



Care of Bowls

Some bowls are primarily for display, while others are functional as well as decorative. These bowls are flexible and surprisingly resilient, though still breakable from physical or thermal shock.

All of my bowls are finished with Mohawk Salad Bowl Finish, FDA tested and approved. With care, a bowl will last many decades. Wash by hand in warm water after use. If dressed salads are served, wash with dish detergent to prevent a buildup of gummy vegetable oil. Towel dry. Avoid sudden extremes of heat or moisture, such as soaking in a sink, leaving in a sunny window, or placing in a refrigerator, and certainly not in a dishwasher. When dull, a light coat of food grade mineral oil or butcher block oil rubbed in and wiped off will both brighten the wood and help to preserve it. I use Snow River Wood Oil. If your bowl becomes rough from heavy use, lightly sand with some worn 320 grit sandpaper. A small crack may be fixed with medium density superglue. I may be contacted to repair serious breaks.

Artistic bowls may never need refinishing. However, if the finish dulls they may be freshened up with a light coating of oil such as Hope's or Minwax Tung Oil. Wipe on then wipe dry and buff well with a soft cloth or Scott Shop Paper Towel.



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Frederick Williamson Bowls

Turning bowls straight from the log is my craft and my artistic expression. Working with green wood allows me much spontaneity in the process. Using simple shapes, I strive to feature the inherent beauty of wood. I love working with local trees felled by storm, disease, or old age. Most are from within a 30 mile radius of my home, and there is a strong element of the found object as I forage for downed trees or discarded logs. People will call me about a tree that came down at their home, often wanting a bowl to preserve memories. Turned, polished, and dried to a stabilized state, the thin arcs of the wood display the character and history of the tree, revealing the play of figure and grain which the finish brings to life, preserving some of the soul of the tree.

Each of my bowls begins as a chosen section of log, chain-sawn to rough size, and screwed onto the faceplate of my homemade lathe. Peculiar details such as grain, color, texture, knots, burls, ant holes, or spalting often determine the final shape. Those traits are my palette and my glazes, with a clear finish used to bring out the natural color of the wood. Because my bowls are turned thin, they warp rather than crack as they dry to their final state. None is perfectly round, and each is unique. Much risk is involved, since what is cut off can't be replaced. It takes vision, concentration, strength, and patience to complete a piece and be rewarded by the bowl's glow when the oil is applied.

Woodworking has been my passion and my profession since 1971. Much of my lifestyle is homemade or homegrown, from my tools, to the house we live in, to the apple cider press in the fall. I work alone in my shop, surrounded by the beauty of Sugar Hollow in the foothills of the Shenandoah Mountains. We live close to the land and close to the seasons. Maple, cherry, walnut, oak, ash, apple, peach, poplar ... there is so much variety growing in our area.

May the fruits of my handiwork give you pleasure.

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