

Parting Tools for Lathes

DT Workshop Equipment Reference — D&T / STEM resource for school workshops | Drilling & Cutting Tools



Photo via Wikimedia Commons (Thread_Cutting_or_Parting_Tool_for_Foot_Lathe_Used_by_William_Beattie_of_Beattie_Manufacturing_Company,_St._Louis_-_DPLA_-_52bb7e96de736d345dce7a2f40da30f1_(page_3).jpg)

A parting tool is a narrow blade used on the lathe to cut grooves and separate finished work from the stock. It has a thin blade with a straight or slightly angled cutting edge and a deep groove to clear swarf, and is essential for cutting off finished pieces cleanly.

Key Features

- Blade widths from 3 to 13 mm
- Straight or diamond-shaped cross sections
- Long blades for deep cuts
- Curved versions for bowl work
- Carbide-tipped insert models available

Typical Uses in the Workshop

- Separate finished turnings from the stock
- Cut sizing and decorative grooves
- Make tenon grooves for chuck mounting
- Part off metal bar stock in the metal lathe

Safe Operation

1. Set the tool rest close and at centre height
2. Align the blade square to the work
3. Feed the tool in slowly and steadily
4. Rock the blade slightly in deep cuts to clear swarf
5. Stop short of cutting through to avoid flying work

SAFETY NOTES

- Keep hands clear of the spinning work
- Never part off with unsupported long stock
- Slow the lathe down for larger diameters
- Watch the blade flex - do not force it
- Support the cut-off piece as it separates

Maintenance & Consumables

- Keep the cutting edge square and sharp
- Check the blade is not bent or cracked
- Store parting tools separated from gouges
- Re-set the tool rest after each use
- Oil blades lightly to prevent rust

Specification & Buying Notes

Buy parting tools in 3, 5 and 6 mm widths with comfortable handles. Carbide insert versions stay sharp for students but cost more. Match blade length to lathe swing.