

Tools and accessories you need to make your first pens

There are items that you need to have and those that are nice to have but not essential.

You will need:

- **Lathe** (mini lathe will do the job) like these or similar:
<https://www.busybeetools.com/categories/Woodworking/Wood-Lathes/Lathes/>
- **Band saw or mitre saw** to cut the blanks to the correct length
- **Drill press** for drilling the holes lengthwise into the blanks. This is also used to trim the ends of the blanks with a pen mill.
- **Chisel(s)**. I would recommend carbide. HSS (high speed steel) chisels are less expensive, but they need to be sharpened often and many people find that difficult to do correctly. Carbide chisels come with cutters that can be easily rotated on the end of the chisel to get a new sharp spot. This is the chisel I prefer and use: <http://www.penblanks.ca/Easy-Start-Finisher/>
- **Beginner starter kit** which includes five Slimline pen kits, five wood blanks, 1A bushings, adjustable mandrel A in MT2 or MT1, 7 mm drill, thick CA (cyanoacrylate) to glue the tubes into the blank, 3/4" premium pen mill cutter head, premium 7 mm pilot shaft to square the ends of the blank, Hut bar polish and one sheet of baseplate wax. The baseplate wax is used to plug the ends of your tubes while you're gluing them into the blanks – even a tiny bit of glue inside the tube is a major reason why pen kits don't work properly.
- **How to select your mandrel:** Most lathes are MT2 (Morse Taper 2) but check the head stock taper on the lathe you own or buy – the Morse Taper size determines what kind of mandrel you will need to select with your starter kit. If the hole in the spindle of your lathe is approx. 3/4" across it is MT2; if the hole in the spindle is approx. 1/2" across it is an MT1. This info sheet will help you determine what you need:
<http://www.penblanks.ca/instructions/english/MandrelMT1vsMT2infoSheet.pdf>

Nice to have:

- **Drilling center vise** to hold the pen blanks straight while you drill and trim the ends:
<http://www.penblanks.ca/Drilling-center-vise/>
- **Pen assembly/disassembly press** for pressing the pen hardware into the blanks. If you need to take your pen apart, this will also aid in that process: <http://www.penblanks.ca/pen-assembly-disassembly-press/>
- **Other finish options like friction polish.** Here is one that is good to start with as it is easy to apply and inexpensive compared to other friction polishes: <http://www.penblanks.ca/Craft-Coat-wood-finish-2oz/>

Most people start out in their pen turning hobby making Slimline pens. They are good low cost kit to hone your skills on. The Slimline pen instructions give you a general idea of the steps involved in making a pen. Our Beginner Starter Kit comes with these kits and the instructions: <http://www.penblanks.ca/instructions/english/Slimline.pdf>