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- Step by Step construction instruction.
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- How-to photos with instructive captions.
- Tips to help you complete the project and become a better woodworker.



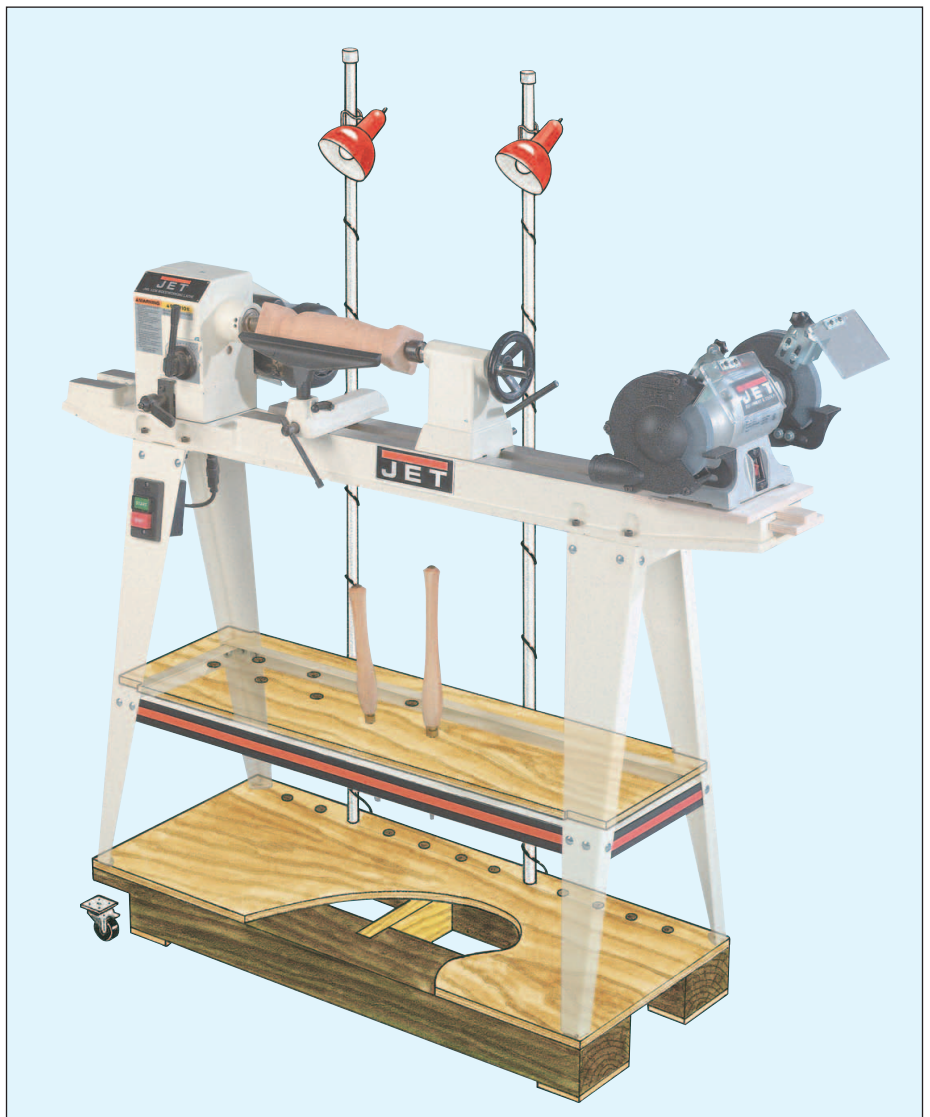
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## Creating a Customized Portable Lathe Station



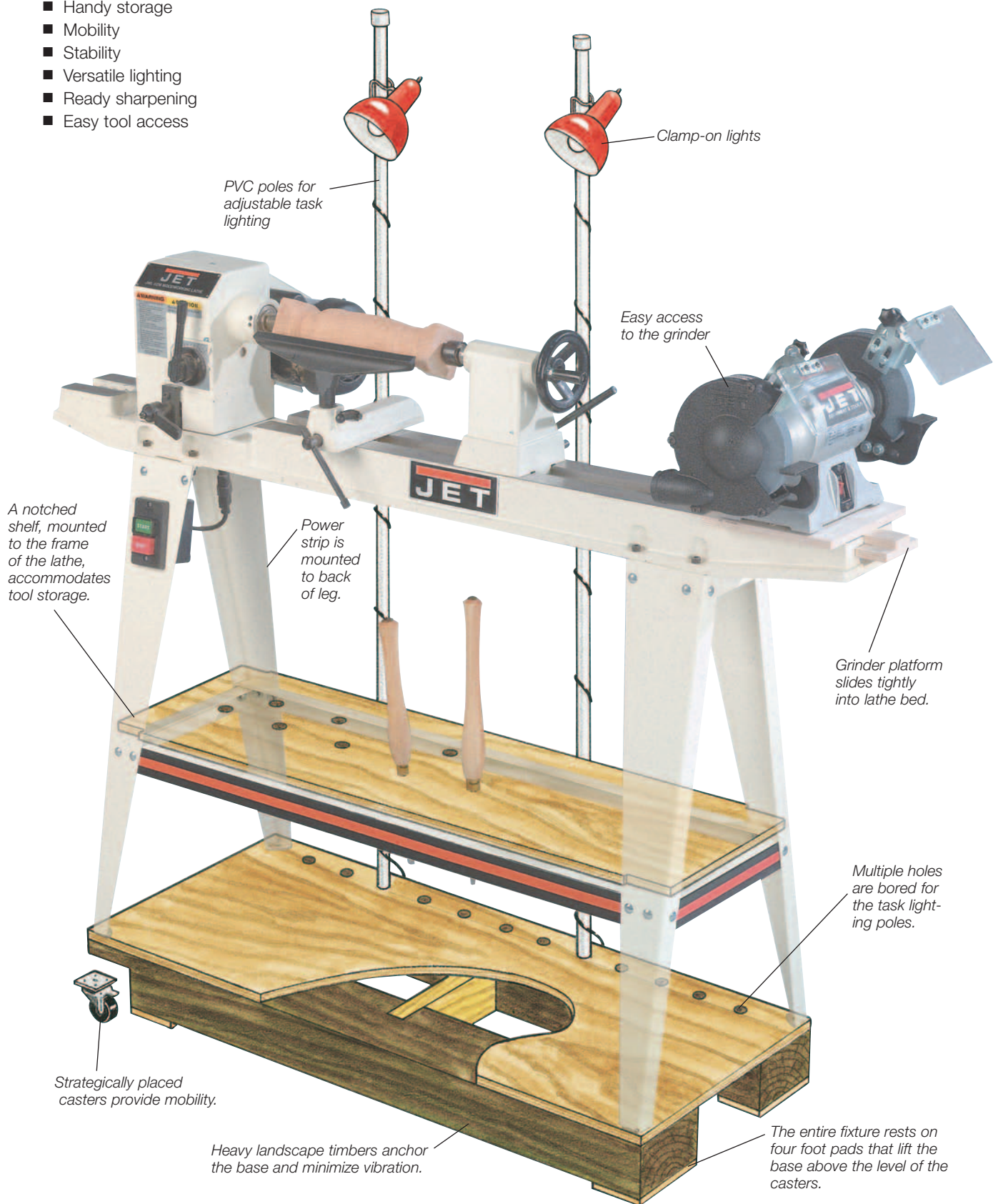
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## 6 GREAT FEATURES

- Handy storage
- Mobility
- Stability
- Versatile lighting
- Ready sharpening
- Easy tool access



# Creating a Customized Portable Lathe Station

**L**athes are one category of shop machinery that are easy to “soup up” for improved performance and convenience. Our lathe station will add portability, tool storage, sharpening capability and task lighting to your machine for around \$75.

Most home shop floor-standing lathes are well designed machines right out of the shipping carton. But, a good machine can usually be made even better with a few enhancements. Our lathe station will set you back about \$75 and take about a day to construct, but it will add storage, mass and better lighting right where you need it most. Although the design you see here was intended for our JET lathe, the concepts can be adapted to virtually any mid-sized lathe brand or base style.

The first order of business is to add enough weight to ensure that your lathe stays put under duress. Our heavy-duty base adds significant mass and rigidity to the stand, and it helps to reduce vibration while turning large or eccentric stock. Portability results from casters strategically positioned in notches cut into the base timbers.

To provide a four-point stance, add 3/4" plywood pads below the notched landscape timbers. When you're ready to move the station, simply pick up the tailstock end until the casters clear the pads (about 20"). Center the lathe on the bottom subassembly and bolt it in place. Drill a series of deep holes on the back edge of the base so you can reposition a lamp pole wherever you need the light as you work.

We added other custom features, including handy tool storage and a bed-mounted grinder platform for touching up your chisel edges without having to move away from the lathe.

The grinder jig's T-shaped base is sized to fit into the slot in the lathe bed. Use a couple long carriage bolts and wing nuts to bolt the base to a second filler piece that fits underneath the bed rail and clamps the jig securely.

We drilled a series of different sized holes in the top shelf for accommodating chisel and related tool storage.

Power for the grinder and other auxiliary items (lights, sander, and so forth) comes from a power strip mounted vertically on the stand leg (not visible in the *photo* at left) under the lathe motor. This placement facilitates access and yet is out of the way of any turning operation. Note: Don't use this power strip to provide primary power to the

lathe motor—the amperage won't be sufficient for the load.

The lamp pole concept is better than clamping task lights directly to your lathe: it keeps them clear of turning tools or spinning blanks and prolongs the bulb life by reducing extra vibration. The holes also allow you to reposition the light for both grinding and turning operations. Use ordinary clamp-on lamps to simplify height adjustment.

You may also want to add a couple of boxes to store the multitude of chucks, faceplates, centers and other turning and finishing materials you're sure to add to your collection.

With a customized stand like this, turning will never be sweeter.



*Quick access to your grinder is one of the key features that makes this lathe station a winner. Deep holes provide a solid foundation for the fixture's task lighting—another of the author's innovations.*