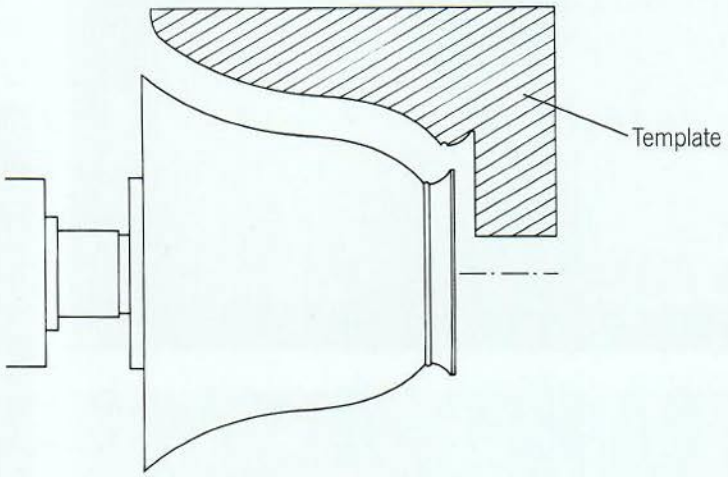
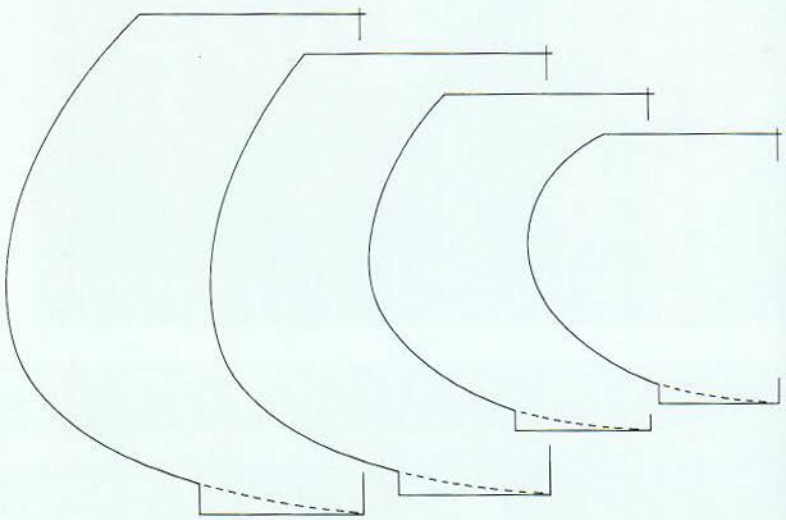
# PROFILE TEMPLATES

The profiles in the drawings on these pages are not here just to look at. I suggest you select a few to copy, and that you make templates to help you get the curves right. Don't let the notion of copying bother you; it's an excellent way to learn about form and to develop your eye. In the workshop where I began turning, I was given templates to use for all the standard bowls—for the inside as well as the outside. When I started working on my own, I continued to use templates for all my basic profiles for about a year. As my eye improved, I needed the templates less and less. I was making a lot of sugar bowls and salad sets—consisting of one large and six or eight small bowls—and the practice they provided soon rendered the templates unnecessary.

The templates will be most useful to beginners, although a number of professional turners might want to give them a whirl, too, especially when trying a new form. A good exercise is to make sets of 6-in.- (150mm) diameter bowls. You aren't likely to get complete sets in the beginning, but the effort will almost certainly yield a number of more than passable and saleable individual pieces. It is ironic that by marketing these "failures" to reluctant craft shops in the early years of my career, I created the demand for the limited-production, one-off bowls that I've enjoyed making since the mid-1970s. These days it's difficult to sell



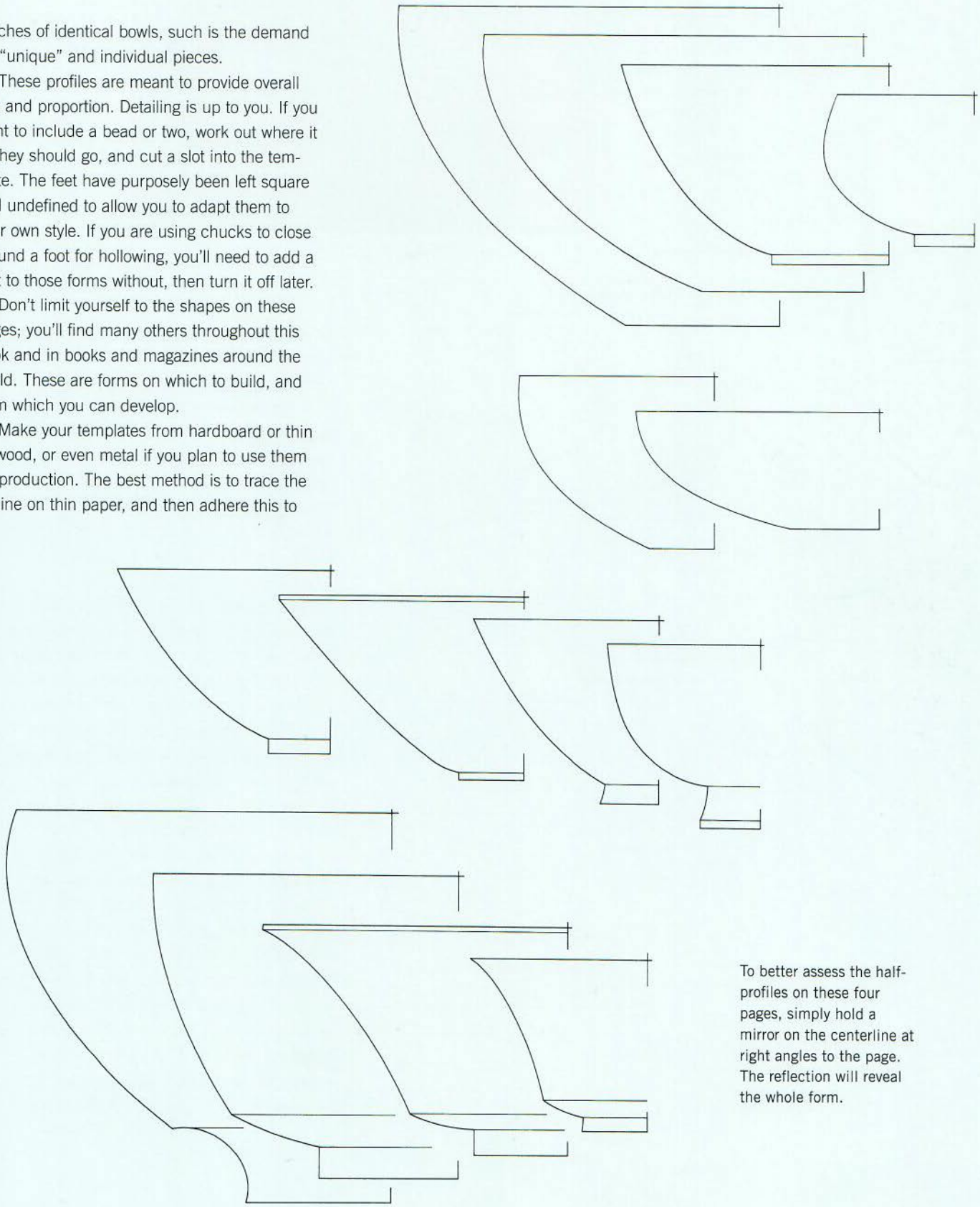
▶ When I turned this 6⅞-in. (175mm) voamboana bowl in 1979, it was bright purple. Within weeks light mellowed the wood to near black. All wood darkens eventually.

batches of identical bowls, such is the demand for "unique" and individual pieces.

These profiles are meant to provide overall line and proportion. Detailing is up to you. If you want to include a bead or two, work out where it or they should go, and cut a slot into the template. The feet have purposely been left square and undefined to allow you to adapt them to your own style. If you are using chucks to close around a foot for hollowing, you'll need to add a foot to those forms without, then turn it off later.

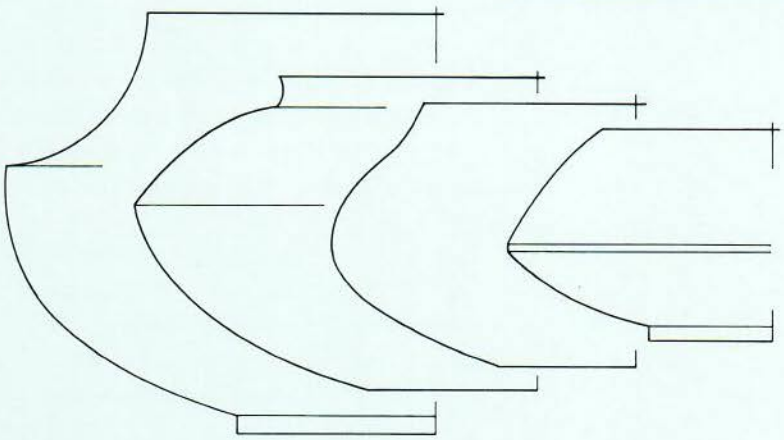
Don't limit yourself to the shapes on these pages; you'll find many others throughout this book and in books and magazines around the world. These are forms on which to build, and from which you can develop.

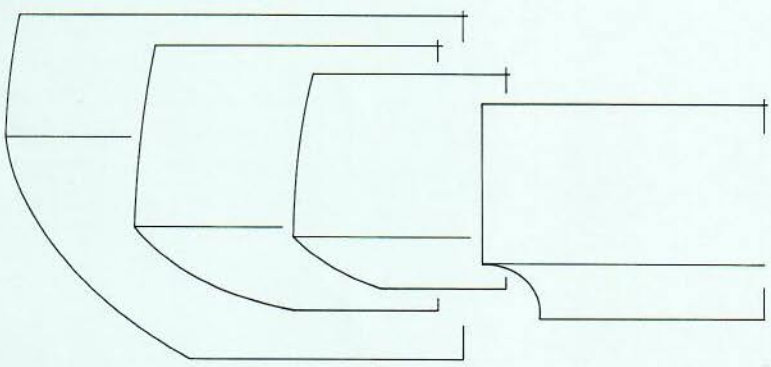
Make your templates from hardboard or thin plywood, or even metal if you plan to use them for production. The best method is to trace the outline on thin paper, and then adhere this to

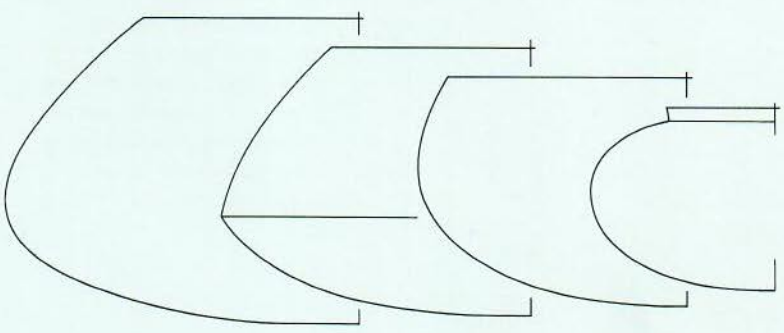


To better assess the half-profiles on these four pages, simply hold a mirror on the centerline at right angles to the page. The reflection will reveal the whole form.

▶ The beads could have been cut all the way to the angle, but stopping short and leaving a band creates a finer shadow line.







the template material for cutting. (And don't forget that the template should retain the negative shape of the profile.)

Once the blank is mounted on the lathe, true it, and ensure it is free of defects and sawn facets. Next, establish its thickness (which will be the height of the bowl), truing the upper rim and making sure to keep the bottom face flat. If the bottom is concave, you will lose thickness when you cut back to define the base.

Next, establish the diameter of the bowl and mark this on the top face. It is probably better to allow some extra room for your first attempts—perhaps ⅛ in. (3mm) in overall diameter. You can always reduce the curve to the right diameter once it fits the template. Develop regular methods of work. Your forms will be easier to duplicate if you go through the same process each time, and in this way your personal style will develop.

Finally, mark the diameter of the base or foot. With all these measurements set, you can begin turning away the waste to develop your shape. Templates are tedious to use because you need to stop to check so often, but their long-term benefits make it all worthwhile. In the heat of comparing your work to the template, don't forget to *touch* and *feel* the developing form. The quality of a curve is tactile as much as it is visual, and, as your eye develops, so too will your sense of touch.

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