

## ADDING AN ACRYLIC BEAD TO A FINIAL

Adding a colored acrylic bead to a finial creates another point of interest especially when color coordinated with the wood choice or coloring of the hollow form.

The basic process is to turn an acrylic bead with a small hole so it can be mounted between upper and lower sections of a finial. Tenons must be made on the finial parts to fit into the bead. Many thanks to Cliff Guard for offering pointers and sharing his experience.

### Components

**Collar** fits into the opening of the vessel. Glue in place if the opening of the vessel is not perfectly formed or has defects.

**Plug** can be made from a smaller diameter piece of material. It can be a snug fit to the collar so it can be removed. The top needs a hole approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ ", depending on the tenon size of the lower finial.

**Lower finial** with tenon to fit the plug on the bottom, and a thin tenon on the top for the bead.

### Acrylic

Use an acrylic pen blank or similar material. Bottle stopper blanks are an option for larger shapes.

Mount one square end into a chuck with pin jaws.

Dimple the free end in the center using the long tip of a skew or a point tool.

Go only about  $\frac{1}{16}$ " depth just to help the drill from starting off center.

Drill  $\frac{3}{32}$ " hole deep enough to go completely through the length of the bead you are planning, about  $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1", and allow an extra  $\frac{1}{8}$ " to be sure. Drill slowly, in many shallow sections to prevent drill wobble from making the hole oversized. Too fast a drill speed will also cause melting and lead to an oversized or bad result.

### Shape the bead round, oval or slightly wider at the bottom according to your preference.

Sand and polish the bead. Refer to details for this in any acrylic pen making video. It involves wet sanding with progressively fine grits.

Part off the bead with a thin parting tool.

### Finishing the parted off end of the bead:

Make a jamb chuck from a cylindrical piece of hard wood. It needs to have a thin tenon on the free end to fit snugly through the hole in the bead to hold it securely.

Carefully finish sand and polish the end of the bead. Remove it from the jamb chuck and set aside the bead. You will need to have it handy to size the tenons of the upper and lower finial sections.

