

# Kurt's clinic

Kurt Hertzog answers readers' questions



**1** Question: I'm shopping for a turning smock and am puzzled by the huge range in prices. Seems like there a large variation in prices, styles, etc. What should I be looking for as I shop?

**Answer:** I have too large a collection of smocks I've accumulated over the years. Many were gifts from clubs, symposia, and occasionally vendors. I try to buy a smock at events where I haven't been given one to help support their fundraising efforts. Regarding the price, smocks are clothing and the variations in price are driven by production run sizes, materials used, complexity of production, manufacturing location, purchase volumes, shipping costs, and retailer mark-up. Obviously better materials with pockets, cooling vents, embroidery, and elastics will be more expensive than lesser-featured products. The features I look for when I shop include quality zippers and stitching, elastics at the neck and on long sleeves; rear pockets just above butt level, mesh vents at the underarms when possible, full-length zippers making it a jacket rather than a pullover, and a design that zips all the way up, closing the neck area tightly to just under the chin. Materials can range from light khaki to rip stop nylon since my turning temperatures



**2** If you are going to have more than one turning smock, you may wish to include light weight, warmer, short and long sleeves, more water resistant (wet wood turning), and perhaps different sizes **2** The more important features I look for are pockets on the back and elastics around the neck and cuffs if long sleeve. For summer use, having mesh underarm vents is a plus **3** Personally, I like full zipper jacket styles rather than pullover designs. While I don't need a pocket on the front, if there is one, I'd like it flap covered yet still able to accept a pencil through the flap.

can range from cold to warm depending on the location and season. I buy them sized large enough to allow for warm clothes to be worn underneath if needed. Since a smock will usually last a lifetime, I



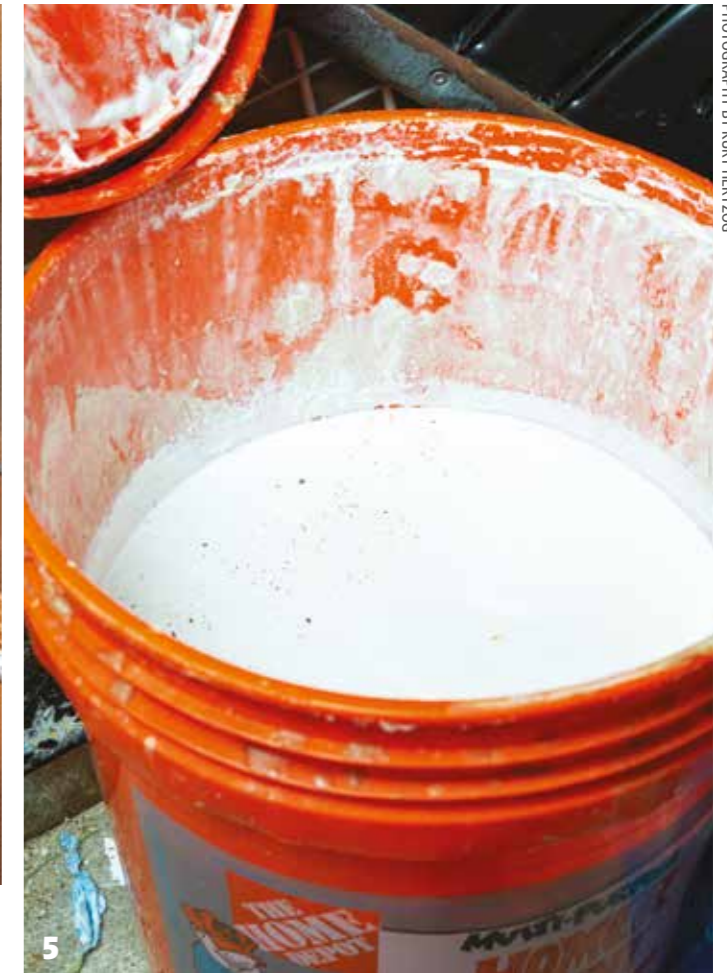
suggest you shop with that in mind. Spending a bit more rather than scrimping will let you enjoy a quality product for many years – especially if you have more than one to use so none will get extensive use.



**4** Once harvested, a painting of end-grain sealer of your choice will usually keep a blank from checking and splitting until ready for use **5** I buy my Anchor Seal in larger quantities and store it in a sealed five-gallon container. It looks white and paints on easily, drying clear. I've never had it 'go bad' regardless of storage length **6** There isn't any real downside to using end-grain sealer on wood that will be in storage, like this cherry blank, or turnings in process, like the green turned bowl

**Question:** My local retailer has a product called Anchorseal. It is pretty pricey, but they tell me it is great for sealing green wood. Why so expensive? Is it as good as some rave about it?

**Answer:** Anchorseal is a product of UC Coatings in Buffalo NY. It is wax emulsion used on green wood to avoid the checks and cracking that occurs with uneven drying. It is one of several products on the market available to serve this purpose. Painted on the end grain, it does a good job of minimising the usual end checks and splitting. I believe it has been around since the 1980s. On the expensiveness, there obviously are the chemical content, processing, and packaging costs. Whatever those are, I'm guessing one of the big factors in the price you see at retail is the shipping cost to get it to you. It is very heavy, much like paint products and seemingly even heavier. Ship that around a few times, such as from the manufacturer to a retail chain warehouse then to the retail outlet, and you'll have costs much like shipping around boxes of rocks that factor into the retail price. That assumes there isn't any wholesaler(s) in the loop that will also add some mark up. I can't speak to the actual product costs but can attest to its effectiveness. I use that brand extensively because it works well for my needs and is made about 70 miles away. One of the clubs I belong to makes large-quantity buys at the factory, industrial drum sizes on occasion, and subdivides it selling to the members at their cost. I buy five gallons at a time. Rave about it? I know turners who use similar products they like better. Are those other products better? Perhaps so but I'm a pretty simple person. In Anchorseal I've got a product that successfully accomplishes what I need of it at a price I'm content with. The MSDS tells me it is safe, it works well for me, and even if I buy at retail it is cost competitive with the alternate choices. No need to reinvent the wheel from my perspective. By the way, many, including myself when needed, use old household latex paint to perform the same purpose. Since it will ultimately be turned away, even hideous colours will serve the purpose.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY KURT HERTZOG

**Question: I need some advice on business cards. Where do you buy yours? Do you have photos on your cards? Do you have both sides printed? Why?**

**Answer:** I use one of the discount business card printers I found online. I currently use Vistaprint but there are many others. I recommend you shop around and pick your own. I'm pleased with my vendor because I can create, compose, and order so painlessly. They are very cost effective for my needs and deliver quickly and accurately. I think you'll find others who can do the same. When planning your design, decide who your audience is and what you wish to accomplish. Often businesses will have more than one business card because they have more than one purpose and audience. Here's my story and you can alter it as appropriate based on your needs and thinking. I want a quality card, so I opt for the better card stock with glossy finish and colour pictures/printing. I do print both sides but the back is only simple info so it can be easily 'found' if it is ever turned over in someone's stack of cards. My purpose is to inform the recipient about my woodturning business, provide my contact info, especially my email and website, and a picture to tease them about my abilities. I have the exact same cards with a few different pictures, just so over time there is some variety in what I might hand out. My favourite image as shown is one of several collaborations I did with an old friend, Binh Pho, who has since passed away. Not only is it eye catching in my opinion, but it reminds me of him and our times together. If you have multiple aspects to business, you may wish to create different cards that focus on each.

A business card is your advertising so make it put your best foot forward. Make it brief enough to be readable and printed in quality. Unless you are promoting the very artsy aspects, I suggest you skip the flowing fonts and weird colours that are difficult to read. You can be artistic and eye catching yet let the reader discern the information easily. Your card is a representation of you and



**7** I suggest business cards be simple with something eye catching, like a photo relating to your craft and the pertinent contact info in easily read fonts and colours **8 & 9** The only limit on what sort of cards you produce is your imagination!

your business so cheap, flimsy, blurry images, or difficult-to-read cards should be avoided. There are ways and materials available to print your own cards on your computer. They range from pretty good to pretty poor. Commercially printed cards are so modestly priced, I recommend you avoid the hobbyist-looking home-done cards. Even done on a good printer

with the better stock, most of the die-cut edging retains sufficient difference to say 'homemade'. Some people opt for odd sizes, so your card stands out by being larger or differently shaped than others. Especially the artist-type folks. You decide. Personally, I think odd sizes are counterproductive because they don't easily fit in a card file. ●



**8**



**9**