

Kirinite™ Dave's Scale of difficulty rating = Moderately Difficult, 5 to 6 depending on the skill level and experience of the turner.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Kirinite™ is the Trademark name for a true acrylic material owned by Eagle Grips, Inc. which is based in Illinois (although I have Kirinite™ pen blanks that are labeled "Made in England"). Kirinite™ is a high-quality, hardened, thermoset acrylic resin that is made by adding very thin strands of poly-paper (polyester coated paper) to the resin in different directions to create swirling patterns and colors. Although Kirinite's™ origin is associated with handgun grips, it is widely used in the knife making industry as a handle material that can be polished to a high gloss while still retaining it's "grippiness" even when wet.

ACCORDING TO THE MANUFACTURER / OWNER

Kirinite™ is a versatile, innovative acrylic sheet material that is bringing new excitement to an ever-increasing variety of products. Kirinite™ comes in a wide array of alluring colors and patterns, but there's a lot more to Kirinite than just dazzling colors:

- Kirinite™ is remarkably durable...it resists chipping, cracking, warping, and shrinking
- Kirinite™ responds well to shaping, grinding, sanding, and buffing
- Kirinite™ can be buffed to a high-gloss finish, but never feels slippery in the hand...even when wet
- Kirinite™ is created using a single-batch process, so each piece is totally unique

Kirinite™ offers an unusual blend of durability and workability. Unlike other acrylic materials, it's not brittle, so it resists chipping and cracking. Sanding, shaping, drilling, and buffing are also easy with Kirinite™. When treated with just a bit of restraint, the material won't melt, seize your drill bit, or warp when being worked.

You don't need special tools to work with Kirinite™, either. Whether you're accustomed to working with wood, plastics, stone, bone, or other substances, you can use the same tools on Kirinite™ without fouling the tools or compromising the beauty or integrity of the material.

COST AND AVAILABILITY

Kirinite™ pen blanks are available from many pen turning supply distributors. They can be found in 50 plus colors and variations. They can be found typically costing in the \$7 to \$8 range as of the time of this this writing.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND OTHER COMMENTS

Reviews have stated that Kirinite™ seemed slightly harder than Acrylic Acetate, but not as brittle as Inlace Acrylester. It has also been called comparable to Italian Lucite. (*Italian Lucite is a vintage plastic which like Kirinite™ is a dense and heavy thermoset acrylic material*). Although Kirinite™ is touted as being a tough material, because of its hardness it can crack especially if it is very thin. Reviews have also reported that although it is a dense material, it turns easily and is capable of being threaded. Also, very little if any plastic smell or odor has been reported while it is being worked. Kirinite™ pen blanks polish well and can offer an intense, bright-pearl coloring, with areas that shimmer when they reflect light. Kirinite™ pen blanks can also have areas that are semi-transparent so painting the brass tubes, or better, painting the inside of the hole in the blank, is very highly recommended. Based on a comparison of synthetic (non-wood) pen blank offerings I would consider them to be in the low to mid cost range.

DIFFICULTY RATING

Due to various reviews and experiences found online related to working with Kirinite™ and based on personal experience, Kirinite™ on Dave's Scale of difficulty where 1 = it almost turns itself and 10 = problematic and very difficult, I would rate Kirinite™ at a 5 for skilled and experienced turners and 6 for less experienced turners.

PICTURE OF KIRINITE™ PEN BLANK (Kirinite™ #EA-WXKNA07, BENGAL TIGER, from Exotic Blanks, note it is more "shimmery" than it appears)



PICTURE OF COMPLETED PEN USING KIRINITE™ BLANK

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