

MLW Steady Rest

Installation And Safety Information



Before installing the MLW Steady Rest, it is important to educate yourself regarding the safety information, function and intended operation of this stabilizing system.

Note the open wheel design, and use caution to avoid contact with the wheels while the system is in use.

Remember the speed of your lathe is not the speed of the wheel rotation: the larger the diameter of the object being turned, the faster the wheels will rotate. Use good judgment while learning the limitations of the system, which will be influenced by a variety of factors, including but not limited to: lathe RPM, surface speed of the object being turned, density of the wood, aggressiveness of your turning, and the cutting tool selected.

Keep clothing away from the moving parts of the steady rest.

Avoid working through the hoop of the steady rest. Instead, verify the position you choose for placement will allow appropriate room to work on either side of the hoop.

Never turn or sand between the wheels.

Turn the lathe OFF before attaching or detaching the MLW Steady Rest.

The MLW Steady Rest is designed to fit on a variety of lathe beds. Three different size key plates are provided: 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", 2", and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Select the one that fits correctly between the ways of your lathe. With a $\frac{7}{32}$ " allen wrench, securely attach the correct key plate onto the steady rest base plate using the two bolts provided.

The key plate, when installed, extends further to one side of the hoop. It may be rotated 180 degrees if necessary, to allow the most versatility with positioning the steady rest on your lathe. If preferred, the MLW Steady Rest may be positioned near the head of the lathe, out of your work area while you are turning the object between centers. Then it can be positioned more easily, before removing the tail stock, when you are ready to use it.

Before mounting the MLW Steady Rest on your lathe, spread the wheels to the most open position. Loosen the T-Handles to allow adjustment of each arm of the steady rest, and tighten the handles to secure the wheels in the desired position.

Verify the wheels are positioned to be clear of the object being turned as you set the MLW Steady Rest onto the bed of your lathe, positioning the key plate between the ways. Reach under or between the ways of the lathe bed and rotate the threaded nut plate to be perpendicular to the key plate (figure 1).

From the top, use a 15/16" wrench to tighten the hex head bolt, fastening the MLW Steady Rest securely into the desired position on the lathe bed (Figure 2). Do not over tighten this bolt, as damage to the steady rest hoop may result.

Figure 1 – Rotate the nut plate



Figure 2 – Tighten from the top



With the object to be turned and the steady rest both positioned appropriately, begin to move the wheels into position, one at a time. Grasp an arm above the wheel, carefully release the T-Handles to unlock that arm, and move the arm so

the wheel just makes contact with the surface of the turning. Secure the T-Handles on that arm. Next, move to the arm of the wheel directly opposite from the one you positioned, and repeat the process. Do the same for the remaining two wheels.

The benefit of the four wheel system is to allow equal pressure on all sides, more effectively balancing the turning. The wheels must make equal contact and roll smoothly and evenly. Remember, the wheels are not intended to apply significant pressure. They are only to stabilize your work as it spins.

The MLW Steady Rest may also be used to support smaller diameter turnings. That is accomplished by rotating two opposing arms 180 degrees, offsetting one pair of wheels from the other pair. This allows all four wheels to be positioned closer together without hitting one another.

Once all four wheels are in position and the arms are tightened, turn the lathe ON and slowly increase the speed to verify that everything is running smoothly. If there is vibration at low speeds, it may be due to imbalanced wheel pressure, or the object being stabilized is not perfectly “true” at the place where the wheels are resting. Turn the lathe off, make any necessary adjustments, and turn it on at low speed again. Slowly increase the speed to verify your adjustments were effective.



You are invited to check our web site, MLWaninger.com, where we will post additional or updated information about the steady rest when applicable. If you have questions, please contact Mark Waninger via telephone at 317-994-6363 or send an e-mail to Mark@MLWaninger.com.