

The Do's and Do Not's of Vacuum Chucking

Do

- When possible, use the tailstock. Use the vacuum system as an alternative means of holding the wood
- Continually monitor the suction level when working – setting it and forgetting it can lead to unexpected results
- Make sure your tools are sharp and take fine cuts
- If the wood is exceptionally porous, use painters tape or plastic wrap on the OUTSIDE to slow the leaks
- Provide ample filters to protect your vacuum pump from ingested debris
- Replace the chuck seal before it gets too worn
- Remember the restraining force is dependent upon the area of vacuum seal
- Have a plan if the vacuum fails (install check valve, vacuum reservoir, move to the tailstock)
- Keep your head about you – stop the lathe before turning off the vacuum pump
- Be ready to catch your turning when you turn off the vacuum

Do Not

- Use a vacuum chuck when applying the first coat of a finish
- Use a vacuum chuck when applying the dyes or colors to raw wood
- Use a vacuum chuck on green wood
- Use a vacuum chuck until you KNOW the application of a finish has cured
- Set the vacuum suction too high when turning thin pieces
- Use the “Jimmy Clews” option, where “faster is better”
- Use more vacuum than you REALLY need