

Handle Adapter for ½” Tools

I normally use permanent handles for my tools, but like removable handles for travelling. An easy and very inexpensive way to make adapters for ½” tools is to use a ½” flare tubing nut and double ended union (purchased from Lowes) as shown in Photo 1. Mount the double ended flare union in a chuck and drill out the center hole with a ½” bit. Mount a handle blank with squared ends between centers and turn it round. Cut a tenon on one end and remount it using a chuck and live center. Mount a ¾” Forstner bit in a drill chuck in the tailstock and center it on the mark from the live center. Drill a hole ¾” deep in the handle and epoxy the flare fitting in place. Make sure the hex part of the fitting is against the end of the wood handle so the fitting is aligned with the lathe center line (does not wobble). You can use the ½” drill bit in the tailstock to align it while the epoxy dries. Just don’t insert the bit all the way into the fitting or the bit will become epoxied in the handle. Add a copper ring if desired.

After the epoxy dries, use the existing hole in the flare fitting as a guide to drill a ½” diameter hole about 3” – 4” further into the wood handle to accept long tools (if the entire tool is ½” in diameter, this also allows you to turn the tool around and put the sharp end inside the handle for transportation). Remount the live center in the ½” hole in the flare fitting to hold the handle for turning. After turning the handle to your desired shape, apply a finish and part off the tenon. To complete the handle, make three cuts in the flare fitting down to the hex part as shown in Photo 2 and install the flare nut. The completed handle is shown in Photo 3. This technique will also work for 3/8” adapters.

Published in June 2015 AAW Journal Hints section and distributed with their permission.



Photo 1 –Union and Flare Nut



Photo 2 – Three cuts



Photo 3 – Completed Handle