

Pinecones



A fun summer project! - As I suppose every schoolboy used to know pinecones like the example left below will shrink down again to cone shape if left wet for a day or so. I have tried a variant of this by soaking them in 50% diluted PVA glue (& shrinking) then binding them with cotton string as right below and drying out over a couple of days



They can then be squared off with a disk sander, drilled, fitted with brass tubes and turned into small objects like pens and cord pulls. The rollerball pen kit here uses a single 8 mm brass tube.

The result turns OK with a very sharp spindle gouge but there are some voids and fibrous material. Sanding cleans this up pretty well but the final spray-hardened CA finish undoubtedly helps. The pull (left top) comes out a bit smoother because it can be just reduced to about the pine cone shape.

Alternatively I have potted an expanded cone in dyed polyester resin:-



This works OK but wastes a good deal of resin! Use a low proportion of hardener to avoid overheating. The red pen top right is made like this.

The all-pinecone pen above uses two cones to get the length - this obviously depends on the cones you have.

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