Weeble Bowls

A Weeble bowl (my name for them) is a bowl that's been turned—usually with some kind of interesting top rim and/or bottom ornamentation— cut in half and then reglued so that the bottom becomes the sides.

The dimensions of the original bowl determine the dimensions of the Weeble bowl. Most bowls are a little wider than they are high, and this creates an oval Weeble bowl. To get a half-sphere Weeble bowl, you have to start with a half-sphere "normal" bowl. If you started with a very tall, narrow bowl, I think you'd end up with a Weeble bread tray.

A few examples

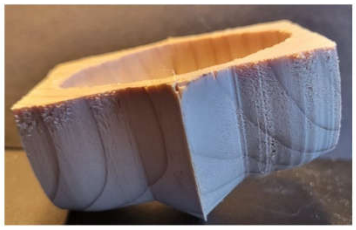
Rough turned from crappy wood 😊













Basic process (Cole jaws or vacuum chuck)

1. Turn the outside of the bowl, creating whatever kind of border or other ornamentation you want.
   - Use a tenon or a glue block. You could use a recess but it might look funny. Or it could be an interesting design feature, especially if you ll it with a contrasting piece of wood, resin, inlay, etc.
2. Make sure to somehow mark the center of the bottom of the bowl.
3. Sand and nish the outside.
4. Reverse the bowl and hollow it out.
   - Wall thickness is always important but it's not generally visible per se. Variations in thickness will be very obvious after cutting and regluing so keep that in mind. You could use wall thickness variation as a design feature.
   - Make sure the top rim is absolutely at. You could even run it across a belt sander before you put it back on the lathe to remove the tenon.
   - Make sure the inside of the top rim isn't rounded. That will create a crevice when you glue the bowl back together. The inside of the top rim should be crisp.
5. Sand and nish the inside.
6. Reverse the bowl again on Cole jaws, or vacuum chuck, using the center hole for reference.
7. Remove the tenon (unless it's a design feature).
8. Re-mark the center of the bottom.
9. Draw a horizontal line through the entire center of the bowl, from rim to rim, passing through the center mark.
   - Line up a at toolrest or something else at with the center of the bowl bottom and draw the line, keeping the pencil level. A at carpenter's pencil works well for this.
10. Cut the bowl down the center line on a bandsaw.
    - The cut doesn't have to be exact but it should be as close as possible.
11. Use a hose clamp, tape or rubber bands to keep the two halves together temporarily.

12. Sand and nish the bottom (on or off the lathe, whatever seems safe) then remove the clamp or tape.
13. With the two halves together and the bottom of the bowl facing up, “open” the bowl and match the top rim of the halves together.
14. This is the new orientation of the Weeble bowl.
15. Glue it up.
16. After glue is dry, atten the new top rim on a belt sander if necessary.
17. Sand and nish the new top rim.

Basic process (Cole jaws or vacuum chuck)

1. Turn the outside of the bowl, creating whatever kind of border or other ornamentation you want.
    - Use a tenon or a glue block. You could use a recess but it might look funny. Or it could be an interesting design feature, especially if you ll it with a contrasting piece of wood, resin, inlay, etc.
2. Make sure to somehow mark the center of the bottom of the bowl.
3. Sand and nish the outside.
4. Reverse the bowl and hollow it out.
    - Wall thickness is always important but it’s not generally visible per se. Variations in thickness will be very obvious after cutting and regluing so keep that in mind. You could use wall thickness variation as a design feature.
    - Make sure the top rim is absolutely at. You could even run it across a belt sander before you put it back on the lathe to remove the tenon.
    - Make sure the inside of the top rim isn’t rounded. That will create a crevice when you glue the bowl back together. The inside of the top rim should be crisp.
5. Sand and nish the inside.
6. Reverse the bowl again on a jam chuck, using the center hole for reference.
7. Remove the tenon (unless it’s a design feature) but leave the nub.
8. Draw a horizontal line from rim to rim as much as you can.
    - Orient the bowl to your lathe’s index of “0”. Line up a at toolrest or something else at with the center of the bowl bottom and draw the line from the rim to as close to the center as you can get , keeping the pencil level. A at carpenter’s pencil works well for this.
    - Turn the bowl to whatever value is halfway on your lathe’s index and draw another line from the rim to as close to the center as possible.
9. Either turn off the nub or remove the bowl from the lathe and chisel it or sand it off or whatever you do.
    - Be careful not to remove your lines.
10. With a ruler, connect the ends of the lines.
11. Cut the bowl down the center line on a bandsaw.
    - The cut doesn’t have to be exact but it should be as close as possible.
12. Use a hose clamp, tape, or rubber bands to keep the two halves together temporarily.

13. Sand and nish the bottom (on or off the lathe, whatever seems safe), then remove the clamp or tape.
14. With the two halves together and the bottom of the bowl facing up, “open” the bowl and match the top rim of the halves together.
15. This is the new orientation of the Weeble bowl.
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