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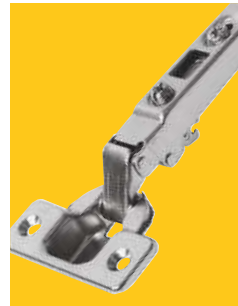
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# Welcome



It's here somewhere; on the way to a tidy workshop

'I put it somewhere safe', is a sentence often spoken when we realise we can't find something, and usually accompanied by a feeling of despair and/or panic, depending on the nature of the situation. Made doubly galling when you remember seeing the item concerned only a few days ago (or less!), it's one of those moments that you vowed would never happen again, yet here you are once more, searching blindly for a vital tool or component while the glue is going off or the deadline is rapidly approaching.

If at all possible it's the time to take a deep breath, put aside those feelings of anger and self-loathing, and check the usual places you put those types of things. Eventually it will turn up and, in the elation that follows – not to mention the completion of the task in hand – it's all too easy to forget the entire wretched business and to carry on as before, never really learning from the whole experience.

But what can be done? Clearly some workshop organisation is required, and the introduction (or improvement of) some kind of system. With short-term memory just a vague recollection for a lot of us, to achieve the sort of trouble-free, smooth-running work that we all know we're capable of, a degree of order is definitely top of the list. It's times like this that the desire for a blank sheet new workshop is strongest, but that's a luxury available to only a lucky few, and the rest of us will simply have to look around and see what we can improve.

Top of the list should be visibility; if something is hidden away on a high shelf or a dark corner, the chances are you will forget all about it. I've found that institutions are a good model; timber and boards on open racks, tools housed in dedicated cupboards, maintenance kit positioned alongside associated machines, and work surfaces kept clear of random bits and pieces. This last is probably the key area, and we should all take a leaf out of the chef's kitchen book and 'tidy as you go'. As well as designated areas for fixings, adhesives, etc., it's not a bad idea to have a 'special' box or drawer for any of those bits which defy categorisation or are of particular importance.

Certainly it's all easier said than done but, with a bit of practice and a degree of self discipline, a functioning and productive workplace can be achieved by all of us, and never again will we have to utter those dreaded five words; instead we'll be proudly saying 'it's right here!'.

*Mark*

You can contact Mark on [editor.ww@mytimemedia.com](mailto:editor.ww@mytimemedia.com)



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**UK & overseas**  
**Tel: +44 (0)1689 869 840**  
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### CURRENT & BACK ISSUES

**Website: www.mags-uk.com**

**Tel: 01733 688 964**

### EDITORIAL

**Group Editor:** Tegan Foley

Email: tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com

**Editor:** Mark Cass

Email: mark.cass@mytimemedia.com

### PRODUCTION

**Designer:** Nik Harber

**Retouching Manager:** Brian Vickers

**Advertising Production:** Robin Gray

### ADVERTISING

**Business Development Manager:** David Holden

Email: david.holden@mytimemedia.com

Tel: 01689 869 867

**Online Sales:** David Holden

Email: david.holden@mytimemedia.com

Tel: 07718 648 689

### MARKETING & SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Subscriptions Manager:** Kate Hall

**Subscriptions:** Sarah Pradhan

**Tel: +44(0)1858 438 798**

### MANAGEMENT

**Group Advertising Manager:** Rhona Bolger

Email: rhona.bolger@mytimemedia.com

Tel: 01689 869 891

**Chief Executive:** Owen Davies

**Chairman:** Peter Harkness

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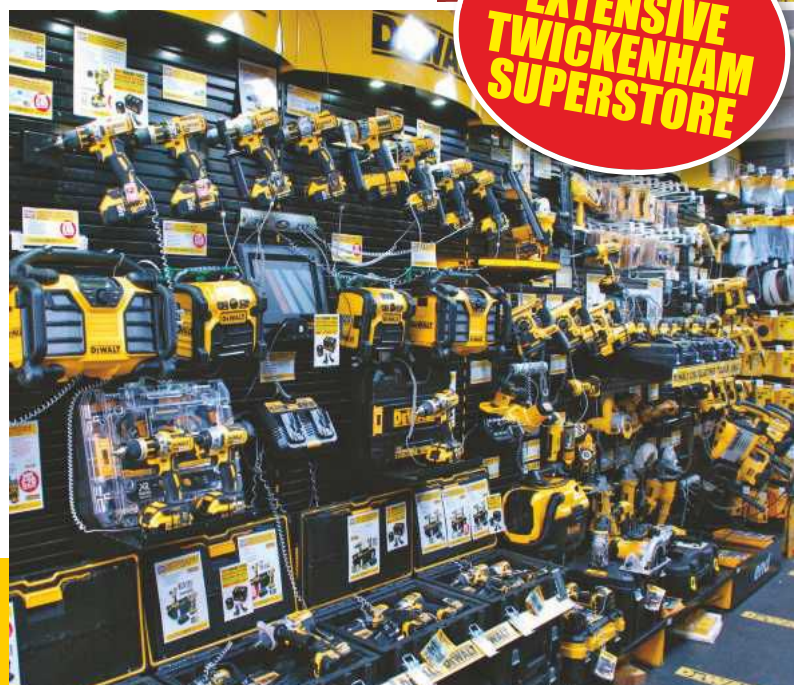
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# In brief...

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There's a lot to be said for trying something new. Although we're naturally inclined to repeat the tried and tested – and often grow to prefer the safe option over everything else – when it comes to woodworking, there should always be room for experiment. As long as we don't try anything reckless and threatening to personal safety, I would heartily recommend that new avenues be explored.

Unless you share a workshop with fellow makers and woodworkers, you'll probably spend most of your time at the bench with little chance of a second opinion on which course to take. We all benefit from the input of our fellows (and this is

where magazines and websites can be of help), but in lieu of any cautionary or encouraging advice from a colleague, there's nothing for it but to take the plunge and try something new.

The results are generally gratifying – sometimes surprising – but, more often than not, you're glad you did it. One of the very real reasons I'd give for trying something new is that much has changed in our woodworking world, and there are some really great products out there that didn't exist only a few years ago. With new technology making a difference in every field, it would be a shame to miss out. If you've developed any successful new working practices lately, please let us know and we can all share in them. **Mark**

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Back for its 13th consecutive year, this event will take place in the beautiful setting of Mill Marsh Park, Bovey Tracey, Devon from 9–11 June.

The three-day event is designed to showcase the finest makers from across the country. Over 200 woodturners, jewellery makers, textile designers, metal and leather workers, potters, silversmiths and many more, have been carefully selected by industry specialists to exhibit at the show with the aim of raising the profile of quality contemporary craft.

While promoting the skills of experienced designers and makers is at the heart of the festival's remit, supporting new businesses is something event director, Sarah James, is extremely passionate about. The 2016 event

saw the launch of the StartUp campaign, giving 20 of the latest makers the opportunity to exhibit their work at the festival, while The Crafts Council's Hothouse programme introduces their exclusive newcomers.

What's more, this year's festival programme is brimming with workshops, such as 'Into the Woods', which celebrates British woodland craft skills, plus demonstrations, exhibitions, children's activities and entertainment, street theatre, festival food and live music, as well as their two most popular attractions: The Vintage Craft Cinema and The Pottery Showdown, featuring stars from the BBC show.

It's going to be hard to beat last year's event, which saw over 10,000 visitors attending, but the organisers have promised that this year's festival will be even bigger and better than ever. To find out more, see [www.craftsatboveytracey.co.uk](http://www.craftsatboveytracey.co.uk).



Adam Cornish turns contemporary wooden vessels



One of Jane Crisp's steam-bent wooden baskets



Mark Sanger's pieces often feature mixed media

## DIARY

### MARCH

- 2–3 Bee hive making
  - 8–9\* & 20–21 Beginners' woodturning (two days)
  - 13–14 Turned boxes (advanced)
  - 14 Fine-tuning hand tools\*
  - 16 Taster session
  - 17 Introduction to Leigh Jigs\*
  - 17 Pen making
  - 20 & 24\* Pyrography with Ben Beddows
  - 20–21 Bowls & platters\*
  - 20–21 Introduction to the small lathe
  - 25 Sharpening with Tormek hand tools\*
  - 28–29 Machining castings
  - 30–31 Woodcarving with Paul Gardner
- \* Course held in Sittingbourne, Kent  
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- 7 Basic drill skills
- 11 Introduction to woodwork – wood stool – two days
- 25 Introduction to woodturning  
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**D&M GUIDE PRICE:** See our website

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The DCH481 (below) is a 54V SDS Max 3-Mode hammer drill with a brushless motor, providing 6.0J impact energy with a capacity of 40mm in concrete and 100mm in core bit.



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# Armoire RESCUE MISSION

**On discovering a French walnut armoire at his local architectural salvage yard, Niall Yates sets about restoring it to its former glory, which turned out to be a labour intensive process, but entirely worthwhile nonetheless**

It wasn't something I had intended to buy when I set out with a collection of old Victorian doors, architraves and floorboards to sell at my local architectural salvage yard, but when I returned, I was the proud owner of most of a French walnut armoire. This wasn't really the time to be buying furniture because, as a family, we were then busy clearing the decks prior to moving home, but this had been too good an opportunity to miss.

Before it could be moved I had to brace the armoire with several lengths of 6 x 1 to reinforce the structure and stop it collapsing, like a floppy, oversized, cereal box. Upon delivery, it then took four sets of strong arms to lift it over the 6ft high garden fence, after which it was placed on its side in the summer house, blocking access there for the next few months.

### Fast forward

When we were safely settled into our new home the armoire was placed in the adjoining garage. I now had to work carefully around it while converting the garage into an additional bedroom (photo 1). With my impulse buy I had certainly made things difficult for myself, but I was convinced that with a bit of TLC the armoire would turn out to be a very handsome piece of furniture.

### Fast forward again

When the building work was complete and with my workshop up and running, it was finally time to start renovating the armoire. Firstly, I had to work out the amount of timber I needed as well as the species required – I could not tell at this stage if I was dealing with cherry

or walnut – it wasn't until I cut into it, however, that I could confirm that it was indeed walnut. Identifying which species it was, in the end, proved quite academic. There was no way that I could source European walnut readily in the sizes needed, neither could I justify the cost with the quantities required. Obviously, if the cost of the materials was going to exceed the value of the finished item, then a repair simply wasn't viable.

For many reasons, not to repair the armoire wasn't an option, so I selected cherry as a good substitute. This was not such a bad choice as the grain figuring is very similar and once stained it is pretty difficult to tell apart. Besides, most of the timber missing and damaged belonged to the back and inside of the carcass and would mostly be hidden from view.



1 Working around the armoire



2 Section of waney-edge on the inner apron



3 The poor condition is very obvious



4 Separated side panels marked in pairs



5 What was left intact of the armoire



6 Groove routed in the back bottom rail





Mortises being cut in the bottom rail

### First things first

The reason why so much of the armoire was missing was because of quite extensive woodworm damage. This was not surprising as there was a lot of sapwood present in the timber. The original maker would've had to have been quite frugal in his timber use and there were a lot of instances of waney-edge tucked away, out of sight, throughout the piece (**photo 2**). The armoire had been sprayed with a woodworm treatment outside in the fresh air soon after I purchased it and I had kept an eye out for re-infestation in the intervening period.

I had already removed the doors of the armoire and taken them to the workshop. I now worked on the carcass in situ, first assessing the damage and then working out an initial plan of attack.



Back complete with spliced stiles and bottom rail

The true awfulness of the armoire's condition was very obvious (**photo 3**). I removed the back first, which did not prove to be too difficult as there did not seem to be any evidence of the use of glue. The tenons were held by a pair of square-ended dowels, and where they still existed, these were removed with a wood screw and vice-grips, or carefully drilled out.

All the parts were labelled with chalk before being removed. **Photo 4** shows some of the side panels from the armoire. A curious point to note here is that all of the side panels were formed of two separate pieces of timber and that every single one had separated. They were joined with a sloping tongue & groove joint of a type that I had not encountered before, likewise the panels on the doors. What they all had



Close-up showing dowels and mortise for the side rail

in common was that each of the joints had sprung apart and I could see no evidence of glue remains on any one of them.

### Into the workshop

With everything stripped away that needed to be (**photo 5**), I now adjourned to the workshop with the back and panels, and it was a fairly straightforward task gluing the panels back together. I then set about planing and cutting my stock of cherry to size, before fabricating a new bottom rail for the back, along with two sections of stile to splice to the existing stiles. Grooves were run to accommodate the bottom side panels and the base of the cabinet (**photo 6**) and various mortises were sunk to house the tenons of the rails and the muntins (**photo 7**). The whole



Thin walnut board being laminated to the cherry backing



The side rails turned out surprisingly well



Fielded carcass bottom prior to having corners trimmed



Carcass being glued with everything in place



Square-ended dowels used to hold tenons



Break-out around left hole that needs attention



16 Damaged area on front stile requires repair



17 Splice glued in place



18 Small section of walnut glued in position using CA adhesive

assembly was now glued and spliced to the back, before screws were added behind the splice to reinforce it and the tenons were pinned with dowels (photos 8 & 9).

The repaired carcass back was sanded to a finish and was then stained with several coats of walnut spirit stain before being temporarily reunited with the front.

#### What next?

It was apparent that both the bottom side rails were a write-off and could not be salvaged. I had inherited, with the armoire, a couple of shelves. One was a board of Douglas fir and obviously not original, but the other, a narrower board of walnut, was. Although this was too thin I decided to laminate this to some cherry to make up the thickness and this allowed me to easily fabricate two replacement rails (photos 10 & 11), which worked surprisingly well.

#### Shelf & cabinet base

At this stage I made the cabinet shelf and base. These were both formed from several narrower widths of cherry, biscuit and glued together. The base was fielded from underneath, so that it would fit into the corresponding grooves (photo 12). It also had to have its corners cut out to allow for the stiles, front and back.

The original fixed shelf had long since disappeared from the armoire but there was

ample evidence of its existence and location from four notches cut into the stiles at the front and back of the carcass. It seemed logical to assume that these housed two bearers to which the shelf was attached.

After cleaning and staining the repaired side panels and placing them in their correct positions, I now set about gluing and dowelling the carcass back together (photos 13 & 14). Some of the dowel holes through the tenons had suffered some breakout (photo 15), so these had to be attended to by gluing pieces of timber in with CA adhesive to reinforce around the holes.

#### Bits still to do

The carcass renovations were still not complete as there were a couple of tasks left to do. One was to splice a section of timber to the left front leg around the mortise for the bottom rail tenon. The splice was planed to thickness, but left slightly over width, and after gluing in place, was planed flush (photos 16 & 17). There was also a triangular section of sapwood that had been eaten away on one of the side rails; it seemed fitting to simply glue a piece of walnut here as a repair, using CA adhesive as before (photo 18).

#### The doors

The doors were easily broken down into their component parts, as they

were dowelled and not glued. The separated pieces that formed the panels were glued back together before being thoroughly cleaned and stained. The doors were then reassembled using glue and dowels.

The doors are of a particular lay-on type, in that they sit on the surface of the door frame. This is similar to modern kitchen cabinet doors, except that the edges of the armoire doors are rebated so that they fit partly into the frame as well.

From a design point of view, the doors are not made to cover the full width of the opening. The gap left is filled with a thin moulded section of board that sits behind the inner rebates of both the doors and is fastened to form an integral part of the left-hand door (photo 19).

This board also had to be glued back in position where it had come away from the left-hand door. It had originally been housed in a groove behind the rebate of the door by means of a bare-faced tongue, which had further been pinned through diagonally in several places. I fastened the doors back on the cabinet and now the armoire was ready to be finished.

#### Less is more

I often find it difficult to know at what point to stop, when renovating antiques, but the maxim above is a helpful reminder. The armoire had no cornice when I bought



19 Separate moulded section forms part of the left-hand door



20 Recessed heart carving leaves little space for a cornice

it, though there is evidence of one, which is demonstrated by rows of broken nails across the top front and sides of the carcass. There is very little room between the recessed heart moulding at the top of the frame and the top of the cabinet – 12mm to be exact – so I can only guess that there was a very narrow cornice moulding applied here (**photo 20**).

I did once repair a broken cornice on an armoire for a customer, but this was a large separate assembly fastened from above. With this in mind, I decided to leave well alone and not attach a cornice – at least until I had done some further research.

There was also the problem of how to fasten the doors shut. Although there are a pair of very large escutcheons on the doors, and the right-hand one has an accompanying key hole cut in the stile, sadly there is now no lock. However, finding something suitable was going to be problematic, so I decided to reinstate

the crude wooden latch at the top of the frame, which had been attached some time in the past; this keeps the right-hand door closed and hence the left-hand one as well. The latch had a certain amount of age to it, and was certainly in keeping with the general aged look of the armoire, especially with the several splits to the timber that I had also decided not to repair.

### The finish

There is a useful cleaner for antiques comprising equal measures of genuine turpentine and methylated spirits. Used with wire wool this is good for removing the old surface finish from furniture without destroying the patina beneath. It also helps to redistribute some of the original polish and stain across the surface of the piece, helping to give it a unified look. The armoire was certainly in need of cleaning being quite grubby and having a fair number of different coloured paint splatters on its surface. After

using this cleaner, I further wiped the surface with methylated spirits on a rag – making sure that I had plenty of ventilation in the room – before I applied a walnut spirit stain.

After the stain had dried I applied several coats of French polish to the piece using a squirrel mop, waiting for each coat to dry before rubbing down with fine wire wool. This was really all the finishing that was required. I did not feel the need to apply a final coating of wax as I was pleased with the end result (**photo 21**). **LWW**

### MEASURING ANTIQUES

It can be quite thought provoking working on antiques and the armoire proved to be no exception. What had puzzled me, when I started to make the replacement sections that were damaged, was that when measuring them with a metric rule, none of them seemed to be of any size in particular.

I vaguely remembered, reading in a book I had on French furniture, a reference to an earlier measuring system. On checking this out, I came across mention of 'The Kings Foot'; this is larger than the imperial foot, measuring 324.8mm.

Armed with this information I marked out a rule on a lath of timber and used this to check some of the armoire's dimensions. Now I had a better fit for the sizes, but things still did not appear to be orderly enough. Further reading on the internet showed there had been variations for the size of the foot. In particular, there was a law enacted by Napoleon in 1812 relaxing the regulations regarding the use of the metric system; this enabled tradesmen to continue using feet and inches with the foot in question being equal to one-third of a metre. So, another rule and another checking of measurements and finally the sizes really did seem to make sense. Based on this new system, the height of the armoire – with allowances for the cornice – is 6ft, the width 5ft 10in and the depth 1ft 8in. The components are nominal sizes with the stiles of the frame being ex 5 x 1 1/2in and the side rails ex 6 x 1 1/2in, ex 9 x 1 1/2in.

Am I confident that this is right? Well, not really. Perhaps the only thing I can be sure of is that a workman in France once made a very handsome walnut armoire, which hopefully, after its repair, can go on being appreciated for many years to come



21

Completed armoire with all its rustic charm

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# In your own write...

Here are just some of the latest letters we've received since the last issue. Drop us a line on paper or via screen and keyboard to add your voice to the woodworking crowd; you might be one of the lucky few who will manage to get their hands on a coveted Woodworker badge!

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## FIG TREES IN THE WILD

**Hello Mark,**

My wife and I are keen motorcyclists and our travels have taken us to some interesting places around the world. Most recently, we were riding across South Africa and Lesotho, when we rode into the De Hoops Nature Reserve near Bredasdorp, S.A., relatively close to the southernmost tip of Africa.

After exploring the almost deserted Koppie Alleen coastline, part of a Marine Protected Area, we rode to a small restaurant in the nature reserve. We had lunch outside in a walled enclosure that was reminiscent of an old military fort with an earth parade square baked hard

by the summer sun. However, growing in this enclosure was the star of the show: a gigantic wild fig tree with an enormous, almost perfectly symmetrical canopy. I simply had to send this photo as I felt that your readers may well appreciate its beauty.

I know little about the species (*Ficus*), but I understand that, generally speaking, the fig family isn't a major timber producer, with its main appeal being due to its bearing of fruit. If any of your readers know which species of fig tree this might be, or any significant uses for its timber, I would be interested to know.

Best regards, **Chris Finch**

*Hi Chris, that is some tree all right! A real beauty and no mistake, and nice and shady underneath I bet. Many thanks; it's always good to see photos from distant lands.*

*Mark*



Chris recently encountered this wonderful wild fig tree while on holiday in South Africa

## EXTENDING TABLES

**Hi Mark,** I have a need to make two tables for family members: one with an oblong top; the other with an oval top; both capable of being extended. Unfortunately I have no plans to suit these requirements and I should be grateful if you could advise me on likely sources and also where to obtain the mechanism for the extensions. With thanks, **Gwilym Roberts**

*Hi Gwilym, extending tables come in many forms, from the crank-powered screw-out type of Victorian times to the latest slide and fold variations of today. The only mechanisms I know of that can be purchased are those made by German experts Hafele. They make top-of-the-range everything in the fixtures and fittings line with prices to match.*

*Most extenders employ a simple telescoping frame, which you can just pull out, or even simpler is the humble drawer leaf. None of these I have ever seen available as plans in any shape or form, although it's possible there may have been one or two in past copies of The Woodworker. As we have no real record of archive contents, I won't be able to find one to order.*

*Your best bet is to look in as many secondhand furniture shops as possible and investigate any extenders you might see there, with a view to measuring, recording and drawing up your own plans.*

*Sorry I can't be of more help, but keep in touch and let me know how you get on.* **Mark**



An early Victorian-style extender

## SMOOTH VS ROUGH

**Hi Mark,** a belated comment on the article on page 72 of the January issue re laminating. I found this very interesting and admire anybody taking on such a mammoth glue-up! However, I was struck by how much effort the author made to smooth the individual layers after sawing. I was always taught to leave the rough saw marks in order to give the glue more purchase. I would be interested to know if I was taught wrongly? All the best, **John D**

*John, when it comes to smooth Vs rough, I think that the smooth must take it – as long as you can spread an even coat. Certainly there are times when a surface will benefit from a little keying (as in scotch glue veneering for instance), but it really depends on the adhesive being used as well as the material being glued. I've found laminating a very exciting process and would highly recommend a bag press to achieve optimum clamping. Just be sure to take a lot of care in making your formers.* **Mark**

**GET IN TOUCH!**

Don't forget, we're always keen to see your photos, so please don't hesitate to send them in if you've snapped something of interest recently. Email me at the new address: [editor.ww@mytimemedia.com](mailto:editor.ww@mytimemedia.com)



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### Clarke CROSS 450W RANDOM ORBITAL SANDER

NEW

Adjustable front handle improves control • 7000-14000rpm

INC DUST BAG AND SELECTION OF 125MM DIAMETER SANDING DISCS

FROM ONLY **£29.98** EX.VAT  
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\* was £71.98 inc.VAT

### Clarke CPF13 ELECTRIC POWER FILE

Variable belt speed • Tilting head

Black & Decker

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\* was £71.98 inc.VAT

### Clarke BOSCH CORDLESS DRILL/DRIVERS

powered by Li-Ion

CON18LI

FROM ONLY **£39.98** EX.VAT  
**£47.98** INC.VAT

PSR18

MODEL	MOTOR	BELT SIZE (mm)	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
CPF13	400W/230V	13x457	£49.98	£59.98
KA900E*	350W/230V	13x455	£54.99	£65.99

### Clarke 10" (254MM) SLIDING COMPOUND MITRE SAW

For fast, accurate cross, bevel & mitre cutting in most hard & soft woods • 1800W motor • Laser guide • 78mm max. depth of cut

BEST SELLER

FROM ONLY **£139.98** EX.VAT  
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NEW CLARKE CMS210 210MM (8") MITRE SAW WITH LASER - ONLY £71.98 INC. VAT

MODEL	MOTOR	MAX CUT (mm)	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
CCS185B	1200W	65/44	£39.98	£47.98
CON185*	1600W	60/40	£59.98	£71.98
CCS2	1300W	60/45	£59.98	£71.98

### Clarke WOODWORKING VICES

STANLEY Record

FROM ONLY **£13.99** EX.VAT  
**£16.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	MOUNTING	JAW (WIDTH/OPENING /DEPTH)mm	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
Clarke CHT152	Bolted	150/152/61	£13.99	£16.79
Stanley Clamped	72/60/40		£16.99	£20.39
Multi Angle				
Record IV75B Clamped	75/50/32		£19.98	£23.98
Clarke WV7 Bolted	180/205/78		£26.99	£32.39

### Clarke STAPLE/NAIL GUNS

All models include nail/staple pack and tough moulded case

ALUMINIUM CONSN18LIB

FROM ONLY **£21.99** EX.VAT  
**£26.99** INC.VAT

NEW

SPARE NAILS / STAPLES IN STOCK

ELECTRIC AND CORDLESS MODELS IN STOCK

MODEL	TYPE	STAPLE/NAIL GAUGE	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CESNG1	Electric	22/18	£21.99	£26.39
CCT48	Cordless	4.8V Ni-MH	£28.99	£34.79
CESNG2	Electric	18/18	£39.98	£47.98
CONSN18LIB	Cordless	18v Lithium-Ion	£114.99	£137.99

### Clarke BELT SANDERS

Ideal for surface removal, sanding and finishing

ABRASIVE SANDING BELTS IN STOCK

FROM ONLY **£34.99** EX.VAT  
**£41.99** INC.VAT

\* was £113.99 inc.VAT

### Clarke CIRCULAR SAWS

Great range of DIY and professional saws • Ideal for bevel cutting (0-45°)

CON185

FROM ONLY **£39.98** EX.VAT  
**£47.98** INC.VAT

\*Laser guide

MODEL	MOTOR	MAX CUT (mm)	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
Clarke BS1	900W	380	£34.99	£41.99
Clarke CBS2	1200W	480	£76.99	£92.39
Makita 991*	650W	75-270	£89.98	£107.98

### Clarke HARDWOOD WORKBENCH

Includes bench dogs and guide holes for variable work positioning • 2 Heavy Duty Vices • Large storage draw • Sunken tool trough • LxWxH 1520x620x855mm

CHB1500

FROM ONLY **£139.98** EX.VAT  
**£167.98** INC.VAT

### Clarke PLANERS & THICKENERS

Ideal for DIY & Hobby use • Dual purpose, for both finishing & sizing of timber

CPT800

FROM ONLY **£184.99** EX.VAT  
**£221.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	PLANING WIDTH	MAX THICK. CAPACITY	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CPT600	6"	120mm	£184.99	£221.99
CPT800	8"	120mm	£209.98	£251.98
CPT1000	10"	120mm	£289.00	£346.80

### Clarke QUALITY CAST IRON STOVES

OVER 23 QUALITY STYLES ON DISPLAY

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BARREL II

6kW

6.9kW

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airmaster

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Superb range ideal for DIY, hobby & semi-professional use

\* V Twin Pump

MODEL	MOTOR	CFM	TANK	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
8/250	2HP	7.5	24ltr	£34.99	£101.99
7/250	2HP	7	24ltr	£34.99	£113.99
11/250	2.5HP	9.5	24ltr	£109.98	£131.98
8/510	2HP	7.5	50ltr	£119.98	£143.98
11/510	2.5HP	9.5	50ltr	£139.98	£167.98
16/510*	3HP	14.5	50ltr	£209.00	£250.80
16/1010*	3HP	14.5	100ltr	£259.98	£311.98

### Clarke SHEET SANDERS

Ergonomic design for optimum comfort

CON300

FROM ONLY **£16.99** EX.VAT  
**£20.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	SHEET SIZE	MOTOR	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
COS200	190x90mm	150W	£16.99	£20.39
CON300	230x115mm	330W	£34.99	£41.99

### Clarke PORTABLE THICKNESSER

Max thickness cap. 125mm and 250mm wide • Planing depths adjustable from 0-2.5mm • Powerful 1250W motor • 8000rpm no-load speed

CPT250

FROM ONLY **£209.98** EX.VAT  
**£251.98** INC.VAT

### Clarke OSCILLATING BELT & BOBBIN SANDER

450W motor • 2000rpm spindle speed • 1750rpm belt speed • Dust collection port • Inc. sleeves, drum and belt

COEBS1

FROM ONLY **£179.98** EX.VAT  
**£215.98** INC.VAT

NEW

MODEL	MOTOR	RPM	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
COBS1*	450W	2000rpm	£134.99	£161.99

### Clarke CLARKE BOLTLESS SHELVING BENCHES

Simple fast assembly in minutes using only a hammer

SAVE 10% WHEN YOU BUY ANY MIX OF 4 FROM THIS RANGE SAVE AT LEAST £23.99 INC.VAT

CHOICE OF 5 COLOURS: RED, BLUE, GREY, SILVER & GALVANISED STEEL

MODEL DIMS WxDxH(mm) EXC.VAT INC.VAT

150ka	800x300x1500	£29.98	£35.98
350ka	900x400x1800	£49.98	£59.98

150 (evenly distributed) Strong 9mm fibreglass shelves PER SHELF

350 (evenly distributed) Strong 12mm fibreglass shelves PER SHELF

### Clarke 4" BELT/ 6" DISC SANDER

Dust extraction facility • 4" x 36" belt tilts & locks 0-90° • 225mm x 160mm table, tilts 0-90° • 370W, 230V motor

CS4-6D

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### Clarke 1" BELT/ 5" DISC SANDER

Includes 2 tables that tilt & lock

Quality induction 300W motor

CBS1-5

FROM ONLY **£69.98** EX.VAT  
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### Clarke 4" BELT/ 8" DISC SANDER

Includes two tables

550W 230V motor

FROM ONLY **£154.99** EX.VAT  
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CS4-8

### Clarke DISC SANDER (305MM)

Powerful, bench mounted disc sander • 900W

No load speed: 1490rpm • 305mm Disc Dia. (1 x 60 grit sanding disc included) • Dust extraction port

CDS300B

FROM ONLY **£129.98** EX.VAT  
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### Clarke VAC KING WET & DRY VACUUM CLEANERS

Compact, high performance wet & dry vacuum cleaners for use around the home, workshop, garage etc.

FROM ONLY **£49.98** EX.VAT  
**£59.98** INC.VAT

\* SS = Stainless Steel

MODEL	MOTOR	CAPACITY	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CVAC20P	1250W	16/12ltr	£49.98	£59.98
CVAC20SS*	1400W	16/12ltr	£59.98	£71.98
CVAC20PP2	1400W	16/12ltr	£62.99	£76.89
CVAC25SS*	1400W	19/17ltr	£67.99	£81.89
CVAC30SSR	1400W	24/21ltr	£97.99	£117.59

### Clarke CPT800 PLANERS & THICKENERS

Ideal for DIY & Hobby use • Dual purpose, for both finishing & sizing of timber

CPT800

FROM ONLY **£184.99** EX.VAT  
**£221.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	PLANING WIDTH	MAX THICK. CAPACITY	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CPT600	6"	120mm	£184.99	£221.99
CPT800	8"	120mm	£209.98	£251.98
CPT1000	10"	120mm	£289.00	£346.80

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TC-SM2131

**EVOLUTION**

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- Quality Range of Mitre saws and blades in stock

MODEL	BLADE DIA/ BORE (mm)	MAX CUT DEPTH/CROSS	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
Einhell 210/30	55/120mm		£56.99	£68.39
TC-MS 2112				
Evolution Fury 3-B	210/25.4	50/120mm	£57.99	£69.59
Einhell TC-SM2131#	210/30	62/310mm	£119.98	£143.98
Einhell SM2534	250/30	75/340mm	£159.98	£191.98

# Laser Guide ± Sliding Compound

**Clarke ELECTRIC HEATERS**

**DEVIL 6003**

**BEST SELLER**

FROM ONLY ~~£49.98~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£59.98** INC.VAT

MODEL	VOLTAGE	HEAT OUTPUT KW	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
DEVIL 6003	230V	1.5-3	£49.98	£59.98
DEVIL 7003	230V	3	£59.98	£71.98
DEVIL 6005	400V	2.5-5	£74.99	£89.99
DEVIL 7005	400V	5	£84.99	£101.99
DEVIL 6009	400V	4.5-9	£119.00	£142.80
DEVIL 7009	400V	9	£139.98	£167.98
DEVIL 6015	400V	5-10-15	£179.00	£214.80
DEVIL 7015	400V	15	£199.98	£239.98
DEVIL 6025	400V	22	£289.00	£346.80
DEVIL 7025	400V	22	£319.00	£382.80
DEVIL 7030	400V	30	£359.00	£430.80

**Clarke TURBO FAN GAS HEATERS**

Offering low cost, efficient heating

**Little Devil II**

FROM ONLY ~~£64.99~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£77.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	MAX OUTPUT KW	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
Little Devil II	10	£64.99	£77.99
Little Devil S511*	10.3	£84.99	£101.99
Devil 700	15	£84.99	£113.99
Devil 900	24.9	£139.98	£167.98
Devil 860SS**	31	£149.98	£179.98
Devil 1600	36.6	£169.98	£203.98
Devil 2100	49.8	£259.00	£310.80

\*Dual Volt 110V/230V  
\*stainless steel

**Clarke PROFESSIONAL BANDSAWS**

Top Quality Bandsaws - ideal for professional workshop use. Strong steel body with solid cast iron table

- Table tilts 45° • Adjustable blade guide
- Supplied with stand, 4TPI wood cutting blade, rip fence, mitre guide, mitre gauge and push stick • Induction motors
- Includes stand

**MODELS ALSO FEATURE:**

- MULTI-STEP DUST EXTRACTION OUTLET
- FLEXIBLE LED WORKLIGHT
- REMOVABLE DUST TRAY
- BLADE TENSIONING CONTROL

**CBS300**

FROM ONLY ~~£389.00~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£466.80** INC.VAT

MODEL	THROAT DEPTH	MAX CUT 90°	MAX CUT 45°	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CBS300	305mm/12"	165mm	115mm	£389.00	£466.80
CBS350	340mm/14"	225mm	160mm	£479.00	£574.80

**Clarke DRILL PRESSES**

Range of precision bench & floor presses for enthusiast, engineering & industrial applications

**NEW RANGE**

FROM ONLY ~~£66.99~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£80.99** INC.VAT

B = Bench mounted F = Floor standing

MODEL	MOTOR (W)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CDP35B	350/5	£66.99	£80.39
CDP102B	350/5	£79.98	£95.98
CDP152B	450/12	£134.99	£161.99
CDP202B	450/16	£179.98	£215.98
CDP108	370/12	£194.99	£233.99
CDP352F	350/16	£219.00	£262.80
CDP502F1100	1122/49.00	£598.80	

**Clarke MORTISING MACHINE**

Accurately creates deep square recesses

- Table size 150 x 340mm • Max. chisel stroke 76mm
- Robust cast iron base & column ensures stability & accuracy
- 95mm depth of cut

**CBM1B**

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**Clarke QUARTZ HALOGEN INFRA-RED HEATER**

3KW instant, clean odour free heat.

**DEVIL 370SP**

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**Clarke ROUTER TABLE**

Router not included

**CRT-1**

**BEST SELLER**

FROM ONLY ~~£69.98~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£83.98** INC.VAT

- Converts your router into a stationary router table • Suitable for most routers (up to 155mm dia. Base plate)

**Clarke GRINDERS & STANDS**

Stands come complete with bolt mountings and feet anchor holes

6" & 8" AVAILABLE WITH LIGHT

STANDS FROM ONLY **£47.98** INC.VAT

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# With sanding belt "8" whetstone & 6" variable

MODEL	DUTY	WHEEL DIA.	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CBG6RP	DIY	150mm	£32.99	£39.59
CBG6RPZ	PRO	150mm	£42.99	£51.59
CBG6RSC	HD	150mm	£54.99	£65.99
CBG6SB#	PRO	150mm	£54.99	£65.99
CBG6RWC	HD	150mm	£59.98	£71.98
CBG6W*	wet	HD 150/200mm	£56.99	£68.39

**Clarke MULTI FUNCTION TOOL WITH ACCESSORY KIT**

Great for sawing, cutting, sanding, polishing, chiselling & much more • 250W motor • Variable speed

**CMFT250**

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**Clarke 13" MINI WOOD LATHE**

Ideal for enthusiasts/hobbyists with small workshops

- 325mm distance between centres • 200mm max. turning capacity (dia) • 0.2HP motor

**CWL325V**

FROM ONLY ~~£149.98~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£179.98** INC.VAT

**Clarke JIGSAWS**

DIY #Professional

FROM ONLY ~~£14.99~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£17.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	POWER (W)	DEPTH OF CUT (WOOD/STEEL)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
Clarke CJS380*	420W	55/6mm	£14.99	£17.99
Clarke CON750#	750W	80/10mm	£27.99	£33.59
Bosch PST700E*	500W	70/4mm	£44.99	£53.99

**Clarke ROUTERS**

Powerful heavy duty machines ideal for trade and DIY use

**CR2**

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CR2 INCLUDES 15 PIECE KIT WORTH OVER £20

**Clarke MITRESAW STAND**

Suitable for most sizes/makes of saw

- Inc. outriggers & rollers

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**Clarke DETAIL SANDERS**

Perfect for smooth and fine finishing along with hard to reach areas or curved surfaces

**CDS-1V**

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ALL MODELS INC. SANDING SHEETS

MODEL	WATTS	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
PS105	105W	£19.98	£23.98
RT-OS13	130W	£22.99	£27.59
CDS-1V	280W	£28.99	£34.79

**Clarke SCROLL SAWS**

50mm max cut thickness

- Air-blower removes dust from cutting area
- Table tilts 0-45°

**CSS16VB**

FROM ONLY ~~£79.98~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£95.98** INC.VAT

MODEL	MOTOR	RPM	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CSSA00B	85W	1450	£79.98	£95.98
CSS16VB	90W	550-1600	£89.98	£107.98
CSS400C	90W	550-1600	£109.98	£131.98

**Clarke 12" DOVETAIL JIG**

Simple, easy to set up & use for producing a variety of joints • Cuts work pieces with a thickness of 8-32mm • Includes a 1/2" comb template guide & holes for bench mounting

**CDTJ12**

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**Clarke ROUTERS**

FROM ONLY ~~£44.99~~ ~~EXC.VAT~~ **£53.99** INC.VAT

MODEL	MOTOR (W)	PLUNGE (mm)	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
CR1C*	1200	0-50	£44.99	£53.99
Bosch	1400	0-55	£79.98	£95.98
POF1400ACE				
CR2	2100	0-60	£119.98	£143.98

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**FESTOOL**

Tools for the toughest demands

# In brief...



## THE MIDLANDS SHOW – NOT TO BE MISSED!

This fantastic show, which is now in its fourth year, takes place at the Newark Showground on 24–25 March. With 50 companies exhibiting and over 20 demonstrators taking part, including April Wilkerson, you can be sure of a great day out. To book tickets and to find out more, see [www.nelton.co.uk](http://www.nelton.co.uk).

DIYer and woodworker April Wilkerson has a fantastic following on YouTube – see [www.youtube.com/user/AprilWilkersonDIY](http://www.youtube.com/user/AprilWilkersonDIY)

## IT'S ALL GOING ON AT YANDLES

One of the UK's longest running and successful woodworking shows – the Yandles Spring Show – is due to have a major makeover this year. Manufacturers and demonstrators will now be mixed together throughout the show rather than being in two separate areas. There will also be several new demonstrators, including Richard Jefferies, Peter Thomas, Mark Anson and April Wilkerson, a well-known vlogger who has over 250,000 followers on YouTube and is flying in from the USA to entertain the crowds.

The Hobby Shop will have a number of different demonstrators attending, covering crafts from paper craft, quilling and card making, to a demonstration from the Spinners, Weavers and Dye Guild.

New companies such as Yorkshire Grit will be attending for the first time and old favourites Record Power will be showing their next generation lathes. Alongside this will be masterclasses, one of the largest selections of timber to be found at a woodworking show, plus various special show offers, not to mention free entry and parking. Taking place from 7–8 April at their premises in Martock, Somerset, see [www.yandles.co.uk](http://www.yandles.co.uk) to find out more.



## CHIPPENDALE SCHOOL RECEIVE GLOWING REVIEW

The Chippendale International School of Furniture has been praised by Education Scotland for delivering "high quality learning and teaching."

The school is a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) centre and offers two Higher National (HN) units as part of the school's full-time award in Furniture Design, Making and Restoration programme. In its report, Education Scotland also notes that "the strong vision for the school and the commitment of the senior management team and staff promote a high quality learning experience that equips learners well for future employment or self-employment."

This year the school, which is near Edinburgh, has full-time students from the UK, USA, Germany, Austria, Poland, Singapore, India and South Korea, and Education Scotland notes that "the range of countries and cultures of learners supports well the diversity within the learning environment. This is used effectively by learners and teaching staff to support individuality in design and technique and enhance learners' projects."

The School runs an immersive 30-week course that equips successful graduates to become professional woodworkers, as well as a number of one-week experience courses to give enthusiasts or prospective woodworkers an introduction to furniture design.

The national education authority also noted that the school had a 100% student



retention record, and that "all learners are highly satisfied with their experience. They are well supported by an end-of-year exhibition of their work, a graduation ceremony and pieces of work being chosen to be displayed in the Scottish Parliament."

The report notes that "the learning environment exposes learners to real life experience by integrating project-based learning with commercial influences. Mutually respectful relationships between learners and teaching staff are evident and these contribute to a purposeful environment for learning."

Principal Anselm Fraser, said: "The

Chippendale International School of Furniture aims to deliver teaching excellence, and the review by Education Scotland found that we continue to deliver high quality learning. Education Scotland also noted that we offer incubation space at the school – a low-cost way for students to set up in business, with continued access to teaching staff and our equipment and machinery. In providing long-term support to our students, we will shortly be announcing other exciting initiatives that we hope will give students further career opportunities." To find out more about the various courses offered, see [www.chippendaleschool.com](http://www.chippendaleschool.com).

# A Walnut SURPRISE

**Tim Pettigrew inspects the remains of a mighty walnut tree and salvages some of the wood to make a platter**

The wood for this project came from a large walnut tree, which was felled at a farm near the village of Bovington, Hertfordshire. The tree had to come down because the base of the trunk had become rotten, making the tree unsafe. Quite unaware of the woodworking potential, the owners intended to use all the large quantity of felled timber as firewood! I was invited to make a selection when, through a chance conversation, they became aware that I was looking for turning wood.



Harvested walnut comprising two sections of trunk (700mm diameter), and four boughs (120-160mm diameter)



The crotch on a cutting platform ready for preparation with an electric chainsaw



After slicing longitudinally – the platter was made from the arrowed slice



A circular hardboard template was used to saw the wood into a turning blank on the bandsaw

## More in hope than expectation

My invitation to the farm was some 3-4 months after felling and I was pessimistic that after such a prolonged period of outdoor weathering, there would be excessive splitting and degradation. Initial examination was hampered by surface staining and it was impossible to see any fresh unweathered surfaces to enable evaluation of condition and quality. The selection (**photo 1**) was therefore made more in hope than in expectation.

## A crotch for starters

The walnut I had selected included a large crotch (**photo 2**) which, if the wood was sound, might make two bowl or platter blanks. A crotch is a fork in the branch of a tree and they often feature superbly figured wood. The challenge for the woodturner is to ensure that the figuring is displayed to maximum effect in the end product.

Using an electric chainsaw, I sliced the crotch longitudinally, roughly along the line of the pith; this revealed some dark brown-coloured heartwood surrounded by pale-coloured sapwood. To my surprise, both were in excellent condition with beautiful figuring, minimal weathering and no splitting (**photo 3**).



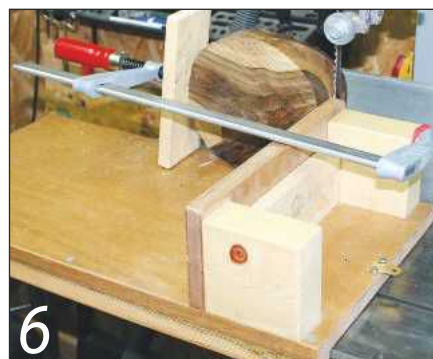
### Turning blank decision: bowl or platter?

To make the blank, the half-crotch was placed sawn face down, and I used a circular hardboard template, temporarily nailed in position, as a cutting guide for the bandsaw (photos 4 & 5). It's important to place the template carefully above the centre of the crotch to ensure some symmetry of the branched wood when the blank is turned. At this stage it



**5** The sawn blank. The brown heartwood only occurs near the bottom, with pale sapwood and bark above

was also important to decide if the blank would be used to make a bowl or a platter. In this instance, the attractive heartwood was relatively thin and much of this would be cut away and lost if the blank was used to make a conventional bowl. I decided that the flatter profile of a platter would be a much better option to keep and display as much of the heartwood as possible.



**6** A cross-cutting jig on the bandsaw set up to cut away waste wood and bark and also flatten the blank base

### Trimming the blank

To facilitate easier mounting on the drill press table and also on the lathe, the bark together with some associated sapwood was trimmed away using the bandsaw (photo 6). For cutting across such round stock it is essential to use a jig, which grips the wood firmly. It is dangerous to use a bandsaw to cut across cylindrical stock just using your hands to support the timber. As the blade bites, the wood will try to roll forward with irresistible twisting force, which can bruise and crush your hands. At the same time the saw blade can be severely twisted, which will either cause it to kink or even snap, rebounding with considerable force.

### Finding the centre & drilling a recess

On the top of the blank, I used a centre-finder to mark the middle (photo 7), then I used a 54mm diameter Forstner bit to cut a shallow (10mm deep) circular recess in the centre top of the blank (photo 8). The jaws of the lathe chuck expand into this recess to hold the wood securely while turning.



**7** Using a centre-finder to locate the middle of the blank

Trimming the bottom of the blank with the bandsaw had created a flat surface, which enabled the blank to be easily secured with G-cramps to the drill press table.

### Mounting, topping & tailing

The blank was mounted on the lathe, held with the 50mm chuck jaws expanded into the drilled recess. The left side of the blank (closest to the chuck jaws and exhibiting the best of the figured heartwood), would become the top of the platter. First I used



**8** Drilling a 54mm diameter recess in the top centre of the blank

a bowl gouge with a swept-back grind to true up the edge of the blank to a perfect cylinder (**photo 9**), then a series of sweeping push cuts removed residual bark and put some shape into the sides (**photo 10**).

The top was trued up as far as possible, first with pull cuts (**photo 11**), followed by push cuts (**photo 12**). The base was made flat and then, with dividers, a 50mm diameter circle was scribed on the spinning blank (**photo 13**). With the scribed circle as a guide, a 6mm parting tool was used to



**9** Mounted on the lathe, truing up the edge with a bowl gouge

make a 50mm diameter, 5mm deep, straight-sided spigot to enable the blank to be flipped and held securely by the chuck jaws while the top of the platter was turned (**photo 14**). The completed roughly turned base of the platter is shown in **photo 15**.

### First flip, to turn the top

The platter was then flipped on the lathe (held by the chuck jaws gripping the spigot), ready for shaping the top (**photo 16**). The first operation was to mark the boundary



**10** Giving the sides some shape



**11** Truing up the front edge, first with pull cuts...



... and then push cuts



**13** Marking the position of the spigot on the base with dividers



**14** A parting tool was used to create the spigot



15 The roughly shaped base of the platter



16 The platter flipped, held by the spigot

between the well and the surrounding lip of the platter. A pleasing proportion is to make the width of the lip about a fifth of the total diameter of the platter (photo 17).

#### Adding a bead

I decided to add a bead to the inner edge of the lip with the aid of the Ashley Iles' 4mm bead-forming tool. Photos 18 & 19 show the correct presentation and use of the tool, cutting on centre. The tool is gently pressed into the rotating wood with a slight side to side movement on the rest.



17 Marking the position of the boundary between the well and the lip of the platter



18 Correct presentation of the bead-forming tool



19 Creating a 4mm wide bead on the lip of the platter



20 Making the well, with push cuts from the lip to the centre...



21 ... and push cuts from the centre to the lip

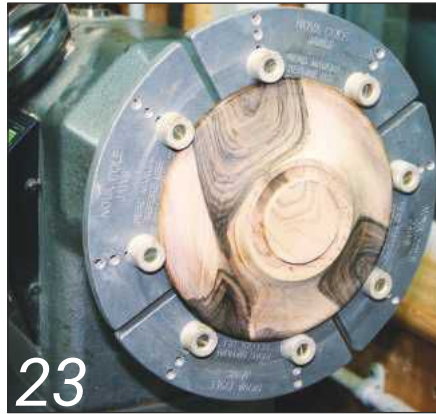


22 Top view of the platter after sanding and oiling

Stop before the crown of the tool engages with the wood otherwise there is a danger of significant tear-out on the top of the bead. The profile of the bead can be refined in the later stages of sanding using finer grits of abrasives. The well of the platter was then created, with gentle push cuts from bead to centre (**photo 20**) as well as from centre to bead (**photo 21**). The well was minimal in depth (6-7mm), and almost flat bottomed to preserve as much of the heartwood as possible. Finally, the top was completed by sanding and applying finishing oil (**photo 22**).

### Second flip, to finish the base

After completing the top of the platter, it was flipped again, this time held securely by the Cole (button) jaws on the lathe to enable completion of the base (**photo 23**). The bead-forming tool was used again to form a supporting bead for stability. Finally, after sanding, the long point of a skew chisel was used to scribe some decoration (**photo 24**). To complete the platter, I gave it several coats of finishing oil and then buffed it after applying a final coat of Microcrystalline wax. [www](http://www.getwoodworking.com)



The platter flipped again and held by the Cole jaws



Here you can see the completed base of the platter, which has also been sanded



Top and bottom views of the walnut crotch platter

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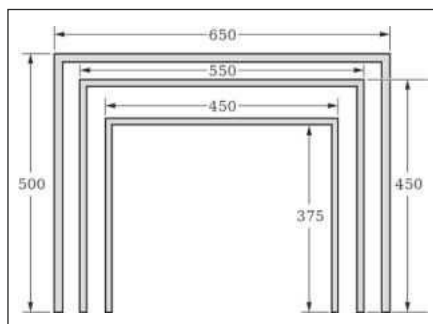
# The 'modern' nest

**Rick Wheaton's modern nest of tables consists of only nine boards and six joints – it requires little expertise and can be made in only a few hours**

**A** nest of tables is so useful and versatile, no wonder it's so popular. The classic nest – three tables, each with four legs and three rails – at the very least consists of 24 separate pieces of wood, linked by twice that many joints.

Dominic Collings' beautiful classic nest, so expertly made and eloquently described in last September's issue, took around 60 pieces, and in his own words, 52 identical mortise & tenons!

Sadly, I lack Dominic's fine woodworking skills, but fortunately for me, there's a much simpler version – the modern nest. It does the same job, yet consists of only nine boards and six joints. It needs little expertise, so you can make it in a few hours.



**Fig.1** Measurements for the nest of tables

### Timber for the job

For my 500mm high nest, you'll need around 4-5m of a nice wide plank, around 250mm wide and 30mm thick. Each table in this ultra-simple design is made of three boards, and the joints are glued and bevelled. 250 x 30mm planks are not common, but most timber merchants will supply them, already planed, in a variety of timbers.

Of course, you can save some cash by planing sawn boards, and make larger savings looking through your timber

merchants' 'sale rail'. Today, two merchants happily quoted me around £90 for 5m of sawn planks in utile or sapele, and "much less from our offcuts pile."

### The making

This design hides faults well. Each of the nine boards has an outside (which is seen) and an inside (largely hidden from sight). If you can obtain damaged or faulty planks, some careful cutting could consign the scruffy areas to the inside faces, and discounts would save you more.

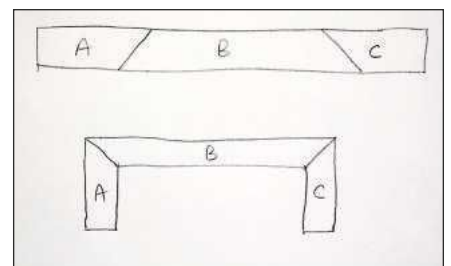
A disclaimer: I said 'little expertise' and this is true provided you have a saw bench,



**1** The vital bevel: 45° cross-cut at 90° (machine guard removed for clarity)



**2** The first joint is clamped onto bench and jig



**Fig.2** My back-of-envelope sketch



and can set it up accurately. The simple joint that makes this design possible demands an exact 90° cut, with a bevel at exactly 45°. With a saw bench this is relatively easy (**photo 1**). Hats off if you can do this with hand tools!

To start, lay out your planks, plan your sizes (a 15mm gap between tables seems about right) and decide how you'll cut the nine boards. Please note you only need two 45° cuts to make one table. As on my back-of-envelope sketch (**Fig.2**), the plank is cut into three boards: A, B and C. Stand A and C up, flip B and there's your table. Of course, flipping like this might mean the inside grain of B doesn't match the outside of A and C, but it might usefully hide a fault. Basically a bit of thought is needed before you cut anything, work safely and please make a few scrap cuts to check your joints are spot on.

### Glue-up & assembly

Once you've 'thought and cut', there's just the gluing, and high strength two-pot epoxy is the perfect choice. It's expensive, but you don't need much, and because the assembly is straightforward (assuming your joints are OK) you can mix for a reasonably fast set.

Assemble each table upside down. You'll need a flat bench, some clamps and a simple 90° gluing jig (**photo 2**). Looking at **Fig.2** again: clamp B flat on your bench, spread the glue on one joint face, and press A into position, supporting it with the jig. Once set, repeat with C. Now clean off the excess glue, sand and finish as required (my favourite is Danish oil) and table number one is made! This design lends itself to wider tables made from biscuit-jointed boards. You can then use contrasting timbers for a nice effect. [www](http://www.getwoodworking.com)



# Side window

Designed with simplicity and space saving in mind, we take a look at this simple variation on the standard box sash from *The Woodworker* of September 1952

There's a great deal of satisfaction to be had from making a sliding sash window, and if you've not had the chance yet, then it's worth looking out for one. A simple variation on the standard box sash is pictured here in a reproduction from *The Woodworker* of September 1952, and is possibly one which not every reader might be familiar with. Designed with simplicity and space saving in mind, it will fit exactly into a window opening and needs no additional room at each side to house the sash weight boxes.

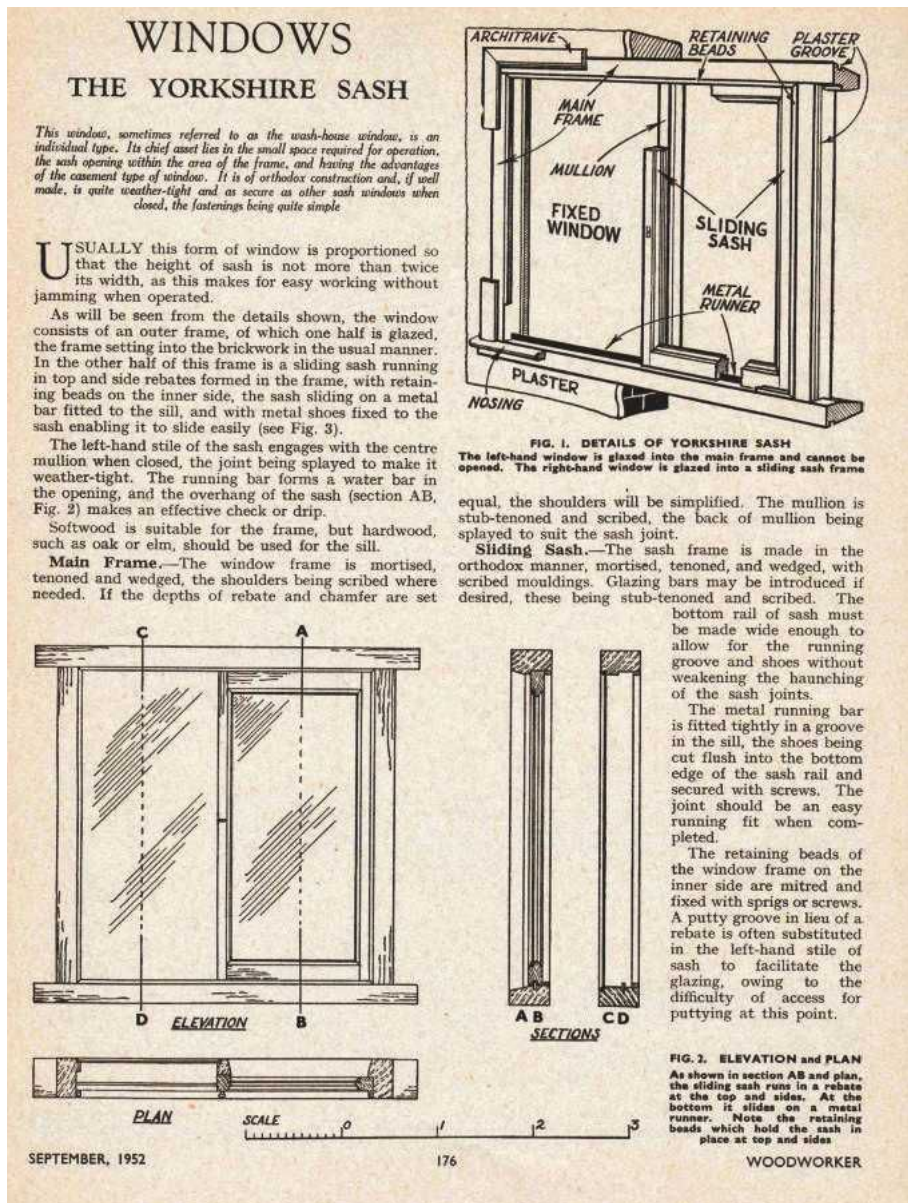
## Wash-house window

Reading the article in the cramped *Woodworker* library, I learnt that it's sometimes known as a wash-house window, the implication being that it is best suited for an area of the house where looks aren't too important and budget is all. The last one I saw was just outside Lewes in East Sussex, an upstairs window in an isolated country cottage, and clearly part of a cheaply built farm labourer's dwelling.

## Straightforward construction

The construction is pretty straightforward, with standard mortise & tenons on both outer frame and sliding sash. The horizontal sliding mechanisms required for this sort of job need to be simple, robust and long-lasting, and the one recommended for this particular window is a simple steel bar. This would be similar to that which you might fit into the sill of an exterior door frame, and has two metal shoes let into the bottom rail of the sash to run on it. As long as everything is nice and square, and there is sufficient running space – but not too much – the window will slide quite nicely. And if any readers, especially those in Yorkshire, can add to our scant knowledge of this piece of domestic joinery, we'd love to hear about it.

*Mark*



## DO GET IN TOUCH

If any readers have memories and photos of things they or their forebears made from *The Woodworker*, please get in touch as we'd love to see them. Just email me on the new address: [editor.ww@mytimemedia.com](mailto:editor.ww@mytimemedia.com) and we'll get them in the mag

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STC = Sliding Table Carriage. TWE = Table Width Extension. TLE = Table Length Extension.

Offer prices valid until the 31st March 2017.

# Step & store

**The Editor shows us a neat design for a bathroom storage stool that provides a tiny cupboard space for books and general supplies, as well as a step-up for smaller family members**

**W**ith houses and flats getting smaller with every new-build, it's a certainty that there will always be room for some more storage space, no matter how modest it might be. This little bathroom storage stool provides a tiny cupboard space for books and general supplies, as well as a step-up for smaller family members. The sloping front ensures

stability when stood upon, and the rubber feet add to the general feeling of security.

I made mine out of laminated pine strip board, but any flat timber approximately 20mm-thick would be suitable. The component parts for the carcass are first marked out and then cut. This sort of wood is easy enough to cut by hand; all too often we reach for a machine when

sometimes it's quicker (and cheaper, and healthier) to just pick up a handsaw.

The few parts needed for this job are easily planed up after sawing; the two sides can be clamped together in the vice and planed as one. I left the bottom slightly over-size, preferring to mark and cut the bevel on the front edge after the joints had been formed. For this type of small carcass construction, I've lately been using a wide finger-type joint. It's quick and easy, strong enough for a small job, and I like the look of it too. Dovetails are always an option, though...

### Aim for accuracy

When it comes to marking out, just remember to keep everything close to symmetrical and be as accurate as humanly possible. Always hatch in the waste parts of a joint; it's so easy to make the wrong cut if



It's always good to keep your hand in when it comes to using a panel saw



Treat both sides as one to ensure they come out the same size



Ensure the work is accurately marked out, and be sure to cut to the line



A small guide block can sometimes help to keep the narrow blade of the coping saw cutting in a straight line



With the sides fitted, the bevel on the front edge of the base can be marked for planing

you get distracted mid-operation. Make all the vertical cuts first, then use a coping saw to remove the bits in between. If you've got a bandsaw handy then this is just the job for it, but either way, you'll have the joints fitted in no time. I always try to get things right from the cut, but there's generally a little paring involved when you come to offer up the two halves of the joint to each other. What you're aiming for is to have the end-grain of the male parts of the joint just standing proud; if they're below flush you'll have a lot of work on your hands when cleaning up.

Once the sides are dry-fitted, the back can be checked for fit and marked and cut for biscuits (where the ends meet the sides), and the bevel can be marked on the base with assurance so it can be conveniently planed to fit when it all comes apart again. The top rails need no work, only to be

present for marking out and offering up.

### Gluing up

So, at this point we have two sides, a bottom, two top rails and a back, all jointed and dry-fitted to check everything is fine – we're now ready for the glue-up. This is always a significant stage in a job and, depending on many factors, can go really well or very badly indeed. The first important job on the check-list has just been completed (the dry assembly) so the next thing is to get all the kit together. This is not really much of a chore, but if you wait until the glue is on and the components are fitted, you may well regret it. Get your clamps to hand and maybe even set

them roughly to size if it's a particularly demanding assembly. Make sure you have a damp cloth or two nearby as well, and then clear the decks, switch off the phone, cancel all appointments for the next half an hour and you're all set.

Like most of us woodworkers, I've



All the pieces have dry-fitted, the glueing up kit assembled, and now the glue-up can start. Note damp rag, soon to disappear



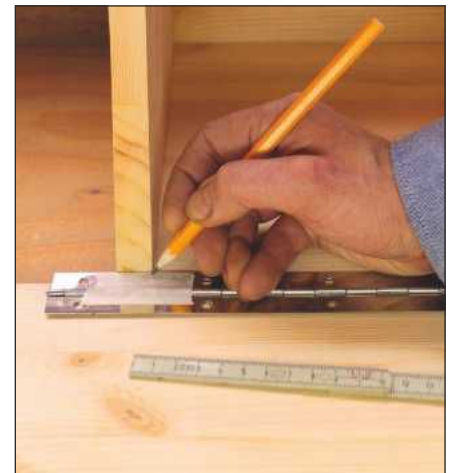
It quickly became clear that the top rails would have to wait, and that further clamps would be needed



The front rail is glued and clamped on; note bevelled block and countersunk clearance holes for screws



The job was cleaned up with a belt sander and planes



The piano hinge was centred and marked for cutting at both ends



Fixing the hinge in place, the use of a centre pilot drill bit makes this job virtually fool-proof



Planing the leading edge of the door to a nice tight fit

completed many a glue-up over the years and, while some have gone better than others, they've nearly all induced the strange sensation of time speeding up and of being less in control of things than one would prefer. Parts get mixed up, glue goes on the wrong sides or in the wrong place, biscuits don't go into the right slots, the clamps aren't big enough, or a visitor drops in for a chat. For a fairly straightforward and shortish job, the list of random acts of annoyance is often disproportionately long.

### Preparation is key

For this little storage stool, I prepared as well as ever and felt that my chances of a trouble-free and successful glue-up were pretty good. Well, things didn't go too badly,

but I did lose the damp cloth within seconds (it didn't turn up until the next day) and managed to get biscuits in the wrong slots again (and there were only two at each end!) before I got it all together and clamped up. It soon became clear that the top rails would have to wait, but it wasn't until I sat down with a cup of tea that I noticed the need for additional clamping, and this meant a hasty rearrangement before I was satisfied all was finally as it should be. The next day saw the top rails go on, an easy job which only needed the introduction of a bevelled packing block on the front rail to make sure it could be fully clamped into place. I glued and screwed both the rails into position, making sure that the heads were countersunk beneath the surface.

With most timbers – and especially this sort of pine – screwing into end-grain doesn't require a pilot hole, so a clearance hole on the upper component is required. This will be a hole the same size as the screw and allows it to pass through without the need for force; force which might otherwise split the piece along the grain.

### Plane sailing

When the glue is all dry, it's time for a thorough clean up with planes and sander. Any protruding end-grain on the joints can now be levelled off and the whole carcass given a good sanding. I hauled out my big belt sander for this one, but be warned – it's very easy to slip up and make a mess if you're not paying sufficient attention.

The door is the next thing to sort out. It's easy enough to cut and plane a piece to fit the aperture snugly; you want to leave it a bit oversize on the leading edge (top) so you can plane this to an exact fit once the

### DIMENSIONALLY SPEAKING

Working out finished sizes can be quite tricky, especially on a piece you've not made before. Some jobs need to be scaled to fit individual requirements, and the challenge here is to make something both serviceable and neat in appearance. I've found that the best way is to employ as many props as necessary, and to utilise any boxes, tins and stray offcuts to rough out your proposed shape. While a drawing is undoubtedly a very good thing indeed, you can't beat that third dimension to really get an idea of what you want



The door stop is centred and glued in place



The top is cut to size, two 30mm holes cut with a Forstner bit on the drill press and the hand hole carefully enlarged with a jigsaw



Screwing on the top through the front and back rails. A side-action driver is useful but a simple stubby screwdriver would also do the job

hinging has been taken care of. I went for a piano hinge on mine as I had a short length lying around just waiting to be used. Even though it means an extra cut, it's worth taking the time to centre a piano hinge so that both the knuckles and the positioning of the screw holes are symmetrical and regular. Don't discount the importance of these little details: they're what makes the difference between a fair job and a good one. Make sure to form a matching bevel on the bottom (hinge) edge of the door before you attach it. It's not a bad idea to fix the hinge with the minimum of screws until you're pleased it's closing as it should.

Any door will need something to close against, so now would be a good time to fit a slim door stop of some kind; the underside of the top rail is the obvious place, or you could use a magnetic catch to both stop and hold the door. I went for a sprung cylinder ball catch, just because it was the first catch I found in my fittings box. It's a nice minimal solution, but can be a little tricky to fit in a tidy manner.

### Topping out

With the carcass complete and the door fitted, the next job is to get the top out. I went for a 12mm overhang on the sides and front and planned to leave the top just over flush on the back edge, to take up the minimum amount of space. I've found that a comfortable hand-hole is 90-95mm long x 30mm wide, and is most easily formed by cutting two 30mm holes and jigsawing the space between. Take care when setting this out as it's very easy to get it wrong, as indeed is anything that involves numbers and simple arithmetic.

Once the hole has been cleaned up, the top can be fixed on from underneath, both rails being drilled each side to provide four fixing points. Although a small top like this won't be moving too dramatically as it adjusts to local conditions, it's always worth making the clearance holes as large as possible so as to facilitate any future shrinkage or expansion. I fitted small rubber feet to my storage stool to help keep it stable in what could well be a testing environment. The last job is to apply a finish – I'd recommend some kind of oil – and for this you'll need to take the piece apart to ensure a professional job can be made. And as with most things, a bit of patience really does pay off. [www](http://www.getwoodworking.com)



The unit is disassembled to enable the finish to be applied



The finished job, soon to be installed in a waiting bathroom

# Techniques for TURNING **PART 2**

Continuing his discussion on woodturning techniques, in part 2, Bob Chapman looks at those used for colouring and finishing a turned piece

In part one of this series on techniques I talked about turning a bowl and ebonising, and this month I will be looking at other techniques for colouring and finishing a turned piece.

## OTHER COLOURING TECHNIQUES

### Fuming

Fuming with ammonia gas is a method traditionally used to darken oak, but it will also work on other tannin-rich timbers. Chemically speaking, ammonia is a weak alkali, which reacts with the acidic tannin in the oak causing the wood to darken considerably. Ammonia is supplied as a solution of the gas dissolved in water. If poured into an open dish, the gas escapes from the liquid and it is this gas which 'fumes' the oak.

Having described ammonia as a 'weak' alkali, I must emphasise that although this

is a technically correct description of its chemical activity, ammonia solution is not something to be trifled with.

If you want to try fuming, I should warn you that concentrated ammonia solution is a very hazardous chemical. It is corrosive and poisonous and it releases lots of ammonia gas, which is also corrosive and poisonous. It will attack your eyes, nose and throat if you breathe in any more than the very slightest whiff.

There was once a time when you could go into any supermarket and buy 'household ammonia' – a dilute solution, which was used for cleaning drains and such. Not any more, though, and you may have difficulty obtaining it, although I have seen it for sale in some ironmongers stores. The effectiveness of the solution depends on its concentration. Dilute solutions will take longer to give the same effect. You are unlikely to be able to buy the most concentrated solutions from anywhere other than a specialist chemical supplier.

I don't recommend using ammonia solution in the house where, if there was a spillage, you would have to evacuate to escape the fumes, and so I decided to carry out the fuming in the greenhouse. There are no plants in it at this time of year (November, as I write this) and I reckoned that if any ammonia escaped it would simply fumigate the greenhouse for me.

The principle of fuming is really simple: put the oak in a box, with some ammonia

solution in a dish, close the box and leave the fumes to darken the oak. The ammonia gas reacts chemically with the tannin in the oak to form the dark colour. Use offcuts to find how long to leave it to obtain the colour you desire.

To illustrate the technique I made a small burr oak bowl, sanding it to its final finish. Being a gas, ammonia does not raise the grain of the wood as a solution would. The ammonia gas will only darken the oak where it comes into contact with it, so I also made a small stand to let the fumes get under the bowl (**photo 10**). I arranged the bowl, on its stand, in a cardboard box and put about a cupful of ammonia solution in a shallow dish next to it (**photo 11**). The box was closed and left overnight. I was surprised, when I opened the box the next day, to see just how dark the oak had turned. It was a beautiful rich chocolate brown colour, but still retained the variations of the original burr (**photo 12**). The remaining ammonia solution was tipped into a watering can full of water to dilute it further and then sprayed around the garden – it forms a useful fertiliser.



A simple stand to raise the workpiece and allow the ammonia gas to circulate freely around the bowl



Before fuming...



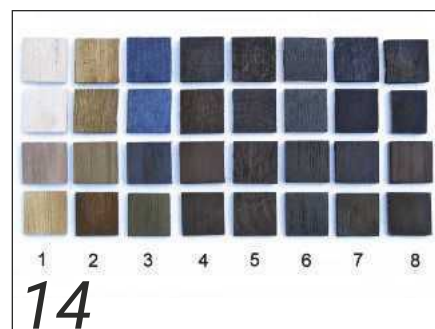
... and after fuming



Household chemicals are well worth experimenting with, but take care mixing them, especially if they are bleaches, as they are not always compatible with each other. Observe any warnings or advice given on the packaging

it is so convenient to obtain and simple to use. The blackest black, if that is your aim, is undoubtedly the Indian ink. Both this and the wood stain gave consistently black results on all the timbers I tested.

Unfortunately the colours obtained with iron sulphate were not permanent, and six weeks later they had darkened to match those obtained with the iron wool-vinegar mixture. Even more disappointingly, the colours obtained with bicarbonate of soda



Simple experiments showed some surprising results, but they were not all permanent

### It pays to experiment...

Thinking about iron wool in vinegar, it seemed sensible to assume that, because vinegar alone does not stain oak black, it must be the iron which the vinegar dissolves from the steel wool. If that thought is correct then, so I reasoned, any solution containing dissolved iron should have the same effect.

This led me to try iron (II) sulphate (also known as ferrous sulphate or 'sulphate of iron'), which can be bought quite cheaply at almost any garden centre. I dissolved about a teaspoonful in half a cupful of warm water and used a small paintbrush to apply it to the timber surface. It started to darken immediately and I left it overnight expecting the black colour to develop. However, to my surprise, it didn't turn black or even blue-black. Instead, a very attractive mid-blue colour was produced. I've a suspicion that this might be the pigment called 'Prussian Blue', but I'm not sure of this. Whether or not it's Prussian Blue, it certainly is a most attractive colour.

A second experiment, based on fuming, led me to another unexpected discovery. As I've said above, chemically speaking

ammonia is a weak alkali. Well, 'bicarbonate of soda' is also a weak alkali, so...? (photo 13).

I made a solution by adding half a teaspoonful of 'bicarb' to half a cup of warm water. When I painted this solution onto some oak, I was delighted to see it immediately darken in much the same way as it does with ammonia. The bicarb solution will raise the grain of the timber but, compared with ammonia, it is harmless, cheap and readily available.

The success of these experiments led me to try a more organised approach, comparing different methods of colouring timbers (photo 14).

In photo 14, the top row shows pieces of oak, the second row is sweet chestnut, then walnut, and the bottom row is laburnum. For each timber the samples are all the same, cut from the same pieces of wood. The samples have been treated as described in the table. The photo was taken a couple of days after treatment.

The iron mixtures tended to give blue or blue-black colours, although the laburnum had a marked greenish tint. I was most surprised, and pleased, by the effect of 'bicarb' because

### COLUMN TREATMENT

Column 1	Untreated timbers
Column 2	Treated with bicarbonate of soda solution
Column 3	Treated with iron sulphate solution
Column 4	Treated with iron sulphate, left to dry then treated with bicarbonate of soda solution
Column 5	Stained with 'Chestnut' proprietary black wood stain
Column 6	Stained with Indian ink
Column 7	Treated with steel wool/vinegar solution
Column 8	Treated with steel wool/vinegar solution, left to dry, then treated with bicarbonate of soda solution

gradually faded during that time. Further work is obviously needed if anyone would like to pursue it. Please let me know the results if you do.

## Coloured stains

Wood stains can be purchased in just about every possible colour and hue. Other dyes, paints and stains may also be used on wood – fabric dyes, leather dyes, glass paint, etc. There are just too many possibilities to enter into here. If this is what you fancy, then begin by following or adapting the instructions on the container and then... experiment (**photo 15**). The only advice I have is to try them out on scraps before using them on your latest masterpiece, and remember that end-grain will always soak up more colour than side-grain and on thin sections can carry colour from one side to the other where it might not be desired.

## Coloured paints

Like stain, paint is available in almost any conceivable colour but whereas stains are transparent and allow the wood grain to show through, paint is opaque. It obliterates all trace of natural colour or figure and has to be used with much more care. If you are an expert with an airbrush there is much to be explored here with both stains and paint, but this is specialised work and not an area where I have any particular expertise. I have, however, done a little work with acrylic paints (**photo 16**).

Although I'm aware of those who throw up their hands in horror at the very thought of colouring wood, I'm firmly of the opinion that if it's done well, it can certainly enhance a turning.

## Inserting other timbers

Attaching or inserting sections of a differently coloured wood is a well-known technique, frequently applied to lids and finials where a small part made of a contrasting timber can greatly enhance the appearance of a piece. In the hollow form shown in **photo 17**, I have introduced colour variation by inserting dowels of different timbers, whereas in 'Patchwork' I have used slabs of different coloured woods to decorate the rim of an otherwise fairly plain sycamore bowl (**photo 18**).

## SANDING TECHNIQUE

Sanding is one of those tasks that looks deceptively simple but where there is more to it than meets the eye. Broadly it can be divided into two techniques: hand sanding and power sanding. Whenever I sand work, I always switch on the dust extractor and



**'Firmament'** – a beech bowl, ribbed, stained, cut and re-joined. Approximately 220mm diameter × 130mm, front to back. The central 'eye' is 35mm diameter, suspended on silvered strings. The base is a rough-hewn lump of sandstone

position the inlet in the dust stream to collect as much as possible. I also turn on the air filter if it's not on already. I will already be wearing a face mask.

## Hand sanding

A common piece of advice is to slow the lathe down for sanding. 'Slower', of course, depends on what speed you were turning at in the first place. There are no hard and fast rules about this, but one difficulty with high speeds is that friction causes heat and fingers can begin to get very hot. If this happens, ease off and let both the wood and your fingers cool down. Work on the basis that if it's too hot for you, it's too hot for the wood. Some timbers may develop tiny cracks or 'heat checks' if they overheat. This can be especially noticeable on end-grain.

Although I commonly refer to abrasives as 'sandpaper', this is an inaccurate description based on the term 'sanding', which everyone still uses to mean 'smoothing with abrasive'. In fact it's a very long time since sandpaper was based on sand, and nowadays most of them aren't based on paper either. Abrasives vary considerably in quality and, like most things, you get what you pay for. The best ones are cloth-backed, although I do buy 'wet and dry paper', which actually is paper-backed. It's a convenient way of buying grits from about 600 down to 1,500.

Whether the work is spindle or headstock

work, I sand in the region between 6 o'clock and 9 o'clock viewed from the tailstock end of the lathe. In this position, if the abrasive were to catch it would simply be pulled from my fingers without harming me. I sometimes see people sanding in the 1 or 2 o'clock position, and I wouldn't claim not to have done so myself, but a catch here will push fingers back on themselves and this can be painful. I tend to sand in this position if I'm working around fine detail and need to see what I'm doing a bit better.

Start with the coarsest paper you think you need to remove the worst of the visible imperfections. In my case, this is usually 120 grit, but sometimes I begin with 80 or 60 grit. I know some people are reluctant to admit using these coarser grits, but sometimes the timber demands them and I'm not ashamed of using them. I almost always hold the paper between the first two fingers and the thumb of my right hand, and I use my left hand to brace the right; this keeps my left hand out of mischief and also helps me apply even pressure.

Whatever paper you start with, remember that this first paper must do all the work. It has to get rid of every blemish you can see. Never leave a blemish thinking you will get it out with the later papers. It's very unlikely. If the coarse paper hasn't removed it, what makes you think a finer grit will? It's no good 'dabbing' at the wood; the abrasive



16

'I like modern art' – a shallow square bowl, cut into pieces, painted and glued to a black base by its rim. Dutch painter Piet Mondrian did a series of paintings in which he used only the colours red, blue and yellow, together with black, grey and white, which he did not regard as colours, but as shades of light or darkness. Approximately 240mm square × 45mm deep

should be sandwiched between your fingers and the surface. Use the paper with a firm pressure but try to avoid overheating. Take your time, keep the abrasive moving, and allow it to do its job.

'Flat' woodworkers habitually sand their work along the grain and would never dream of sanding across the grain. We turners, however, always sand across the grain when we sand with the lathe switched on. For this reason we have to use fine grades of paper, which other woodworkers would consider excessive. I usually use the sequence 60 or 80 if needed, then 120, 180, 240 and 400 grit. Don't be tempted to skip any in the sequence or you may not remove scratches from the previous grit. I rarely go beyond 400 grit but some very fine-grained or oily woods will benefit from even finer grades.

Each of the finer papers is used to remove the scratches caused by the previous paper.

Thus 60 grit might remove the blemishes, 120 grit is then used to remove the 60 grit scratches, 180 grit gets rid of the 120 grit scratches, 240 grit takes out the... well, you get the idea. Change worn out paper promptly and never, ever, allow yourself to be persuaded that, say, a worn out 180 grit will serve as a 240 grit. Take my word for it, it won't, it really won't. Using worn out paper will cause frustration as it fails to remove the scratches you want removed, and may burn your fingers and damage the work with the heat generated by the rubbing action of the blunt abrasive. Using a fresh piece of abrasive is one of life's small pleasures. Enjoy it.

When working down through the grades, I frequently stop the lathe after each one and do a little sanding with the grain. This is an excellent method for removing 'difficult' scratches or small but persistent blemishes.

Sometimes, when using grits beyond

about 600, a finer surface may be obtained if you lubricate the abrasive by dipping it in soft paste wax before beginning to sand. The wax is soon converted to a slurry of wax/dust but a finer finish is obtained on timbers that can take one, and it doesn't seem to affect subsequent finishes. Danish oil and the like can be used in a similar way.

### Power sanding

In power sanding the abrasive is attached to some sort of pad, often by a 'hook-and-loop' system such as 'Velcro'. The pad is held in an electric drill and abrasive discs of different grits can be attached as needed. Power sanding would remove any fine detail very rapidly and is rarely used on spindle work. I find it most useful on wide, gently curved areas such as the inside of a bowl. Beware accidentally rounding off corners or detail work on the rim of the bowl.

With both the drill and the lathe switched on, the rotating pad is applied to the work surface (photo 19). There is some technique to be learned in order to hold the disc where you want it, and also to prevent the abrasive being pulled off the pad. I usually start in the centre and move the disc in an arc, anti-clockwise until I get to the rim. Don't dwell in one place or you will create a hollow in that region. Like much else, it takes practice to get it right. The disc should be moved across the surface gently but with light pressure. Holding the drill with both hands and bracing it firmly against your body will help in controlling it.

Just as in hand sanding, the first grit does all the work and you must work down through the same grit sequence in order to get a good finish. Because both the abrasive and the work are rotating you are less likely to get circular scratch marks around the bowl but after each grit I turn off the lathe, remove the pad from the drill and, holding it in my hand, I hand sand with the grain



17

'Cupressus leylandii' hollow form, approximately 340mm tall × 330mm diameter, inset with wooden dowels of about 50 different species



18

'Patchwork', approximately 300 × 50mm – sycamore bowl with several other timbers and black veneer



19

Power sanding reduces circular scratches and completes the job quickly, although it takes practice to control the sanding disc



If you lose your grip on the workpiece, the padding on the lathe bed reduces damage. The loose flaps on the box will allow the workpiece into the box but won't easily let it out again

across the bottom of the bowl. Power sanding is very effective and much faster than hand sanding. More wood is removed and more dust is created. When power sanding, a personal dust mask fitted with P2 or P3 filters is a must. After sanding remember to keep it on until the dust in the atmosphere has been removed by the air filter or dust extractor.

## TECHNIQUES FOR POLISHING

I'm an impatient polisher. I don't mean that I skimp on polishing, but when I've finished a piece I want it to be finished. I don't want to have to come back to it later, or worse still, tomorrow, to rub it down and put on

another coat of acrylic lacquer or Danish oil, or whatever. No, I want it finished now. This means I rarely use slow drying finishes and don't claim any particular expertise with them. On occasion I've used tung oil, lemon oil or Danish oil, but only when I've known the finish must stand up to wiping with a wet cloth – for example, on items for kitchen use. Generally, when I have to use these finishes, I simply follow the instructions on the tin. I've also used a 50/50 mixture of Danish oil and Polyurethane varnish, which gives a good hard wearing surface when applied with a soft cloth and well rubbed in. However, the fact remains that most of these finishes require waiting until tomorrow and then applying another coat.

## Polishing on the lathe

I like wax polish: it's instant. My usual procedure on any large item, like a bowl, is to sand to 400 grit and, with the lathe off, apply a generous coat of cellulose sanding sealer with a brush. Before it's had time to dry, I rub it in/rub it off with a piece of kitchen paper towel, finishing by turning the lathe on and burnishing it with the same towel.

I examine the surface against the light and, if I can see any marks in the sealer, I go over it with '0000' grade steel wool. This is the finest grade; don't be fooled by descriptions like 'fine'. If it doesn't say '0000',

then it isn't 'fine' enough. You can do this with the lathe on, or with it off, working with the grain.

When I'm happy with the surface, I turn on the lathe and apply beeswax to the surface from a small block. The most common fault when using wax is to apply too much. The aim is to start in the centre and move smartly outwards, across the surface with light, even pressure so as to leave a thin covering of wax. I then repeat the process with a block of carnauba wax.

Beeswax polishes to a glowing shine but is quite soft and will finger mark very easily. Carnauba wax is much harder and will stand up to handling much better. By applying them both in this way I aim to blend them together and get the best of both worlds. Alternatively, ready-mixed beeswax/carnauba wax blocks can be purchased and used instead of the separate blocks.

I fold a small piece of soft cloth, about 100mm square, in half, and in half again, to form a pad, which I press firmly in the centre of the piece, applying enough pressure so that friction heats the pad and melts the two waxes. I then move slowly outwards, allowing the waxes to melt and blend together. I can usually see the 'front' of molten wax moving with the cloth across the surface. A lot of wax is removed on the pad.

Refolding the pad to a clean wax-free part



'Coffee and Cream' – these simple hollow forms are from slightly spalted beech, but the regions near the rims have been textured and bleached to give the contrast, which suggested the name. Smaller: 118mm diameter × 85mm high; larger 137mm diameter × 120mm high

I gently buff the surface of the work to a gentle glowing shine. Again, the surface is examined against the light. If any blemishes are found in the wax surface they can be gently removed with '0000' steel wool and the surface can be re-buffed with the cloth. If this isn't successful, I stop the lathe and use a small pad of '0000' steel wool to apply a paste wax, such as Briwax, with the grain. The solvents in the paste wax help to redistribute the beeswax and carnauba wax more evenly. With the lathe still off, this is then buffed with a soft cloth to a good finish. It's said that beauty is only skin deep, and I think that's never been more true than in woodturning. It's worth making the effort to get it right.

I know there are those who argue against using cloth for polishing on the grounds that if it gets caught it can take your fingers with it. They advocate using paper because, they argue, if paper gets caught it will simply tear and so not be dangerous. I've no doubt that these comments are well meant but I have my doubts about their accuracy. Without the benefit of scientific tests, nevertheless it is my experience that multiple layers of paper seem almost as difficult to tear as cloth, and paper does not give as good a polished finish as a soft cloth.

I think the answer is to hold the cloth (or paper if you insist) between fingers and thumb in such a way that, if it were to catch, it would simply be pulled out of the hand. Used in this way cloth is perfectly safe. I do not advocate wrapping cloth or paper around the fingers.

### Using a buffing wheel

As an alternative to the method above, but still leading to a wax polished finish, I sometimes use the Beall buffing system. This uses three polishing mops, each one softer than the previous one, to apply Tripoli compound, white diamond and carnauba wax in that order. Chestnut Products market a similar system, which is used in the same way. These systems give a high gloss finish that looks superb on small items but which I don't personally like on larger pieces.

The work is sanded and sealed and then gently applied to the Tripoli mop rotating on the lathe. Tripoli compound is a mild abrasive and removes any imperfections in the sealer. Don't use excessive pressure and keep the work moving or the mop will cut through the sealer in places and these will show as duller patches in the final surface.

Keep a good hold of the workpiece because these mops have a habit of suddenly 'grabbing' the work and sending it flying. I usually place a foam mat or some

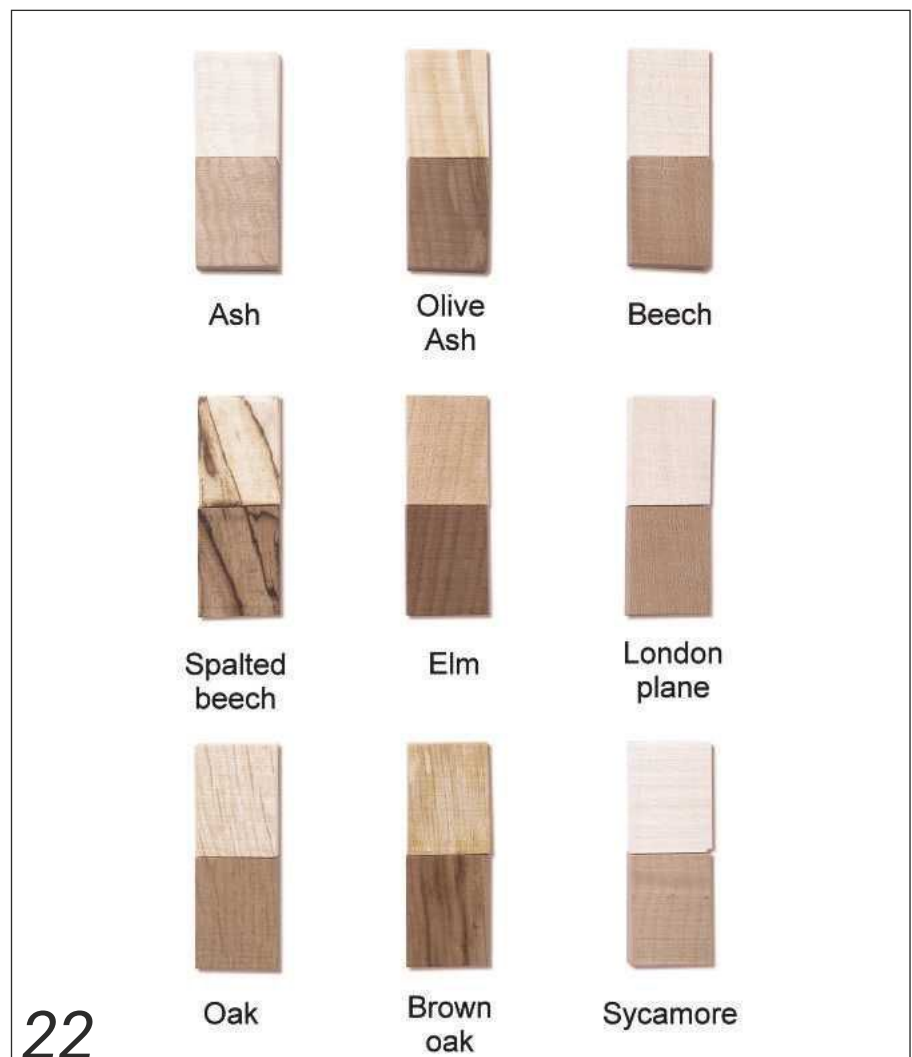
other padding over the bed bars of the lathe under the mop, and a cardboard box behind the mop. If I do lose my grip the foam will reduce the damage to the workpiece and, with luck, the box will catch it for me (**photo 20**). When the entire surface has been treated, the mop is changed to the next one, which uses white diamond, an even milder abrasive. Again, work carefully, covering the whole surface. Finally, the third mop is used to apply pure carnauba wax. Gently buff the entire surface to a glossy finish.

### Bleaching wood

If ebonising is to make wood black then bleaching is to make it white, or at least as pale as possible (**photo 21**). I frequently bleach wood for the sculptural pieces I like making, but this doesn't make me an expert because I always use the same wood bleach and simply follow the manufacturer's instructions. I find that Rustins' two-part bleach works well and does what I want.

Because I want the wood to be as white as possible, I always start with the palest wood I can find, usually holly, ash or sycamore. I wouldn't start with a dark wood and expect it to bleach white although darker woods will become paler. **Photo 22** shows the results of bleaching some common timbers. Samples of the timber were cut in half and the top half was bleached, leaving the lower half for comparison. In each case the bleach made the wood significantly paler, but the whitest samples were ash and sycamore, which were the palest timbers to begin with. Beech and London plane were also bleached to a marked extent.

Although my aim when bleaching is to make the wood as white as possible, bleaching can also be used to remove colour before staining. Take care to follow the manufacturer's instructions about neutralising residual bleach before attempting to re-stain the wood. [www](#)



**22** Most woods can be made paler with a wood bleach, but some are bleached more readily than others. Don't expect a dark wood to become white – it won't



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# In brief...



## NEW 18V ROTARY HAMMERS FOR PROFESSIONALS

As powerful as corded tools, the GBH 18V-26 Professional and GBH 18V-26 F Professional, two particularly high-performance tools, are the latest additions to the Bosch range of rotary hammers. Both generate an impact energy of 2.6 joules – 50% more than the current strongest 18V rotary hammer. This makes them comparable with corded tools such as the GBH 2-26 Professional. The EC motor is highly efficient and completely maintenance-free. Users can choose between the model with fixed chuck and the model with changeable chuck (F).

To allow installers to stay in complete control, even when carrying out work on hard materials, the new 18V rotary hammers are equipped with KickBack Control. If the rotary hammer turns suddenly or unpredictably on its drill axis, the integrated sensor shuts off the motor in a fraction of a second. This prevents unexpected kickback of the tool and can therefore reduce the risk of injury.

When developing the new generation of 18V rotary hammers, Bosch also redesigned the shape of the tools and optimised them for everyday handling. The handle is now in line with the drill axis on both tools. This 'L' shape reduces the effort and fatigue involved in working with the tool. In addition, both rotary hammers feature efficient vibration damping. A damping element uncouples the main handle from the hammer drive, thus reducing vibration.

Further features of the 18V rotary hammers include an LED light on the housing, which illuminates the working area, as well as a powerful 6.0Ah battery. With its accompanying GAL 1880 CV Professional quick charger, the battery is fully charged in just 50 minutes – 30% faster than the previous model.

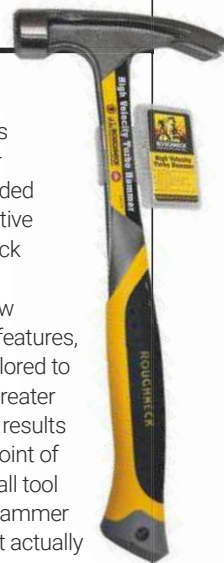
Prices start from £308.40 for the GBH 18V-26 Professional; see [www.bosch-professional.com](http://www.bosch-professional.com) to find out more.

## HARD-HITTING HAMMERS

Olympia Tools, which distributes hand tools and workwear under its Roughneck brand, has extended its range with a new and innovative product known as the Roughneck High Velocity Turbo Hammer.

As its name suggests, the new hammer employs a number of features, which have been specifically tailored to help users swing the tool with greater velocity. This increased velocity results in higher striking forces at the point of impact and in turn, greater overall tool effectiveness. In fact, the new hammer performs like a 20oz version but actually weighs just 16oz. The specific features that facilitate the new tool's higher swinging speeds include a long and narrow shaft. In addition, this shaft is lightweight, contributing not only to higher swinging speeds but also reduced user exertion.

Further benefits include impressive durability and ease of use. Made from high quality steel the product has a one-piece construction, which means it is physically impossible for the forged head to detach from the handle. The handle also has a triple injected air cushion grip while the head has a magnetic nail holder, which helps users to more easily start a range of nailing tasks – see [www.olympia-tools.co.uk](http://www.olympia-tools.co.uk).



## MIRKA CLEANS UP WITH NEW DUST EXTRACTOR

Today, health and safety issues are becoming increasingly important and sanding tools and abrasives are made more and more efficient, with focus on dust-free applications. This development places higher requirements on the dust extractors. To meet these demands, Mirka is introducing the following three new high performance machines to address the latest health and safety demands for L (low) and M (medium) class models:

### Mirka dust extractor 1230 L PC

(Push & clean) – 230V

### Mirka dust extractor 1230 M AFC

(Auto filter cleaning) – 230V

### Mirka dust extractor 1230 M PC

(Push & clean) – 110V

The above machines have been designed to handle multiple sanding applications and surface sizes with ease. The new range

comes with a 30 litre container, easily accessible flat filter, a high performance 1,200W motor and one-stage turbine that creates 250mbar of suction with an airflow of 4500l/min as standard to assist in the efficient removal of particles from the area being worked on.

The extractors' innovative features include an auto start function, which ensures they only run when the tool is in use, increasing the lifespan of the product and reducing the amount of noise produced. For extra space in the work area, the flat top of the extractor can be turned into additional storage with the ability to fasten the Mirka cases to the top of the machine, providing a complete sanding solution.

The L class 230V and M class 110V models come with a push and clean filter cleaning system that is easy to use and provides a simple process to maintain a clear filter. The M class 230V extractor is fitted with an automatic filter cleaning system, which cleans the filter every 15 seconds for increased performance as standard. It also has an airflow sensor that indicates when the suction is below optimal levels (below 20m/s) and excess dust might be in the air. Prices start from £483; see [www.mirka.co.uk](http://www.mirka.co.uk) to find out more.

## NEW ROUTER TABLE TOP

The UJK Technology Professional Laminated Router Table Top is high grade birch ply with a hard wearing, low friction, phenolic laminated surface.



The ply core ensures the top will remain flat throughout its working life, while the laminated top ensures workpieces glide smoothly. An extruded aluminium track inset into the table top includes a standard 19mm track for the use of a mitre fence and a T-track slot for other jigs and accessories. The central aperture (230 x 306mm) will accept any of the UJK router table inserts as well as the UJK router elevator. The top measures 800 x 600mm and is pre-drilled to fit the UJK Technology Professional router table leg stand, fence assembly, or optional dust collection box. Currently priced at £139.96, see [www.axminster.co.uk](http://www.axminster.co.uk) to find out more.

Tony Wilson



Mick Hanbury



Wayne Mack



Jennie Starbuck



April Wilkerson



Peter Sefton



Michael Painter



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The freestanding armoire was constructed in much the same way as the wardrobes, albeit from framed and panelled sides, which, once again, were assembled with Domino joints. It was also furnished with a set of graduated drawers with hand-cut dovetails and under-mounted full extension runners

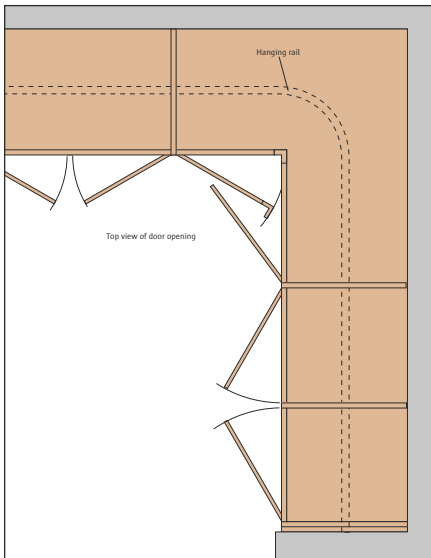
# Oak across the water

**Mark Griffiths' fitted wardrobes combine modern space-consciousness with the style of 18th-century oak panelling**

**W**henever I enter a client's home for the first time I try to take in the building's character and details, as well as the style of its occupants. It's important to develop this understanding of their tastes and what will work in their house as quickly as possible because it not only informs my initial ideas for the work they're commissioning, but also goes a long way to building their trust in me as a designer. A lot of time and credibility can be lost if you try to impose a concept on people who already know what suits them and their surroundings.

## **Size up the style...**

So, when I entered the house of two customers recently, I was on the lookout for the clues that would help me to design the fitted wardrobes for which they'd asked. Crossing the threshold, I stepped into a grand hallway lined with richly coloured and beautifully crisp panelling; set at half-room height was well-proportioned and deeply moulded wainscoting that led off around most of the important areas of the house. In what I suspect was a test of my timber knowledge, my customers asked me to identify the wood: "English oak," I answered, quickly and confidently. "Wrong," came the reply, so, slightly put out, I took a closer look at the panels and framework. It was oak, but the grain was far straighter than our European species, telling me that this was American oak.



**Fig.1** You can see here how the corner doors incorporate the centre frame, and open to give full access to the wardrobe

Now, this had me stumped because this was an 18th-century house and the panelling was obviously contemporaneous, so why would it have come from the far side of the Atlantic rather than from closer to home? The reason, I learned, was that the house had been built by a shipowner, many of whose vessels were engaged in trade with America. If, on their return trip, these ships required ballast, they would take on board baulks of native oak, some of which the shipowner had sent from the dockyard down to the carpenters who were working on his new house.

American oak, then, was clearly going to be the timber of choice for the wardrobes which, as the panelling didn't extend into the dressing room where they'd be fitted, would pick up on its styling and so connect the room to the rest of the house. Although it would be possible for an experienced polisher to have matched the new timber to the old, it was my feeling that the wardrobes should complement and add to the house's character rather than try to mimic it.

### ... and measure the space

Having settled on the materials and style, the next task was to survey the dressing room where the wardrobes would be installed. It's very easy to miss a protruding pipe or plug socket, which can have major implications when it comes to fitting the furniture, so I try to collect as much detail as possible and take plenty of photos, too.

While I'm doing this, of course, the customer will very often be in the room



with me, discussing the commission and asking questions. This can be a real distraction, so to help prevent mistakes with the measurements I employ my own version of the 'measure twice, cut once' principle by measuring every dimension twice – first in metric, and then in imperial. When I'm back in the safety of the workshop, I can cross-reference the two results knowing that if one doesn't convert into the other, I need to head back to the site to re-check my measurements.

In this case, the room wasn't without complications: three doors opened off it, and it had a very high, bi-level ceiling that also incorporated a skylight. Eventually, we decided that the most efficient way to construct the wardrobes in terms of space-saving would be to build an L-shaped suite extending from floor

to ceiling and running along two of the walls. I also suggested that a smaller section of wall opposite should have a free-standing armoire-style piece, which, though also using American oak and much of the same moulded detail as the main suite, would look more like an individual piece of furniture.

### Sourcing the timber

With the final design agreed and drawn up, I set about ordering the timber and board material required for the build. The internal structure of the wardrobes was to be made up from a series of boxes constructed in 18mm birch-faced plywood. This was converted from the 2,440 × 1,220mm board into over-size sections, which were then marked up with the component details on their edges and the desired grain direction



1 When you have lots of mortises to cut, I swear by the speed and accuracy of the Festool Domino

on the face side before being sent off to my local board veneering company to be finished in American oak.

I would've saved money, you might say,

### The Domino: a definite workshop favourite

If you haven't come across Festool's Domino joiner, or if you've written it off as an expensive biscuit joiner, I'd really encourage you to take another look. Priced at over £600, the Domino isn't what you'd call an impulse purchase, but I feel that its price tag is justified by Festool's build quality and its utility. With six sizes of Domino biscuit available for different applications, it makes accurate and extremely strong joints in areas where the only alternative would be a not-so-accurate dowel joint, a long-winded tenon, or a less-strong conventional biscuit. Until you've actually used one, it's hard to appreciate the Domino joiner's full potential, but believe me, it's so versatile that you'll find yourself planning the construction of your work around the Domino joint! To find out more, see [www.festool.co.uk](http://www.festool.co.uk)



by using 18mm MDF for the carcass work, especially if I'd used a pre-veneered board.

MDF is indeed my material of choice due its cost and versatility. However, for projects such as wardrobes with all their weight-hanging issues, and kitchens with their proximity to water, I prefer to use a strong, long-lasting material that I know will provide good solid screw fixing.

While I was waiting for the veneering to be done, I began converting the solid timber. Now, one of my favourite tasks is to sort and saw waney-edged timber, but it can be a very time-consuming process, and the allowances you have to make for wastage can be enormous: one hardwood timber merchant that I deal with recommends adding 50% to the measured quantity of waney-edged boards! But I suppose they would say that, wouldn't they?



3 The moulded end-grain of the panels was finished with a cabinet scraper to eliminate any cross-grain scratching from a paper finish



2 The door mouldings bridge the panels and frames perfectly

When it comes to imported timbers, however, shipping costs mean that much of the waste tends to be eliminated at source, and in the case of American oak the timber comes ready planked; the only margins that I needed to add were for variations in colour, matching the grain, and the inevitable mistakes.

I also ordered the timber in thicknesses as close to the finished components' sizes as possible. While it's tempting to keep the order simple and buy all the timber at the same size, the time spent in thickening it to produce, say, thin stock for drawer



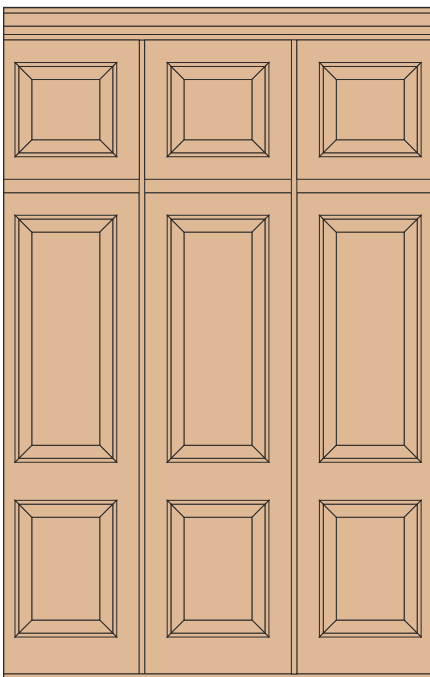
4 Pinning the glued-up tenons with brads allows the doors to dry without cramps, stacked flat in stick on top of one another, which eliminates the danger of the doors drying twisted



**5**  
The moulded detail was glued and pinned to the frame only so as to leave the panel itself free to move

sides, not to mention the inherent risk of subsequent cupping, make it well worth the trouble of itemising and ordering the different thicknesses you need.

From this stock of solid timber I made up the framing for the carcass, which features a cock bead detail that runs flush with the doors. Once machined, the framework was cut to the correct sizes and Domino slots were cut into the intersecting joints producing a ready-to-assemble kit, which, together with other moulded details, could be transported



**Fig. 2** The detail of the wardrobes borrows from the house's original panelling and helps to unify old furnishings and new



**6**  
The armoire was furnished with a set of graduated drawers with hand-cut dovetails and under-mounted full extension runners

and fitted on site once the carcasses themselves had been installed.

### Making & raising the door panels

In keeping with the house's original panelling, the wardrobe doors feature raised and fielded panels. The timber for these was initially cut over-size but to the correct thickness. The planks were then placed into their panel groups with an eye to making each set harmonious in terms of grain pattern and colour – a process that involved machining extra planks to give me plenty of choice when mixing and matching. As the panels were sorted, consideration was also given to the end-grain direction, making sure that the growth rings alternated from plank to plank to minimise the consequences of any movement.

The boards were then Domino jointed – taking care not to set a joint too close to the edges that would be moulded – and the panels assembled. Once dry, they were trimmed to size, belt-sanded, and machined around their four edges with a panel-raising cutter. After a good sanding session, in which the moulded end-grain was finished with a cabinet scraper in order to eliminate the cross-grain scratching that can occur with a paper finish, the completed panels were placed in stick in a dry part of the workshop until I was ready to fix them into the door frames.

### Pre-fabricating the carcass

As soon as the freshly veneered boards returned from the pressing 'shop I trimmed them along one long-grain edge to create a reference from which to work when cutting the boards on the panel saw. I know

that some people like to use a chisel for this trimming task, but I've suffered so many veneer splinters that I now place the panel flat on the bench and run a rasp along the edge at 45°, which quickly removes both the veneer and any residual glue; the rough edge the rasp leaves is cut away once it has served its purpose on the panel saw.

One of the reasons for getting to work on these boards as quickly as possible was that the veneer tape used on the joints leaves a ghost mark, which only tends to reveal itself when you come to apply a finish, by which time it could be too late to act. So, the boards were immediately given a good going over with a belt sander and a new 120 grit belt, after which the boards were cut to their final sizes and jointed with the biscuit jointer. A 7 x 10mm rebate was also machined into the rear edge to locate the wardrobes' 6mm-thick oak-veneered back panel.

As the plan was to re-construct the carcasses on site, I only dry assembled them in the workshop, which allowed me to drill the holes for the carcass bolt fixings that would pull up the butted biscuit joints tightly during final assembly. The carcasses were then disassembled and sanded with a 120 and 240 grit orbital sander before finally being sprayed with a water-based polish.

### TIP: an eye to safety

It's imperative that you wear safety glasses when trimming veneer from a board because, when dry, the Cascamite glue used by most veneer presses is extremely brittle and will produce sharp, shrapnel-like splinters when broken, which you don't want in your eyes!



I decided that an L-shaped suite extending from floor to ceiling and running along two walls was the most efficient way to construct the wardrobes in terms of space

## Building the doors

The final job to be done in the workshop was to joint and assemble the doors. To receive the panels, the 22mm-thick door stiles and rails were all machined on one edge with a 5mm wide, 10mm deep groove that was set down 11mm from the face edge, and stopped 90mm from the stiles' ends. The Domino jointer was then called upon again to form quick and precise

mortises in the end of each rail and in the side of their corresponding stile.

When it came to gluing up the doors, I fired two fine brad pins from an airgun through the rear of the door and into each of the freshly assembled Domino joints. Although virtually undetectable when polished, I discovered long ago that these brads are enough to hold the joint so that the sash cramps can be removed

immediately after gluing-up. Without the cramps the doors can be properly cleaned of excess glue and stacked flat in stick on top of one another, which eliminates the danger of the doors drying twisted, which can happen if they're left in cramp.

Once dry, the doors were sanded and the moulded detail was glued and pinned into place around the edges of the panels, ensuring that the glue and pins were attached to the frame only so as to leave the panel free to move. After cutting the hinge mortises, the wardrobes' solid timber components were given their first coat of oil.

## Assembly in situ

Back on site, the carcass boxes were reassembled and fitted in place, after which the solid oak frame was attached to their fronts, using a combination of 0-size biscuits and some pocket hole screws located inside the carcass.

I'd planned that the wardrobe frame would have a 20mm scribing strip on its two ends, allowing me to fit the wardrobes to the walls exactly and thus avoiding any unsightly gaps. In the event, however, the walls proved to be straight and true, which is remarkable in such an old building, and so no adjustments were necessary.

Along with the frame, I also fitted the wardrobes' cornices, which were attached to pre-machined 45° fitting blocks. Unfortunately, the room's ceiling hadn't stood the test of time as well as the walls and sagged by 30mm down in



Assembling the carcasses in the workshop prior to installation made for a much easier site visit. Note adjustable feet for convenience



The cornices, which incorporate a recessed 30mm scribing strip to accommodate uneven ceilings, were attached to 45° fitting blocks



Similarly, careful measurement of the installed door frames allowed me to trim the doors to size in the comfort of the workshop as opposed to on a wobbly Workmate

one corner. I had, however, made a note of this problem on my first survey and planned ahead, giving the cornice a recessed 30mm scribing strip in order to accommodate this height difference.

With the framework dry and checked for square from corner to corner using a pre-cut stick, I was ready to hang the doors. As anyone who has worked with me will tell you, though, I hate site work. In my workshop I have my trusty bench, big machines, lots of tools, a kettle and Radio 4; on site I only have as many power tools as I can fit in the van, a spindly Workmate, lukewarm tea from a Thermos, and usually another tradesman's radio blaring out drum & bass music. For these reasons I try to keep my time on site to a minimum, so I used detailed measurements taken from the door frames to remain in the comfort of my workshop while I adjusted the fit of the doors. In this way, I could return to the site and hang them with the minimum of fuss, and without needing to plane any edges on a wobbly Workmate.

The two sets of doors that did require a bit of extra attention were the corner doors, in the angle of the L-shape. These were both designed to open in the centre, and because the frame between the two is attached to one of the doors rather than to the rest of the framework, they afford unimpeded access to the wardrobe, which contains a curved hanging rail. To maintain the appearance of uninterrupted

framework, however, extra care had to be taken when hanging the doors to make sure that they met correctly, and the gaps were consistent.

This only left the doorstops and magnetic catches to be fitted before giving the oak three more coats of finishing oil, rubbing down each coat before applying the next. To avoid any Norman Wisdom moments with a painter's ladder, though, I waited until I was sure that all the other trades were off-site before fitting the very expensive cut lead-crystal handles!

While the American oak timber for this project may not have come to these shores on a romantic voyage under sail, my hope is that the wardrobes will be a fitting addition to the story of this grand old house. And who knows, one day the timber's journey in a rusting 140,000-ton container ship may also seem romantic... [www](http://www.getwoodworking.com)



The pricey cut lead-crystal used for the handles adds a touch of glamour to the wardrobes

### Kreg R3: entry-level pocket-holing

For pocket-hole work, I use the Kreg R3 jig. The R3 is a good entry-level system, and very useful for fixing situations such as the framework employed in these wardrobes. To cover the screw holes, Kreg also supplies dowels in a variety of different timbers, and though I used oak dowels in this project, I've made use of contrasting timbers elsewhere to add an interesting constructional detail. To find out more, see [www.kregtool.com](http://www.kregtool.com)



# In brief...



## CHESTNUT BLIGHT IS BACK

Plant health authorities are urging woodland managers, tree professionals and the plant trade to be vigilant over the coming months for sweet chestnut blight, caused by the fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica*. The request follows confirmation of the disease in a small number of sweet chestnut trees at two sites close to each other near Exeter in Devon. One of the sites is in woodland. Plant health notices are being issued to prohibit the movement of sweet chestnut and oak material from woodland and business sites within the 5km area until further notice. Although oak trees suffer only superficial damage if they are infected by the fungus, they can spread it, so restrictions on oak movements are also required as a precaution. Full information about the disease and pictorial examples are available on the Forestry Commission website – see [www.forestry.gov.uk/chestnutblight](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chestnutblight).

## MAKITA EXPANDS I8V BRUSHLESS POWER TOOL RANGE

Makita continues to expand, refine and finesse the market leading 18V Lithium-ion powered power tool range that has driven the brand to market leadership, and has introduced the following new products:

### DTW285 LXT impact wrench

This latest machine includes the reverse rotation auto stop mode, which allows for the safe removal of fixings by hand, helping to prevent fixings accidentally falling off when working at height. It benefits from excellent tightening performance, weighs just 1.7kg, and will run from 1,600-2,800rpm. Available with two 4.0Ah Li-ion batteries or as body only.

### 18V LXT Brushless motor drill driver

Two new versions of the 18V LXT Brushless

## KEBONY CLEAR MAKES IDEAL WINDOW WOOD

Kebony announces that Kebony Clear has now officially been approved as a window wood by the Verband Fenster und Fassade (German Association of Windows and Facades, VFF). Kebony, a beautiful wood recommended by leading architects, has been used for years in window installations worldwide and last year the wood was officially recognised as a suitable product for the window industry. Following additional research and a series of tests by the German Institute for Window Technology, Kebony Clear, made from *Pinus Radiata*, has now also received this recognition as a suitable product for the industry, making all Kebony Clear woods viable for use as window woods.

Kebony's versatility as a material has



rendered it invaluable for the construction of everything from exterior surfaces to terraces and windows – working to create a uniform appearance throughout. Kebony timber is easy to work with; it can be processed in the same way as hardwood without the need for special precautions during sawing and profiling as a consequence of the low dust and VOC emissions. Additionally, the wood also responds especially well to paint and varnish, thus confirming Kebony works as the perfect material to be used in window frames.

For further information, see [www.window.de](http://www.window.de) and [www.kebony.com](http://www.kebony.com).



## POLISHING GOES OLD SCHOOL

Alfie Shine was researched and developed by Jim Hendricks for use on his extensive collection of rare and valuable woodworking hand tools. It is a proper, old-fashioned hard wax polish with the addition of some special natural ingredients borrowed from a 17th-century instrument maker's finishing recipe. The product doesn't contain any solvents: it began as a historical research

project rather than a commercial product and it is only ever made by following Jim's original recipe to the letter.

Applied in thin coats with a soft cloth or a clean shoe brush for larger surfaces, Alfie Shine penetrates and nourishes dry wood. With successive applications, the resins gradually build into a resilient clear protective surface that enhances the figure of the timber without degrading patina.

There are no dryers or accelerants, so you do need to leave two or three days between coats to allow everything to harden up, but if you keep going, it will eventually build into an incredibly deep, rich and subtle gloss finish. Priced at £9.50 for 60ml, see [www.workshopheaven.com](http://www.workshopheaven.com).

motor drill driver have been introduced: the body only DDF083Z, a direct drive model, while the DDF484 features a keyless chuck. Both models have two-speed, all metal drive systems, variable-speed trigger, electric brake, ergonomic soft grip, LED job light and belt clip. The direct drive model will run up to 1,700rpm in high mode and 500rpm in low mode, will generate 40Nm of tightening torque with 20 settings, plus drill mode, and weighs just 1.3kg with a compact overall body length of 124mm. The DDF484 will run up to 2,000rpm in high mode, generates 54Nm max torque with 21 settings, plus drill mode, and weighs 1.8kg, measuring 172mm from chuck to body back. It comes complete with two 5.0Ah Li-ion batteries, and a Makpac case.

motor has improved performance over the previous model, the DHP480. It will run up to 2,000rpm in high mode, 500rpm in low mode, with a major increase of impact performance to 30,000ipm in high and 7,500ipm in low modes; a maximum torque of 54Nm with 21 settings and drill mode. This tool is available with two 5.0Ah Li-ion batteries and charger, in a Makpac case, or as a body only model for those users with existing stocks of Makita batteries.



### DHP484 combi drill

The new DHP484 combi drill with Brushless

To find out more about these and other Makita products, see [www.makita.com](http://www.makita.com).

# mafell

Quality • Innovation • Performance

Beyond all expectation

"There are a number of portable jointing systems on the market, but this has to be the best there is!"

Andy Bailey, Furniture & Cabinet Making.

## DD40

Duo-Doweller



Thanks to the use of conventional wooden dowels combined with the precise Duo-Dowel Joiner DD40, Mafell has triggered a revolution in portable jointing. The work is fastened exactly by the dowels, so that clamping is much simpler and quicker, or it can be omitted altogether. Mafell's DD40 System is an inclusive product package, comprising the MaxiMAX or MidiMAX machine in a MAFELL-MAX case, wooden dowels, a glue bottle, 2x anti-slip mats and drill bits as standard.



Quick & economical:  
Making carcasses with the DD40 and dowel template.



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# Avoiding catches & dig-ins



**Think catches or dig-ins are just part of the turning process? Think again. Colin Simpson shows how tools should be correctly held and how these annoying situations can be avoided**

**M**any aspirant woodturners think that catches or dig-ins are inevitable and that they are just part of the turning process. We have to accept them and hope that there is a greater time period between our last catch and the next one. When we get a catch our grip on the tool tightens and sometimes we push the tool harder through the wood than is necessary. The result? The next catch we get is even bigger.

Now I am not saying that I never get a catch, although they are much less frequent now than when I started turning. When I do, it is because I have done something wrong

– and I generally know what that is. The vast majority of catches or dig-ins occur when the wrong part of the tool is being used. There are a few other reasons, which I will also cover, but first I'll explain why using the wrong part of the tool will result in a catch.

### Why a catch occurs

I am using a spindle roughing gouge as an example, but the principles are true for any cutting tool. I often use the analogy of being in a rowing boat on the water: if you stay in the bottom or on the seat in the middle of

the boat, it remains quite stable; if you stand on the edge of the boat, it will tip. **Photo 1** shows my spindle roughing gouge on the toolrest with the flute pointing up. My pointer is at the bottom of the flute and that part of the tool is being supported by the toolrest. Therefore, using that part of the cutting edge is safe. **Photo 2** shows my pointer up on the edge of the flute. There is a gap underneath this part of the tool and the toolrest, so it is not being supported by it. If I tried to cut with this part of the tool, it would twist and probably dig into the wood. If I want to use this part of the cutting edge, I would need to turn the tool onto its side (**photo 3**).

### The skew chisel

The skew is a very versatile tool, but has a reputation for getting bad dig-ins. If used



**1**  
This part of the tool is supported by the toolrest...



**2**  
... but here there is no support



**3**  
Roll the tool onto its side to use the wings



4 With the tool on the rest place the bevel onto the wood before making a cut

properly it can achieve a superb finish on the wood that will require little or no sanding. We'll start with the planing cut. I use this cut to create a smooth cylinder once the timber has been brought to round with the spindle roughing gouge. I plane above centre so therefore raise the toolrest a few millimetres before I start.

You are very likely to get a catch if you enter the wood with just the cutting edge. A far more controlled way to enter the wood is to place the tool on the toolrest and then allow the bevel to very lightly rub or caress the wood (photo 4). You should not be getting a cut at this stage. Next, rotate the tool clockwise until the cutting edge just starts to cut (photo 5). Rotating more will give you a deeper cut. You should aim to make the shaving come off the lower half of the cutting edge – the part that is being supported by the toolrest. When the tool starts to cut, begin to slide the tool along the toolrest to the right (photo 6). Try to keep the tool at the same angle to the wood. If you swing the handle rather than slide the tool along the toolrest, you are likely to come off the bevel, which will result in a spiral catch (photo 7). This is, in effect, the same catch you will get if you enter the wood with just the cutting edge.

Photo 8 shows the shaving is coming from the top half of the cutting edge. This part of the tool is not being supported by the toolrest and there is a good chance



9 The starting position for a slicing cut



5 Roll the tool to make the cut



7 Coming off the bevel will result in a spiral kick-back

that the force of the revolving wood will push this part of the tool downwards into the wood, thus resulting in a catch.

### Slicing cut

This cut is used to clean up the end-grain of spindle work. This time use the tool on its edge with the long point of the skew downwards. Start with the handle well down and start the cut by lifting the handle and engaging the long point of the cutting edge in the wood (photo 9). Raise the handle to continue the cut and the tip of the tool should describe an arc (photo 10). It is important to recognise that it is only the tip of the tool that makes this cut and only a tiny part of the bevel behind the tip that rubs on the cut surface. Lean the tool slightly to the right to ensure the cutting edge does not touch the shoulder of the



10 Raise the handle to continue the cut. The tip of the tool should describe an arc



6 Slide the tool along the rest without altering the angle of the handle



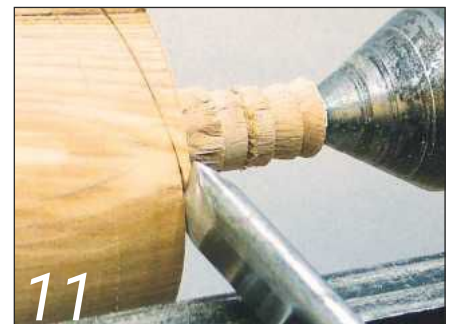
8 Cutting too high up the edge could result in a dig-in

work. If you allow the cut to move up the cutting edge of the tool, this edge is likely to catch on the shoulder of the work, resulting in a nasty catch (photo 11).

### Cutting beads

Beads can be cut with a skew chisel and, like the slicing cut, only the tip of the cutting edge is used. I use the short point, but I know other turners use the long point. Try both and choose your favourite.

Mark the width of your bead with pencil lines and make a small 'V' cut on these lines to remove waste and give yourself a little clearance. Next, lay the tool on the wood as if you were going to make a planing cut, but this time instead of allowing the cutting edge to engage in the wood, just allow the short point to start to cut (photo 12). The bead is cut by continuing to roll the tool at



11 Don't allow the cut to come up the cutting edge or it will catch on the shoulder of the work



12 Use the tip of the cutting edge to roll a bead...



13 ... and continue to roll at the same time as swinging the handle

the same time as swinging and raising the handle (**photo 13**). On larger beads, you will also need to traverse the toolrest.

Problems will occur if you swing the handle too quickly without allowing the cutting point to follow the curve of the bead. In other words, if you allow the cutting edge to pivot on the wood, this will result in losing contact with the bevel and another spiral catch will occur (**photo 14**).

### The bowl gouge

When shaping the outside of a bowl with a cutting action, as opposed to a scraping action, you are likely to get a kick-back if you enter the wood with just the cutting edge (**photo 15**). The safest way to introduce the tool to the wood is to place the tool on the toolrest and put the back or heel of the bevel into the wood (**photo 16**). The tool will not skate across the wood's surface, nor will it immediately cut the wood because the cutting edge is not in contact with the wood. Next, move the handle so that the rest of the bevel touches the wood (**photo 17**). There still shouldn't be a shaving. Move the handle a little more and a tiny shaving is produced (**photo 18**). You can now control the depth of cut or how large a shaving you want to

take by continuing to move the handle.

However, you must now start to slide the tool along the toolrest otherwise the cutting edge will become a pivot point and you will come off the bevel completely with the possible result of the tool kicking back (**photo 16**).

Problems will occur when cutting the inside or outside of the bowl if you roll the tool up too far. Look again at **photo 18**; you will notice that the shaving is coming off near the tip of the tool. If you roll the tool up too far you will allow the shaving to come from the wing. When the tool is upright (**photo 19**) the wing isn't being supported by the toolrest and the tool will twist into the wood. **Photo 20** shows the same problem on the inside of a bowl. The left-hand wing is a split second away from digging in.

### The spindle gouge

The above explanation using the bowl gouge can equally be applied to the use of a spindle gouge to cut convex curves on spindle work (**photo 21**).

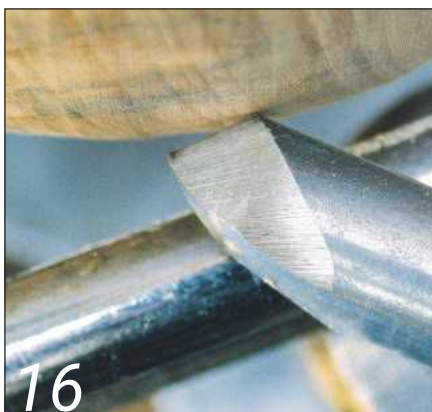
This controlled entry – tool on toolrest, put the bevel on the wood and then find a cut – is fine if you can rub the bevel first. But what happens when you need to cut



14 Don't pivot the cutting edge on the wood or it will catch



15 Entering the wood with just the cutting edge could result in the tool skating



16 Start with the heel of the bevel touching the wood...



17 ... then swing or raise the handle until the rest of the bevel caresses the wood...



18 ... continue to swing or raise the handle a little more to start the cut



19 Cutting on the wing in this position will cause a dig-in...



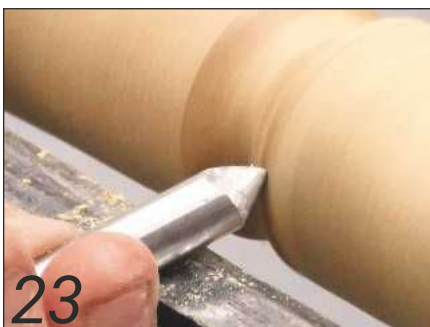
20 ... and the same will happen on the inside of a bowl



21 The same principles apply when cutting convex shapes on spindle work



22 My thumb helps prevent the tool from skating...



23 ... and my fingers stop it skating when cutting the right-hand side



24 The hand and tool position for entering a bowl



25 A typical dig-in with a bowl gouge

'from air' directly into the wood – for example, when cutting a cove on spindle work or when you make cuts to hollow a bowl? We need to control this entry and the angle of the tool is important.

**Photo 22** shows me cutting the left side of a cove. Note the tool is over on its side and the handle is held low. The tip of the tool is making the cut and the bevel behind the tip of the tool is pointing in the direction in which I want the tool to go. I lift the handle to start the cut. The position of my left thumb is important. The bony part of my thumb is partly on the toolrest and partly behind the shaft of the tool. In this position, my thumb helps to prevent the tool from skating to the left as it enters the wood. **Photo 23** shows how I cut the right side of the cove. This time the tool is rolled over on its other side, the tip of the tool is used to make the cut and again

I lift the tool into the cut. My fingers are wrapped around the shaft of the tool, thus preventing the tool from skating to the right.

The cut used to hollow a bowl is similar to that used to cut the left side of a cove. Roll the gouge over on its side and place your thumb behind the shaft, to help prevent it from skating (**photo 24**).

### Conclusion

I hope this article helps to convince you that dig-ins are not inevitable. If you understand why they happen, you can prevent them. Finally, when you have your next catch (**photo 25**) don't just tighten your grip on the tool and try again. Stop the lathe and try to place the tool into the dig-in (**photo 26**). This way, you will be able to see the position of the tool just before the dig-in and better understand why you had it. [www](http://www.getwoodworking.com)



26 This shows the position of the tool when the dig-in occurred. I was using an unsupported part of the cutting edge

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# Lead in a little light

The wonders of stained glass mixed with woodwork epitomise the joys of mixed media



## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

**Pattern:** A full-scale drawing of the design showing the outlines of the individual pieces of glass to be cut (see 'getting started').

**Pattern shears:** When used for cutting up whole patterns to make individual templates, these double-bladed scissors remove a strip from between the different sections equivalent to the thickness of the foil or lead came that will fit between them, thereby helping to ensure the glass is correctly sized for a good fit.

**Lead board:** A board edged with laths – one along the bottom edge, and another up one side – on which the separate elements of a design are assembled to make up the completed panel, or light. You can make it from anything that's flat, but you must be able to hammer nails into it easily.

Stained glass work calls for a number of specialist tools that you probably won't have in your workshop. The good news, though, is that none of them are very costly. Around £250 should buy you all the essential tools and materials, among which the greatest expenses will be a soldering iron – say, £60 to £80 – and a grinder, which will cost in the region of £100, though you could buy second-hand. After that, the only significant ongoing costs are the glass itself, and (unless you're working with foil) the lead. Then again, at £2 to £4 for a 1,800mm length, this a fraction of the price of hardwood.

**Hammer:** You can use a conventional hammer to knock in nails, but a glazing hammer is double-headed – acrylic for nails, and rubber for 'easing' lead work.

**Wooden square:** Don't use a metal square.



**Fid:** A wooden or plastic all-purpose tool used to ease the shape of came or press and smooth copper foil into place



**Grozing/breaking pliers:** These are used to break glass along a score, and also to nibble edges to shape



**Glass cutter:** These don't actually cut the glass, of course, so much as score it, creating a line of weakness along which it can be snapped in a controlled fashion. To create a neat score without chipping or breaking the glass, you need to lubricate the cutter's wheel with a cutting oil. The pen and pistol-grip cutters shown here are self-lubricating, drawing on a built-in reservoir of oil



**Grinder:** To smooth the edges of glass after cutting, you can either work by hand using a carborundum stone and water, or a specialised electric grinding wheel



**Lead knife:** Used to cut lead came much as you'd use a veneer saw to slice veneer. Alternatively, you can use lead pliers



**Running pliers:** The shaped jaws of these pliers encourage glass to snap or 'run' along a score line; very handy when you're making long cuts whether they're curved or straight



**Soldering iron:** An iron of 100W or more will do the job. Solder tends to be either a 50/50 or 60/40 mix of tin and lead; the tin-rich mix melts more readily, and gives a brighter finish but is also the more expensive. You'll need flux, too, to clean surfaces to be soldered, and to help the solder flow and adhere. The stick of tallow shown here does the same job as a flux paste; it's simply rubbed onto the joints much as you'd rub a candle on a drawer runner



When cutting, you can either follow a pattern laid underneath the glass or, if you find it easier, glue a paper template to the surface of the glass with rubber solution

### Instantly rewarding

The great thing about trying your hand at stained glass work is that the rewards are quickly realised. A weekend course won't make you a master of the craft, of course, but that's all you'll need to get started, and gain enough of a grasp of the essential skills in order to make finished items for yourself.

"Working glass," maintains Marc Gerstein of Camden's Lead & Light, "involves much



Snapping the scored glass with your hands is quite safe, but you can also use pliers

less complexity than timber." Admittedly, some glass is what he calls 'idiosyncratic'. The process of hand-making English antique glass, for example, can introduce internal stresses that may be released unpredictably when it's cut, much as resawing timber releases tensions in the grain. Initially, though, the glasses with which you'll be working will probably be machine-made and uniformly annealed, and therefore less likely to suffer from these tensions.

### Getting started: cutting glass

When using a cutter, the trick is to use a firm, even pressure and score the glass along your chosen line once only. Some suggest that it's easier to work by pushing the cutter along the line; others prefer to draw it towards them. Use the approach that suits you, but remember to keep the cutter perpendicular to the workpiece, and stop the score about 3mm from the edge of the glass; if you score right up to the edge, the chances are that the glass will splinter.

To guide the cutter, you can follow a paper template lightly glued to the surface of the glass with rubber solution, which is more easily removed from the glass than, say, Spraymount. You'll notice, however, that in **photo 1** Debbie is following a pattern laid underneath the glass, which is fine if the glass is sufficiently transparent to see through, or you're cutting straight lines, which extend either side of the piece of glass so that you can align a ruler with them.

In either case, the size of the pieces shown on the pattern must take account of the thickness of either the lead came or foil that will be used to join them together. If you're cutting out paper templates for lead work, say, a pair of pattern shears will remove a



A grinder is ideal for smoothing the edges of the glass after cutting

1.6mm strip from between the different sections leaving room for the came that will fit between them. If you're simply following a pattern laid underneath the glass, then this gap should be represented by the thickness of the cutting line, allowing you to offset the cutter by the correct amount.

Once you've scored the cut line, you can safely use your hands to snap the glass: just hold the piece firmly with the score uppermost and press upwards with your fingers from below. Providing that your score is clean and continuous, the glass should fracture neatly. Alternatively, you can use either running pliers (see 'tools of the trade') or grozing pliers to snap straight cuts (**photo 2**).

If your cutting has left small amounts of



Assembling: the pieces are laid out over a copy of the design, cutting and shaping lengths of came to fit around and between each element...



... and holding everything in place with flat-sided horseshoe nails tapped into the lead board



Flux, or in this case tallow, cleans the joint and helps the solder to flow and adhere

### GLASS SAFETY

Store glass on edge – it's not only more efficient in terms of space but also makes the sheets less vulnerable. When carrying a piece of glass, keep it perpendicular to the floor; if it slips, then the rule of the dropped kitchen knife applies – resist the temptation to make a grab for it!



**Tack solder:** when you're using lead, all the solder's required to do is tack together the ends of the pieces of came

glass still to be removed, it's possible to nibble back to the score line using grozing pliers, using one corner of the jaws to take very small bites of glass, if necessary.

### Cutting curves

Curved cuts with relatively tight radii can't be made in one go, but need to be made progressively by nibbling away at the glass. For a concave curve, then, score and snap away successive arcs of glass as shown in **Fig.1**, working in towards the final shape. A convex curve is tackled in much the same way, scoring a series of arcs that touch on the line of the desired curve and which allow you to remove the waste in stages (**Fig.2**). In both cases, you may need to use arcs of smaller radii to remove the last of the waste. The curves that you produce in this way won't be smooth, of course, but can be dressed off using either a carborundum stone or grinder (**photo 3**).

### Put it together: working with lead

After cutting the glass elements, removing any templates and cleaning the glass, the next stage is to bring them all together in a light. The traditional method, of course, uses lead came to create a latticework within which the glass elements are held, and this is where your lead board comes in. Working out from a corner or a side against the laths, the pieces are laid out over a copy of the design, cutting and shaping lengths of H-section lead came to fit around and between each element as you go (**photo 4**). For woodworkers, who're used to measuring and mitring, this shouldn't pose any real problems. To hold everything in place while the panel is built up, flat-sided horseshoe nails are tapped into the lead board beside the came (**photo 5**).

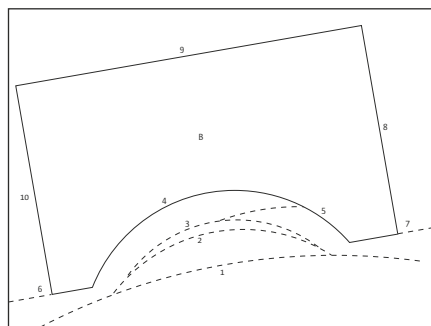
### Where do you go from here?

If the vitreous bug bites, you'll find that stained glass work suffers a shortage of neither courses nor creative possibilities.

### Soldering tips

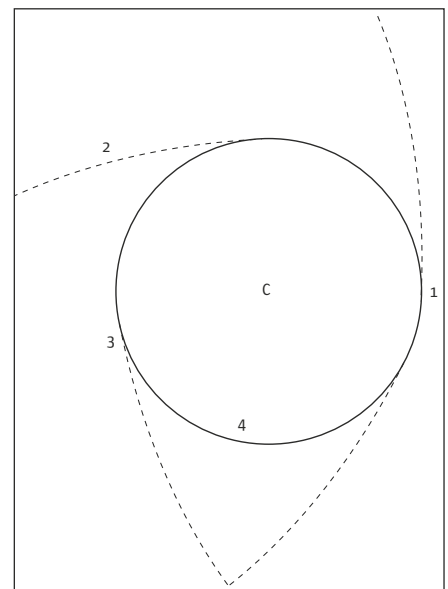
If you haven't tried soldering before, here are a few tips to help get you started:

1. Keep the tip of your soldering iron clean; a quick wipe with a damp sponge is all that's needed, though a proprietary tip cleaner (sal ammoniac) will help shift heavy residues.
2. Always use flux on a joint; without it, the solder simply won't flow. Tallow can be rubbed on; flux paste is painted on with a brush, but only when you're ready to start soldering – leave it too long, and its efficacy can be reduced.
3. Use the iron at the correct temperature. If an iron's not hot enough, the solder will be reluctant to flow; if it's too hot, the solder will tend to run out of the joint, leading to weakness, and you may overheat the glass itself, causing it to crack. An overheated iron may also damage the lead came.
4. To test your iron's temperature, touch the tip to a small scrap of solder. If it melts immediately but sticks to the tip, you're ready to go; if it doesn't melt readily, then the iron's too cold, and if it puddles and runs off the tip, it's too darn hot!
5. Tack soldering is relatively easy: you only need to touch the iron to the solder to melt enough wire to hold the pieces together. Running a bead is another matter. You'll have to practice until you have the knack of moving the iron along a joint at a speed that allows enough solder to melt and run into the joint to form an even, raised bead.
6. Long beads are built up from short, overlapping runs of solder. The trick to getting them to blend is to lift the iron vertically at the end of each run without dragging it sideways. Where a fresh bead meets, say, one of your earlier tacks, they can be feathered together by touching the iron to the cold solder and reheating it enough to melt and combine with the new bead. You can do the same thing to even out any lumps and bumps in your work, too.
7. When soldering the reverse side of a panel, take care not to overheat the foil or you'll re-liquefy the solder on the first side and spoil the finish



**Fig.1** Concave curve

'Hot glass' work, for example, is becoming an increasingly popular way to create coloured, textured and even shaped pieces by fusing together the various glass elements in a kiln. You can also paint glass, of course, using enamels which, when fired, fuse with the glass and become permanent. You might not have realised, though, that the same enamels can also be used to screen print glass, a technique which – if you have screens made from digital images – allows you to combine photography with glass. Go on, lead a little light into your windows, doors and cabinets; your woodworking might never be the same again!



**Fig.2** Convex curve

### TIP

Keep an oil-soaked rag or sponge to hand to wet the wheel of the cutter before each cut and to remove any build-up of powdered glass

## Safety

You should expect to encounter small shards when cutting glass, so wear safety glasses, and don't brush off your work surface with the back of your hand the way you would with shavings – use a brush!

Patinas and etching creams tend to be caustic, so use protective gloves, and although the quantities of lead vapour given off when soldering won't be high, it makes sense to ensure good ventilation. **WWW**



9

Foiling: each of the glass pieces is edged with copper foil...



8

Brass brush: once the joints are cool, they are cleaned ready for cementing



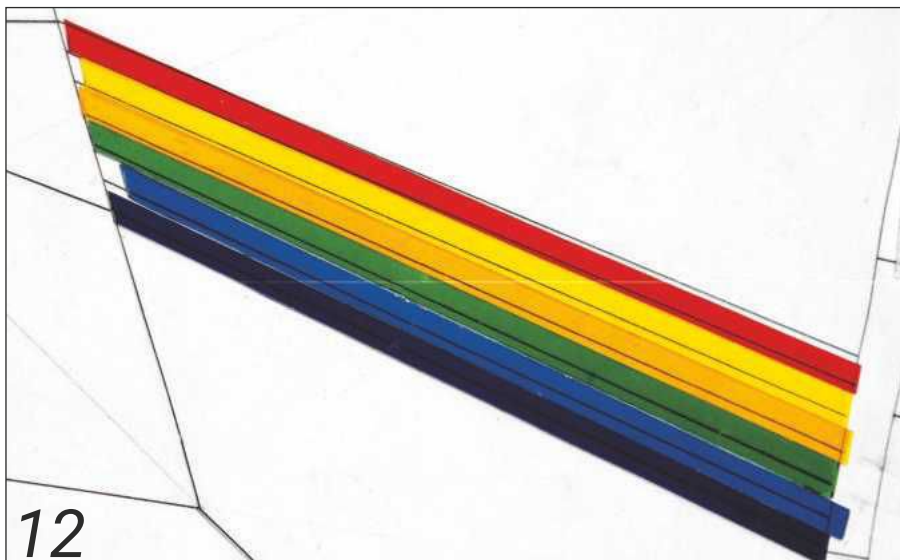
10

... which comes in rolls and has a self-adhesive backing



11

When folded around the glass, the foil provides a surface to which the solder can bind



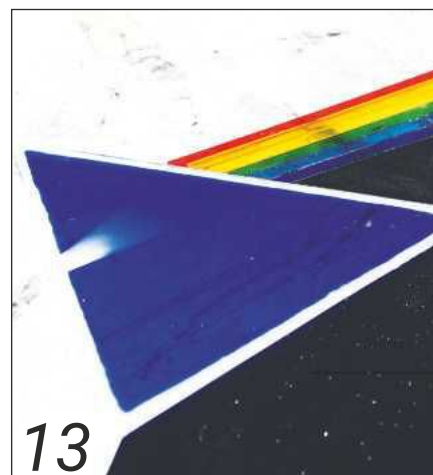
12

The thinner foil makes for more discrete joints than lead came...

## Lead vice & advice

Before it's used, lead comes need to be pulled straight by holding one end securely and giving the other end several sharp tugs with a pair of pliers. Here, Debbie's using a dedicated lead vice to hold the came, but a woodworker's 'shop won't be short of substitutes.

When making up your light, try to arrange for breaks in the came to lie wherever a sharp angle occurs. That way, the joint can be hidden by the solder. You'll also find that, while came is remarkably malleable, it can only be bent so far, so when you are creating a design, you should try to avoid curves that have very small radii



13

... which in turn allows you to create more involved designs. That's right – it's a stained glass version of George Hardie's design for Pink Floyd's *Dark side of the Moon*!

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on courses offered by Lead & Light, see their website: [www.leadandlight.co.uk](http://www.leadandlight.co.uk)

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# Deco kit box

**Peter Benson's ash kit box, incorporating an Art Deco-inspired sunrise, is almost too good for holding tools**

**T**his kit box demonstrates form and function in equal measure. It employs dovetails, stopped housing and mitre joints, plus a workshop-made handle and latch, all of which offer you the chance to hone your skills.

Start by preparing the timber, ash in this case, planing, thickening it, then running it through the drum sander. Then cut the dovetails for the top and stopped housings for the drawer shelf, using either a router or plough plane.

The back of the box consists of a plywood panel in a rebated frame with mitred corners (**photo 1**), and is cut on a dimension saw, though you could just as well use a tenon saw for this job. Next, clean up the carcass components and the front batten, give them a final sanding and check for square. Put the carcasses to one side to set.

## Framing & veneering the lid

The lid comprises a frame bordering a veneered panel rebated in a routed 6mm groove that is also used to join the frame itself (**photo 2**).



1

The back comprises a plywood panel set in a rebated frame with mitred corners

Using either a bandsaw or tenon saw, cut tongues on mini tenons on the long sides of the frame to fit the 6mm grooves. Tape the 0.7mm veneer into the design and glue with PVA glue to the 5mm plywood panel, then glue a uniform piece of balance veneer on the back before placing in a vacuum bag or clamping.

Use 13mm-thick material for the sun, cutting the curve with a router on a trammel. You will also need a corresponding shape in the veneered panel to accommodate the quadrant. Reduce the thickness of the sun to that of the veneer by mounting a router on a pair of skis that allows the tool to skate over the panel while the bottom of the cutter mills the timber to match the thickness of the surrounding veneers. After careful sanding, the front panel is ready for the frame to be assembled around it.

## The drawer

The shallow drawer emphasises the blind hand-cut dovetails at the front. Cut a groove for the plywood bottom and a rebate for the back, then, using a Forstner



2

Look for a tight but sliding fit in the drawer



bit in the drill press, drill two 25mm finger-holes in the front, finishing with a roundover cutter in the router (also used to finish the drawer sides).

Because the back is not yet attached to the carcass, any binding of the drawer can be corrected with the smoothing plane. Wax the drawer, which should now have a tight but sliding fit (**photo 3**).



3

What more could you want in a kit box?



The door is held closed thanks to a workshop-made latch...

is needed, prepare two mounts of the same thickness from offcuts, and make a hinge pin from a short piece of bicycle spoke. The latch and handle are then attached with countersunk screws running into counter-bored holes that are then filled with round wood plugs.

Now all you have to do is fill the completed box with shiny tools. [www](#)

#### TIP

- To prevent brass screws from snapping when torqued, cut threads with steel screws
- Mask off all parts that are to be glued, to prevent wax on inside surfaces interfering with the glue

#### Hinging the lid

Line up the brass hinges against the side rails of the frame, then, using a marking knife, cut around the hinges, marking to the required depth with a marking gauge set to the thickness of the hinge flap. To hold the hinges in place, mark the centre of the screw hole, then drill a pilot hole very slightly to one side of the centre so that the countersunk woodscrew pulls the hinge in place.

#### Finishing touches

Do a rough clean-up with a belt sander, then sand to a final finish using 120, 180 and 240 grits, before banishing any sanding marks with a random orbital sander.

The curved handle is laminated, made by preparing two halves of a former by bandsawing the required shape from a length of 50 x 100mm softwood. Lay seven strips of glued-up veneer on top of each other on one side of the former and clamp the two halves together overnight.

The latch (**photo 4**) is also workshop-made with the aid of another former (**photo 5**). Drill the end of the latch where the pivot



... which is made with the help of a former

# Lock, stock, & barrel

Siân Ellis meets Alastair Simms, one of the very last practitioners of the once flourishing art of brewery coopering



1 Coopering calls for quite an array of hand tools – most of Alastair's are well seasoned

**A** roll around a Yorkshire brewery yard in a 54 gallon (245.7 litres) hogshead, full of stale ale and wood shavings, is not for the fainthearted. But Alastair Simms laughs cheerily when he recalls the traditional 'trussing-in' ceremony, back in 1983, that marked the end of his four-year bound apprenticeship to become a journeyman cooper.

"It's a rite of passage that has been carried on for centuries," he explains. "An apprentice also used to have to ask his boss, the master cooper, for permission if he wanted

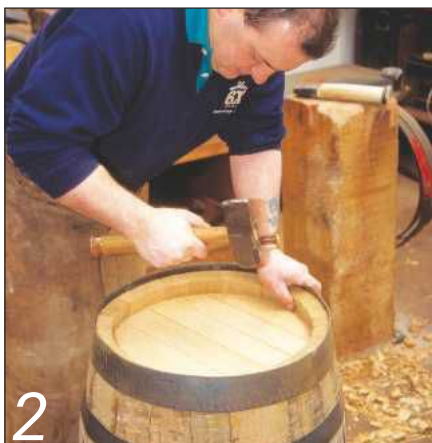
to have a girlfriend, a fiancée, or get married, have a mortgage and a child. That no longer applies, but it did when I was an apprentice; it taught respect for your boss."

Times move on and since 1995 Alastair has been master cooper at Wadworth brewery in the Wiltshire market town of Devizes, lured south from his native Yorkshire by his love of the company's 6X beer. Every day he makes and repairs oak casks using coopering techniques that can be traced back (via Egyptian tomb paintings) to 2,690BC.

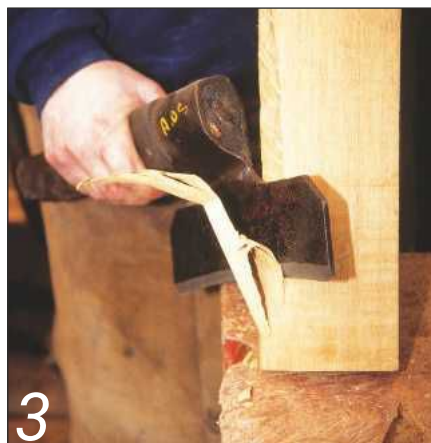
"The earliest coopering evidence in Britain dates from the late Iron Age, while the Romans were great users of casks – to transport wine," Alastair says. By the Middle Ages the cooper's trade was thriving, called upon to provide containers for all manner of wet and dry goods, from liquors and vinegar to flour and Navy gunpowder. Any couple setting up home would visit their local cooper to buy their day-to-day utensils: buckets and bowls, dolly tubs for laundering, a churn for making butter and casks for home-brewed ale.

"People often refer simply to barrels, but in the brewery trade a barrel specifically means a 36 gallon cask," he continues. "The word first came into use in Norman times and derived from France. Other cask names show the early Dutch influence on our beer industry – the hogshead, a kilderkin at 18 gallons [81.9 litres], a firkin, which holds 9 gallons [40.95 litres] and a pin, which is 4.5 gallons [20.48 litres]. The other measures are a puncheon at 72 gallons [327.6 litres] and a butt at 108 gallons [491.4 litres]."

The proliferation of brew houses in the 16th century brought the brewery trade into dispute with cooperers' guilds: the latter, wishing to maintain their monopoly of business, insisted brewers bought their casks from independent cooperages; the brewers preferred to entice the best cooperers,



2 Beer purists often feel that a wooden barrel is kinder to the conditioning of wine and ale than the more commonly used metal



3 The process of cutting and tapering the oak planks into the staves is known as listing



expert in making liquid-tight casks, into direct employment. The argument went to Parliament where the Coopers' Company furthered its cause by bribing the Lord Chancellor with half a butt of malmsey in 1533. Wrangling and liquid inducements continued for three more decades and, although a well-watered Parliament found in the guilds' favour, the brewers disregarded the judgments: they simply employed coopers on a piecework system.

### From apprentice to master

It is estimated that there were 600 brewery coopers working in Britain in the first half of the 20th century. "Today there are just four and I'm the only master brewery cooper – that means a journeyman cooper who has had an apprentice," Alastair says. "Since 1965 metal casks have been used in a big way and so there's been a huge decline in brewery cooperage. But I think beer conditions better in wood, because the temperature is more stable and so the ale is more natural tasting."

Alastair originally wanted to be a carpenter and joiner, but a school holiday job at the brewery in his hometown of Masham got him interested in coopering. At the age of 16, after a six-month trial, he signed his indentures and began his apprenticeship. "For the trial period and

the first two years of your apprenticeship you are not allowed to use any electrical tools whatsoever. Everything has to be done by hand – it really teaches you the skills."

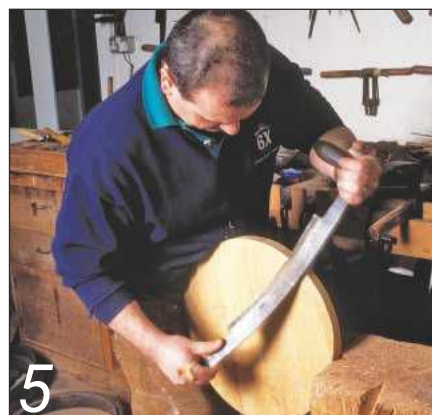
Over the years he has had two apprentices, inheriting one of them in the will of his former master, Clive Hollis, who died in 1998. "It used to be standard practice for a master to leave any apprentice to someone in his will, so he could continue training," he says.

### The basics

Deep inside the Victorian tower building of Wadsworth brewery Alastair's cooperage is stuffed full of beechwood and metal tools



4 After softening, the staves would have traditionally been bent by hammering steel hoops of decreasing thickness around them



5 The edges of the cask heads...



6 ... are bevelled



In another nod to tradition, river reed is used to keep things tight

that hint at the complexity of cask-making: axes and adzes, files and topping planes, knives by the dozen, as well as more graphically named pieces like the knocker-up, a bent iron bar that is inserted through the cask's bung hole to slug the top cask-head into place. Some are pre-Victorian and Alastair maintains that, "old, second-hand tools are better quality and far more comfortable."

As the mid-morning ferment of rich ale aromas percolates through the window, he demonstrates the basics of making a cask, though he says with a grin: "The age-old cooperage laws of secrecy mean I can't show you exactly how I make them."

He begins by 'listing' staves of English oak, cutting and tapering them to size, shaping them with an axe, hollowing with a knife, planing and jointing the edges. When he has sufficient staves, he 'raises' them up in a mild-steel hoop, and then softens them in a steam bell for 40 minutes so that they

can be bent into the familiar bellied form. The traditional way of doing this, which Alastair sometimes follows, is to vigorously hammer down wooden truss hoops over the staves, with the smaller hoops pinching the staves in towards the ends of the cask. Alternatively, and in a fraction of the time, he uses a hydraulic bending machine.

Once the staves are bent, he removes the truss hoops, then hammers and rivets four or six permanent mild-steel hoops into place and heats the cask over a cresset fire of burning shavings to 'set' it. "Then I dress it out to make the insides smooth, adze it up, chiv it and make the heads," he summarises.

The cask heads are fashioned from jointed planks sealed with 'flag' or reed from East Anglia's Great Ouse. Their bevelled edges fit neatly into grooves around the cask that have been cut with a croze, "which is like a medieval Black & Decker router." River reed at the back of the grooves keeps the seal tight.

After the outside of the cask has been dressed, silicon brass rings are added to the augered bung hole. Finally, Alastair brands the finished cask with a number and his initials: the block mark issued when he came out of his apprenticeship.

At least that is the simplified description of a process requiring superb hand-eye coordination. The joints Alastair crafts must be accurate to within two thousandths of an inch to avoid leakage of liquid under pressure, and he checks with his eye alone that the belly he is putting into the cask is correct to within a pint's capacity. The heads must be fitted at the right level for the required volume, too, while increasing

requests for glass heads demand incredible dexterity to fit without breakage.

## An eye to the future

Throughout the whole making process the most high-tech measuring devices he uses are a pair of compasses and metal pins called diagonals. At every stage he is planing off curls of wood and he says: "I can always tell by the way someone holds a down shave (a chunky, double-handed plane) whether they have the technique and potential to become a cooper. You need a natural talent and to have it nurtured. A wooden cask will last 80 years and after that you can cut it down a size and use it again – coopers are the original recyclers," he adds. "We also buy in whisky casks to recycle into beer casks. I turn some old casks into water butts, plant pots and garden furniture, too. It is what has always been done. I make and remake about 1,000 casks a year and we're getting increasing business from the growing English wine trade: there's good potential, but at the moment there won't be the coopers to meet it."

Alastair is passionate about keeping the skills of his trade alive. The public can tour the brewery, including the cooperage, and he promotes coopering at agricultural shows, in schools and through The Worshipful Company of Coopers, of which he is a liveryman. He firmly believes that there should be greater support for training "in all heritage crafts." In the near future he hopes to take on another apprentice and he says with a chuckle, "I'll observe all the rites of passage." **WW**



Apparently it can be judged in a matter of seconds if someone's meant to be a cooper by the way they hold a 'down shave'



Alastair judges most measurements by eye, using nothing more complex for this task than his diagonals



His is a dying breed, but Alastair hopes to give another young apprentice a spinning bath in stale ale soon

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Alastair Simms – Wadworth & Co Ltd

Northgate Brewery

Tel: 01380 732 270

Web: [www.wadworth.co.uk](http://www.wadworth.co.uk)

# Flexidisc Sander/Grinder

The Flexidisc sander gives a superb finish on wood, metal, fibreglass, car body filler and all hard materials.

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Accurate and efficient in use, this excellent planer from Bosch would prove to be an asset to any woodworker

# Bosch GHO 26-82 D Professional planer



Although battery technology seems to be improving by the month, there's still a fair bit of difference between a cordless tool and a mains powered one. Even though the former will execute its work perfectly adequately – as long as the battery holds – there's

something instantly reassuring the moment you hear the sound and feel the power of a 240V motor running.

### On-site asset

So it is with this new planer from German tool giants Bosch, a feeling that everything will be OK with the tool, as long as the operator plays their necessary and skilful part. A planer is a vital component of the modern day woodworker's kit, and can make a huge difference to a job, whether in the workshop or out on site. Clearly a battery powered tool will always be an asset when working away, but the GHO 26-82 D mains powered machine is both compact and not overly heavy in the hand, lending it to situations other than at the bench. Plus the designers have made sure that the planer has been provided with a very useful 3.9 metre long lead, one of the longest out there and a real asset on site.

### 'Wood Razor' system

The 26-82 D planer is capable of very accurate working, and will cut down to a depth of 2.6mm in incremental steps of 0.1 of a millimetre. This is great for when you want to make a couple of 'coarse' passes first, then finish off with a fine one or two; with this sort of control you can be assured that you won't take off too much as a result.

Unlike other planers, Bosch machines employ a system that uses only a single blade, what they call the 'Wood Razor' system. The theory behind this one is that each contact the blade makes



The Bosch 26-82 D makes easy work of a piece of 55mm yew



The genius that is the exhaust side selector



Adjustment on depth of cut is nice and positive – all the way down to 2.6mm



The hex key for blade changing is tucked away near the parking foot



Here we can see the solo blade making the maximum cut in a piece of 55mm yew

with the workpiece effectively slows the spinning block down, and it needs a full revolution before it gets back up to speed. Certainly it works tremendously well, and the other – and obvious – benefit here is that you only need to change one blade instead of two. The changeover itself is easily executed: an onboard hex key loosens off a couple of grub screws and the blunt blade can be eased out for replacement. There's no adjustment necessary, so it's straight back to work within seconds.

### Pleasing features

Bosch have always been innovators, and there are a couple of features on this planer that are intensely pleasing; one of which I've yet to see on another manufacturer's machine to boot. The locking button, which guards the on/off trigger, can be operated from either side, making this a truly ambidextrous power tool (sadly one of the few if you're left-handed). This is great, but the feature which really impressed me the first time I saw it is the dust and chip exhaust control. Using a planer without any kind of catchment or extraction is a sure-fire way to spread a deep coating of shavings debris across a surprisingly large area. If you've got a dust bag hooked up then great, but it's not always configured for your specific ease; unless, that is, you have a Bosch Pro planer, which allows you the choice of exhaust side with the turn of a lever. As well as being entirely useful, this feature offers the chance of a comedy moment when you forget to change it for a new procedure and you get a second or two of a shavings shower right where you don't want it.

Nearly every planer offers a groove on the bottom of the sole to enable chamfers to be worked with ease. Many have multiple grooves but the Bosch planer sensibly has just the one, which is frankly all you need. The other big feature of the sole is the retractable parking foot, which enables the user to put the planer down on a flat and level surface without fear of damaging the blade



The vital dustbag (light cotton fabric on wire frame) plus a very useful extraction adaptor



The planer with parallel guide and side fence fitted



The Bosch GH0 26-82 D Professional planer gets the thumbs up from us

### SPECIFICATION

<b>RATED POWER INPUT:</b>	710W
<b>NO-LOAD SPEED:</b>	16,500rpm
<b>PLANING DEPTH:</b>	0-2.6mm
<b>REBATING DEPTH:</b>	0-9mm
<b>PLANING WIDTH MAX:</b>	82mm
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	12.6kg

### VERDICT

Accurate and efficient; a real asset for any woodworker

**PROS** ■ Accuracy ■ Extraction ■ Ease of working

**CONS** ■ Finish on the soleplate lets it down a bit

**VALUE FOR MONEY**  
**PERFORMANCE**



### FURTHER INFORMATION

- Bosch Professional
- 03447 360 109
- [www.bosch-professional.com](http://www.bosch-professional.com)

or indeed the work surface it's resting on. This is a popular item on a power planer, and saves a lot of trouble for the busy worker.

### In summary

There are a number of additional accessories available, and it will pay to check which (if any) will come with your machine if you decide to buy one. *The Woodworker* review model came with the (essential) dustbag, an extraction adaptor (always useful), and the parallel guide and 90° fence (very useful indeed). As well as an adjustable angled fence, there's also a rebating depth stop listed, but this is a feature I've never really warmed to on a planer, and don't feel that it would be a big loss if deprived of one. All in all, this is an accurate and efficient machine; a real asset for any woodworker. **MC**

This new 18V cordless sander from Ryobi is compact, comfortable to use and gets the job done – you just need to ensure you have enough batteries on charge



**£69.99  
(bare)**

## Ryobi R18ROS-0 18V random orbit sander

either is likely to make sanding a somewhat less tedious task. Their compact size makes them handy for outdoor work around the house, especially when working off a ladder or away from a mains supply.

### Into orbit

The R18ROS-0 random orbit tool is the pricier of the pair and equipped with a standard 125mm diameter pad. With plenty of textured, soft-grip rubber the sander is held from above and weighs 1.6kg with a 1.5Ah battery fitted. Although it has a reasonably small footprint, the sander is fairly tall to accommodate the vertically-mounted battery.

A standard push-through power button activates the tool and is accessed from either side. There is an orbit rate of 20,000opm and an orbit diameter of 2.5mm, which is enough for fairly aggressive paint removal as well as finer finishing. With eight holes to aid dust removal, the backing pad is hook-and-loop-backed and three abrasive discs are included (80, 120 and 240 grit).

Supplied with a rigid dust container, this simply slides over the tool's outlet and actually stays put when sanding. It's an effective system and easier to empty than some budget sanders out there.

### In summary

Fitted with a fully-charged 1.5Ah battery, I got about 10 minutes use, which may not sound a lot, but it's surprising just how much timber you can cover in a few minutes. Obviously a bigger battery will give increased run time. **PD**

At first glance, cordless sanders may seem more DIY tools than kit for serious woodworking. After all, what use is a sanding tool when the battery runs flat halfway through finishing a project? In a workshop with a power supply a 240V sander probably makes more sense (together with a vacuum extractor), though it's hard to ignore the convenience of a battery equivalent. Mains tools tend to be cheaper than cordless, however. Many manufacturers now offer both 240V and cordless sanders, with Ryobi adding two new 18V models to their impressive One Plus range. Rated as mid-range power tools,

### SPECIFICATION

<b>ORBIT DIAMETER</b>	2.5mm
<b>NO LOAD SPEED</b>	10,000rpm
<b>SANDING PAD SIZE</b>	125mm
<b>ORBIT RATE</b>	20,000opm
<b>VOLTAGE</b>	18V
<b>WEIGHT WITH BATTERY PACK</b>	1.56kg
<b>BATTERY</b>	0 (body-only batteries and charger sold separately)

### VERDICT

This body-only sander is ideal for outdoor work due to its cordless nature and the rigid dust container is a good addition

**PROS**

- Compact size
- Effective dust collection system
- Ideal for outdoor use or work around the house
- Comfortable to use

**CONS**

- You will have to factor in the cost of a One Plus battery if you haven't already bought into this system
- Run time off a fully-charged 1.5Ah battery is fairly low, meaning you'll have to work fast

**VALUE FOR MONEY PERFORMANCE**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

- Ryobi
- [uk.ryobitools.eu](http://uk.ryobitools.eu)



The sander is fairly tall to accommodate the vertically-mounted battery



A standard push-through power button activates the tool and is accessed from either side



The backing pad is hook-and-loop-backed and three abrasive discs are included



The rigid dust container simply slides over the tool's outlet and actually stays put when sanding

*This simple hand-sanding device not only represents great value for money but it will take standard size belts and is ideal for a multitude of household tasks as well as the usual woodworking applications*

**£14.10**



# Milescraft Sand Devil 3.0

Simple things can often be the most effective and that's undoubtedly the case here with the Sand Devil 3.0 (I assume there must have been versions 1 and 2 prior to this one!) Making good use of a standard 75mm-wide sanding belt, the Sand Devil 3.0 is pretty much a hand-driven belt sander and indeed it has the same style of tensioning lever to retain the belt around its periphery.



it feels a little flimsy for something that will be operated regularly, but it does what it's designed to do and as long as it isn't operated with force it should stand up to the task, although a metal or alloy lever would be better suited and ultimately more durable.

## Design

The design of the tool incorporates a couple of curves and a wedge profile so it will work these as well as getting tight into corners; I found it worked really well against a vertical surface as the grit of the abrasive against my palm was sufficient to hold it firmly while I sanded, and I found I could sand right up to an edge, which was a definite bonus.

It comes supplied with a relatively coarse belt, which is fine for general work, such as keying a surface or cutting back an old finish, but the option is there to fit a finer grit belt for more delicate sanding if you should need it. I found it felt a little on the large side when I first started using it, but this does work in its favour in general as you can get good purchase on it if you need to work it hard and place two hands on the surface to allow for extra pressure or control.

## Elbow grease is required

The belt doesn't rotate in this instance; as with any hand-sanding it's all about elbow grease and with the wide, flat area it offers, it's ideal for larger areas especially. You can slacken the belt to rotate it as needed once it loses its bite to get full use from the abrasive before changing it, and with good quality abrasives that shouldn't be too often. If there's a negative in this it could be the durability of the lever;

## Useful applications

Although woodworking is an area where it will undoubtedly find a place, I also found it brilliant for blitzing back some Polyfilla from a door lining I had fitted, cutting the filler back flush in seconds and leaving it ready to paint. Any drylining-type work where filler needs flattening back is another application where the large surface area is a definite winner.

## In summary

As with many Milescraft products, this one won't break the bank – it retails for around £14 including a good quality belt. **AK**



Belts are swapped using this tension lever, although it doesn't look to be overly durable



The Sand Devil 3.0 takes standard off-the-shelf 533 x 75mm belts



Cutting back filler was very quick and you can sand right up to an edge



The all-round abrasive aids gripping when sanding



Each part of the Sand Devil 3.0 has a different profile...



... which is ideal for intricate areas, such as moulding

## SPECIFICATION

<b>BELT SIZE</b>	533 x 75mm
<b>BELT SUPPLIED</b>	80 grit

## VERDICT

Simple it may be but this clever device from Milescraft represents a hot idea for hand-sanding

**PROS** ■ Takes standard belts ■ Multiple profile areas  
■ Large sanding area

**CONS** ■ Tension lever looks a bit fragile

**VALUE FOR MONEY** ■■■■■■  
**PERFORMANCE** ■■■■■■

## FURTHER INFORMATION

- Toolovation
- 01531 636 819
- [www.toolovation.co.uk](http://www.toolovation.co.uk)

*Undoubtedly the Rolls Royce of its ilk, the new Tormek T-8 is hard to beat when you take into account its high accuracy and ability to sharpen pretty much any edge tool going*

## Tormek T-8 grinding machine

£499.96



When you set the bar for others to follow you have to be sure you continue to keep raising it to ensure it's out of reach of competitors, and that's just what's happened here with the latest Tormek.

With options from other manufacturers available based on the same principle of a slow wet grinding wheel with a leather honing wheel to complement it, Tormek has always been the premium product on the market.

### 'All in one' solution

Like many innovations, there's an evolutionary process as niggles and tweaks along with new features are dealt with and the Tormek is no different with many variants along the way, culminating in the flagship Tormek T-7. And while that was, and still is, a great performer in its own right, even that has been superseded by a newer model in the T-8.

The main difference from the T-7 is the step away from the powder-coated fabricated steel frame of old, which has now been upgraded to a swanky zinc casting. This casting incorporates an 'all in one' solution to the fabricated predecessor with a solid top and sides that hold the stainless steel drive shaft bearings, which makes the drive shaft position not only durable but also very accurate.

The shaft has the 'EzyLock' fitting for quick changeovers of the stone or honing wheel as required and the casting extends to include support legs with ABS plastic panels filling in the areas between the legs so the whole unit is designed to be free of rust.

### New upgrades

In terms of containing water, the Tormek's solution is to flare the top of the water trough to capture drips on standard grind jobs, and for longer tools, planer knives, kitchen knives, etc., there's a clip on chute to direct the water back into the trough, which works pretty well in keeping the water where it should be.

Although the T-8 trough has had a bit of a redesign, it still features a built-in rare earth magnet, but now also includes a small scraper that sits in an exterior recess, retained by the same magnet, which is used to drag the metal laden slurry out of the trough as it builds up.

There's also a cracking new upgrade in terms of how the trough fits to the Tormek. Older models require a bit of jiggling to get this in to position, but water spillage is now a thing of the past thanks to the new design. It engages onto a pair of zinc forks, which raise and lower on a knob-operated rack and pinion; this allows the trough to simply slide on and then be lifted up, so the stone comes into contact with the water. The pins index at five different heights to allow the trough to cover as much of the stone as you want, or adjust it as the water level drops.

The toolrest is standard to the Tormek range, having the micro adjust post to fine-tune the position of the tool to the stone for consistent setting of angles, and the angle finder/setter is the standard design that works well, so why change it?

What has changed, however, is the supplied straight tool holder for chisels and plane irons; this has undergone a few modifications during its life span, but none so radical as now. The SE-77 jig clamps the blade as securely as its predecessor but previously it could still grind slightly out of square in some instances, but now the jig has a clever set of screw adjustments that nudge or skew the blade to alter its position to the stone if you find you are slightly out. It has a fair bit of travel and can prove useful on low angle plane irons, especially where the machining of the bed



The water trough can easily be raised and lowered using this knob



For longer blades, such as plane irons, this clip on chute is included



The excellent angle setter is supplied to ensure quick and easy setup



A fine adjusting toolpost makes it very easy to set the correct angle



The Editor puts two very different woodworking products through their paces and finds them not without merit

## Osmo Polyx-Oil



The last few years have seen a big rise in the popularity of oiled finishes, and the high gloss yacht-type varnish is rarely encountered, except in the occasional seafood restaurant. Historically, oiled finishes were simply plant-based oils like linseed, and have gradually been developed into modern interior finishes (like Danish oil) with the addition of varnishes and driers for a shinier, faster drying result.

### A huge range

It's only lately that waxes have been added to the recipe, and none more effectively than the finishes made by Osmo. With 100 years of experience, their huge range of oils and associated products – primarily aimed at the flooring industry – is extensive and growing all the time. Their most popular product is the standard Polyx-Oil, which produces an attractive and hardwearing finish on any timber product.

### Also tinted

After frequent requests from my students, I bought a white-tinted version to help achieve a light and natural finish and found it even better than I'd hoped. It goes on easily, looks great, and is showing every sign of maintaining its fresh appearance for a lot longer yet. Recommended.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

<b>SIZES AVAILABLE:</b>	5ml sample; 125ml; 375ml; 750ml; 2.5l; 3l & 10l
<b>SHEEN LEVELS:</b>	matt; semi-matt; satin & glossy
A versatile, premium protective oil for use on most interior wood surfaces, including floors	
<b>PRICE:</b>	£1.02-£272.76
<b>WEB:</b>	www.wood-finishes-direct.com

## Trend DWS/KIT/C diamond sharpening kit



It's possible that I speak for many readers here when I say that if only we'd understood both the mechanics and the importance of sharpening at the start of our woodworking careers, what a difference it could have made to both our work and our working lives. No matter, at least we know now, and with the wide range of sharpening products that's available today, there's no excuse for struggling on with blunt tools and a 30-year-old concave oilstone.

### Ticks all the boxes

Top of the list is the diamond stone. These come in a number of varieties, but what you're looking for is a flat plate (or stone), a uniform appearance, and preferably a reputable brand (i.e. not the Pound Shop). Ticking all those boxes is this little kit from cutter and blades specialists Trend, and is everything you need for all of your day to day sharpening requirements about the workshop.

### Handy & portable

The credit-card sized diamond plate is double-faced with a coarse 300 grit one side and a fine 600 the other. In the unlikely event of your kit becoming very blunt indeed, the coarse side will do the rough work briskly before you can settle down to the fine stuff. It's the best tool for sharpening router cutters, and, being so portable, is very handy to have in your travelling kit bag. Use it with the lapping fluid to avoid rusting.

### On file

The 600 grit tapered file is flat one side and domed the other, and is about as useful as a tool can get, just watch out it doesn't make its way into the house or you'll likely never see it again. Also included in the kit is an instructional booklet, plus a DVD by sharpening guru James Barry, the both of which will probably qualify you for *Mastermind* after consumption. **MC**

### FURTHER INFORMATION

<b>KIT INCLUDES:</b>	a precision hand-made double-sided credit card size diamond stone; versatile 75mm half round/flat mini tapered file; lapping fluid; James Barry's <i>Sharpening Made Easy</i> DVD & sharpening booklet
<b>CREDIT CARD SIZE:</b>	85 x 50 x 1.6mm
<b>PRICE:</b>	£49
<b>WEB:</b>	www.trend-uk.com

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**01604 411 568 (Northampton)**

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**01233 638 039 (Kent)**

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**01935 872 222 (Kent)**

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**01613 395 101 Lancs**

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## WANTED

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A view inside the Shoreditch Technical Institute, which later became The London College of Furniture, where Peter lectured

level, continuously moving, from one side of the premises to the other, east to west, about 200ft each side of the central corridor, which ran from north to south and was some 12ft wide. Where these crossed there were huge rubber doors with clear plastic panels to enable the tug drivers to see any possible obstructions to their passage through and deal with such. It was at the north side of one of these crossings when, on my way home after a morning shift, I met my first boss, the Chief Inspector. After we enquired about each other's health and the normal generalities in which one indulges, we were parting when he suddenly said, almost as an afterthought: "You know, you should do your City & Guilds." I instinctively knew that he meant 'cabinetmaking' but that simple remark subsequently altered my whole life, for

## A walk around the factory **PART 5**

**Peter Baker tells us of his lucky encounter with the Chief Inspector, studying for his City & Guilds in cabinetmaking, and how this helped to shape the rest of his successful career**

At the end of the last episode I mentioned that all of our work at Lebus had a time value, which was recorded on a punch card. The full description is a 'Powers Samas' punch card, which is about 38mm in width and about 100mm long with numerals 1-0 printed from top to bottom along the length. Bearing in mind that every component had a number, every sub-assembly had a number, every final assembly had a number and every operation that took place within the factory also had a number, and that some 3,000 pieces of furniture were dispatched from the factory every week, it's difficult to comprehend the magnitude of calculations that took place to enable each of the 3,500 employees to be paid what they had earned while working an incentive scheme, based on the individual productivity of each and the time they had earned regardless of the time they had actually worked...

This assessment was arrived at by use of the punch card, which had all the details of the work one had carried out during the week. Everything relating to the work was detailed on the punch card by means of holes, which were punched into the card replacing one of the digits printed thereon – one of the many systems that predated

the computer and enabled such volume manufacturing to take place for the benefit of all. This is 'payment by results', sometimes incorrectly called piecework. These recollections are not the place for a discourse on either the history or the pros and cons of incentive schemes – all I will state is that, in my opinion, they work for the benefit of both employee and employer, but then, I have always earned well on incentive schemes and have since devised and implemented many such schemes for quite a few companies in England and Wales, but back to the walk...

### Opening doors

Finished items of furniture that arrived in the polishing shop were then placed on to the appropriate conveyor belt. After much deep thought and visualising, I have concluded that there were eight, not 10, conveyor belts, which travelled at ground

level, which I can only declare, "thank you, Mr. Zak." I duly sought out the wheres and whys, arranged with my Foreman to enable me to leave work at 5.30 instead of 6pm, and cycle into the City (almost) to arrive at Shoreditch Technical Institute just before 6.30pm when the lessons began. Three days a week, come rain or shine, for three years I studied in this manner: homework done at the weekend and one paid one's own fees and bought one's own books and drawing equipment. No 'day release' then; in fact, when you add the hour and a half of lost time (at 100% bonus as well) it does start to mount up, but the life change was that this subsequently enabled me to train into the 'world of work study' – a first step into the realms of management and then into becoming a Management Consultant, where for over 25 years I solved other people's business problems, lectured one day a week at the London College of Furniture, and several other London Colleges on an ad hoc basis in differing management subjects. I really mean it when I say how grateful I am to Mr. Zac, for prompting me to open the door to a wonderfully exciting life. **WW**

### GET IN TOUCH

© Peter Baker 2017

In part 13 of this series, Peter continues his tour through the polishing shop. And if any other readers have a story to tell, we'd be glad to listen – just write to [editor.ww@mytimemedia.com](mailto:editor.ww@mytimemedia.com) and we'll see how we get on





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