

Tom Raymond's Microwaving Program & Experiences

Bowl Drying in a Microwave Oven			
For 6 to 9" diameter green wood bowls of about 3/4 to 1" uniform thickness			
Step	Minutes	Heat	Remarks
1	6	Medium	In plastic bag then let cool out of bag for 20 min.
2	4	Medium Low	In new plastic bag then let cool out of bag 20 min.
3	3	Medium Low	No bag then let cool out of oven 20 min.
4	3	Low	No bag, on shelf for 5 days

10-2-05 The Effects of Microwaving to dry a maple bowl

Material: Red Maple blank with 24% moisture before turning.

Instrument: Pin type moisture meter with 7 to 35% range.

The blank was rough turned to 7.5" dia. and 2.5" high with a 7/8" wall. After turning, the blank had 35%+ moisture level.

Step 1 Microwaved the bowl for 6 min. on Medium in a plastic bag. When the bowl was removed the inside of the bag was very wet. Let it set to cool for 20 min. outside the bag. Then retested at 25% moisture. The end grain being the highest readings.

Step 2 Microwaved at Med.-low for 4 min in a new plastic bag. There was some moisture in the bag after the 4 min. Tested the moisture at 35% plus and let cool for 20 min. Retested at 27% after the 20 min. cool. This proves that the moisture is driven from the center of the bowl towards the outside during microwaving.

Step 3. Micro waved on Med-low for 3 min., no plastic bag and tested at 35%+. Let cool for 20 min. and retested at 27%. Highest reading in the end grain.

Step 4. Micro waved on Low for 3 min., no bag. Reading was 35%+ after micro waving. Let cool for 20 min and retested at 22% moisture.

Moved the blank to the shop for air drying on an open shelf in an environment of 62 degrees F and 67% relative humidity.

After day 1, tested moisture at 16%
 After day 2, tested moisture at 13%
 After day 3, tested moisture at 14%
 After day 4, tested moisture at 9%
 After day 5, tested moisture at 8%
 After day 6, tested moisture at 8%
 After day 7, tested moisture at 8%
 After day 8, tested moisture at 7%

Summary: After microwaving in the past I would let a bowl set on the shelf for 30 days to air dry. From the experiment above, I would not hesitate to final turning after 5 days.

Tom Raymond