Furniture &cabinetmaking

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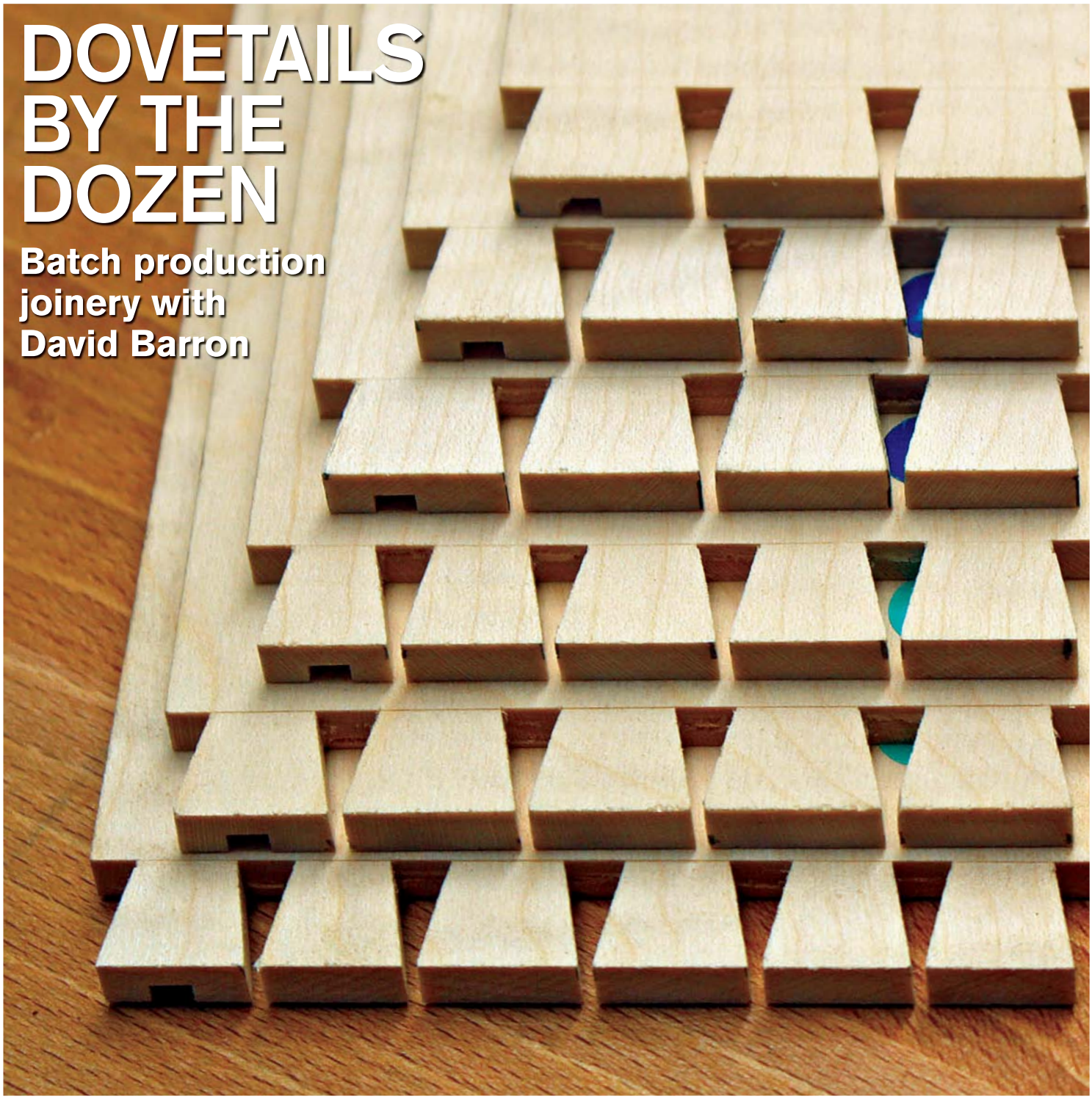

DOVETAILS BY THE DOZEN

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Welcome to...

...desk-top woodworking

PHOTOGRAPH BY DEREK JONES/GMC PUBLICATIONS

Apropos of nothing in particular or at least nothing in this issue, is a confession that I have a fascination for roll top desks. You're shocked, I can tell and why wouldn't you be, they're not exactly a great example of fine cabinetmaking and they're not even really that attractive to look at either. If it helps, I know exactly when it happened which makes a lot more sense. Aged about 10, my parents acquired some dilapidated commercial premises that had once belonged to the RAF Social Club. Included in the inventory were a couple of billiard tables with cues and a score board, assorted bar paraphernalia including a propeller and a roll-top desk. During the refurbishment I spent hours rummaging through the artefacts in one of the back rooms in between bouts of colouring in while seated at this desk. I wasn't so much impressed as in awe of the space it occupied and the importance it bestowed on anyone privileged enough to sit at it. Anyone that had a need for a desk like this must have held a position of authority. Hey, this was once the property of the Royal Air Force. No piece of furniture since has captured my imagination in quite the same way.

Nowadays when the words don't come, I like to tidy my desk and de-clutter my immediate surroundings in the hope that it'll kick-start an idea. When that fails I just shut up shop, call it a day and head out for a walk. Today was such an occasion and the walk took me to the saleroom and a most unexpected surprise. This clean example of a roll-top desk was on display and very tempting. The sale is next week!

Our projects this month are conveniently desk-top sized meaning that you don't need a huge space to build them and already I'm starting to think that maybe a roll-top bench would be a good idea. As I say, the sale is next week so watch this space. We might be able to kill two birds with one stone.

Derek Jones
derekj@thegmcgroup.com

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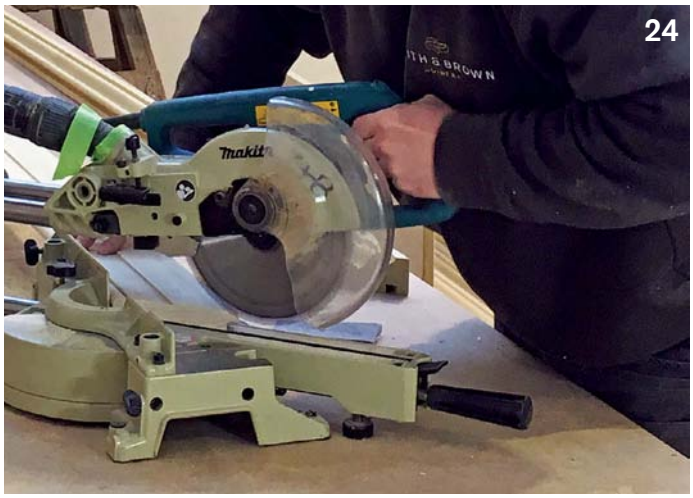

Issue 269
April 2018

Design & inspiration

Projects & techniques

Your F&C

Don't forget there are plenty more articles and discussions to be found on the Woodworkers Institute & Forums
www.woodworkersinstitute.com

Meet the contributors

David Barron

David is a fine contemporary furniture maker and the producer of a popular range of hand tools. He also regularly teaches woodworking courses at West Dean College, produces DVDs and uploads videos to his YouTube channel.
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Steve Bisco

Steve Bisco has been carving for over 30 years, specialising in decorative carving in period styles, first in wood and recently in stone. He is a regular writer for *Woodcarving* magazine and his book *Stone Carving for the Home & Garden* is available now from GMC Publications.

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Matt spent five years training at Rycotewood Furniture Centre in Oxford. He is a sales advisor at Axminster's Basingstoke store, where he also demonstrates products and techniques. He designs and makes custom furniture, often filming the construction of his pieces; these videos can be viewed on his website.
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Nearing the end of a satisfying career as a lawyer, Jim realised he would need something to do in retirement. A long-term interest in woodworking suggested cabinetmaking so he enrolled on a course at West Dean College. Twenty years and many courses later, Jim now makes furniture to his own designs in his well-equipped workshop.

Vic Tesolin

After his honourable discharge from the Canadian Artillery, Vic studied furniture design and making at Rosewood Studio. He ran his own studio furniture business while working at Rosewood as a part-time instructor and craftsman in residence. He now serves as Woodworking Technical Advisor in the R&D department of Veritas Tools. Vic is also the author of *The Minimalist Woodworker*, which encourages new woodworkers to do more with less.
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Ramon works full-time as a production manager in his brother's cabinet, countertop and fixtures shop in New Mexico. As well as making gallery quality furniture in his spare time, he has taught marquetry classes at his local college. Ramon is the man to go to for the best time-saving tips and ingenious short cuts.
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Under the influence:

a Japanese-style tool box with Arts & Crafts joinery

Derek Jones looks at the origins of Arts & Crafts to build a tool box in the ancient style

Anyone that's stopped to consider the shape, form or function of an object will unwittingly have engaged in a conversation about design. Even choosing between Thai, Italian or tapas for dinner constitutes having an opinion on the merits of each regardless of how well equipped we are to do so. Just having an opinion can make us an expert sometimes for they are so often gut-felt and conceived without rational thought as to make them the most honest of human responses. Aside from the categories used to group items in chronological order like Georgian, Victorian, etc., we also have more general terms that take into consideration the aesthetic nature of objects. The history of furniture is packed with references to Japanned items, Chinoiserie and Classical proportions. Most of the time these are interpretations of a style developed to respond to a particular shift in taste for commercial reasons and therefore not always a reliable source of original intent or information – Gothic and medieval immediately spring to mind. Some of the more well known descriptions that just so happen to be so vague as to mean very little are Shaker Style, Scandinavian or my favourite, Oriental. While I have a rough idea what's meant by them they don't really tell me much about the objects at all.

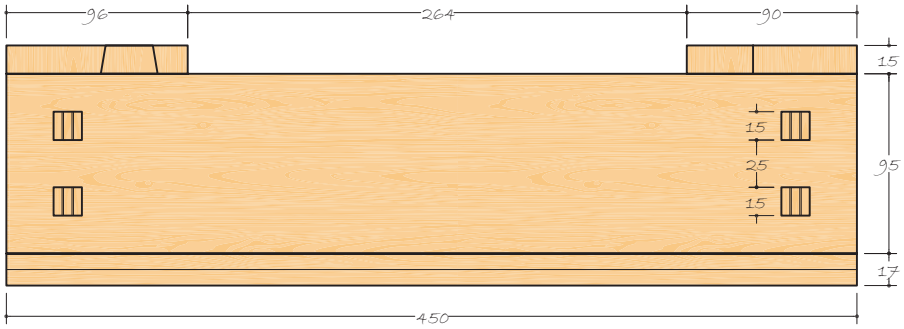
When I first looked at making this style of box I was undoubtedly drawn to a style that has its origins in Japanese carpentry and more specifically temple builders. I'm just as fascinated by the things craftsmen make as how they make them. Like all good tool chests it follows some basic principles that are common among tradesmen the world over, particularly those working with wood. Firstly, they are usually made from an inexpensive material and to a design that lends itself to being repaired easily. Secondly, as a purely utilitarian object conceived under the rule of form equals function they represent the height of aesthetic achievement.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEREK JONES/GMC PUBLICATIONS

Box building class

So far I have two weekend classes scheduled this year to build this box. The groups are small with a maximum of five attendees and suitable for beginners. To tackle the mortise and tenons in the time available you need to be a confident dovetailer.

When: 28–29 April and 6–7 October
Where: Robinson House Studio, Newhaven, East Sussex
Price: £275 plus materials
Contact: derek@lowfatroubo.co.uk



SIDE ELEVATION
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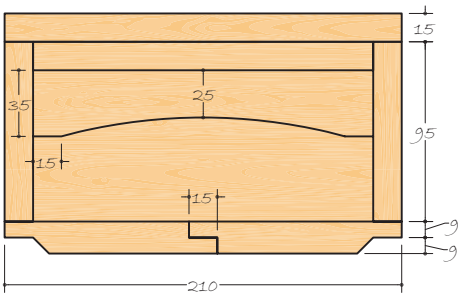

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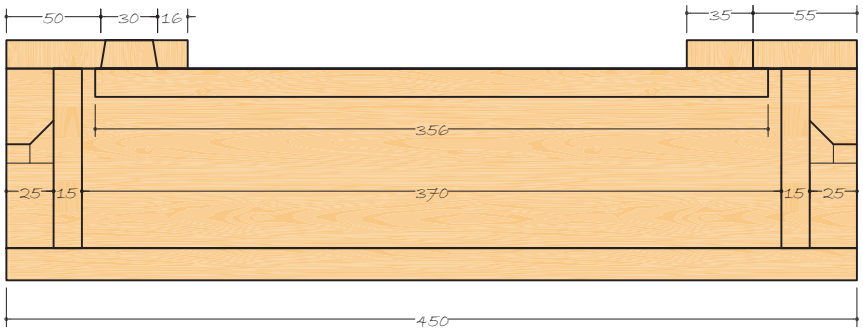

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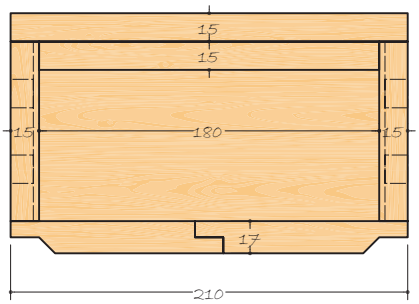

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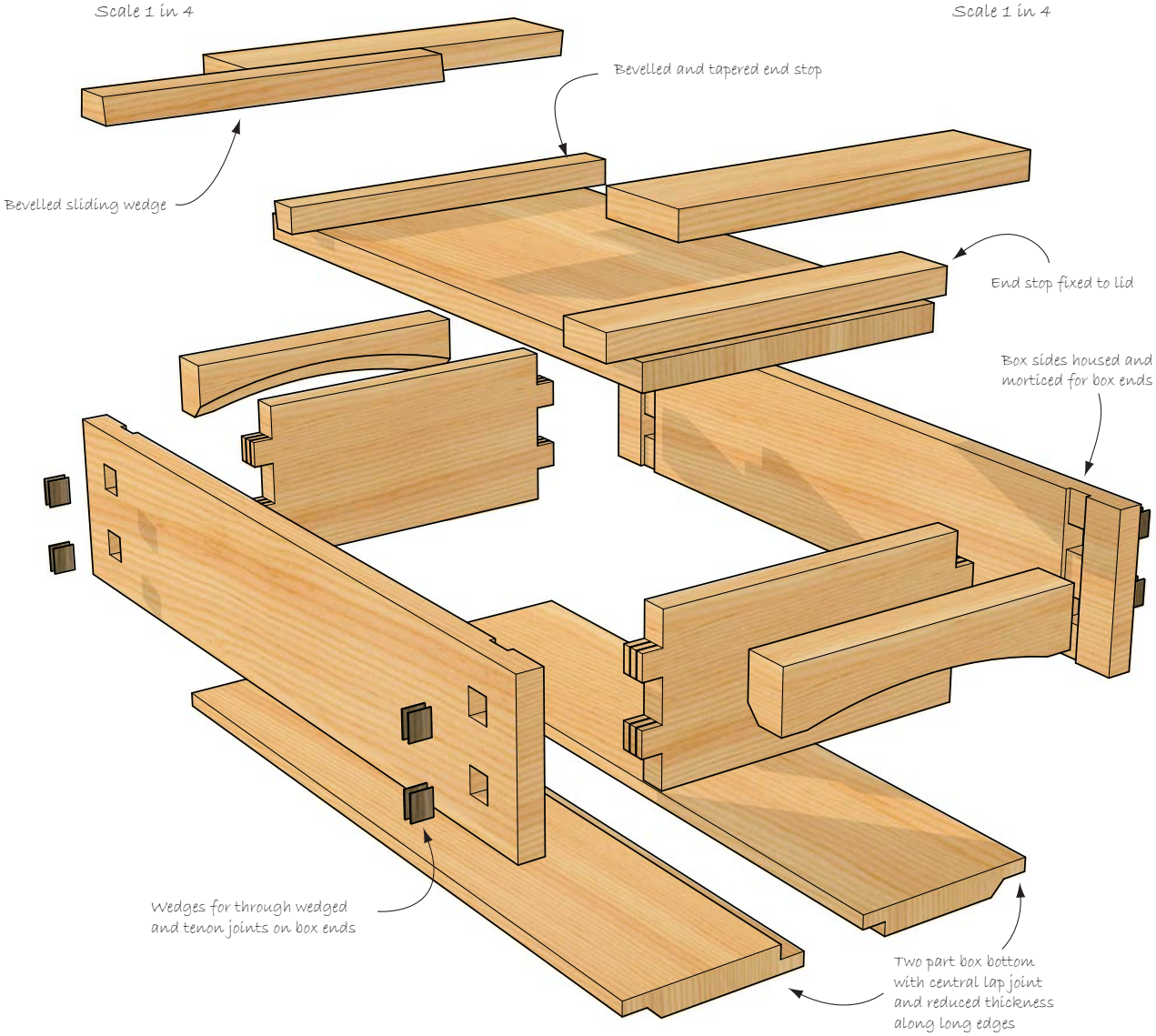


All the functions without the hardware

Tapered wooden nails are a neat way of securing the battens to the lid and box

No frills please

There are some fancy tool chests out there that often house an equally fancy assortment of tools but I have my reservations about how well they perform as working tool chests. When I see them decked out with inlay and marquetry it makes you wonder if perhaps the owner was more concerned with storing his tools than using them. Presumably at the end of the job these showy chests were loaded onto a cart adorned with the 19th-century equivalent of furry dice and go-faster stripes. I'll concede that such a chest might be used to display a workman's competency in various cabinetmaking disciplines but in the 18th and 19th centuries nothing said 'hire me' better than a letter of recommendation.

Coming back to our Japanese chest we need only look at the frugal use of materials to understand that a completely different culture existed between the tools a craftsman used and how he transported them. Perhaps the most significant difference in the approach to building such a container was that for the Japanese chest, no hardware was required apart from the nails used to fasten it all together. Western-style chests, on the other hand, typically featured metal straps to strengthen the box, metal handles with which to lift them and metal hinges to attach the lid. Most featured some form of metal lock as well and were expensive items to either buy or make. All of these additions serve to complicate the design in one way or another and nearly always fail before the rest of the chest gives way. Metal and wood can so often conspire to destroy one another.

I've made about half a dozen of these chests myself over the last couple of years and, through teaching classes on how to make them, have been at the birth of dozens more. So as not to exclude students from completing the project I've experimented with a variety of fixings, not to find the best mechanical fixing but to find a method that suits the skills of the builder. Cut nails, Japanese wooden nails and screws all work well and are easy to implement. For historical accuracy you'd have to use cut nails and this is the most common way of fastening all the components together; it's quick to do and negates the use of glue. Unfortunately one person's authenticity is another person's rustic and any amount of explaining won't change perception. Tapered wooden nails require an adhesive and take a bit longer but result in a sleeker look when everything has been levelled off. Screws seem to introduce more problems than they solve, as you'll have to decide whether to 'clock' the heads or not.

Traditional cut nails are quick and strong

Proportions

There's no escaping the fact that Japanese toolboxes are made to different proportions than Western-style ones, which is largely attributed to the size and shape of their tools. A Western craftsman might have need of three or four backsaws ranging from a 6in dovetail saw to a 14in tenon saw plus hand and panel saws up to 24in. The Japanese carpenter could halve the number of saws in his chest as some are toothed along two edges and others double up as the same saw for multiple applications. The handles are pole shaped rather than a pistol grip, which is easier to accommodate as well. Japanese planes, despite being made of wood, are also less bulky than Western ones so take up much less space and weigh considerably less than metal ones.

Long and low for a reason

Dress down for success

When deciding what material to build a tool chest with you could do a lot worse than pine or cedar. Although both are soft woods botanically speaking as well as physically, they are, in their respective natural homes, generally cheap and in good supply. They are also much lighter than hard woods, so that at the end of a long day you might still have the energy to load your chest onto the cart. It's also worth considering that no craftsman was ever paid to make his own tool chest either, having instead to cover the entire cost of materials and labour out of his own pocket. Though soft woods can be less abrasive on edge tools they still require sharp edges to cut cleanly. In class situations I've noticed that cedar is the most challenging of the two to work. When chopping end grain, anything less than a razor-sharp edge will cause the hard strands of material to crush the soft fibres and a slightly dull plane will either tear up the surface of the material in any direction or just produce fluff. The downside is that it marks easily from chips left on the bench and even from a pencil when laying out joinery. A list of pros in favour of cedar might include its aroma and its resistance to insects and rot. Button shellac will turn it a glorious amber colour, which is not entirely unpleasing. If you can get good quartersawn Douglas fir, the pin stripe pattern of the grain is an excellent choice for a long skinny box. As most of this timber is destined for construction and architectural joinery in the UK you may struggle to find thin wide boards. All my Douglas fir boxes started out as 4x2s.

The most recent box I built was made from a single piece of English oak approximately 300mm wide, 600mm long and 75mm thick. I found it in the offcuts bin of my local timber yard and being perfectly quartersawn I couldn't really leave it behind. Although the annular rings were relatively wide apart, suggesting periods of rapid growth and therefore not ideal for something like drawer construction, there was a fair chance the medullary rays would be spectacular. On opening up the board they weren't as striking as I'd hoped for but to compensate the range of colour was very similar to olive ash; a much prized timber in the 16th century that was often referred to as green ebony.

Button polish brings out the best in red cedar

A very striking example from the offcuts bin

Cunning joinery

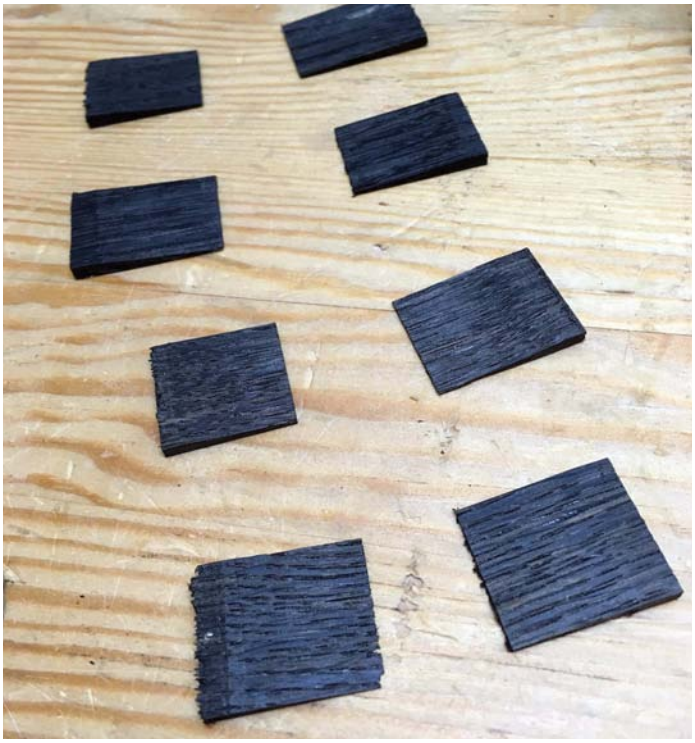
The joinery is really very simple for this box. If you're just using cut nails a dado across the end of each long side is all that's required to house the ends. If you decide to introduce through tenons, the dados double up as a reference for the mortises. My technique for cutting these is to transfer the lines to the outside faces of the board with a marking gauge from a single common edge and drill a slightly smaller hole than the tenon with a Forstner bit. Drill from the face side and support the waste side with an offcut positioned in the dado and you will get a clean hole. If you decide to wedge the tenons it's a good idea to leave them long and chamfer the top edges so they don't inadvertently blow the timber around the mortise when you assemble the components. While it's possible to cut the mortises first and mark the tenons through the holes I've found it better to rely on gauge marks to transfer the vital information because unless the bottom of your dado is perfectly flat and smooth it doesn't provide a crisp arris to guide a marking implement.

Wedging the tenons is more cosmetic than structural as they are quite short and the likelihood of springing them apart sufficiently to create a wedge of any meaningful purpose is slight. However, a diagonal wedge does have the effect of splaying the tenons into all four corners of the mortise thus ensuring a gap-free joint. When it comes to assembling the joints it's only natural to want to drive the wedges all the way home. But if you've made them much longer than the tenons there's a real chance you'll create a split in the wood beyond the shoulder.

Use a dado to register the mortises from the tenons

For effect rather than function

X wedges take a little more time but may help to close up any gaps in the joint



Keep your wedges short to avoid splitting the tenon

Hidden extras

Every one of the boxes I have made has had a shaped handle instead of the more common straight variety. It may in some small way improve the function but really it's where one of the most satisfying details of this box hides. I say hides because you're about the only person that will ever notice its existence, unless you're a builder of things in wood with a predilection for turning things upside down. The inside edge of the curve receives a generous chamfer to form a definite grab which is followed onto the straight ends of the rail. All this has to be done before adding them to the ends of the box. I've used a range of shaping tools to produce them; spokeshave, rasp and scraper and, on one occasion, a router. I like to glue these in place slightly proud of the rest of the box in height and length and let the glue dry before nailing them from the inside of the box. When they are set you can flush them with the rest of the box using a block plane as it will become a seat for the fixed ends of the lid.

The bottom of the box is made from two pieces that are rebated on alternate faces to equal depths and widths. You could if you prefer plough a groove along each edge to take a loose tongue or plane a tongue-and-groove. The benefits are one and the same whichever you decide; to allow the bottom to expand or contract as required without causing it to split or distort the shape of the box. My tip if you're using cedar is to enquire at your timber yard whether they carry cedar ship lap. If they do you're in luck because it will come with two ready-made profiles ideally suited to box bottom making. One edge will have the required rebate and chamfer used for concealing the nails or screws with which you will attach the boards to the sides. The other edge will have a perfect rebate from which you can gauge its mate. You'll need to sacrifice one of these but at least three of the four profiles are pre-cut.

Hidden detail

Ready-made mouldings from the timber yard

Don't let the simplicity of the moving parts fool you

Moving parts

I hunted high and low for a detailed description on how a typical Japanese tool chest lid should be made but other than a cursory note about the benefits of tapered wedges I couldn't find anything of much use. Maybe there's a reason for that which is buried in the archives somewhere but it seems anyone who has ever made one faces the same problem: there isn't a formula as such. OK, there are some basic principles that involve a keyed wedge moving in one direction against a fixed wall to shift an object perpendicularly across a given distance, which might be all you need to know. I won't sugar coat it, at first it's fiddly beyond belief so don't attempt it if there are other things on your mind, you'll need every ounce of grey matter to pull it off. To begin with, cut all the components that sit on top of the lid and the box ends over length. Marry the parts that go together with a couple of pencil dashes so they can't accidently be positioned in any other way than that which is intended. Now shoot the sides of the parts that will mate alongside each other when the lid is closed. For seamless joints the wedge is best cut from the middle of one piece with the offcuts either side forming the fixed end on the box and the other the fixed batten on the lid. Depending on your skill with a rip saw you will need to make this part over width to allow for trimming and planing the angles. It may help to use a dovetail marking template to establish the angles. I have used a 1:6 marker for all my boxes and it works fine. Pay attention to the grain direction on all the angled mating edges as you may end up planing into end grain creating tear-out.

Use a dovetail marker to set the angle on the wedge

With this done you can now trim your lid to fit inside the top of the box with a hair's breadth gap all round. Second tip: having a square box is less important than having a lid that is the same shape as the opening. Mark the orientation of the lid and make up a couple of blocks to sit inside the box along the two long sides to hold the lid at its intended height, i.e. flush with the top of the box. Attach some masking tape tabs to it and drop it in place onto the supports. You can now locate the two fixed ends on top of the handle grips. The end that will include the wedge needs to overlap the lid by, let's say, 12mm. Clamp it in place onto the box and draw a line across the lid and the box sides where it overlaps. At the other end of the lid make a mark across the width 6mm in from the end and extend it onto the sides of the box. You now have marks at each end of the box showing where the fixed ends need to be in relation to a 6/12mm ratio. Remove 6mm off the length of the lid at the wedge end. In order to carry out a test fit, attach the two fixed battens onto the lid with small pieces of double-sided tape while

the lid is resting on the supports with the pencil marks lining up. At the square end the fixed batten will sit on the line. At the wedged end use the wedge as a spacer to set the distance from the end for the other fixed batten. Closing the gaps in this dry run isn't as important as adjusting things so that they are parallel. With that accomplished you can now glue, nail or screw the fixed battens onto the lid and position the other components accordingly and fix them into position without the lid in place. Final adjustments to the fit and finish of the lid include some or all of the following: shooting the ends, creating a leading edge or bevel to the end without the wedge, softening the top arris of the same end. When you're happy with the fit, flush off all the edges but leave the wedge long.

Top and bottom tips

Run the nails in the rebate to keep a smooth bottom

A retro fitted wedge with contrasting slithers on both sides

Flushing up with a shooting plane

You're now ready to fix the bottom in place and once again you have a couple of choices, screws or nails. Both the long sides need to be fixed to the underneath of the box with just a single fixing required along the short side to one of the bottom boards, preferably towards the middle. I use a thin ruler to separate them and create an even expansion gap. The rebate or tongue will be sufficient to hold the other board in place but still allow it to expand or contract. If you're finishing the inside of your box do so now before fixing the bottom. The bottom boards can be over size in all directions at this stage as you can trim them flush later. Use matchstick sized spacers at the ends to prevent breaking the ends of the rebate while planing. The final part of the jigsaw is to trim the wedge to length, however this is where you have to exercise great restraint.

Wait a couple of weeks at least or until the box has spent time in its new home because even the slightest reduction in width across all the battens will mean the wedge has to travel further to close the lid. In extreme cases you may find you need to reduce the width of the wedge even more, add a couple slithers either side and then refit it. Use a contrasting wood and it doesn't look as bad as it sounds.

Anglo-Japanese origins

Exposed joinery is a term that covers a lot of different styles of construction and is perhaps what's meant to describe joints that are exposed for aesthetic reasons. The Arts & Crafts movement in England between 1880 and 1920 played a great part in popularising this style as it drew attention to one of the group's primary objectives, to highlight craftsmanship. Of course exposed joinery had been around for centuries before that in many ancient cultures. Regarded as the grandfather of the movement, Edward William Godwin (1833–86) introduced a style influenced by Japanese art that took inspiration from simple forms and structures. By the 1870s Godwin's designs for wallpaper and other decorative objects featured in the catalogue of Liberty & Co. and found favour with the most progressive and artistic designers of the period. As well as furniture, Godwin also designed buildings including the entrance to the Fine Art Society in Bond Street in 1881. One of the first exhibitions to be held there featured Japanese woodblock prints cementing further still the Anglo-Japanese style that influenced the next generation of makers. F&C

This settee, attributed to Edward Godwin, was made by the London firm Collinson & Lock ca. 1873 from ebonised hard wood

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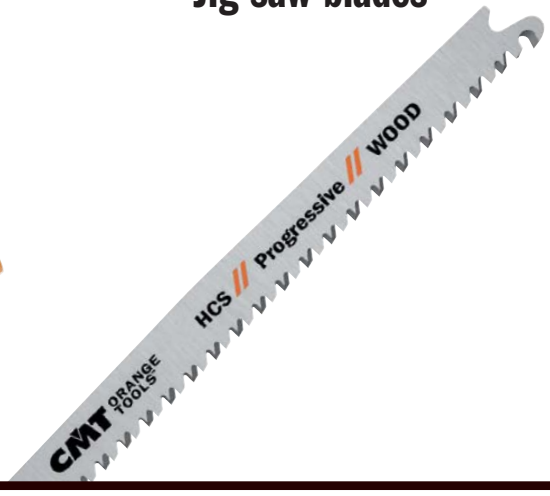

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The Furniture Awards winners announced at JFS

The Cayenne wardrobe range by Wiemann won the Bedroom category

The award in the Living category went to Tetrad's Constable sofa

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF FURNITURE NEWS

The winners of this year's Furniture Awards were announced at the January Furniture Show. Organised by *Furniture News* magazine in partnership with the January Furniture Show, and supported by the BFM, The Furniture Awards recognise the industry's champions by identifying the most commercial and creative products launched at the show.

This year's judges – Malcolm Walker (Furniture Village), Jacquie Benedukt (Fenwick) and Debbie Watmore (AHF) – selected the winning entries from an impressive shortlist. The Constable sofa by Tetrad won the Living category; the judges praised its comfort, fashionable colours and use of materials. Cayenne, a dual-depth wardrobe range by Wiemann, won the Bedroom category. The judges said: 'This market sector is full of flat models without any shape, so Cayenne really stands out – it could probably be sold based on its looks alone, and it lends itself to so many room configurations.' In the Dining category, the award went to the Milano collection from Gallery Direct, which was described as a 'well-balanced range'. Think Rugs' Woodland rug won the award in the Decor catgory.

Awards co-ordinator (and editor-in-chief of *Furniture News* magazine) Paul Farley said: 'It was certainly a tough competition in several categories this year, but the final selection, which features both established leaders and a handful of surprise victories, really demonstrates the strengths of our industry. It's also interesting to note how many of the winners in some way reflect this year's trend for greens and naturals, and puts it into practice so well.'

Gallery Direct's Milano collection won the Dining category

Contact: The January Furniture Show & Furniture News
Web: januaryfurnitureshow.com & www.furniturenews.net

Chippendale school introduces intermediate course

The Chippendale International School of Furniture has announced the introduction of a new one-month intermediate course, designed to fill the gap between their one-week introductory course and the nine-month professional course.

The very popular one-week course gives students a taste of woodworking, while giving them useful DIY skills, and has proved successful in helping students decide if life as a professional furniture designer is the right option for them. However, only offering introductory and professional courses excluded potential students who wanted more advanced skills, without the intention of becoming a fully-trained woodworker.

The new intermediate course will meet that demand. It will only have two students at any one time to maximise the amount of one-to-one tuition, and there will be no formal start and end dates, to better ensure that tuition can be fitted around students' other commitments. The course will not only teach practical skills, but also give students a benchwork project to design and build a small, solid-wood table.

'This course is ideal for woodworking enthusiasts who want to quickly develop their skills and take their hobby to the next level,' said Anselm Fraser, school principal.

Contact: The Chippendale International School of Furniture
Web: www.chippendaleschool.com

Events

Information correct at time of publication, check websites before planning your visit

EVENTS OF THE MONTH

THOMAS CHIPPENDALE, 1718–1779: A Celebration of British Craftsmanship & Design

This exhibition at Leeds City Museum explores the life, work and legacy of Thomas Chippendale, whose tercentenary is being celebrated this year. Born in Otley in 1718, he made his name in London with his exquisite designs and entrepreneurial spirit. His beautiful designs and the quality of his workmanship made Chippendale one of the most sought-after furniture makers of the 1700s. From his humble roots he went on to work in some of the greatest and most fashionable houses in the country.

The exhibition will explore how Chippendale rose to such prominence, celebrate the quality of his work and consider his legacy since his death in 1779. The exhibition covers Thomas Chippendale's life and work in five major themes: his family origins, training, career and the publication of the ground-breaking *Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*; his furniture in the Rococo, Gothic, Chinese and neo-Classical styles; the management of his commissions, including relations with clients; his workshops, including manufacturing and decorative techniques; and his legacy from the 18th century to the present day. It includes objects from his early life, alongside beautiful hand-drawn designs and some of the best examples of his work, many on public display for the first time. The exhibition is free to enter.

The Leeds exhibition is part of a year-long, nationwide programme of events celebrating 300 years of Thomas Chippendale. To find out more about other events, visit: chippendale300.co.uk

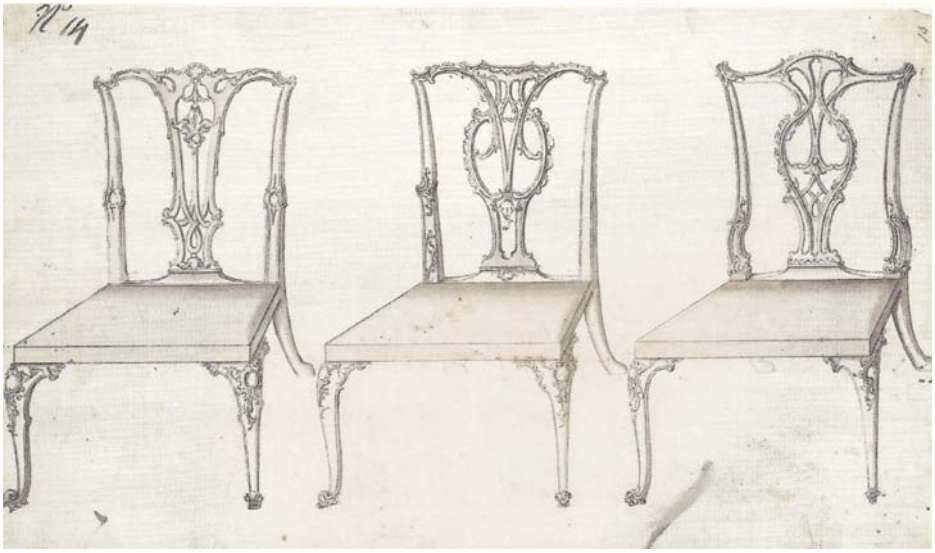
When: until 9 June
Where: Leeds City Museum, Millennium Square, Leeds LS2 8BH
Web: www.leeds.gov.uk/museumsandgalleries/visit/leeds-city-museum

PHOTOGRAPH © LEEDS MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Lady's secretaire made for the State Bedroom at Harewood House in 1773

PHOTOGRAPH © THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY

Armchair from the Newby Hall Chippendale collection, made ca. 1774



PHOTOGRAPH © THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY

Original drawings by Thomas Chippendale which were engraved and published in the famous *Director*

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF GLASGOW LIFE

CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH: Making the Glasgow Style

EVENTS OF THE MONTH

This year also marks an important anniversary for another of Britain's greatest designers, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, who was born 150 years ago. As part of a year-long series of events called Mackintosh 150, this exhibition at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum presents Mackintosh's work in the context of Glasgow, his peers and contemporaries and how it contributed to creating the Glasgow Style. The exhibition will include the very best of Mackintosh works held by the city. A number of objects have never previously been on public display, with many not seen for more than 30 years. Around 250 objects will be on display across the full spectrum of media, including stained glass, ceramics, mosaic, metalwork, furniture, stencilling, embroidery, graphics, books, interiors and architecture. The exhibition will also include important loans from private and public collections including The Hunterian and The Glasgow School of Art.

Other highlights of Mackintosh 150 include a programme of events at The Lighthouse and at Mackintosh Queen's Cross, as well as the re-opening of Mackintosh at the Willow, Miss Cranston's original Tea Rooms in Sauchiehall Street. The Glasgow School of Art, The Hunterian at the University of Glasgow, House for An Art Lover and the new V&A Dundee will all play host to dedicated event and exhibition programmes. For more information, visit: www.glasgowmackintosh.com/events

When: 30 March–14 August
Where: Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Argyle St, Glasgow G3 8AG
Web: www.visitscotland.com/info/see-do/kelvingrove-art-gallery-and-museum-p246571

High-back chair by Charles Rennie Mackintosh

Midcentury Modern, Dulwich

Over 40 dealers will be selling mid-century furniture, ceramics, fabrics, art and glass at this popular event held in Dulwich College. There will also be some stunning contemporary furniture pieces on show including those from Living Room, making their second appearance after Joanne Coe, formerly from Made, designed her own vintage-inspired range of high-end furniture. Also appearing are Barnby Designs, Design Bros, Coffyn, Melver with furniture and lighting and Fine Modern Furniture.

When: 18 March
Where: Dulwich College, London SE21 7LD
Web: modernshows.com

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MODERN SHOWS

Side cabinet by Living Room

Yandles Woodworking Show

Held in Yandles sawmill, this free event includes demonstrations and masterclasses, plus expert advice on a huge range of top brands, exclusive show deals and 15% off all timber.

When: 13–14 April
Where: Yandle & Son Ltd, Hurst Works, Hurst, Martock, Somerset TA12 6JU
Web: www.yandles.co.uk

High Point Market

The High Point Market is the largest furnishings industry trade show in the world, bringing more than 75,000 home furnishings buyers, interior designers, architects and others to High Point, North Carolina.

When: 14–18 April
Where: 164 S Main St #700, High Point, NC 27260, USA
Web: www.highpointmarket.org

Salone del Mobile

Now in its 57th edition, the prestigious Salone del Mobile returns to Milan with products on show from over 2000 exhibitors. The Salone is being held concomitantly with the International Furnishing Accessories Exhibition, which encompasses the entire home furnishing system, ranging from decorative objects, furnishing accessories and textiles for the home.

When: 17–22 April
Where: Milan Fairgrounds, Rho (Milan), Italy
Web: www.salonemilano.it

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SALONE DEL MOBILE

The Salone del Mobile exhibits the best of contemporary furniture

Craft & Design Fair, RHS Garden Wisley

Held in marquees within the beautiful surroundings of RHS Garden Wisley, this craft fair offers original and affordable designs created by some of the finest craftsmen and artists in the UK. There will be textiles, paintings, furniture, metal, leather, ceramics, jewellery, glass, fashion and more.

When: 3–7 May
Where: RHS Garden Wisley, Wisley Lane, Wisley, Woking GU23 6QB
Web: www.craftinfocus.com

Makers Central

This brand-new event brings together thousands of makers from around the world, from crafters and inventors to hobbyists and artists to share their passion for all things creative. There will be demonstrations of woodturning, carving, 3D printing and much more.

When: 5–6 May
Where: National Exhibition Centre, Marston Green, Birmingham, B40 1NT
Web: www.makerscentral.co.uk

Weald of Kent Country Craft Show

This craft fair at Penshurst Place features stalls of handmade and hand-finished furniture and glassware, jewellery, luxury beauty products and leather goods.

When: 5–7 May
Where: Penshurst Place, Penshurst, Tonbridge TN11 8DG
Web: www.thecraftshows.co.uk/kent/spring

Social media dashboard

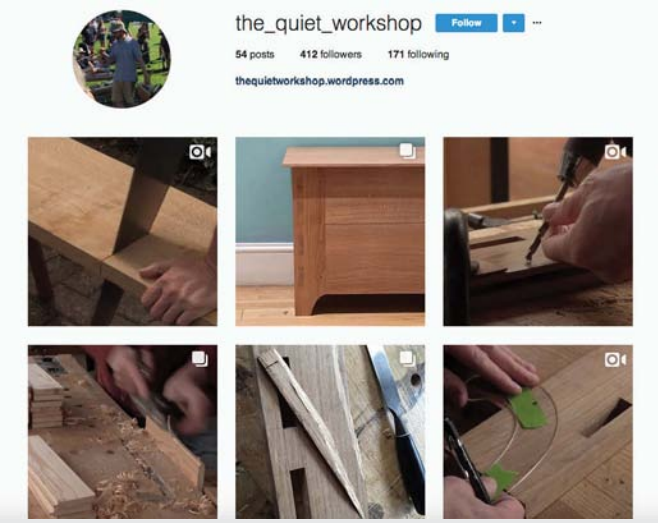
Bringing you a round-up of the best from the online world plus a selection of the latest projects from our readers

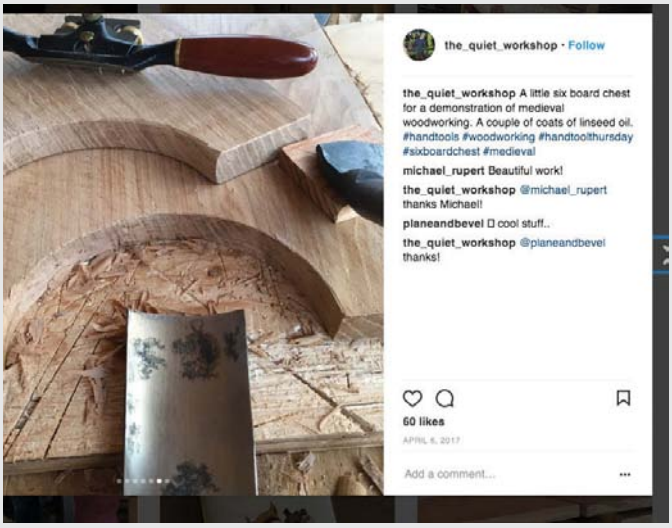
In this section of the magazine we bring together the best furniture and woodworking related content from social media. Here we'll recommend who to follow, where to comment and which online communities to join. We also feature projects we love, readers' letters, comments from the Woodworkers Institute forum and pictures of readers' work. If you'd like to see your furniture on these pages, email derekj@thegmcgroup.com

Instagram: The Quiet Workshop

'Woodworking without the loud noises' is the tagline of The Quiet Workshop, a blog dedicated to woodworking with hand tools. The accompanying Instagram account has plenty of photos and videos from the workshop, plus inspiring images from exhibitions.

Address: the_quiet_workshop

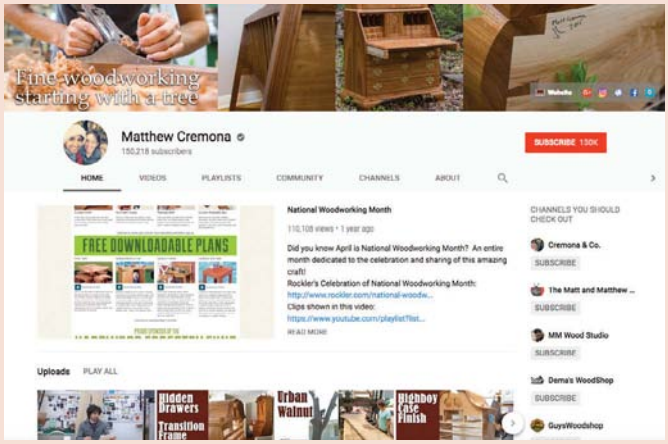


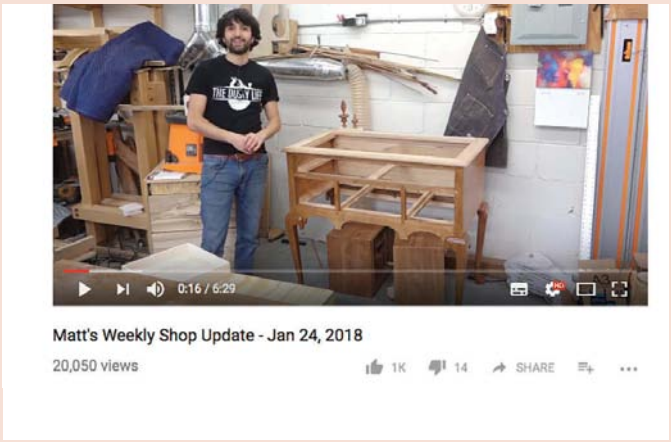


YouTube: Matt Cremona

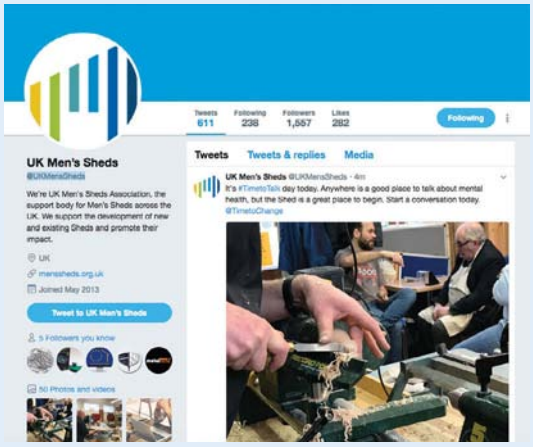
Matt Cremona's furniture projects begin with cutting down trees – he harvests all his own lumber, then uses a combination of hand and power tools to complete his work. You can follow the entire process on his regularly updated YouTube channel.

Address: www.youtube.com/channel/UCDpL0v-Ifie7u05IbfO3zJQ





Twitter: UK Men's Sheds



The Men's Sheds Association is an international non-profit movement, which sets up community spaces to advise and improve men's physical and mental health. Many of the Sheds contain workshops where members can learn and practise woodworking skills. The UK branch's Twitter feed has all the latest news about the Association's projects, aims, campaigns and success stories.

Address: UKMensSheds

Website: FIESTA

The Furniture and Interiors Education, Skills and Training Alliance (FIESTA) is a new organisation that was set up to address the widening skills gap. It is an alliance of trade associations from across the UK furniture and interiors industries and its aim is to address the current and future skills needs by encouraging and inspiring new talent to join the industry, and ensuring relevant training and qualifications are in place to support them.

FIESTA now has its own dedicated website which offers careers guidance, links to relevant courses, information on apprenticeships for manufacturers and case studies of people starting out in the industry.

Address: www.fiestalearning.com

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Bigger pictures

Derek Jones visits the workshops of Smith & Brown Joinery, a cabinet shop for London's elite

Julian Smith and Aaron Brown began their partnership in 2012 in response to a growing demand for bespoke cabinetry in London's West End. For interiors companies and especially joinery firms this has always been a fast developing area. London dwellers are perhaps less likely to notice, but infrequent visitors to the capital are generally astounded by the number of cranes jostling for position across the skyline. As indicative of a landscape in a constant state of repair and regeneration, the less obvious projects are those taking place behind closed doors. Desirable residences in this part of town don't change hands for anything less than a seven-figure sum but these (relatively) small-scale projects add a disproportionate amount of value to the interior fit out industry where underground pools and rooftop dining areas are standard features. London remains one of the world's most desirable locations for foreign investment opportunities and property is about as good as it gets. Other areas of the UK have struggled to keep up with the capital's impressive rate of growth year on year, which in no small way is thanks to the army of small businesses like Smith & Brown plying their trade in this area.

Fuelling this industry is a constant churn of people either moving in and up, or out to the country and up-sizing. London's capacity for growth has always been driven by the influx of New Money. If you believe what the papers say, the people with the biggest pockets in the playground right now are likely to be from Russia but that is just what the papers say. Where style is concerned there's no accounting for taste and that's very much the way it's been for the last couple of centuries. A resurgence in the classics, for example, during the 18th century shaped much of the world as we know it today. Like any capital city, London is a huge melting pot of cultures and influences that make it such an exciting place to live and work and the city's upmarket joiners get to see the best and possibly the worst of it. I've interviewed a number of firms over the years in a similar position and all have been cagey about who their customers are. Sure, there's an element of commercial rivalry and one would expect that but there also exists a code of conduct, a bond almost between client and contractor – a customer's home is his castle, even when he's not English.

Expansion

Every business has its USP and for Smith & Brown Joinery it's arguably being located within easy reach of central London. We visited them as they were reaching the end of a period of renovating their own premises in Tottenham. The firm were recently acquired by Sizebreed Group, a company that specialises in providing bespoke and high quality construction and maintenance services for clients with prime residences. Before the acquisition Sizebreed were placing about 80% of their joinery requirements through Smith & Brown so when the opportunity arose to expand into the workshops next door it seemed only logical to merge and establish a joinery division in-house. The new space will incorporate their existing machine 'shop, which is also gaining a few new items to assist with the workflow, a show room, a finishing booth, a meeting room and design studio. My notebook of London is full of best kept secrets and the list just got longer.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEREK JONES/GMC PUBLICATIONS

New design studio at Smith & Brown's London HQ

The traditional workshop is enhanced by CNC capability

Old and new technology

After touring the new premises I spent a few minutes talking to John Izzard who judging by his grey beard could tell stories of the trade before Sizebreed and Smith & Brown existed. Such experience is invaluable in a business like this where the day-to-day routine of solving complex construction problems is made that much easier when you've solved them a hundred times before. He guided me towards a brand-new four head moulder that had just been commissioned but is not in use yet. It's one of a number of industrial-rated pieces that will enable the company to operate at maximum efficiency. Despite the level of automation Smith & Brown still retain a group of joiners at the bench. A mountain of freshly machined poplar in the shape of a classic Georgian three-piece door surround moulding had recently been finished and was no doubt awaiting a primer coat before heading out for installation. Other items under way in the workshop were a section of 10ft high cornicing and panelled covers presumably made to conceal a radiator or AC unit. Their cabinet 'shop has a specially designed partition wall that allows the team of makers to construct entire room settings with lighting and electronics built in prior to delivery. As bespoke installations become ever more sophisticated and cabinets feature more than just lights and storage, it will help them to iron out any bugs in the system before arriving on site.

It's interesting that the most successful companies operating in this sector don't call themselves cabinetmakers any more, even though that's precisely what they do. I blame architects for that. Before the likes of Chippendale popularised the style for cabinetry, joiners were responsible for fitting out the most luxurious apartments in the city, so perhaps they've got a point.

Measure twice cut once still applies

The latest addition to Smith & Brown's machine 'shop

Hundreds of metres of door frame moulding

Programming a cutting list for optimal use of the board

The next generation

I first got to meet with Aaron from Smith & Brown and Holly Rich from Sizebreed following a conversation about recruitment and their need to add more skilled cabinetmakers to their team. It's a recurring theme to many of my introductions and suggests that for the next generation of craftsmen and women the industry is moving in the right direction. Apprenticeships are the way forward for many trades now, once again returning to a tradition that's widely thought to have been lost for good. These take many forms and include a variety of career options for school leavers as well as graduates. As technology and automation continues to spread throughout the furniture-making industry it stands to reason that bespoke makers will seek to use it to deliver even more complex installations, with companies like Smith & Brown eager to explore new horizons. F&C

Every workshop needs a little bit of old-school tech

More information

To find out more about working for Smith & Brown, visit: sizebreed.com/services-joinery

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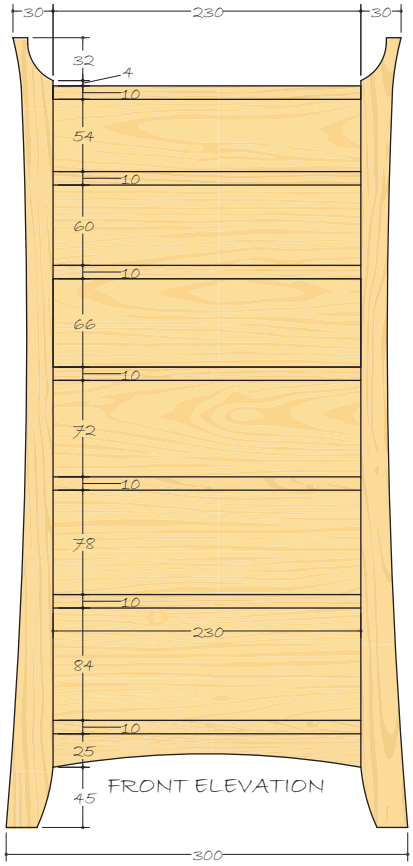
Small chest of drawers

David Barron makes good use of a chestnut board with this small project

I don't usually make a full-size drawing of my projects but I felt it was essential with this piece. It has lots going on with the shape and I needed to make sure the graduated drawers were in proportion. I'd had a board of quartersawn chestnut in stock for a few years and this seemed the ideal project. The board was purchased part-seasoned from Yandles. It measured 1800 x 250 x 76mm thick and I managed to use most of it on this small project, which was quite a surprise.

After playing around with scale sketches, a full-size working drawing was produced BELOW: A large plank of quartersawn chestnut with some nice ripple

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID BARRON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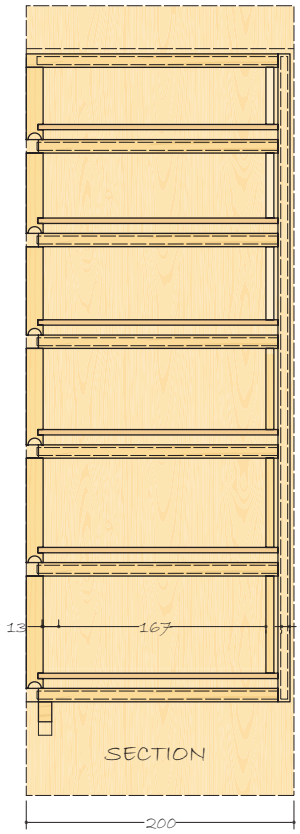
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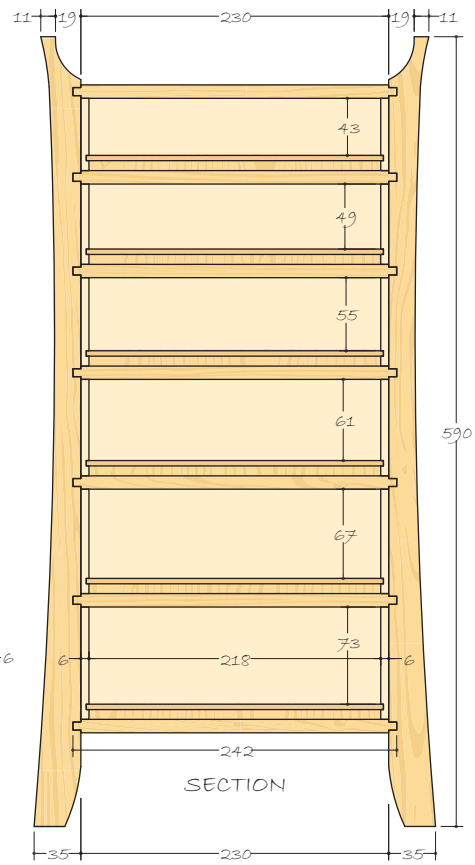
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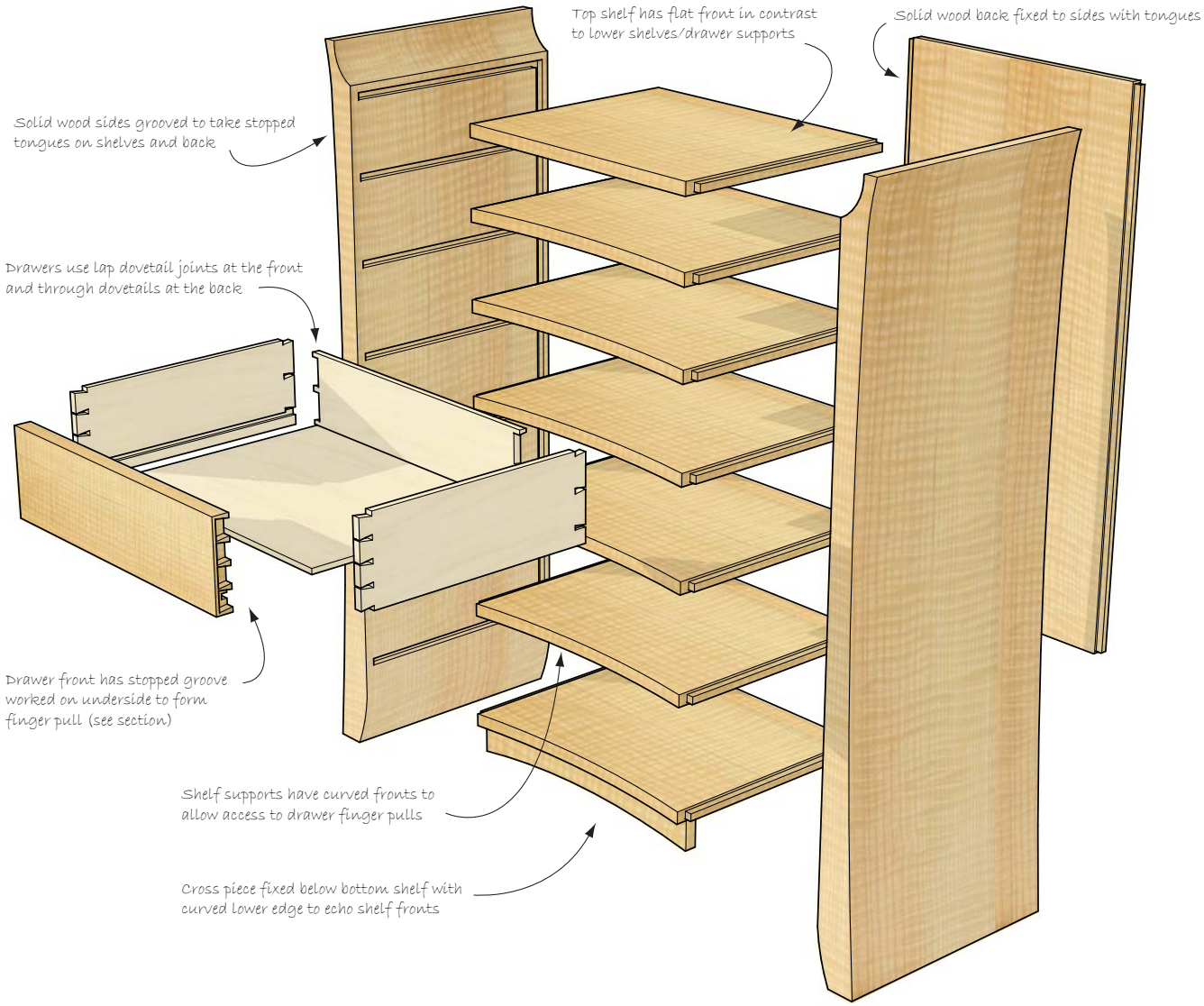

Top shelf has flat front in contrast to lower shelves/drawer supports
Solid wood back fixed to sides with tongues
Solid wood sides grooved to take stopped tongues on shelves and back
Drawers use lap dovetail joints at the front and through dovetails at the back
Drawer front has stopped groove worked on underside to form finger pull (see section)
Shelf supports have curved fronts to allow access to drawer finger pulls
Cross piece fixed below bottom shelf with curved lower edge to echo shelf fronts

Cutting and marking

Having worked out all the dimensions required, I bandsawed the parts 20% oversize and allowed them to settle for a few days. The air-dried timber held no tension so there was very little movement; this was helped by the fact it was quartersawn. With the sides planed to size and cut square, I marked all the positions from the template and cut all the grooves for the dividers and back panel on the router table. All the dividers were then cut to identical size and squared before I created a slight taper on the shooting board. I took three progressive stopped shavings and then finished with one through shaving. This was done on both sides of each divider, making sure of course that the shavings were started at the front to create a taper that widened towards the rear. The taper was then checked with two stops set to the rear edge and this confirmed a taper of 0.26mm (0.13mm on each side), this would be very difficult to achieve with a tablesaw.

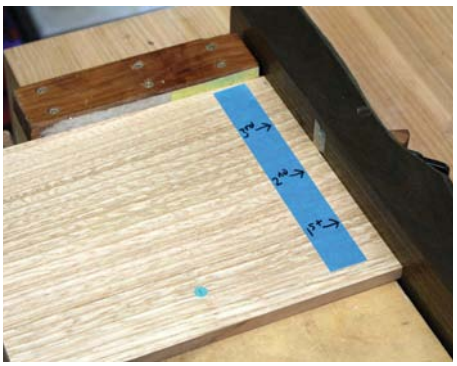
With all the dividers gently tapered I marked the baselines for the tenons with a wheel marker. The tenons were then cut on the router table just shy of the scribe line and cleaned back with a (sharp) chisel. I have found this gives a much cleaner finish than just relying on the router and I like to undercut the shoulders a fraction to make sure they are pulled up perfectly tight with no gaps. All this takes a little extra time but it makes sure that tapers are maintained in the glued-up carcass.

I then cut the finger access for the dividers on the bandsaw and cleaned up with a flat-soled spokeshave, which is ideal for smoothing out a gentle concave. I also cut a shallower curve on the back to allow air to escape when the drawers were closed.

Parts cut on the bandsaw and being allowed to settle

Using the drawing to mark off the position of the dividers

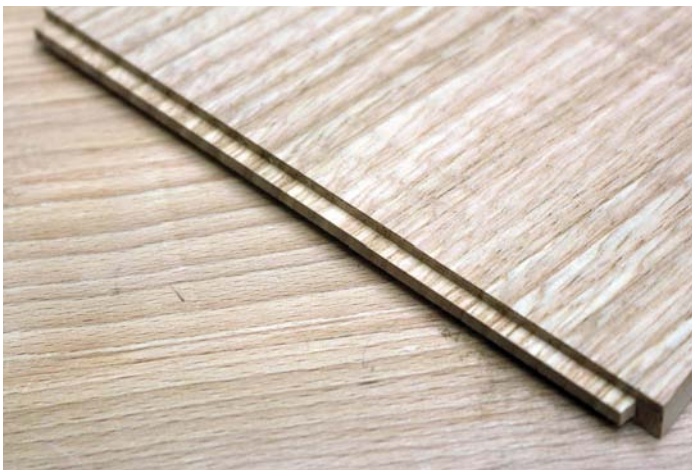
Cleaning up the internal surfaces after routing the grooves for the dividers and back panel



Using stopped cuts on the shooting board to induce a front to back taper to the openings

Checking the taper against stops with a feeler gauge

Smoothing the curves to allow finger access to the drawers



Tenons cut and cleaned up with a sharp chisel

Shaping and gluing

After doing a dry fit, to confirm the fit of all parts, it was time to shape the sides. To aid stability on the bandsaw I stuck both sides together with a small amount of double-sided tape (the small inside curves were cut individually before sticking together). The more accurately these cuts are made the closer the two parts will be to each other and the less cleaning up will be necessary. Even with care it still took quite some time, with both curved and flat-soled spokeshaves, to create nice, even and identical curves.

Prior to gluing up I re-attached both the offcuts with a small amount of double-sided tape which meant that the clamps were square to the work, applying even pressure. I took the precaution of rough sanding the bandsawn offcuts so that the smooth sides of the cabinet weren't damaged. I also took a few progressive shavings from the underside of each divider to create a slight taper in the height increasing from front to back. This is not essential but I've found it aids with fitting the drawer sides.

A dry fit to check everything

Cutting curves on the bandsaw

Smoothing and cleaning up the sides

Gluing up the carcass using the offcuts to keep the clamps square

Fitting the drawers

With the carcass glued up I could start fitting the drawers. First the fronts were shot to a very tight fit in the front openings. With this done, the tapers in both height and width could be checked at the back of the cabinet – all was well. The rear of each drawer is knifed from the front and trimmed back to the knife lines on the shooting board. Each of the sides was marked with its position and orientation with coloured dots before being shot to a tight but smooth running fit.

With all the drawer parts fitted it was time to cut the grooves on the router table. The back of each drawer had to be cut level with the top of the groove to allow the drawer bottom to slide in. By using the top edge of all parts against the router table fence the rear pieces could be grooved on both sides before being cut off and cleaned up to a perfect fit.

Now it was time to cut the dovetails, all 96 of them! Clean, accurate square tails are the key to a good fit and this type of close accurate work is my favourite part. I had decided on half-blind dovetails, something I don't cut very often and the pins proved quite a challenge in this coarse timber, especially with a thin lap. Tradition has it that the lap should be ⅓ to ¼ of the timber thickness but on finer work I prefer to work to ⅕, which in this case was just 2.5mm thick.

I cut the through dovetails on the rear with a 3mm protrusion and used this later to adjust the drawer position. While it is usual to make the stops against the drawer front, the amount of movement in the sides of this small piece was going to be minimal and not worth allowing for.

The final fitting of the drawers needs to be done carefully to ensure a smooth running piston fit, which is aided by the tiny tapers that were built into the carcass. Each drawer is fitted into its opening from the back and the wood is carefully planed until the fit is running smoother but without wobble. Waxing the sides and running them in and out helps identify the high spots which show up as shiny. Alan Peters gave an excellent and detailed description of this in an article he wrote for *Fine Woodworking* many years ago.

With each drawer fitted, the cedar of Lebanon base could be slid into place and re-checked before being secured with a slotted screw to the rear. The rear panel was fitted in a similar fashion and again secured with a single central screw to allow for wood movement.

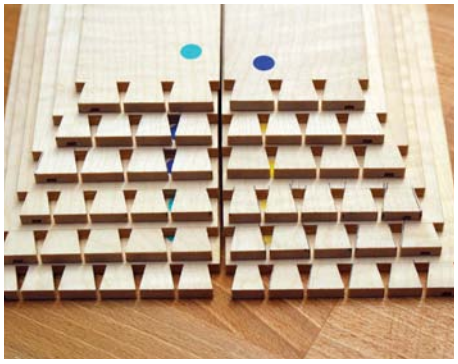
I had experimented with various finishes on scrap pieces and decided against an oil finish as it accentuated the colour differences in the wood. I wanted something that gave a mild finish that didn't clash visually with the shape of the chest and so settled on three coats of heavy cut shellac, cut back with 600 grit and gently waxed. F&C

Fitting of the drawer fronts in their openings

Scribing the rear pieces from the fronts

Fitting each of the sides in its opening

Routed grooves in the drawer parts, note the narrower rear piece



Tail boards cut on one of the four corners

The corresponding delicate pins

Carefully fitting the drawers

The drawers being fitted from the rear to ensure a smooth piston fit

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK/ALESSANDRO CRISTIANO

Cedar of Lebanon in La Morra, Italy

What's in a name?

Jim Hooker raises the issue of identifying wood species by common and Latin names

The purpose of this article is to start a discussion about the words we use to identify the material we all love – wood, and also challenge the way our magazine – for that's how I believe many loyal readers view *F&C*, deals with this subject at a practical level. Such abstract matters may not seem immediately interesting or important to readers thirsting for furniture-making knowledge and inspiration, but I believe it should be important to all of us.

As a starting point, it's worth exploring the evolution of common wood names. These usually originate in the depths of history, but what species they relate to has evolved and varied from country to country and sometimes within countries. This is often because colonisers came across a timber in a new continent or country which in some way resembled a wood with which they were familiar, so they bestowed the familiar name on it. Cedar is a good example. In European furniture making 'cedar' would usually mean cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*), but in North America it would almost certainly be taken to mean one of a number of unrelated species including members of the cypress, juniper and thuja families. In Australia it might even refer to *Toona ciliata* which is a member of the mahogany family and one of many species of which mature examples have all but disappeared as a result of unsustainable exploitation. In other cases, common names are bestowed on a new species by the timber trade for purely commercial reasons. 'Mahogany' is one example – this familiar and much-loved wood from a family of closely related species native to the Caribbean and Central America became expensive and then effectively unavailable, also because the wild populations had been exploited almost to the point of extinction, so the cachet of the familiar name is used to promote other (often palpably inferior) species to the benefit of profit.

All of this is a recipe for confusion. But does confusion arising from, at best, innocent cultural differences and, at worst, commercial misrepresentation really matter? I would argue that it matters a great deal for three reasons.

When wood species really matters

First, I think we should be told precisely what wood species is being referred to when this is important to us. *F&C* recognises this by quoting Latin botanical names alongside common names. Project articles are a good example of where this information is important. Here the writer is, in effect, inviting us to

This unfinished true mahogany (*Swietenia* spp.) was recycled from redundant 18th/19th-century table leaves. Note the very light-coloured silica deposits which cease to be visible when finish is applied …

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM HOOKER, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

replicate something he or she has made. So far, so good, but the information needs to be right otherwise we are being misled rather than simply being left in the dark. I would choose the latter every time because I must then make up my own mind what wood species I need to use to replicate the look of the original. In a recent *F&C* project article the piece was stated to be 'out of genuine mahogany (*Khaya ivorensis*)', which immediately raises the question – what is meant by genuine mahogany? I suspect that most people with even a little knowledge of the history of mahogany would expect the species to be *Swietenia mahogani* or one of the related Caribbean or Central American species, and yet it was stated to be the African species *Khaya ivorensis*. It certainly looks more like *Khaya* because I have yet to see a piece of it that replicates the rich deep red/brown colour of the *Swietenias*, but who knows?

… which also brings out the typically rich red-brown mahogany colour

The international dimension

My second reason why accurate identification matters is thrown into focus by *F&C*'s increasingly international profile in both readership and content. As such it is surely vital that it gets it right for all its significant markets with their varied perceptions of the meaning of common names. An example of where *F&C* consistently gets it wrong is maple. *F&C* normally brackets this as *Acer campestre*, commonly known in the UK as field maple, generally a relatively small field and hedgerow tree that is also widely planted as an ornamental but not for timber production. So, while the attribution may be appropriate for a UK woodturning magazine whose readers will tend to use interesting, locally sourced non-commercial species, it's pretty unlikely that field maple will be used for any significant piece of furniture. In the rare cases where it is, the maker is likely to think it important enough to be worth mentioning. In reality, most UK makers using maple are likely to use North American hard maple, *Acer saccharum*, which is widely available here in good width boards.

An even more confused but very different example is cherry. *F&C* sometimes names this as the North American species *Prunus serotina* and sometimes as *Prunus avium*. The former, commonly known as American cherry, is a pinkish mid brown when cut, quite quickly darkening to orange brown. It is widely available in the UK although perhaps less popular than it was 10 or 15 years ago when it was ubiquitous in hotels and shop fittings. To further illustrate the minefield of common names, *Prunus avium* literally translated from the Latin, means bird cherry but most authorities link it with the common name 'English wild cherry' while attributing 'English bird cherry' to *Prunus padus*, a non-commercial species. However, English wild cherry is commercially available, although you may need to seek it out. It's a notably paler and more stable colour and, to my eyes at least, much more beautiful than its American cousin. My guess is that most pieces identified by *F&C* as *Prunus avium* are in fact American cherry because of its much wider availability and again, a maker using English cherry would likely regard this as a point worth mentioning.

American cherry (*Prunus serotina*) is paler when first machined but finished pieces soon takes on this rich orange brown colour…

…while English wild cherry (*Prunus padus*) is a paler more stable colour much less affected by light

Conservation

Lastly, knowing what we mean when we talk about wood species is vital to the cause of nature conservation. Far too many timber species are now threatened or at risk and this is something that concerns me and, I am sure, many other committed furniture makers. OK, the timber used by amateurs and professional bespoke furniture makers is a drop in the ocean of timber consumption but what we do is a small but important part of the process of setting the tone as to what is ethically acceptable. I don't want to play even the smallest part in species extinction and habitat destruction. For this reason, I try to use UK native species wherever possible and any decent timber merchant should know where his native timber comes from. It also has the added bonus of saving on timber miles.

A solution?

So how can *F&C* make life easier for readers like me? I suggest that species names be given only in project articles and others where the specifics of working a particular type of wood makes it relevant. There is little or no value in quoting botanical names in news items, articles about antiques or in tool descriptions, e.g plane handles. Leaving aside any question as to usefulness, in such articles the information will often be hard to ascertain with certainty and so just increases the chances of getting it wrong. This approach would have the advantage of saving scarce editorial time which could be devoted to ensuring that the species name really is correct where it's given and make other articles more readable by the exclusion of spurious detail.

Over to you...

What information do you want to have about wood species and how do you want to see this provided in *F&C*? Get in touch and let us know. *F&C*

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Jamie Smith. Test Report. Good Woodworking. February 2018.

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Multi-joint frame exercise – part 1

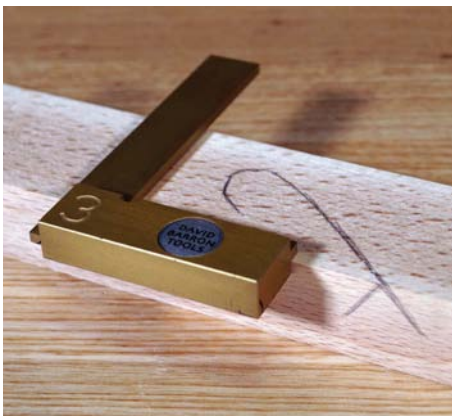
Matt Estlea identifies a few ground rules to ensure your layout lines are ones you can trust

Establish the orientation of all the components and mark them accordingly

Over three separate articles we're going to look in detail at an exercise project I first saw being used on the Level 1 Furniture Crafts course at Warwickshire College. At first glance it appears quite straightforward and for woodworkers with a few joints under their belt, it will be. But for those new to the craft there's a lot to be learned in such a small space. During my time studying at Rycotewood Furniture Centre, we occasionally had to make practice frames, small objects or, in one instance, produce various extruded shapes into a scrap piece of poplar using nothing but a chisel. I often found these tasks a bit of a chore as I wanted to get stuck into making something, however I cannot deny that they improved my woodworking dramatically. The great thing about these tasks is that instead of making a project and building multiple skills simultaneously, ultimately leaving your weaknesses trailing behind, you can optimise these practice projects to build on the skills you feel you are lacking.

The frame we are building here will focus entirely on hand tool usage and will emphasise the importance of accurate, clear marking out. When you're learning, this is usually where things start to go wrong and if some basic techniques aren't mastered now they're likely to stay with you for a very long time. At first the eager student will often rush the marking out stage and then wonder why their joints still turn out as gappy and loose as poorly maintained teeth. The answer is simple: they were cutting accurately but to inaccurate lines. In this first article I want to encourage you to take your time, adopt a methodical approach and check for accuracy every time you establish a layout line. After all they contain vital bits of information that will make your joints nice and tight.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT ESTLEA



Make your face and edge marks clear

Lap joint

The first thing I did was clearly number the components on the drawing and the corresponding components in front of me, as well as mark the face side and face edge of each component. The traditional way of

marking these faces is by drawing the fish-shaped mark (see photo at bottom of page 40) on one face of the component and a V or arrowhead on the adjacent edge where the line terminates. These are extremely important marks as they identify the faces we will be referencing all our marking out from. You can get access to all four sides of the component with a square using these two faces. If you orientate the face edges to be on the outside of the frame, it guarantees the outside of the frame will be square. If you orientate them on the inside, it guarantees the inside will be square. Choose whichever orientation you like, just don't mix and match.

First, we are going to mark out the lap joint and bridle joint simultaneously. To do this I measured in 50mm from the left-hand end of one of the long components and knifed a line across the component using a square referenced from the face edge. Then without moving the square, I put one of the shorter components against it, held it in place and used the component to carefully mark a line on the other side. Thus giving me two knife lines on the long component exactly the same width as the short component. Using the material itself to transfer a critical dimension is far more accurate than relying on a measurement or marking gauge sometimes. If you do the same process on the other long component, you run the risk of your measurements varying slightly and creating a skewed frame. To avoid this, simply flush the end grain up on both components and transfer the knife lines from one component to the other. Now you can square all four of these lines round all four sides of the components. Remember to reference the stock of your square off either the face side or face edge of the component and ensure the knife lines meet perfectly on every corner. Now do exactly the same process on the right-hand side of the frame for the dovetail halving joint and mortise and tenon, but use a very sharp pencil instead of a knife.

Shoulder lines

Next we need to scratch the shoulder lines on the shorter components. To do this, reference a square against one of the face edges, butt one of the longer components against the square and slide it up to the end of the shorter component, leaving roughly 0.5mm of end grain overhanging underneath. This means we can plane the joint flush after it is assembled. Remove the longer component and knife across the shorter component using the square. Similar to before, do this on both sides of one component, then accurately transfer it across to the other short component and square the lines around all four sides.

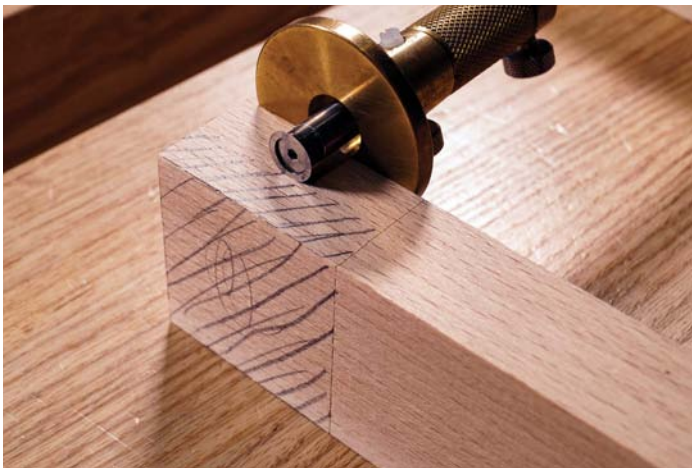
Now we are going to use a marking gauge to scribe the depths of both lap joints. Firstly, set the marking gauge to half the thickness of the stock, in this case 12mm. Scribe a line between the pencil lines on the long component where your dovetail joint is due to be nested and also between the knife lines of the lap joint on the other long component. It's very important you are referencing the stock of the gauge against the face side at this point. Do this on both edges on both components and do not forget to mark the waste.

We now need to mark the laps on the end of the shorter components. This stage catches a lot of people out because it's very easy to reference the marking gauge against the waste side of the lap joint, similar to what we did on the long components. However, in doing so, you are not referencing the stock of the gauge against the face side. The reason we are always referencing the stock of the gauge against a face side is because any minor discrepancies when setting the gauge to 12mm will be cancelled out when we assemble the joint. In fact, we could set the gauge to 7mm, for example, and still get a flush joint as a result, providing we are always referencing from the face side of course! Once this is marked out, do not forget to mark the waste material.

Use a square to line up the component…

… then use the component to mark the line

Gauge the waste material from the same face…

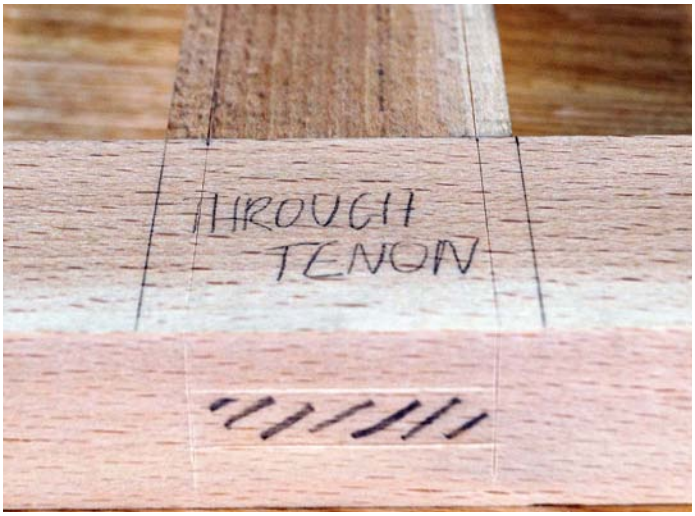


… as the opposing part of the joint

Mortise and tenon joint

When marking out mortises, you want the walls to be exactly the same width as your mortise chisel. Conveniently, the thickness of these components divided by three is 8mm, so that is the size of the chisel to use. Now you need to set your mortise gauge heads to be exactly the same width as the 8mm chisel and adjust the offset of the stock to centralise the marking heads on the timber. Scribe between the lines on both sides of the mortise component and around the end grain of the tenon component. I'll say it again, remember your face sides. To mark the offset of the through tenon from either side measure 5mm in from each side, put a small pencil mark, and use a marking gauge against the face edge of the tenon to score a line from the shoulder line to the end grain. You'll need to reset your marking gauge to scribe both lines from the same edge, don't be tempted to use the non-face edge! Once that has been squared, round the end grain and both faces, butt the tenon component against the mortise component, line the corners up with the pencil lines and transfer the marking gauge lines to the mortise component using a knife and square. Scratch those lines down both edges and mark your waste.

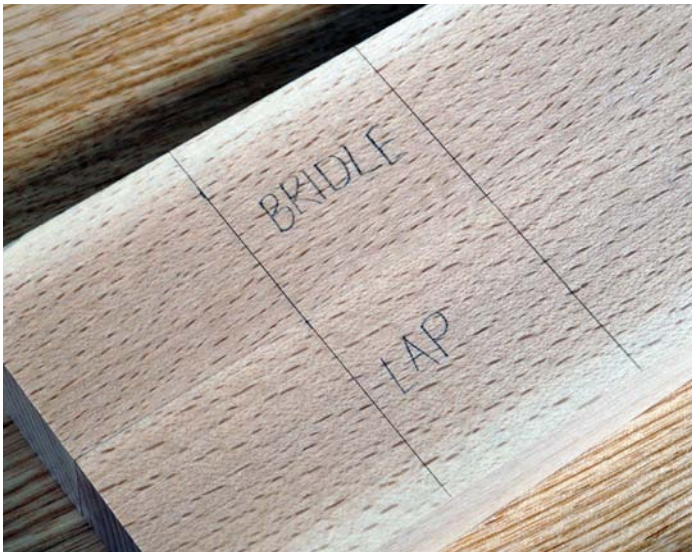
A mortise gauge will help to standardise the marking out for this joint



Project the mortise width from the tenon component

Bridle joint

The bridle joint is as simple as using your mortise gauge to scratch around the end grain of the shorter component, and between the knife lines on the longer components. Just be sure to mark your waste as always. The final bit of marking out we need to do is for the small chamfers on the left-hand side of the frame. Again, nice and simple. Set the marking gauge to 6mm, score around all four edges on the cross grain and long grain. That's it, your marking out is complete. F&C



Single crisp knife marks will help with your joinery

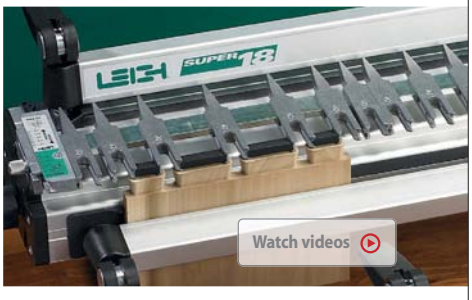
Gauge marks for a 6mm chamfer all round

Warwickshire College

We would like to acknowledge the Furniture Crafts course at Warwickshire College and course leader Jamie Ward for allowing us to recreate this exercise frame

Next month Matt tackles both the lap joints as he continues the frame exercise in part 2 of his series

From Kitchens to Heirlooms...



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Tudor-style seating bench

Vic Tesolin makes a simple bench with rock-solid joinery that won't cause you to lose your head

As you look at furniture throughout the ages, you start to realise that the joinery and overall construction remains the same. What does change over the years, however, is the styling and aesthetics. This Tudor-inspired bench is a fine example. This piece uses some simple, rock-solid joinery that you would expect to find on a bench of this type but what sets it apart is the styling. Don't be afraid to experiment with the shapes and curves – it's not like you have to worry about losing your head over it.

I chose to use tulipwood for this build because my plan is to finish the bench with paint. The original would likely have been done in oak but I have exercised my poetic licence and opted for a different look. That's one of the best things about being a woodworker, you can make things how you want them.

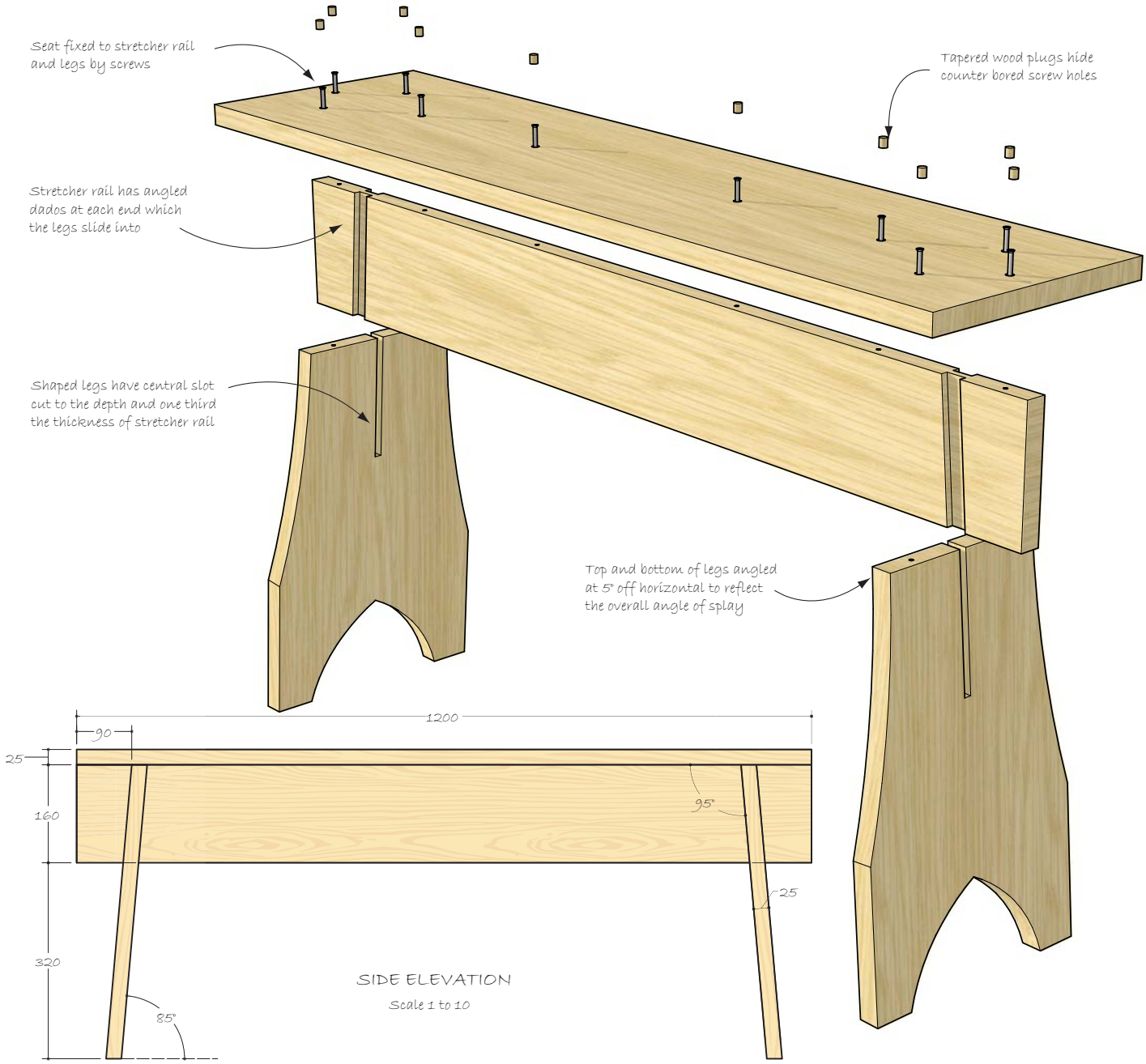
Timber cut list

(Length x width x thickness in mm)
Legs: 480 x 300 x 25
Seat: 1200 x 300 x 25
Stretcher: 1200 x 160 x 25

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIC TESOLIN

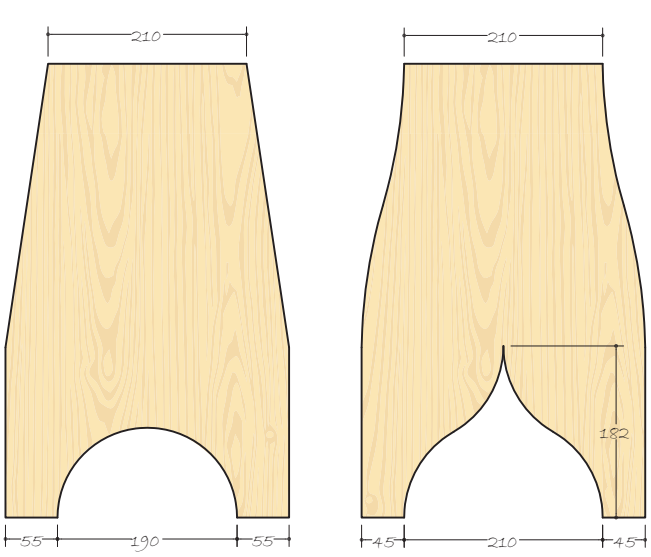
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK/KEVVICTOR

Tudor furniture in the kitchen at Hampton Court Palace

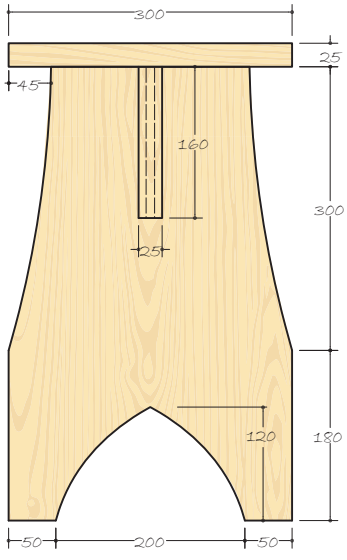


SIDE ELEVATION

Scale 1 to 10

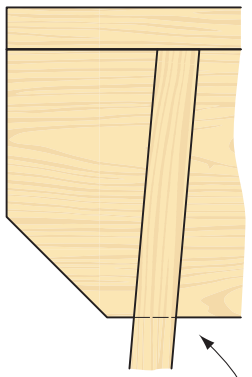


SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVE LEG PATTERNS



END ELEVATION

Scale 1 to 10



Bottom of slot in legs angled at 5° off horizontal to reflect the overall angle of splay. Alternative profile shown.

DETAIL

Not to scale

Break out

Start with breaking out your lumber according to the cut list provided. One of the nice things about this build is that you can dimension all of the components ahead of time and then cut the joinery. Be patient and wait to cut all the curves after you have cut the joinery because the parts will be easier to hold on to if you leave them square. Mark all of your components with a cabinetmaker's triangle so you can keep track of them. You really can't go wrong using this method to mark your work because your pieces will always be in the right orientation as long as they form the triangle. This will be important for later steps because each joint will be cut and fit individually. Putting the left leg into the right leg's position may not work, so take the time to mark your components.

The bench gets its strength from the dados the legs will slide into. The legs will sit at a slight angle, in this case 5° of outward splay. Let's start with laying out the angled dado on the stretcher. Locate the two inside shoulders of the dados according to the drawings. Set your bevel gauge to 95° and place it on these marks and strike a knife line.

Place your leg parts up against the knife line you struck and make another mark denoting the thickness of the leg. Some people would measure and transfer this mark but this technique will fail if your leg dimensions are off by even a small amount. It is safer to use referential methods for this step – in fact, I use referential techniques as often as I can in woodworking. Place your knife into this mark, bring your bevel gauge to the knife and strike a knife line parallel to the first. Carry these lines onto the other side of the stretcher and the edges to complete the angle layouts. Leave the bevel gauge set to 95°, you will need this setting again in a later step.

Keep the parts straight with the cabinetmaker's triangle

Make light strokes with the knife for accurate lines

There's no need to measure: use the actual parts to ensure accuracy

The dados

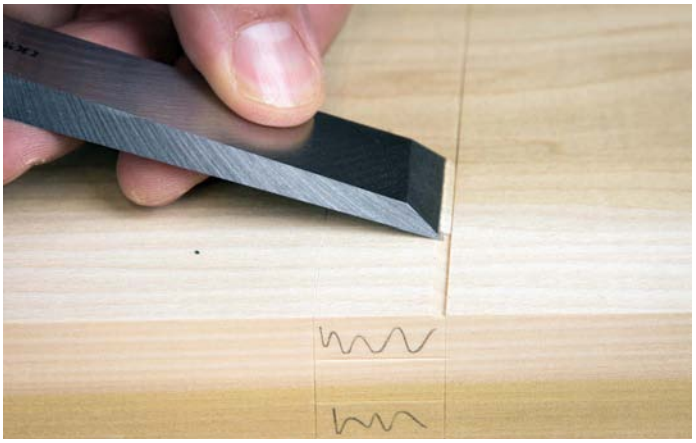
The dados are going to be 1/3 of the thickness of the stretcher. Again, don't worry about the maths here, simply use a small divider to step off the thirds then set a marking gauge to the mark and you're ready to go. Mark your depths and then mark your waste with a pencil so that there is no confusion about what material needs to come away.

To cut the dado, start by creating a knife wall with the lines that you struck. Now place your backsaw into the groove you created and saw to depth. If you are worried about sawing straight, there is no shame in using a jig to ensure that your cuts are perpendicular to the surface. Keep an eye on those depth lines so that you don't cut past them and weaken the joint.

Pick a bench chisel that is slightly narrower than your dado and start removing the bulk of the waste. The goal is to leave about 1mm of waste to remove with a router plane so don't get too carried away. Be sure to not simply drive the chisel out the back end of the dado. Doing this will lead to spelching on the other side making a mess of the joint. Always work inwards from both sides to avoid the dreaded spelch.

With the bulk of the waste removed, set up a router plane to the final depth of your dados and set a stop if your router is equipped with one. Bring the router blade up to where you left off with the chisel and begin nibbling away the remainder of the waste.

Set your marking gauge once you divide the thickness into thirds



The knife wall will help guide your backsaw

A jig can help you learn how to saw straight

Be sure to keep both hands behind the chisel edge – safety first

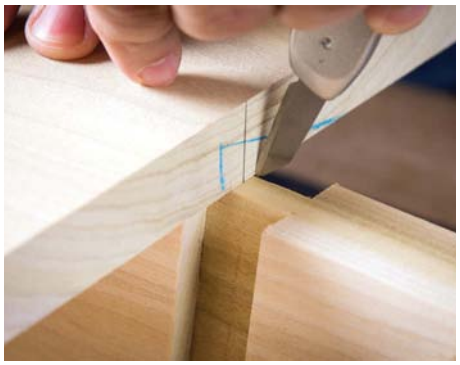
Router planes are perfectly suited for making a clean, flat surface

The legs

Lightly mark a centre line with pencil on the top of the leg parts. Centre the leg on the stretcher and mark the web of material onto the leg. These marks will be the amount of material you need to remove in order to slide the legs into the stretcher. Use the stretcher's width to set the depth of cut you will make into the leg with the saw and use a square and knife to carry the lines down to this depth. Feel free to darken the knife lines with some pencil graphite to make them easier to see.

Use a panel saw to saw out the waste being mindful of your layout lines. Remove the filet of waste by chiselling down from both sides of the leg until it comes free. In order to get the leg to sit properly, you have to make the bottom of this groove 95° to match the angle of the dado. The bottom of the groove needs to be angled downwards going from the inside to the outside of the leg. Start to angle the bottom and use the still set bevel gauge to monitor your progress.

Dry fit the legs to the stretcher to make sure everything is fitting. The legs should slide in with moderate hand pressure. If there are any tight spots, remove a bit of material from the sides of the groove, not the dados on the stretcher. Another potential hang-up can be the thickness of the leg not fitting into the dado. In this case, simply hand plane a small amount of material adjacent to the groove to thin it down slightly. You will also have to plane a 5° bevel on the top of the legs to bring them coplanar to the stretcher.



Transfer the thickness carefully with a marking knife

Mark the waste and make sure you don't saw on the wrong side of the line

A panel saw is the best choice for deep cuts

Come in from both sides with a chisel to remove the waste

Use the sliding bevel to check the bottom of the slot

Use a plane to bring the top of the leg flush with the stretcher

Shaping and assembling

Now for the fun part: the shaping of the legs and stretcher. You can use the provided drawings or you can come up with your own shapes that you find pleasing. I find making a half template makes it easy to ensure that your parts are symmetrical. Make your marks and saw them out with a bow or coping saw then refine the cuts using rasps/files and spokeshaves.

Assemble the legs to the stretcher using glue, remembering that glue is not a lubricant so the joint may need a bit more pressure to come together. Put glue on all the surfaces of the dado to help lock things up. While the glue dries, prepare the seat by carefully marking out the centre line and the leg locations on the top. These lines will guide your fastener locations. Traditionally this bench seat would have been attached with nails or wooden pegs. I have chosen a more modern approach to counter bore holes to receive screws and then finished off with tapered plugs to hide the fasteners. There is no need to use glue when attaching the seat, the screws on their own will be just fine. As for spacing, don't drive any screws closer than 50mm from the edges to prevent cracking. You can also use a divider to mark off the locations of the screws along the length. Doing this will give you a nicely spaced set of plugs and it's just good practice.

Make a half-pattern to help keep the form symmetrical

Always drill pilot holes for your screws to prevent cracking

Finishing

Once the bench is assembled, go around it with a small plane and remove any sharp arrises and round-over the top of the seat so it is comfortable. A simple oil finish would do this project well if you want to see the wood. In my case, I decided to go with a dark brown paint that I think will age well with the piece. Don't get too hung up on the type of paint to use. In this case I went with a high-quality, matte-finish, interior house paint. This particular brand has primers in the paint so two coats were all I needed.

There are many lessons we can learn from studying furniture of the past but don't feel that you have to mimic the aesthetics. For me, the learning came from the joint construction but I wanted a more modern look. Don't be afraid to flex your design muscle in the 'shop, you'll be pleasantly surprised when you do. F&C

A bit of paint will give this classic design a more modern look

The original cordless drill driver

A collector's guide to the Stanley Yankee pump action screwdriver

A collectable 1950s 135A complete with bits, box and inspection note and still very useable. Kindly loaned by TATHS. www.taths.org.uk

A brand new Pozi No.2 bit – note the Stanley step and notch fitment at the end; this one fits the 130 series Yankee. Genuine Stanley shell bits drill quickly but don't bother using reverse action to withdraw a drill bit, simply pull out of the hole

It may seem odd to include a hand tool that Stanley only retired in 2007 of which there are still several other makes available today in our 'Tool Collecting' series. However, the ubiquitous piece of kit first appeared in 1898 produced by North Brothers Mfg, Co. Philadelphia; the company was then only sold to Stanley Tools in 1946. With Stanley's worldwide appeal and marketing power it was inevitable that this tool would be synonymous with the Stanley 'Yankee' brand and appear in every tradesman's toolkit only to be supplanted late in the day by the now universal cordless drill.

I can remember back in the 1980s seeing one of these in every toolbag on site and using several myself. The earliest versions seem to have had an external spring at the front but otherwise the basic mechanism has been largely unchanged in 114 years – not a bad innings!

So what can it do? The clue is in the name; it is a screwdriver with a difference. The long driver bits lock into the chuck by pulling back the milled sleeve at the front and a selector button on the casing behind allows a forward or reverse ratchet action with a fixed middle position. The ratchet action allows quick driving in or out; however, the real trick is found by turning the milled collar behind the chuck. Instantly the criss-cross machined shaft springs out and you can then drive screws in or out under strong spring pressure. This pump action takes away a lot of effort and speeds up screwdriving tremendously. You can also fit shell-type drill bits to drill pilot holes with equal facility.

So why aren't more people using them? Well they are old technology, the cordless drill has surpassed it developmentally. The old driver bits are slot head or Philips pattern and not many of those screws still get used. The Yankee's ability to accidentally puncture plasterboard or run a large scrape across a highly finished surface is also legendary, and yet it is lighter than a cordless drill, it doesn't need batteries and its action is very fluid if it is oiled regularly. What's more, you can buy adaptors to take modern hex shank bits such as Pozi, Torx and all the other exotic modern head types designed for electric driving and it will still drill to boot!

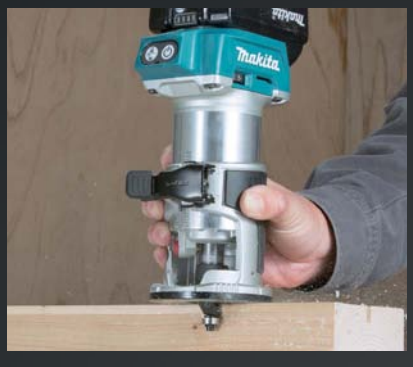
You can find these engineering marvels on eBay dare I say it, as well as the modern adaptors and bits. Beware, however, of certain key things – occasionally one will have its spring removed, a no-no. There are both vintage and modern types, ones with wooden handles and the more modern resin type which are more comfortable as there is no paint to flake off. There are numerous variants from the mighty 131A and 131B down to the Handyman with its bit storage handle and a series of smaller ratchet-only screwdrivers for lesser tasks. Beware also that different Yankee drivers take different diameter bits, so choose the matching sizes. If you are interested in acquiring and using a pump screwdriver do some research online so you only buy what you really need, and don't spend loads of money – unless you are a serious collector. F&C

A resin handled 130B model, not as long as the 131 but still capable of heavy screwdriving work

You can even buy a holster for a Yankee and driver bits for 'go anywhere' screwdriving

Once you buy a bit adaptor of the right size you can fit any standard modern hex shank driver bit

FOUR IN ONE



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UNDER THE HAMMER:

The Home & Interiors sale

We look at examples of 19th- and 20th-century furniture from Bonhams' Edinburgh sale

Bonhams' regular Home & Interiors auctions bring together a wide range of specialist areas including 20th-century decorative arts, furniture, silver, Asian art, ceramics and pictures. These sales provide a convenient destination for outfitting the home in a variety of styles, from antique to modern.

The items shown here were sold at Bonhams' Edinburgh auction house in November 2017. We've chosen a selection of 19th- and early 20th-century pieces for a closer look.

£375

A 19th-century walnut, gilt metal and porcelain mounted display cabinet. The upper section has a glazed cupboard door which encloses shelves, while the lower section is fitted with a cupboard door and raised on a plinth

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BONHAMS

£437

A pair of early 20th-century French giltwood open armchairs. Each is upholstered in scrolling foliate fabric with out-swept carved arms above a stuffed overseat, raised on cabriole legs

£625

A 19th-century French walnut and kingwood side table. The shaped lid features gilt metal mounts and quarter veneers with a green baize interior. The frieze is decorated with Sevrés-style porcelain plaques depicting flowers and birds

£687

A 19th-century mahogany and burr-walnut work table. The top has twin drop flaps above a freize and is fitted with one deep drawer and a wool bag slide (the wool bag is missing). The table is raised on oval cluster columns and trestle ends with brass hairy paw feet and castors

£937

An early 20th-century mahogany breakfront bookcase. The rectangular top has a moulded edge above a frieze, and the bookcase if fitted with three drawers above a pair of panelled cupboard doors enclosing adjustable shelving. The bookcase is raised on a plinth

Rococo-style cresting

Steve Bisco goes Georgian with this classic Rococo-style cresting

A cresting is an 'architectural' form of decoration that has been used since ancient times to sit at the top of door pediments, window heads, mirrors and picture frames and just about anything we want to embellish.

I have designed this cresting in the spirit of the Georgian era (1714–1837) and in particular the Rococo style of the mid-18th century. Rococo typically combines swirling stylised acanthus leaves with garlands of delicate naturalistic flowers. This is a fairly restrained interpretation of Rococo as it is symmetrical apart from the bunch of roses in the centre. In its wilder incarnations – and it can be very wild indeed – Rococo makes no pretence at order or symmetry, as illustrated by Thomas Chippendale's designs in his *Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director* of 1754.

This cresting is quite long at 88cm, but you can reduce – or expand – it to suit your needs. It has a length to height ratio of 4:1 and is extensively 'pierced'. The thickness of the wood should relate to the width of the elements, so 30mm is adequate for most parts. To increase the thickness on the few parts that need it I have gone for the cheap and simple option of cutting out extra pieces from the spare wood – shown in green on the drawing – and laminating them onto the appropriate sections.

In the Georgian era carvings were nearly always painted, gilded or both. I have kept this example simple with a typically Georgian white finish, but using liming wax to create a 'shabby chic' look, which is more subtle than paint. By rubbing the wax off the high points it looks authentically Georgian and about 200 years overdue for a lick of paint!

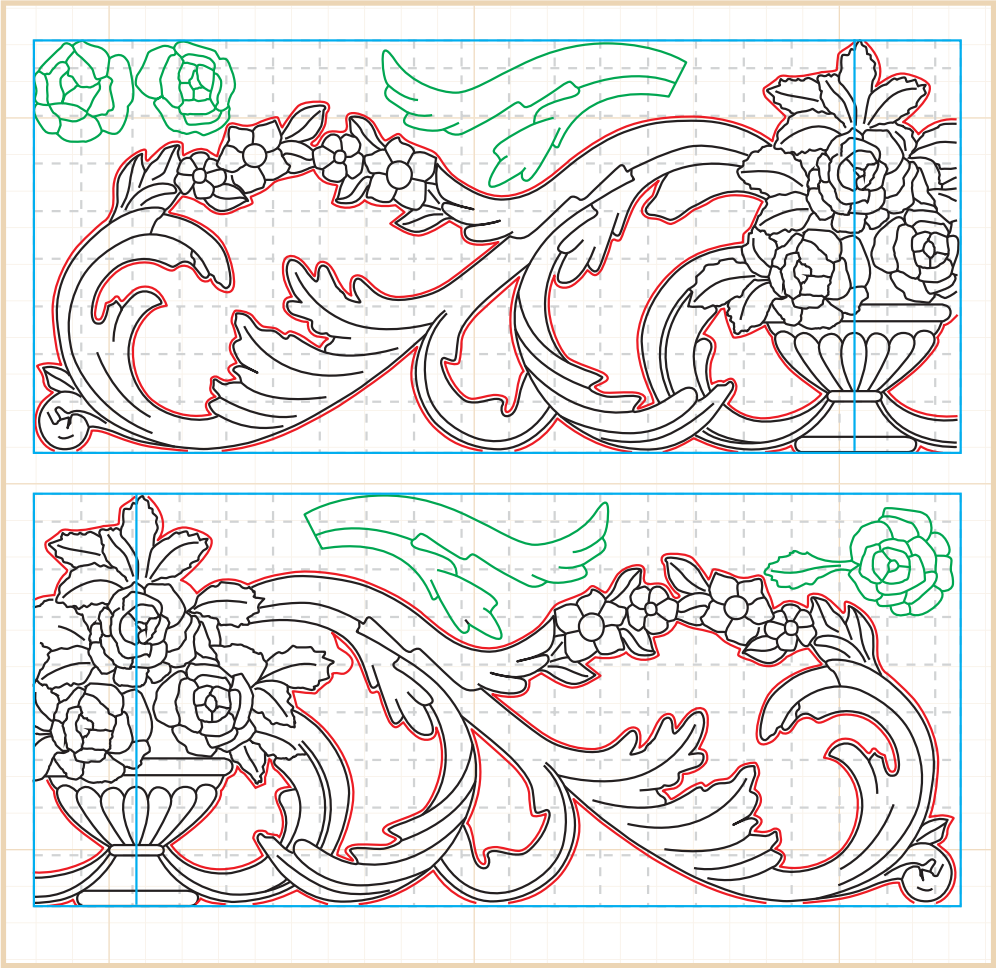
PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE BISCO

You will need…

No.3, 20mm fishtail gouge
No.3, 10mm fishtail gouge
No.4, 6mm fishtail gouge
No.3, 10mm gouge
No.8, 8mm gouge
No.5, 7mm gouge
No.5, 5mm gouge
No.5, 3mm gouge
No.9, 3mm gouge
No.5, 13mm curved gouge
10mm short bent gouge
No.8, 8mm curved gouge
No.3, 5mm bent gouge
12mm back-bent gouge
Straight 'V' tool
Curved 'V' tool
16mm hooked skew chisel
10mm skew chisel
10mm skewed spoon gouge
2mm chisel
Jigsaw
Bandsaw

Wood:

A piece of lime measuring 880 × 220 × 30mm



Using the pattern

This pattern is shown in two halves, with a centreline through the vase and roses. You can enlarge it to any size that suits you, but I made mine 880 x 220mm. If you print it out in sections make sure they are all to the same scale. When you trace it onto the wood make sure the two halves join at the centreline and the baseline is straight. Most of the pattern is symmetrical, but the roses are not. The parts shown in green are cut out of the spare wood and used as add-on layers.


1


2


3

4

Preparation

1 Begin by taking a piece of lime measuring 880 × 220 × 30mm and make a full-size copy of the drawing. Trace the pattern onto the wood using carbon paper and mark your cutting lines in red so you don't get lost with the jigsaw. Take care to line up both halves of the drawing to the centreline and baseline.

2 Cut out the internal voids first using a jigsaw with a narrow blade. Allow for the blade flexing on the curves.

3 The next step is to cut the outer edges with a bandsaw, if you have one, to avoid the flexing problem. If you don't have a bandsaw, continue carefully with the jigsaw. Also cut out the four add-on pieces marked in green on the drawing.

4 Glue and clamp the add-on pieces to give extra thickness to the roses and the upper acanthus swirls. Make sure the joining surfaces are clean and flat. When the glue is set, secure the carving to a backing board ready to start the roughing-out phase.

Roughing out

5 Slope the add-on acanthus leaves down into the rose leaves with a lively and natural curl. With all the symmetrical elements, work the pairs on both sides together so you get them both the same.

6 Reduce the levels of the add-on roses and slope them away from the point where they all meet. Leave them in a domed shape with plenty of material to work into petals later. Slope the topmost leaf into the other leaves.

7 Form the shape of the vase and lower the level of the arabesque curls each side of it so they slope inwards. The foot and neck of the vase must be lowered in proportion to the rim. Leave enough wood for the gadroons.

8 Continue outwards to the acanthus swirl and the arabesque curl beyond it, which both come off the main stem.

9 Outwards again to the long acanthus swirl which takes us to the outer edge and the small unfurled leaf at the end. Make sure all your swirls flow smoothly, and give the acanthus leaves a dip in the middle and a flick up at the end.

10 Finally, lower the level of the flower garland so it sits about 13–18mm above the backing board. 'Bost' down to preserve the outline of the flowers.

11 Hang the cresting up to view it from the height at which it will be displayed and check that everything looks right.

Top tips

1. Sometimes carvings are disfigured by dark patches of wood that distract the eye from the pattern, as in this carving. You can treat these patches with a two-part wood bleach to reduce or remove this effect.


5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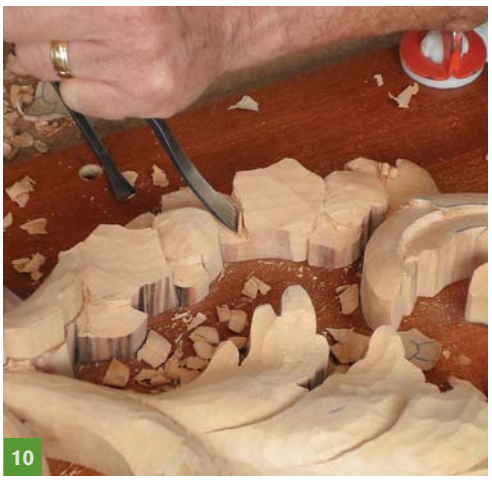
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Carving the detail

Roses and vase

12 Start the detail carving with the rose leaves. These are very naturalistic, so use deep gouges to give each leaf lots of twist and curl.

13 You can now begin to carve the roses by forming a central 'dome' with a hole in the middle for the inner cluster of petals, then layer the outer petals down towards the background. Each rose is angled away from the centre of the group.

14 Moving to the vase, finish the horizontal beading of the rim, neck and foot. Carve the 'teardrop' shape of the gadroons so they bulge out at the top and get shallower towards the neck.

Acanthus swirls

15 You can now start to carve the detail on the built-up sections of the upper acanthus swirls. Follow some of the 'vein' lines right along the stem. When you have the leaves looking right, undercut the upper levels and flow the lower stems and the outer flower garland under them. Create a few extra leaves in the garland to link it into the main stem.

16 Continue with the acanthus swirl and the arabesque curl which link the main stem back to the vase. They are both convex on the outside and concave on the inside.

17 Moving further out, there is another arabesque curl, and a swirl of acanthus leaves which is more naturalistic than the inner swirls. Carve lots of 'eyes' around the edges, put a pronounced flick in the ends and run the vein lines back under the main stem to achieve the desired result.

18 We now reach the outer ends with a long acanthus swirl curling back on itself, concave on the inside and convex on the outside. The little 'ball' at the end is an unfurled leaf, which is a typical acanthus feature.

The flower garlands

19 The leaves and flowers of the garlands need to look delicate and natural in their appearance. Start by cutting a deep hollow in the lower half of each leaf and round over the top half so it curls over on itself, with a vein along the middle. Use the same technique to twist and curl the petals of the flowers.


20


21a


21b


21c

Undercutting and finishing

20 Take the carving off the backing board and place it face down on soft padding to undercut from the back. Protect the delicate high points of the carving so you are not pressing on them. Round over the back edges of the swirls and reduce the leaf edges to about 8mm thick.

21a, 21b & 21c

Limewood generally benefits from sanding with fine abrasives, but don't obliterate the detail. Photos 21a to 21c show the detail of the centre and both sides of the finished carving. Use these for reference.

22 I have gone for a subtle white 'shabby chic' finish using liming wax. Brush the wax into all the crevices, allow it to set for an hour or two, then rub it hard all over with a dry cloth. This will put a sheen on the wax and rub it off the broader areas and edges allowing the wood to show through in places.

23 The carving is now looking suitably Georgian with its 'shabby chic' finish. F&C

Top tips

2. You will find that a carving can look different on the bench to when it is viewed in its display position. When you are making a carving that will be placed above head level, frequently hang the piece in that position during carving to check its appearance at that angle.

3. When cutting round the pattern with a jigsaw, remember that the blade may flex a little on the turns, so it is advisable to make allowance for this.

22


23

Tricks of the trade... bandsaw set-up jig

Ramon Valdez has a solution for making quick, accurate veneers

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RAMON VALDEZ

I love my bandsaws: I have a small 14in that I use for general work and a larger 18in that I use primarily for re-sawing timber to be used for inlay work and marquetry. The thickness (or thinness) of the slices that I cut is sometimes dictated by the size of the coloured veneers I use in my marquetry motifs. I recently built a set of chairs with marquetry on the crest rails and I used dyed veneers for their vivid, bold and colourfast palette. I purchased the thickest dyed or coloured veneers that I could find, around 0.9mm or maybe a tad over 1/32in. Then, I matched that thickness with the veneers that I'd be cutting on my bandsaw. I wanted a way to set up my bandsaw to make these veneers and it needed to be quick, accurate and repeatable. Here was my solution …

Making the set-up jig

First off, I must mention that in order for this 'bandsaw set-up jig' to perform properly, you must eliminate bandsaw blade drift. I employ Michael Fortune's technique of adjusting the tracking knob to accomplish this. A well-tuned bandsaw is such a pleasure to use and I love being able to use my factory fence and leave it parallel to the edge of the table (I use a 2 tpi x 1in wide carbide blade). You can easily Google 'eliminating bandsaw blade drift' and find a lot of good information on that subject. Once your bandsaw tracks straight and true, cutting parallel to the fence, we can begin!

Start with a scrap of material (I used ¼in MDF with white 'cold roll' material on one side) and size it about the depth of your bandsaw table, leaving it about 25–40mm (1–1½in) wider than the distance from the blade to the outside edge of the table. A cleat will go here … but now I'm getting ahead of myself! I cut a clearance notch to allow for the blade and sanded it smooth at my oscillating drum sander. After unplugging the saw, carefully bring the fence over to the left side of the blade until it nearly kisses it. I shined a light behind the blade to view this better. The fence must not make contact with or bend the blade, just be right up to it. We're wanting to establish 'ground zero' or zero inches (or mm) to the left of the blade. By opening the top cover of the bandsaw, I was able to rotate the upper wheel backwards and listen for any contact with the aluminium fence. Once I was satisfied with this 'zero' distance, I locked down the factory fence. Place the ¼in jig material, with the notch surrounding but clearing the blade and tight against the fence. Make sure that it doesn't slide in any direction and clamp it down tight. Most bandsaws will have a tapered pin at the slot used for blade removal/installation. The pin helps align and level the cast-iron table, since it has this slot. And here are where the cleats go. One cleat on each side of the alignment pin, pushed tight against the table. I added a bit of glue and clamped these cleats in place. Then I added a few headless pin nails. Stables or screws would work as well.

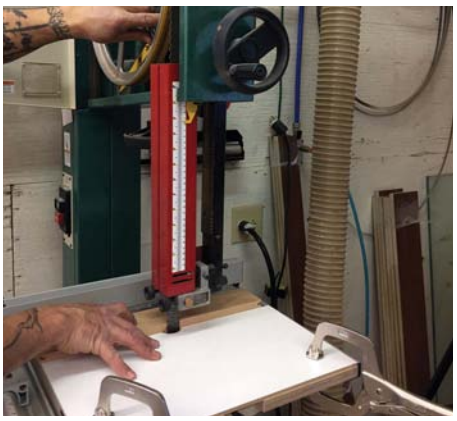
Start with clean, square cuts on some ¼in material (with a notch for the blade) that is about the depth of your table. Allow a bit of overhang to the right for two cleats

Use a strong light, and bring the factory fence just barely against the blade without actually quite touching it, and lock it down

Place the ¼in material against the fence, then clamp it secure

Using glue, clamp, then fasten a cleat …

… on either side of the tapered table pin



Using a straight piece of wood, turn the unplugged bandsaw backwards by hand to double check the 'zero inches' (mm)

For this article, I used two 3⁄32in drill bits as spacers

With the jig clamped in place, position the two drill bits left of the jig and bring the auxiliary fence up against the drill bits, and tight against the jig

Lock down the fence or, if it's an auxiliary type, clamp it in place

Using the jig

In use, this jig is simple, yet very effective. Here's how it works: remove the factory fence if you're going to re-saw anything taller than it is. I have a 'shop-made auxiliary fence that I clamp to the cast-iron table. But first, clamp the bandsaw set-up jig to the table, taking care that the cleats are tight to the table edge and the clearance slot that you created doesn't interfere with the blade. For this article, I wanted some wenge veneers that would be 3⁄32in, so I grabbed two 3⁄32in drill bits. Place these bits to the left edge of the jig, one in front of the blade and one towards the back of the blade. Then, bring your tall re-saw fence right up to the drill bits, essentially creating a 3⁄32in space between the tall fence and the left side of the blade. Now you can clamp the tall auxiliary fence in place. You would now be able to cut veneers 3⁄32in thick, and this would be repeatable even if you moved the fence and used your saw for a different task. Sure, I could just use the cursor on the factory fence but I like using a taller auxiliary fence specifically for slicing wider timber into veneers. Plus, reading the tiny increments and numbers on the scale and using the factory cursor is just going to get you close. I like dead-on when cutting veneers which allows for minimal sanding to create veneers of the same thickness. Right off the bandsaw, on the very first slice I had beautiful and consistent results. From corner to corner and from one end to the other, I had slices of wenge veneer that were dead-on 3⁄32in thick.

Of course, you could use any size drill bits you like, as long as you have two of them. The jig can be used for more than just slicing veneers. The drill bits provide the consistent accuracy, the jig makes it easily repeatable and together they make 'shop time more productive and, yes, even more fun! F&C

Making the cut in crazy hard, resilient, but beautiful wenge!

First cut straight away, right off the bandsaw ...

... fantastic and consistent veneers exactly 3⁄32in!

Consistent corner to corner ...

... and from end to end

Once your jig is established and registers 0 distance left of the blade, you could use a matching pair of any size drill bits to make cuts quickly and accurately

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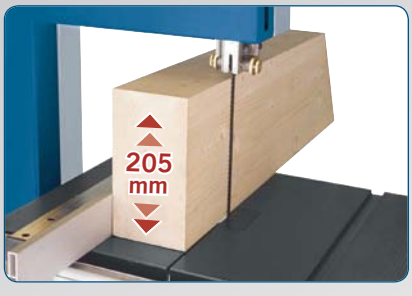

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Kit & tools

Having trouble sourcing the right tool for the job? Here's a selection of new and essential equipment for the workshop

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MINI TEST
Olive ash

This month's Kit & Tools is not in praise of a particular tool or piece of equipment but rather a material that creeps further up my list of favourites every time I come into contact with it – olive ash. In a recent class to build Moxon vices I had the opportunity to use a quantity of this prized material in varying thicknesses from 25mm up to 50mm and I don't think we had a single board rejected beacause it wasn't as 'pretty' as the rest. Admittedly that might have something to do with our supplier – English Woodlands

Timber in West Sussex – but I suspect a more important factor was being able to select our entire cutting list from just one or two boards harvested from the same log. For the most part you won't get anything like this level of consistency from a timber supplier with racks of square edge boards, sorted in thickness and piled up to the ceiling. These boards are generally about as random as you will get and rarely hold any pleasant surprises. I've bought a lot of timber like this and I've noticed that when I'm in full flow my concern is not so much with the consistency of the material but the yield in terms of flatness across widths that suit my cut list. Believe me, there's nothing romantic or creative about the process. In contrast, a visit to your local sawmill will result in a completely different buying experience that will set the tone for a more rewarding build.

Olive ash is the term given to the heart wood of English or European ash that is darker than the pure creamy white timber that's found towards the outer part of the tree. The colour is not caused by any defect in the timber as a result of decay or fungal attack like that found in beech and maple (spalted). Instead it is a chemical reaction to a list of naturaly occurring growing conditions that are hard to recreate or predict. Several research papers suggest there is a link with moisture content in either the tree or the soil on which it grew but nothing conclusive has yet been proved. Other theories suggest a link with increased oxygen levels as a result of exposure to the elements from pruning or open wounds in the tree but again, nothing that suggests this is a rule. It's true that where these conditions occur there is an increased chance that the log will harvest some olive coloured grain but the amount and quality of the figure is not always consistent, which just adds to the appeal. Burrs or burls don't really do it for me and I think that's probably because we know what causes them and where to find them. Olive ash, on the other hand, is still a mystery and one that I hope we don't manage to solve any time soon.

Quartersawn boards elicit the best qualities in olive ash but maybe that's because I have a minimalist eye for detail. let's not forget either that quartersawn is more stable and therefore easier to work with in general.

For a bit of extra sparkle you could ask your sawmill to find you a board with ripple figure as well, only make sure you're sitting down when they tell you the price. Will it be worth it? You bet and when you hear the boards can come in widths over 500mm wide and up to 5m long that's a lot of board to play with. Mix it up with some English walnut and you've got yourself the perfect contrast.

Rippled olive ash from:
www.englishwoodlandstimber.co.uk

Workshop router table

Trend's workshop router table (WRT) is packed with the necessary features to maximise the versatility of all portable routers, ensuring safe, efficient, and consistent performance.

The large 804 x 604mm laminate MDF top is 35mm thick and offers a durable and slick surface to help the work pass smoothly and comes complete with a 6.35mm aluminium insert plate for securing the router, giving solid support while losing minimal plunge depth. The plate is easily adjusted for a flush fit to the table with the seven screw adjusters and magnets, a further four corner holes are used to secure the plate firmly to the table once level. A 98mm aperture allows the biggest panel raisers to be fitted and it comes with two reducing inserts of 67.5mm and 31.8mm to accommodate smaller diameter cutters. The plate is pre-drilled to the Trend Base Configuration (TBC) to suit the vast majority of routers available and has a 20mm access hole to suit the Trend T11's Quick Raiser feature, for easy height adjustment.

With safety in mind the WRT comes with a 240v No-Volt Release switch, top and side finger pressure guards and a pushstick. There are storage positions around the table to keep them secure when not in use.

Laminated MDF sliding infeed and outfeed cheeks on the fence are adjustable to reduce the aperture for safe routing with various diameters of cutters. The outfeed also has a planing facility, when used with the supplied on-board packing rods.

The table comes with a fully adjustable aluminium mitre fence, 57.5mm dust extraction fence port, cable management clips and storage hooks. Accessories available include additional top pressures, an adjustable limit stop and castors.

From: www.trend-uk.com

GTC 400 C Professional Thermal Camera

The Bosch GTC 400 C Professional Thermal Camera can be used in numerous applications, including installation and maintenance of heating, air-conditioning, electrical systems, windows, drywalls and building insulation. Just point the device at your work area and you will quickly gain a clear and reliable picture of the conditions you have to tackle. Its measurements, which include thermal images, visual images and temperature values, accurately show the pattern of heat distribution across the room or feature surveyed. Issues that are difficult or impossible to see with the naked eye become clearly evident through high-resolution coloured pictures. The device is equipped with a visual camera as well as an infrared sensor. This allows a thermal image to be easily superimposed onto a photo of the workplace, helping to put the data into context.

From: www.bosch-professional.com/gb/en/

Marples Circular Saw Blades

Made in Udine, Italy, the Marples Circular Saw Blade range uses best-in-class manufacturing capabilities. They are made from a strong carbide for three times the longer life to ensure maximum durability. For a clean and smooth cut, the blade features a specia PTFE coating with aluminium flakes to help dissolve heat for a smooth cut. The Triple-Chip Grind tooth ensures an excellent finish and the laser-cut body ensures straighter, cleaner cuts and precise accuracy. The blades can fit in mitre saws and tablesaw machines.

The Circular Saw Blades range come in a variety of tooth counts, including 24,40, 48, 60, 80, 84, 96 and 100. The blades are available in 216mm, 250mm, 254mm, 260mm, 300mm and 305mm, and a thickness of 2.5 and 3.2.

From: www.irwin.co.uk

From £75

LS1019 260MM slide compound mitre saw

Makita's new 260mm slide compound mitre saw builds on the high standards established by the LS1016. Among the many new features on the LS1019 is the design of sliding head layout. The twin slide rails are set at an angle in the rigid aluminium alloy chassis frame, while the rear chassis fixing is positioned right at the rear of the saw assembly so that the machine can be placed close to a bench wall. The robust rails allow the saw head to move forward to cover the total sawing zone without the wasted movement of the motor head passing back behind the sawing zone.

The robust aluminium alloy main bed is fully machined for accuracy giving a large turning base. The rear fence has adjustable material locks and side holders for wider pieces of material. The saw has class-leading mitre and bevel capacities – 60° L to 60° R mitre, and 48° L to 48° R bevel. A front knob enables easy bevel adjustment with easy-to-operate mitre angle lock and one-touch sliding head lock. The cutting performance also sets high standards: at straight cut the LS1019 will cut 91mm deep across a 279mm width whilst with a 45° L or R mitre angle and 45° L bevel angle the maximum is 58mm x 197mm.

The electronic controls feature soft start for machine and operator safety, constant speed control, electronic brake, double insulation and a laser marker system on the LS1019L model. 110v and 240v versions of this new mitre saw are available. In addition, a cordless 36v version, the Makita DLS5110, is ideal for major on-site operations and includes all the core features available on the mains LS1019 model.

From: www.makitauk.com

From £865

Note: The effects of a constantly evolving global market in raw materials and other resources mean that prices can change. Be patient with your supplier and please understand that the prices quoted here are correct at the time of going to press.

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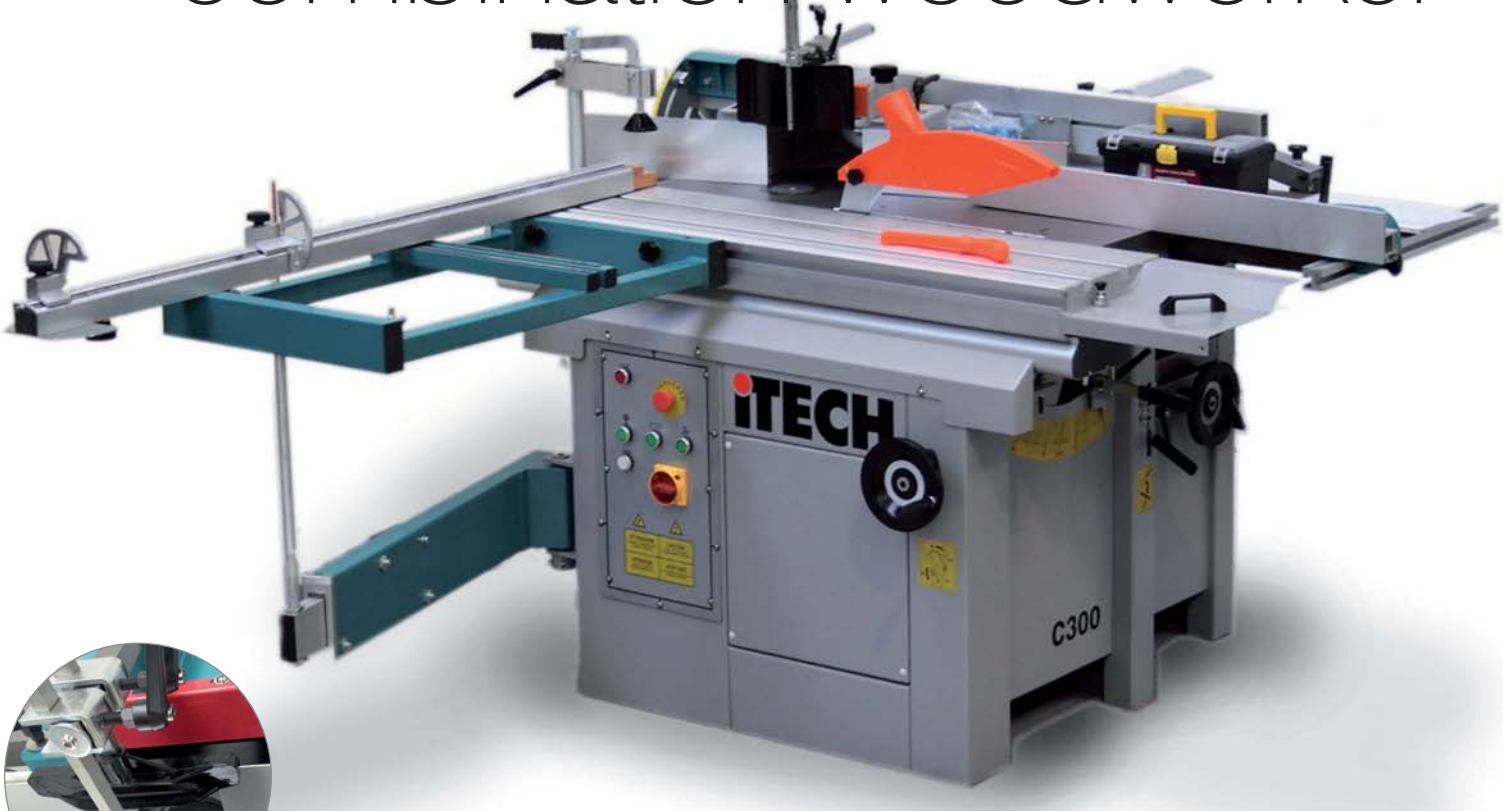

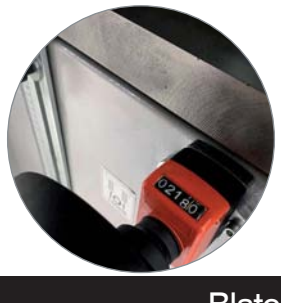

The C300 Universal Machine is the latest addition to the iTECH family. It has been designed to have industrial quality features combined in a size intended for the small professional workshop or home user.

This industrially rated machine features a panel scoring saw, sliding table with large support, surface planer, thicknesser and spindle moulder in one neat package.

The cast iron construction, accurate cross cut fence and superb build quality put this machine in a class of its own.

£4499

Inc VAT

Technical Specification:

Motors	3 x 2.0 hp
Planing width	300 mm
Thicknessing Depth	220 mm
Cutter Bock Diameter	70 mm
Depth of Saw Cut	80 mm
Sliding Carriage	1250 mm
Saw Blade Diamter	250 mm
Scoring Saw Blade	90 mm
Spindle Moulder Shaft	30 mm
Spindle Moulder Max Diameter	160 mm

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK/RONALD IAN SMILES

Out & about:
Waddesdon Manor

This month we visit Buckinghamshire to see an outstanding collection of French furniture

If you want to experience some French art and culture, then head to the Buckinghamshire countryside where you'll find Waddesdon Manor, built in the style of a 16th-century French chateau and home to the impressive Rothschild Collections of paintings, sculpture and decorative arts.

History

Waddesdon Manor was built by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild between 1874 and 1883; he hired the French architect Gabriel-Hippolyte Destailleur to create the Renaissance-style chateau he wanted. Waddesdon was designed as a place to display Ferdinand's extensive collection of arts and to entertain his fashionable friends. The Rothschilds were some of the most prolific collectors of the 19th century, seeking out the highest quality of workmanship and with a keen sense of historical importance. Waddesdon's collection was formed principally by four members of the family: Baron Ferdinand (1839–98), his sister Alice

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS LACEY © NATIONAL TRUST/WADDESDON MANOR

The Baron's Room

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS LACEY © NATIONAL TRUST, WADDESDON MANOR

The Tower Drawing Room

(1847–1922), their cousin Edmond (1845–1934) and the present Lord Rothschild (b. 1936). Ferdinand, Alice and Edmond shared a strong interest in 18th-century France, and each created impressive collections and suitable interiors to house them: masterpieces created by the royal French porcelain manufactory of Sèvres were placed on furniture produced by the most significant French craftsmen of the 18th century, much of it made for the royal family and important members of the court. The floors were covered with Savonnerie carpets exclusive to the Crown and walls hung with tapestries from the royal Gobelins and Beauvais workshops on top of sumptuous silk fabrics. Paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries by famous Dutch, Flemish and French artists subtly glowed from the walls. Baron Ferdinand also prized 18th-century British portraits by Reynolds, Gainsborough and Romney.

The Collection continues to grow today through the patronage of the Rothschild Foundation. Recent additions include several paintings by Chardin, Callet and Lajoue, a magnificent silver dinner service made for George III, a large collection of Sèvres porcelain sculpture, as well as pieces of contemporary art that can be seen in the gardens and at Windmill Hill.

The Manor house and gardens were opened to the public in 1959. Waddesdon Manor is now managed by the Rothschild Foundation, a family charitable trust, on behalf of the National Trust, who took over ownership in 1957.

What to see

Waddesdon's collection of 18th-century French furniture includes pieces by the finest makers of the time, including Jean-Henri Riesener, Martin Carlin, Georges Jacob and Charles Cressent. Many of these items were originally made for members of the French royal family and aristocracy. Several rooms are decorated with elaborate wall panels taken from Parisian houses of the 1700s.

Waddesdon is also home to a world-renowned collection of Sèvres porcelain and a 'Renaissance Museum' of 16th- and 17th-century artworks. Paintings on display include works by Gainsborough, Reynolds and Boucher. Visitors can also explore the Victorian-style gardens, featuring ornate fountains and statues. There are also woodlands to explore and a rococo-style aviary.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE FREAR © NATIONAL TRUST, WADDESDON MANOR

Chest of drawers by Charles Cressent, made ca. 1730. This piece is one of the finest examples of Cressent's workmanship

Videos of the collection

Riesener chest of draws 3D Animation

Above: Still from a 3D animation about a chest of drawers made by Jean-Henri Riesener

You can get a close-up view of some of Waddesdon's treasures via its YouTube channel. There are videos focusing on Riesener's writing table made for Marie-Antoinette, a roll-top desk made for Beaumarchais and a mechanical table (table à la Bourgogne) attributed to Christophe Wolff. To find the channel, search YouTube for 'Waddesdon Manor'.

Where else to see… 18th-century French furniture

Hillwood Museum
Washington, D.C.
www.hillwoodmuseum.org

Musée Nissim de Camondo
Paris, France
madparis.fr/en/museums/musee-nissim-de-camondo/

The Wallace Collection
London, UK
www.wallacecollection.org

Information for visiting

Address: Waddesdon, Aylesbury, Bucks HP18 0JH
Website: waddesdon.org.uk
Opening: Check the website for details of opening times for the manor and gardens
Charges: Check the website for details; National Trust members are entitled to free entry

Information correct at time of publication, check the manor's website before making your visit

FALL-FRONT DESK BY MARTIN CARLIN, MADE IN 1775

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE FREAR © NATIONAL TRUST, WADDESDON MANOR

TOP: Fall-front desk by Martin Carlin, made in 1775

RIGHT: Writing table made ca. 1780-1785 by Jean-Henri Riesener for Marie-Antoinette

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An airbrush with the past

Derek Jones dips into the *F&C* archives for this demilune table

IMAGE BY IAN HALL/JOHN BULLAR/GMC PUBLICATIONS

July 2003 and issue 78 is the destination for this month's Airbrush with the Past and like a lot of contemporary interpretations of classic forms, John Bullar's demilune table incorporates some interesting traditional details. Although not obvious in the illustration, and something that's likely to be of more interest to a woodworker than a customer, is the use of quartersawn timber throughout. Trying to explain why we get so excited about the appearance of medullary rays in English oak will earn you some extra nerdy points if you can pull it off. Perhaps the most common method today of forming a laminated framework such as the semi-ellipse frieze on this table would be to use a flexible core material like ply or MDF. Available in a range of thicknesses and requiring much less force to clamp into shape, it's a quick method that results in a stable structure afterwards. The downside, however, is that neither can accommodate a mechanical joint of any integrity afterwards. The exposed edges on components made in this way often require lippng to conceal the laminates, which isn't always as easy as it sounds. To overcome these shortcomings John re-sawed a single board of oak into five wide strips of veneer about 5mm thick, suitable for laminating in a pair of male/female compression moulds using a couple of large G clamps. Each section was created over length to accommodate a tenon at each end and ultimately an incredibly rigid structure.

Although you do see some perfect semi-circular shaped tables, half-ellipse versions are more common for the simple reason that a table would have to be as wide as it was deep to complete the half circle and perhaps stick out from the wall further than what is desirable. Curves are always difficult to get right and in his text John talks about finishing off the ends of the ellipse so that the shape is reflected in the mirror in a continuous ellipse. His method for achieving this – a couple of drawing pins and a piece of string.

The sabot feet are made by relieving material from the legs and replacing it with strips of ebony glued into place on oposite faces. The edges are then levelled off and the other two strips added. The half-round bead at the base of the frieze was made up from shop-bought ebony inlay 5mm x 1mm and laminated in separate layers into place and then shaped with a scratch stock. John's choice of finish was a beeswax and carnauba paste. Contemporary in a traditional way. Ebony has been used in a decorative way ever since the East India Company imported into Britain in the 17th century. The dense nature of the material make it hard to bend so laminating is the only option for curved work.

Clamping curved structures can also be something of a challenge and John used strap clamps to pull the frame together along with some braces extending from the two front legs to the back section.

The top of the table is held in place with buttons, although not shown on the drawing, and the curved edge has been given a barrel moulding applied with a concave spokeshave. John used a compass plane to shape the top making adjustments to the sole of the plane for each section of the curve.

Next month

Next month we'll be going back to September 1997 and issue 9 for a closer look at Andrew Lawton's Arts & Crafts-inspired dressing table.

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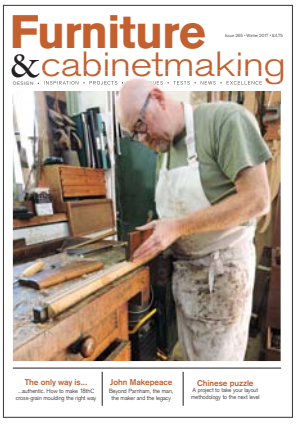

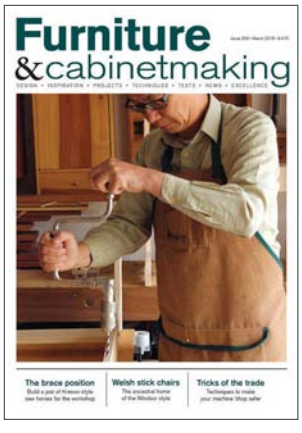

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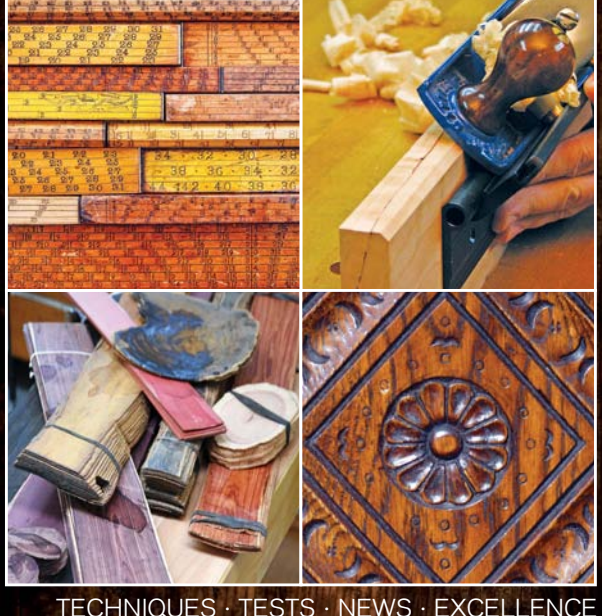

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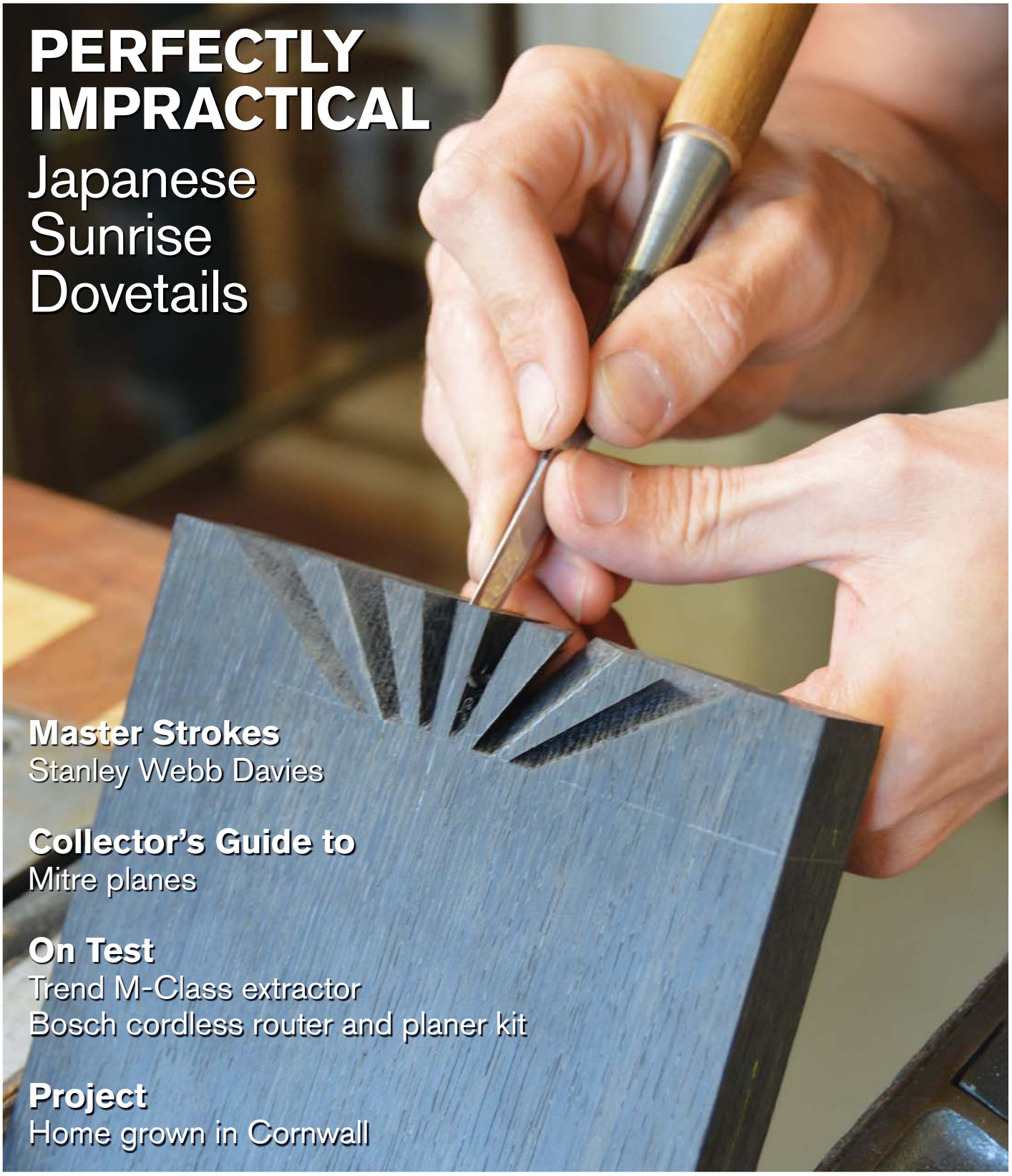

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