



York Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

Loan Equipment Fact and Instruction Sheet:

Book Chakra Compact Spinner

Health and Safety Advice – There are few concerns with this equipment, but note that the spindle tips are quite sharp and to avoid the spinner moving it is essential to use either the provided silicone rubber non-slip mat or some form of clamp while using the spinner.

Uses – This type of spinner, having originated in India, is primarily intended for spinning cotton. That said it will also work with very fine, shorter staple, animal fibres. All references that I have seen show this machine spinning and hanking singles yarn. I have seen no tutorials or references to using it for plying. An offer of super smooth shuttles from the USA was specifically aimed at Chakra spinners ‘who like to weave singles yarn’. If anyone wishes to make a two-ply (or more) I would suggest making a special lazy Kate to hold the Chakra spindles and then ply on a conventional wheel. Plying onto the Chakra is in theory possible but I wish anyone trying it the best of luck!

Setting up and Spinning

Frankly, with so much detail in the setting up of the spinner and the unusual method of working I feel it would be better to see it in a video rather than my trying to go through it in still photos and text. These are the videos that I used in learning to set up and spin with the Book Chakra: -

The first is from India by Madhav Sahasrabudhe (interesting subtitles) and covers the whole spinning process from cotton boll to yarn hank including setting up, spinning and hanking on the same type of Chakra. Other videos do not cover the hank winder.

<https://youtu.be/uslx0Mxn-E8>

This one by Joan Ruane shows the set-up rather more clearly

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBOYU6gHDu0>

This one also from Joan Ruane shows the spinning action in more detail

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4uZu9yNboI>

A couple of points to note: -

Note how all the bits fit in the case, a devil of a job to re-fit if you don't!

The main drive belt is rubber and had to be bought from the USA so please don't nip or break it.

When fitting the spindle I prefer to put a dab of Vaseline on the parts that rest on the leather inserts just to help it run. Also note that the leather washer should fit between the small pulley and the wood,

When setting off with a clean spindle, wrap a little yarn below the aluminium disc to create a firm base to the cop and stop it pushing onto the wood.

John Tavender

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