

Jig for Holding Pens for Photography

Like everyone else, when it comes to photographing your finished pens, there are as many techniques, as there are penturners. My latest attempts have incorporated the use of kneaded rubber eraser to hold the pens in place. I don't remember which penturner introduced this technique, but thanks to you - it was a good solution. Unfortunately, many was the time I had to do a little "digital touch up" to paint out a some visual ooze of some eraser that was showing.

Then, during the Christmas Holidays, my brain did its' semi-annual "kick in" and I came up with yet another solution to holding a pen stationary, while photographing it. The pen can easily be rotated to show the pocket clip up or down or at any degree of rotation between.

What you'll need:

1. A 5/64" twist drill
2. A scrap piece of wood, plywood or 1x or whatever, for your base **PLATFORM**
3. Small rod or stiff wire (preferably around 5/64" in diameter, so as to fit in the 5/64" holes you'll be drilling in your **PLATFORM**. **THIS WIRE WILL ALSO FIT THE HOLE IN YOUR STANDARD PEN NIBS..** It doesn't have to be a snug fit - it just has to fit inside the nib of your pen.

Directions

First, using the 5/64" drill, pierce a hole or several holes in your **PLATFORM** . Multiple holes will allow you to shoot several pens at once. In most cases, the **PLATFORM** will be covered with a sheet of paper or cloth material (which will serve as your background). I also used a small countersink bit to make small indentations at each hole drilled. This allows a tactile "feel" where other holes are **under your background cloth**, if you wish to add additional **PEN SUPPORTS**.

Second: Using the wire or rod, you will make your **PEN SUPPORTS**. I made mine about 4-1/2" long - (nothing critical). I come in about 1-1/2" and make a 90 deg. Bend. On the short end, I went to the grinder and ground the end into a sharp point. This allows easy piercing of your background material, if you want to add additional **PEN SUPPORTS**.

That's it for making the entire **PLATFORM AND PEN SUPPORTS** - REALLY HARD!!!

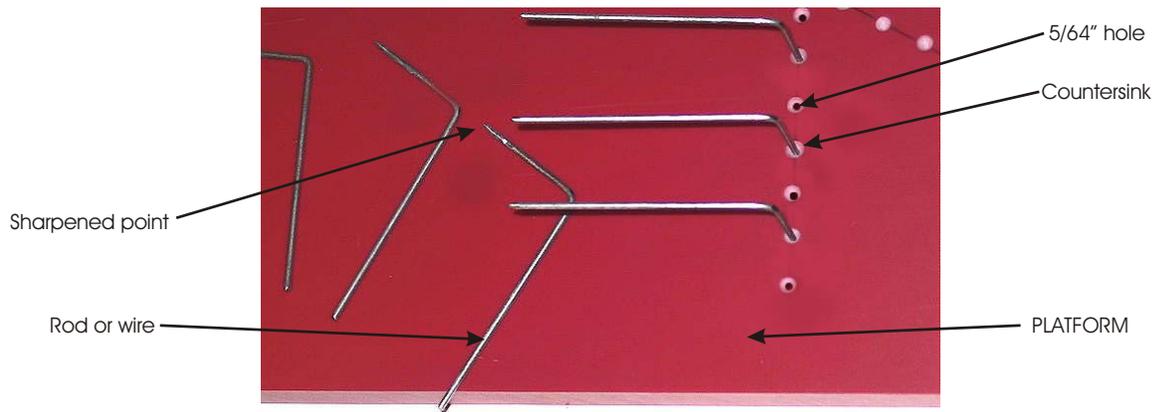


Photo #1

Preparing Your Pen for the Shoot

Separate the two halves of your pen and remove the ink cartridge. Then re-assemble your pen without the cartridge. That's it. Now select your background material - place it over the **PLATFORM** - "feel" for your drilled (and countersunk) holes, under the background material and pierce your CLOTH OR PAPER material with the sharpened point of your **PEN SUPPORT(S)**.

Now, simply slide your pen nib over the pen supports. Your pen is now ready to be positioned and photographed. You will have to "airbrush" or "paint" out in the final photo to hide the amount of your **PEN SUPPORT** that will show. Photos below will show additional views which should clear up any confusion.



This is the area that will have to be painted out of finished art

Photos can be shot straight down, or from the front. Your background can be curved up in the back (as shown in this photo),

Enjoy!
Jay Pickens

