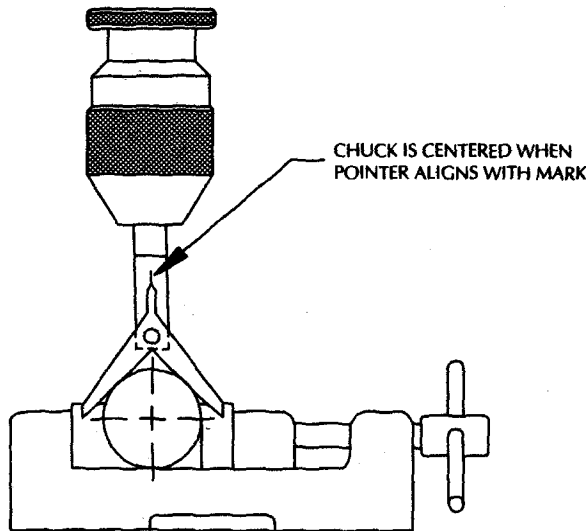


Center Drilling a Dowel

by George White

This article should really be captioned “Why Didn’t I Think of That.”

I’ve been molding a few props of late and using a 1/4” dowel as the center section with which to join the two blades. Getting that small hole for the prop shaft drilled exactly through the center of the radius of the dowel seemed to never be as perfect as I’d like. Yes, I have a centering tool from Micro-Mark (item #82281) which allows me to align the drill directly over the center of the dowel (see below).



However, when the small drill bit, which is somewhat flexible, starts to enter the dowel it wants to bend just a bit to one side or the other, screwing up my careful alignment.

I mentioned this to my sea daddy Gene Smith in Oklahoma. He’s too polite to prefix his response with the word “Dummy,” but instead advised me to examine the end of the dowel and observe the direction of the wood grain. Simply ensure that the grain is running at 90° to the drill and the wiggling is far less likely to happen, especially if you have a sharp drill to start with. According to Gene, sometimes with small dowels you can also notice a slight flat spot which will be at 90° to the grain.