail work and finest finish. For professional level turners.
2	$\alpha=45^\circ$		JS 2 P 65 Hole A	Standard profile. For turners of all skill levels.

Skews

1	Straight edges $\alpha=30^\circ$		JS 20° P 65 Hole B	For tight spots, detail work and finest finish. For professional level turners.
2	Straight edges $\alpha=45^\circ$		JS 20° P 55 Hole B	For broad application. Easier to control than a 30° edge angle.
3	Radius edges $\alpha=30^\circ$		JS 30° P 75 Hole B	For tight spots, detail work and finest finish. For professional level turners.
4	Radius edges $\alpha=45^\circ$		JS 30° P 65 Hole B	For broad application. Easier to control than a 30° edge angle.

TORMEK
Sharpening Innovation

GOUGE AND CUTTER JIG (SVD-185)

For fingernail shaped bowl gouges and spindle gouges

Everyone has trouble with fingernail grinds. Coming in various profiles and wing grind backs, the basic premise is to have the wings of a gouge 'ground back' shaped to allow more cutting edge and more gouge presentation angles to be used. This jig takes away all the guess work out of the roll and swing sharpening motion required and not only allows the pre-determined setting angles – shown on the tool setting jig



– but also the option of altering the length of blade projection for 'bespoke' form plus altering the knuckle setting to cause the wings to be ground back longer or shorter, depending on the setting.

TOOL REST WITH TORLOCK (SVD-110)

For scrapers, hollowing tools and thin parting tools

This tool rest is slid onto the universal rest to provide a stable platform for sharpening items such as scrapers and so on. It can be used for sharpening a lot more tools than that, but importantly, it sports an 'anti-rotation' device called the Torlock, so the angle you set it at is the angle it will remain set at until the locking screws are released.



MULTI JIG (SVS-50)

For skews of any shape, even with an oval section

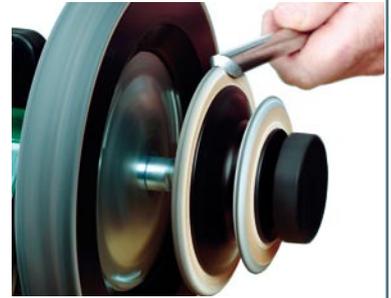
This unit takes the hassle out of sharpening. It is a guide unit to be used in conjunction with the universal rest. The length of projection is set using the turning tool setter and the angle set is determined by the chart in the booklet. It can be used to create standard skew edges or radius edges as required.



PROFILED HONING WHEELS (LA-120)

For honing the flutes – one radiused and one pointed

The Tormek sharpening system already has a leather honing wheel incorporated, but it is only good for honing the outside of a bevel. To achieve the ultimate edge, polish/hone the inside flutes and so on too. These two wheels can be added onto the central stainless steel rod that supports the



standard honing wheel to hone all the bevels and flutes on woodturning, plus carpentry and carving tools.

MACHINE COVER (MH-380)

For protecting the machine from shavings

There is not much to be said for this, other than it is well made and will stop the machine from getting dirty. Seeing the state of many workshops (plus my own!), it will come in handy.



CONCLUSION

The Tormek TNT-708 (Touch n' Turn) Woodturner's Kit is a superbly made, comprehensive kit and does speed up the sharpening process. It is, along with the rest of the Tormek product range, incredibly well made and the kit works on previous models of the Tormek sharpening system as well as the new T7 and T3 models.

I have got the process for sharpening a fingernail profile gouge down to under a minute so one can no longer say it is a slow process. Look at the TTS-100 gouge again (or your own) and compare the cutting edge to that of a dry bench – ground one. It will produce a better finish off the tool and I do think the edge lasts longer as a result.

It is well worth the money and as most of us work in other wood disciplines other than turning, the Tormek system becomes more and more attractive!

DETAILS

Price: £134.96 (inc. VAT)
Available from Brimarc Tools and Associates
Tel.: 0845 604 0064
Website: www.brimarc.com
Overseas customers should check the stockist list at: www.tormek.com