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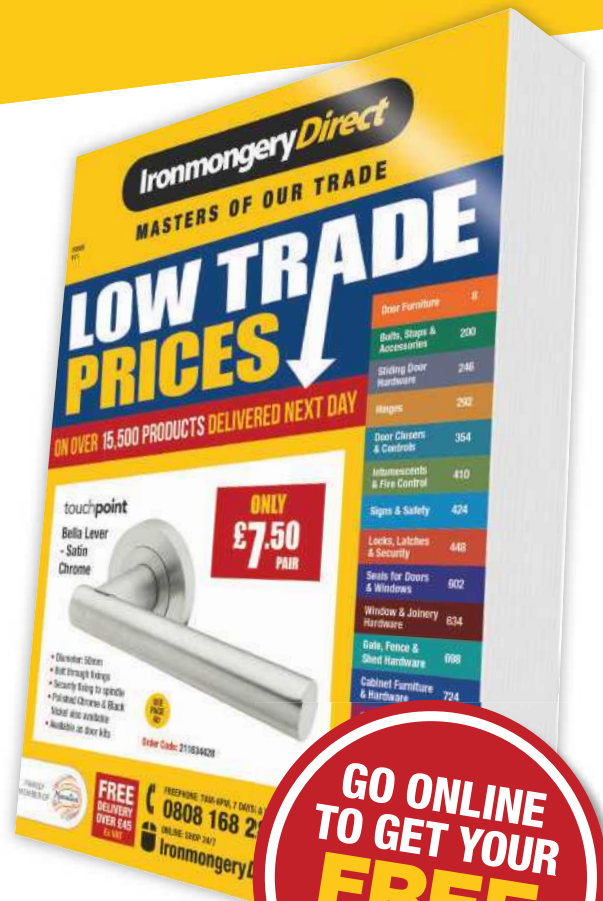
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Welcome

There's every chance that there will be a new reader or two encountering this magazine for the first time, and to those lucky people I'll take this opportunity to wish them a warm woodworking welcome to our global community of makers. Whether you're just starting out in this hugely enjoyable craft, or have been at the workplace for ages, the sentiment is the same: join us here each month and add to your store of knowledge and creative ideas.

After a recent stay on her boat, a friend of mine has caught the woodworking bug and is keen to get started. My advice to her, and indeed to anyone who feels the urge to make something, is simply this: begin today. You don't need much to get going; just a few basic hand tools and some random timber, but most of all, desire. It's likely your first effort won't be a prizewinner, but when you stand back and admire it, I guarantee you'll feel like you placed in the top three, such is the satisfaction that follows a successful project. And with the first one under your belt, your enthusiasm will grow and before you know it you'll be starting the next job. And the next.

So what's your first step? A concept is essential. Often it's a practical need which encourages us to get going, so try and get a sketch down on a piece of paper. You'd be surprised at just how useful this will prove to be, especially if you develop your drawing further to include basic dimensions and component parts. If you have a shoestring budget it's certain that your design will be influenced by what's available to hand, but if your meagre wood supplies are proving too restrictive, then it's time to get some timber in. Try to avoid spending too much money at first, you don't want to be too wasteful, so maybe see what can be scavenged or acquired from friends and neighbours. When your skills have improved



The Editor extends a warm and woodworking welcome to all new readers

you can be more certain about using timber to its best advantages and getting the most for your cash.

In the meantime, for everyone who spends most of their woodworking time in a solitary workshop (me included), think of this magazine as a club or social meeting opportunity, and join in with the rest of us to help promote and extend the simple joys of woodwork. Feel free to write in to discuss your latest project, or email us a photo of your newest work; you're always guaranteed a warm welcome here.

You can contact Mark on editor.ww@mytimemedia.com

THIS MONTH THE EDITOR HAS BEEN:

Messing about on boats ■ re-dooring a chicken coop ■ laser cutting ■ going tandem

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Shaun Stevenson of G&S Timber highlights the importance of sustainability when sourcing timber, the certifications to look out for when buying, and how all timber suppliers should ensure they are practising responsible forestry

36 Propping up the business

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52 Fortune cookie

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66 Bathroom challenge

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90 Timeslip

In the penultimate part of this series, Peter Baker tells us about the factory's dedicated surgery, and how the introduction of a principal contractor to deliver furniture signalled the advent of change at Harris Lebus

26 A REAL ROCKING BEAUTY

A rocking horse is an heirloom piece made to be handed down through generations. Here, Peter Vivian makes 'Lady Layan', a medium-sized rocking horse using reclaimed oak, gambolling on an ash stand



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Get your hands on 1 of 20 IRWIN WeldTec CSB 165mm/24T cordless circular saw blades

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42 Two for the price of one

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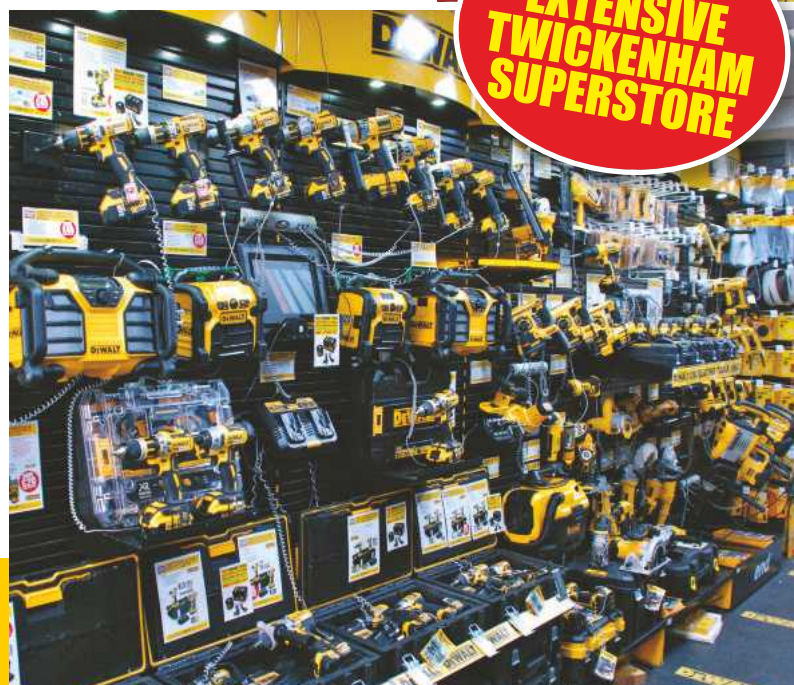
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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Here at *The Woodworker* we're settling in nicely to our new-look magazine, and we hope you're enjoying the step up to a better publication as much as we are. And, while there's no doubt that the appearance of the printed page has improved, the astute reader will no doubt have noticed that the actual changes have been few and painless. Often a makeover is just a vehicle for someone's agenda, but in our case it was just because we fancied it.

There's a lot to be said for the new; at the very least it provides the best possible opportunity for a fresh start or a change of direction. Plus the impetus that invariably accompanies new kit, personnel or surroundings is a gift and a more valuable one than we might think. But just how new do things have to be? If we're talking kit and tools, then brand-new,

just-out-of-the-box is always nice, but most of the time, just 'new to me' is fine. Of all the definitions of new, I think I like 'unknown' the best, conjuring up as it does all manner of unspoken promises and the hint of (possibly great) things to come.

So, if you've had a recent experience of something new that brought about a great change, we'd love to hear about it. Similarly, if you're just pleased with a new day each morning, then more power to you Sir or Madam, and I hope you can share your joy in the things you make.

Mark

WOOD AWARDS 2017 – OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

The Wood Awards: Excellence in British Architecture and Product Design has now launched its 2017 call for entries. Those involved in a UK-based wood project are invited to enter and have until 26 May to submit their applications.

Established in 1971, the Wood Awards recognises, encourages and promotes outstanding design, craftsmanship and installation using wood in projects throughout the UK. The Wood Awards' elite independent judging panel not only judges all submitted entries but also visits the shortlisted projects in person, making the Wood Awards a uniquely rigorous competition.

The shortlist will be announced in July and the winners will be unveiled at the awards ceremony on 21 November 2017, held at Carpenters' Hall in London. The shortlisted projects will be on display at the ceremony and during the London Design Festival in September.

New categories

The 2017 categories will be confirmed at the shortlisting. Building categories are likely to be Commercial & Leisure, Education & Public Sector, Interiors, Private and Small Project, and the Furniture & Product competition will be split into Bespoke, Production Made and Student Designer,



2016 winner of the Arnold Laver Gold Award & Structural Award – Maggie's at the Robert Parfett Building

which is open to anyone currently in education or who has left education in the past 12 months. Within the Student category there are two cash prizes: £1,000 for the Winner and £500 for the People's Choice. Other awards, such as Structural and Existing Building awards, can be given at the judges' discretion. The Arnold Laver Gold Award is the winner of winners, and is chosen from the winners of all the categories.

Sponsors

As a not-for-profit competition, the Wood Awards can only exist thanks to collaborative industry sponsorship. Arnold Laver sponsors the Arnold Laver Gold Award, which is the project that the judges deem to be the best of all the winners. Major sponsors of the Wood Awards 2017 are American Hardwood Export Council, Carpenters' Company and TRADA. Other sponsors include American Softwoods, Forestry Commission, Timber Trade Federation, Wood for Good and Furniture Makers' Company. To find out more, see www.woodawards.com.



2016 Student Designer winner – 'Geometry' – was praised for having its own definite aesthetic



'Planks Collection' was the winner of last year's Production Made category

DIARY – MAY

2–3, 9–10* & 18–19 Beginners' woodturning (2 days)
4 Introduction to Leigh Jigs*
8–12 Windsor chair
12 Festool demonstration day*
16 Bandsaws
18 Fine-tuning hand planes
18 Scrollsaw course
18–19 Beginners' routing (2 days)*
22–23 Turned boxes (advanced)
24 Pen making
25 Introduction to wood finishes*
25 Kitchen door/jointing
* Course held in Sittingbourne, Kent
Axminster Tools & Machinery
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Web: www.axminster.co.uk

5 Make a shave horse
6 & 7 Introduction to pole-lathe turning
13–14 Make your own stick for country walking
Weald & Downland Living Museum
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Tel: 01243 811 363
Web: www.wealddown.co.uk

7–10 Greenwood carving – spoons or small vessels
19–21 Netsuke carving
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West Sussex PO18 0QZ
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1–5 Dovetailing and drawer fitting
13–14 Chair making – part 1
30–2 Beginners' four-day course
Chris Tribe The Cornmill, Railway Road Ilkley, West Yorkshire LS29 8HT
Tel: 01943 602 836
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6 Introduction to woodwork: shelf & brackets
7 Introduction to woodcarving
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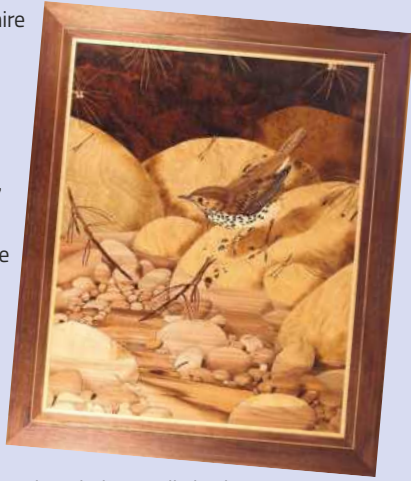
ANNUAL MARQUETRY EXHIBITION

Eccleshall-based Staffordshire Marquetry Group is pleased to announce that it will be hosting the Marquetry Society's 65th Annual International Marquetry Exhibition from Saturday 27 May to Friday 2 June 2017, and will be held at Gladstone Pottery Museum.

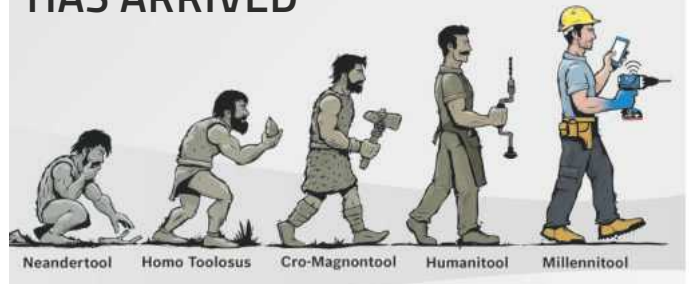
At least 250 examples of the finest contemporary marquetry from all over the UK and abroad are expected to be on display. Entry to the exhibition is free and as well as the exhibited work there will also be demonstrations of marquetry techniques and the chance to 'have a go'.

The exhibition is open from 10am to 5pm each day (last admission 4pm) – please note that the Museum is shut on Sunday and Monday.

For further information on marquetry and the event, contact Quentin Smith on **01785 850 614**, visit the Marquetry Society website – www.marquetry.org – or contact Gladstone Pottery Museum on **01782 237 777**.



THE FUTURE OF CONNECTED TOOLS HAS ARRIVED



The much-anticipated prospect of connectivity in power tools and measuring devices has become a solid reality with the arrival of several new Bosch Professional products on retailers' shelves.

These tools are connected to your phone or tablet via Bluetooth – for sending, receiving and storage of information. A small Bosch connectivity module can be bought with the tool or purchased separately and simply slotted in later. Connected tools and their users communicate via the free downloadable Bosch Toolbox app, which accesses a growing range of time and effort-saving aids.

"With these connected products, we are ushering in a whole new era in the evolution of tool use," says Steve Hillier, Marketing Director at Bosch Professional Power Tools. "In our communication materials we've had a bit of fun by illustrating that development as a progression from primitive 'Neandertool' origins through to today's 'Millenitool' age with its connected tool technology."

Key capabilities

Planned key capabilities of the Bosch connectivity system include asset management and tool location, quick tool registration and personalised settings, fault alerts, condition and usage reports, and remote control. Importantly, the system has been designed to integrate new functionalities as they evolve.

Bosch connectivity not only puts users a step ahead of their competitors today but future-proofs their businesses by equipping tools to benefit from continuing advances. The range of functions offered by the Toolbox app will go on expanding and, looking further ahead, the connectivity module will be easy to upgrade or replace if developments require it.

Four new tools

At present, Bosch is focusing on four new tools with connectivity: the GSB 18 V-60 and V-85 C Professional combi drills, GSR 18 V-85 C Professional drill driver and GWS 18 V-125 SC Professional angle grinder. Each features the latest powerful, highly efficient and long-lasting brushless EC motors, along with state-of-the-art protection and control systems. KickBack Control, Precision Clutch and LED afterglow are among the functions that can be adjusted, personalised and memorised via the Toolbox app.

As an added incentive, anyone buying one of these connected power tools complete with connectivity module before 30 June can use the app to claim a versatile, stylish, ultra-modern Withings Activité Steel activity tracker, worth over £135.

New connected levelling devices, the GCL 2-50 C and CG Line Lasers, are already available to buy. Along with strong green laser light and a user-friendly design, they offer remote angle adjustment as one of their key connectivity advantages.

These connected tools, and the comprehensive range that will follow them, offer a new way of working that's faster, smarter, more efficient and future-proof. Together with the Toolbox app, they will allow you to upgrade yourself as well as your equipment. Tool use is evolving, and Bosch want to make sure you're a Millenitool – not a Neandertool!

For further information, see www.bosch-professional.com/upgrade. The Toolbox app can be downloaded free of charge via <http://m.bosch-professional.com/aplinks.html>.



WEIRD & WONDERFUL WOOD 2017

Taking place on 13–14 May, Weir and Wonderful Wood is an annual experience not to be missed. For those who love wood, those fascinated by the beauty of wood, and beautiful wooden objects, it is a rare chance to see how objects are made and an opportunity to try making things. Demonstrations will include furniture making, musical instrument making, displays by traditional fletchers and bowyers, chainsaw carving, a wheel wright, hurdle making, woodturning, pole-lathe turning, sign writing, labyrinth making, as well as coracle making and traditional gypsy caravan displays. There will also be a working mobile sawmill on site, so if you want to bring your own tree, it can be cut for you! The event is held at Haughley Park in Suffolk; to find out more, see www.weirdandwonderfulwood.co.uk.

VERITAS MINI BENCH PLANE

This miniature tool is a fully functional one-third scale version of the Veritas small bevel-up smoothing plane. Overall, it measures 90mm long and 20.5mm wide. The A2 blade is 16mm wide and 1.5mm thick. The 25° bevel angle, together with the 13° bed angle, provides an effective cutting angle of 38°.

A stainless-steel Norris-style adjuster lets you set the blade with micro precision.

This plane is easily capable of taking a fine shaving. The investment-cast stainless steel body has a fixed mouth, machined sides and a ground sole. The front knob and rear tote are bubinga. The plane weighs about 64g and is handily supplied in a French-fitted embossed leatherette case.

Currently priced at £34.96, see www.brimarc.com.



TRITON MASTERS OF WOOD PLANS COMPETITION

As part of their Masters of Wood Plans Competition, Triton is giving users and buyers of their tools the chance to win some fantastic prizes, all you have to do is submit the plans of either a brand-new project, or an interesting twist on an old favourite. The winning entry in each category will receive a Triton TWX7 Workcentre together with the Contractor Saw module, Router Table module and a Triton TRA001 router for the workshop, and the winner in the Masters of Wood category will receive one of every Triton tool available in their area! Plus, everyone who submits a complete entry will receive a limited edition Triton Masters of Wood T-shirt. To find out more about this exciting competition, visit www.tritontools.com and enter your details.

WELCOME TO THE



MASTERS OF WOOD PLANS COMPETITION

EVEN BETTER SANDING WITH MIRKA



A new and improved backing paper with better sanding characteristics is being introduced by Mirka to its Jepuflex Plus and Avomax Plus abrasives. The backing is an improved paper with better belt sanding characteristics, including less deformation of product, which makes for better belt geometry, and a more consistent sanding medium for a better surface finish. You can also expect higher resistance to heat and humidity problems, and improved belt sanding characteristics, such as increased anti-static properties. Greater resistance to clogging can also be expected as well as an extended belt life. In terms of pricing, the belts come in a variety of sizes, so see Mirka's online belt calculator to work out which size you require: www.mirka.co.uk/beltcalculator.

DO MORE WITH A FAST-RELEASE LEVER



IRWIN Tools combines world class innovation, the best materials and the highest manufacturing standards, to manufacture the IRWIN Record Quick-Adjusting Vice.

The Vice uses fast-release lever functionality to quickly loosen the jaws and return it to the locked position, reducing the time necessary to adjust when frequently clamping and changing materials.

Record Vices are the benchmark by which all other vices are measured, and the IRWIN Quick-Adjusting Vice is no exception. Its S.G. Ductile iron body, integrated hardened steel anvil and hardened steel jaws guarantee durability, making it an ideal choice for light, medium and even heavy users.

The vice has been developed with efficiency in mind: the swivel base with three mounting points and 120° rotation makes light work of any job, giving flexibility to move around as needed, alongside a safety stop to prevent the slide separating from the body for extra peace of mind.

Understanding that every second counts for a trade professional, the self-cleaning buttress thread turns out debris when in use to prevent clogging, so there is no need to stop and start during jobs.

Available in two sizes – 100mm and 125mm – the jaw opening on the vices is 110mm and 180mm respectively, with a jaw depth of 60mm and 70mm.

To celebrate IRWIN's innovative range of products that allow tradesmen to do more on the job, IRWIN is giving end-users the chance to win some DO MORE prizes when they purchase any IRWIN product. Up until 30 June and from participating stockists, customers can be in with a chance of winning IRWIN Impact Double-Ended Bits or a DO MORE experience including rally car driving, hang gliding, tank driving and much more. For more information on the promotion, visit www.irwin-do-more.com and for more information on the IRWIN product range, see www.irwin-do-more.com/products.

BUY BIG RIG PLANS ONLINE

A brand-new website has just been launched, which allows you to buy big rig plans for Australian big rigs, road trains, B-doubles, B-triples, tippers, flat tops and low loaders. If you're familiar with this terminology, then this is the website for you! If you fancy making any of these modes of transport in wood, then check out Roger Jenkins' website: www.aussiebigrigplans.com.

Please note that this is the parent site for the huge American and European hobby woodworking markets, and there will be two identical clone sites too: one for the Australian and New Zealand hobby woodworkers, and the other site for the growing Asian hobby woodworking market. If you'd like to see some of Roger's creations in person, then two of his 1:20 scale wooden models are currently on display at the Australian National Road Transport Hall of Fame – www.roadtransporthall.com – located in Alice Springs, Central Australia.



OSMO REVIVES AGED WOOD WITH HIGHLY EFFECTIVE POWER GEL

Osmo UK, the eco-friendly wood and finishes expert, brings tired looking and aged wood back to life with its powerful cleaning agent, Osmo Wood Reviver Power Gel. This product has been especially developed to restore exterior wood, including wooden decking, timber cladding and garden furniture, back to its original colour and character.

Osmo Wood Reviver Power Gel is a jelly-like cleaner that effectively cleans and refreshes greyed and weathered exterior wood. Made from environmentally friendly and biodegradable ingredients, the product is free from harmful solvents, chlorine compounds, amines and harmful odours. Osmo's special cleaning agent is also biodegradable and odour free. One coat of Osmo Wood Reviver Power

Gel is sufficient to revive external wood back to its natural colour and appearance.

The product is ready to apply straight from the tin. After generously applying the product along the wood grain, the solution requires just 20 minutes to gently work into the wood's surface before being scrubbed with a hard bristle brush. Once rinsed with plenty of water, it is recommended to allow 48 hours drying time before applying a finish, such as Osmo Polyx-Oil, Decking-Oils and Country Colour. On average, one litre of Osmo Wood Reviver Power Gel will cover a 10m² area.

For stockist details and more information on Osmo and its range of environmentally friendly wooden products and specialist finishes, visit www.osmouk.com.

BEFORE



AFTER



NEW SHABBY CHIC BARN PAINT LAUNCH



Rainbow Chalk's new Shabby Chic Barn Paint is perfect for woodworkers and self-builders who want to transform and protect outbuildings, including sheds, barns and garages. Available in a palette of six traditional exterior building colours, Shabby Chic chalk-based Barn Paint will revive, colour and protect exterior structures.

This paint is specially formulated to provide protection against the growth of mould, mildew and algae, caused by plants or damp environments, and its water-repellent wax additives seal out water to eliminate internal dampness and rotting.

Easy-to-apply with a brush or roller the water-based paint features a tough and durable acrylic coating to ensure excellent resistance to outdoor elements, such as UV on most materials including wood, metal, concrete, and plastic cladded structures – reducing sun damage and fading.

The specially developed formula flexes with the underlying layer to reduce flaking or cracking and ensures rich, long-lasting colour protection year-on-year. Shabby Chic Barn Paint can be applied to previously painted surfaces including those coated with weathered bitumen sealants, tar, varnish or creosote. Durable and easy-to-apply, it will last around 4-5 years in most weather conditions without peeling or discolouring.

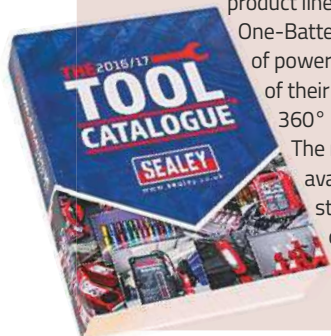
Available in 2.5, 5, 20 or 100 litre cans, prices start from £27 for 2.5l; see www.rainbowchalk.com to find out more.

SEALEY'S BIGGEST EVER TOOL CATALOGUE

Sealey's biggest ever tool catalogue features 9,500 product lines, designed for use in the trade. The new edition is a must-have reference for automotive technicians, engineers, farmers and serious DIY enthusiasts and contains over 2,200 new

product lines, including a new One-Battery-Fits-All range of power tools and variants of their award winning 360° inspection lamps.

The new catalogue is available from Sealey stockists nationwide or you can request a copy online via www.sealey.co.uk.



MACHINE MART'S NEW SPRING/SUMMER CATALOGUE

Whether it's keeping your workshop cool or getting your storage well organised, Machine Mart's new catalogue has all the tools and equipment you need this spring/summer. Featuring over 500 new products and massive price cuts, the 516-page catalogue is a 'must have' for woodworking enthusiasts seeking a huge choice at unbeatable value.

New catalogue arrivals include the new Clarke CMS210 1400W mitre saw, which is ideal for accurate mitre, bevel and cross-cuts in hard- and softwood, as well as the new Clarke CTS15 255mm table saw with stand for cross-cutting, ripping, angle and mitre cutting of hard- and softwoods, followed by the new Clarke 190mm CBS190B bandsaw, which is ideal for accurate cutting in all types of wood. Machine Mart also offers various ranges of sanders, routers, dust extractors and air compressors starting from under £100.

Now with over 20,000 items of tools and machinery in stores across the country and online, there's sure to be a tool to suit your woodworking needs. Order your free copy today via the website: www.machinemart.co.uk.





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What's new from



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NEW RECORD POWER BS9 9IN BENCH-TOP BANDSAW

MANUFACTURER: Record Power
D&M GUIDE PRICE: £179.99 (inc VAT)

This brand-new bandsaw from Record Power delivers exceptional performance in a compact and affordable package. Although ideal for the smaller workshop, its cutting performance far exceeds what might be expected for its price and size. A real benefit to this bandsaw is the cam-lock blade tension mechanism, a first for a machine at this level, and a feature that really speeds up blade change as the tension can be released and re-applied with ease.

Supplied with the Record Power bandsaw masterclass DVD, this machine would more than justify its place as the main machine in a smaller workshop or as a second bandsaw in a larger workshop for use on smaller projects and radius work. The BS9 also comes with Record Power's industry-leading five-year guarantee.



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NEW



SCHEPPACH TIGER 3000VS 240V 10IN VARIABLE-SPEED WETSTONE SHARPENING SYSTEM

MANUFACTURER: Scheppach
D&M GUIDE PRICE: £179.95 (inc VAT)

Without training and experience, costly mistakes can be made and expensive tooling ruined. This new Tiger 3000VS wetstone sharpening system from Scheppach offers superb, professional results and a razor-sharp finish every time.

The powerful induction motor with variable-speed feature ensures a steady grinding speed even by decreasing grinding stone diameter. With total accuracy and sharpening efficiency this wetstone sharpening system is easy to use even for a beginner. Ideal for the home and small workshop and supplied with a comprehensive range of accessories, it is perfect for creating sharp cutting edges on knives, scissors and tools.

The 10in wetstone sharpening system offers superior technology for professional results every time – even if you are a beginner.

The Tiger 3000VS comes complete with a special stone containing grains of aluminium oxide to achieve the perfect grinding results in less time. Also ideal for HSS tools, it includes a jig for straight edges, plane irons and ripping chisels, plus an angle setting jig for measuring exact angles and settings, and a removable leather honing wheel, which removes all burrs after sharpening.



NEW

scheppach

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UP, UP & AWAY PART 1

Ian Wilkie's toy aeroplane would make the perfect gift for a youngster – here, in part 1, he concentrates on making the various turned components



This toy aeroplane is made entirely in wood and should be robust enough for a small child to play with. It is not a model and it is not to scale. I have chosen to make it out of walnut, sycamore, birch plywood and recycled mahogany, because I had suitable offcuts and I wanted contrasting woods. You will probably find you also have timber in stock which will be suitable and this is one advantage of these smaller projects – they do not cost too much to make! Combining the natural colours of wood along with a few touches of paint can give great character to toys. The project can be turned on a small lathe, such as the Jet Midi I used, with standard equipment. I have grouped together the components that are turned in Part 1, and in Part 2, I will describe the propeller, wing, tailplane and undercarriage assembly. **www**

CUTTING LIST

Hardwood blanks in contrasting woods

Fuselage	220 long × 40 wide × 20mm-thick – qty 2
Engine	50 × 50 × 50mm – qty 1
Cylinders	8 dia. × 12mm long – qty 8
Nose cone	30 × 30 × 30mm – qty 1
Tip tanks	60 × 22 × 22mm – qty 1
Wheels	30 × 30 × 50mm – qty 2
Hubs	25 × 25 × 25mm – qty 2
Pilot	25 × 25 × 80mm – qty 1
Scrap pieces of plywood	

THE FUSELAGE

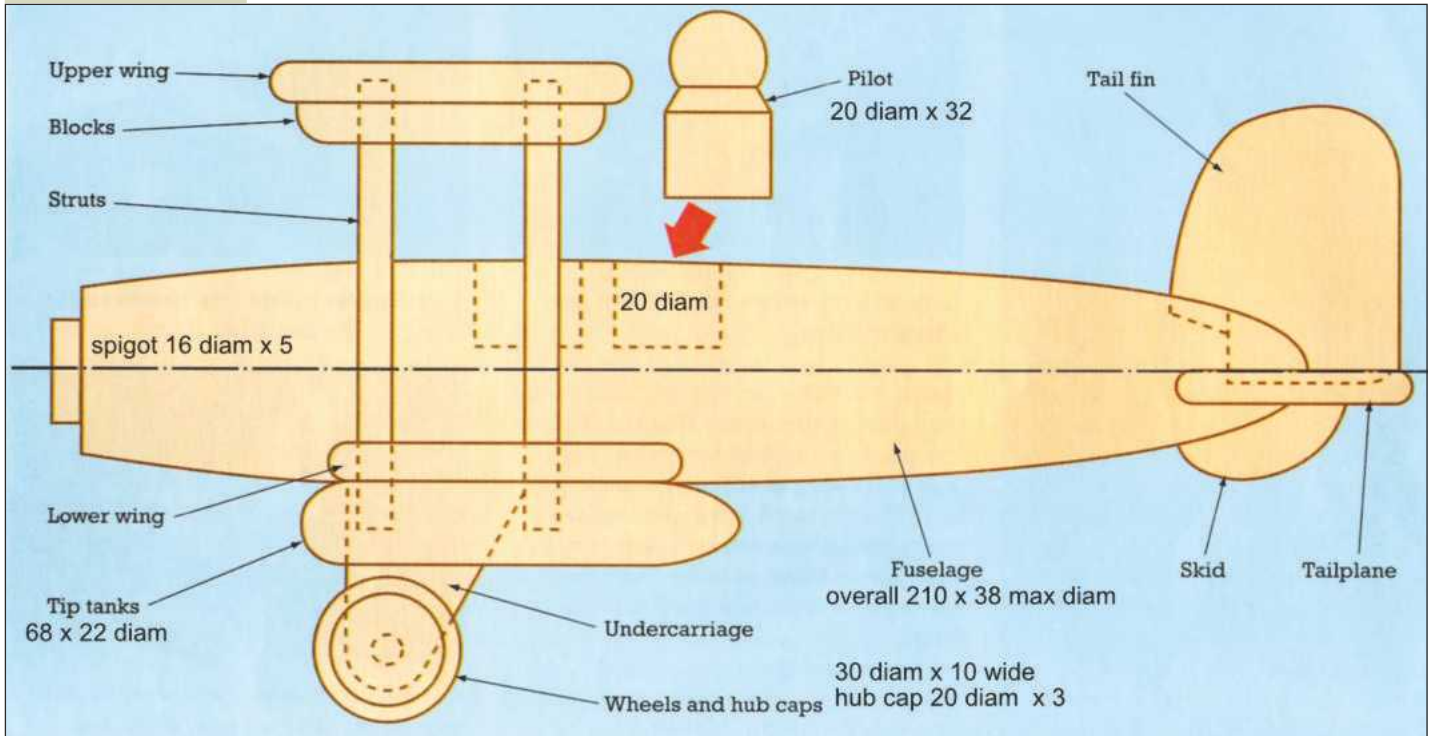


Fig.1 Fuselage drawing



1 The fuselage is turned from a laminated block made up of two contrasting hardwoods. Prepare the wood accurately paying particular attention to the surfaces that are to be glued together. Apply PVA, cramp up and leave overnight



2 Cut two pieces of scrap plywood and hot-melt-glue them to each end of the laminated blank. The plywood pieces will ensure that the wood does not split along the glue joint when pressure is applied between centres. Draw diagonal lines across the ends to find the centre and centre-pop



3 Mount the blank between centres on the lathe. If you have Steb centres these will be ideal, but if not, use a prong drive in the headstock and a revolving centre in the tailstock. Because the Steb centre point retracts as it grips, the wood and the teeth form a ring around the centre point, which means there is less chance of splitting. Set the lathe speed to 2,000rpm and turn to the round with a 12mm spindle roughing gouge



4 Continue to turn the wood with a small oval skew chisel to produce a torpedo shape as shown in the drawing and then sand until smooth. Turn a spigot at the cockpit end of the fuselage to which the radial engine block will eventually be glued



5 With the wood still mounted measure off a distance of 50mm from the front of the fuselage and carefully make a saw cut in the lighter wood, which will be on the underside. Measure a further 60mm and make a second saw cut. Remove the wood between the cuts with a chisel or small file to a depth of 6mm (the thickness of the wing) and sand the area until it is absolutely flat



6 A view of the underside with the flat area for the lower wings and a spigot at the front to mount the engine

ENGINE, CYLINDERS & NOSE CONE

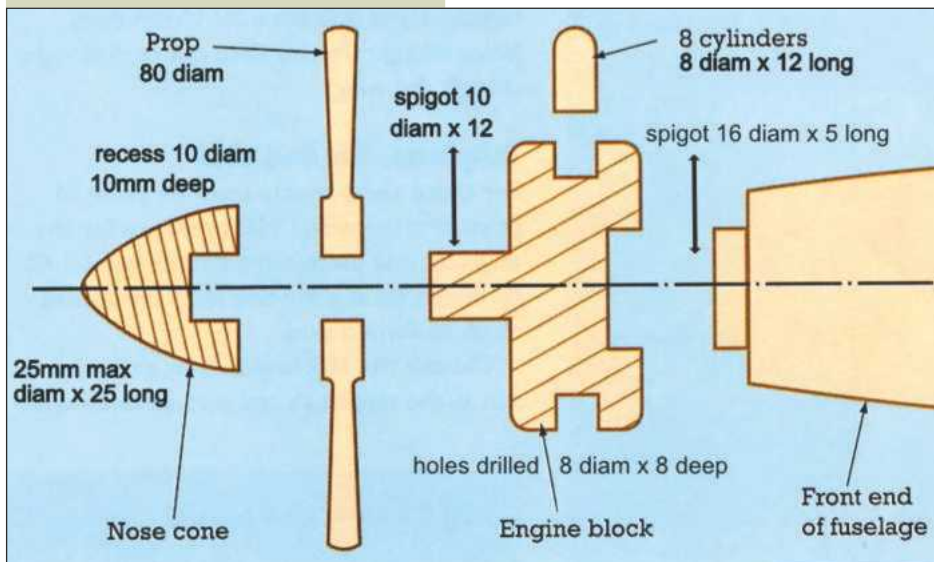


Fig.2 Engine, cylinders and nose cone



7 Mount the engine blank on a glue chuck. Bring up a revolving centre for support and turn the wood to 45mm diameter; move the tailstock out of the way and face off the blank. Use a beading tool to cut a 16mm diameter x 5mm deep recess to match the spigot turned on the fuselage and check for fit. Mark off 20mm at the headstock end and turn a spigot measuring 10mm diameter x 12mm long



8 Mark the positions for eight equally spaced holes around the circumference of the engine for the cylinders. If your lathe has an indexing facility or you have an indexing plate, this will be useful, but if not, take a strip of paper and cut it to match the circumference. Mark to give eight divisions and glue the paper to the blank with Copydex adhesive, then centre punch the positions. Hold the engine block securely in a machine vice and drill the holes 8mm diameter x 8mm deep. If you have a drilling jig, this action can be carried out on the lathe



9 Choose a timber to contrast with the engine and cut 8mm diameter hardwood into 12mm lengths for the engine cylinders. Sand to fit, dip in PVA, and tap each cylinder into its engine hole. I use bamboo barbecue skewers frequently but where I need something larger I have discovered bamboo knitting needles, which come in a useful range of diameters. They are very strong and the diameter is accurate all along the length



10 The completed engine with its cylinders should look like this



11 Prepare a blank for the nose cone and mount on a glue chuck. Turn to a diameter of 25mm and face off the outer surface. Mark the centre with the lathe rotating and form a small indentation with the point of the skew chisel held on its side. Remove the revolving centre and fit a drill chuck in the tailstock to drill the centre hole to match the engine spigot. Remove the drill chuck and mark 22mm off along the blank. Shape the nose cone and part off. From the remaining wood on the chuck form a short 10mm spigot to act as a jam chuck so that the nose cone can be remounted and sanded. This photo shows how the nose cone looks, but at this stage we have not made the propeller

TIP TANKS, WHEELS & HUBCAPS



12 Mark halfway along the blank for the tip tanks. Before mounting the blank between centres, drill the 8mm diameter holes right through the blank for the wing struts, two for each tank. Turn to produce two torpedo shapes



13 Sand the top surfaces flat so that the tanks can later be glued to the underside of the lower wing, as shown in the dry run photo. To make the wheels, mount a blank on a glue chuck and turn to the round. Fit a drill chuck in the tailstock and drill a hole 8 x 20mm deep. Form a recess on the front surface for the hub cap. Mark off 8mm and start to part off the first wheel, but before completely parting off gently round off the edge and, with the long point of a skew, cut shallow 'V's to emulate tyres. Part off and make the second wheel. Form a spigot on the remaining wood to make a jam chuck so that the reverse face of each wheel can be tidied up. An alternative method would be to mount both blanks on a mandrel for turning



14 Clean off the glue chuck, glue on the blank for the wheel hub and turn to fit into the wheel recess with the front face slightly convex. Part off with a thin parting tool and repeat

PILOT & OBSERVER



15 Turn Biggles and Algy to fit into the 20mm holes drilled in the fuselage with their head and shoulders visible. They can be painted and detailed to look the part. When I originally made the Mark 1 version of this toy, I turned the men up from three separate coloured woods but it was probably making unnecessary work. This time I used one blank!

NEXT MONTH

In part 2, we're ready for take-off as Ian makes the wings, propeller, tailplane and undercarriage assembly

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The importance of responsible forestry

Shaun Stevenson of G&S Timber highlights the importance of sustainability when sourcing timber, the certifications to look out for when buying, and how all timber suppliers should ensure they are practising responsible forestry

As one of the most valuable resources in the world, wood has been sourced for millennia in order to provide warmth, decorations and construction. The responsible sourcing of this resource has been a topic of discussion for many decades, as local populations of people, animals and vegetation are impacted in the beginning stages, but the entire world will see its consequences.

Sustainable timber

Wood is sourced daily for use across a number of industries, such as logging, bio fuels, and for the expansion of land for agriculture. When practised responsibly, sustainable timber allows for the continuous renewal of forests as wood is sourced: when a tree is cut down, another one is planted in order to replace it.

Sustainable forestry considers more than just the replantation of trees; it ensures the lack of ecological damage to the environment and to the flora and fauna native to the area. Additionally, sustainable timber is renewable due to the long-term approach into managing local resources. The sustainability factor will ensure that the trees and forests in modern times will survive for generations to come, and to ensure a high level of clean air and wildlife.

Two-thirds of the UK's timber is imported: 80% is softwood from Scandinavia, Latvia and other Baltic states, and Russia; 15% is imported from Canada, Europe, and the USA; and the remaining 3% from Malaysia and Brazil, among other tropical regions.



Timber truck picking up logs

Consequences of irresponsible forestry

The irresponsible sourcing of trees has a deep impact that is felt across the world. Both short- and long-term, deforestation is a big threat to both animals and the planet itself. With the absence of trees, global warming becomes a major factor in the destruction of the planet: trees absorb greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, and produce oxygen and water vapour that are released into the atmosphere.

In addition, loss of animals' habitats will result in the extinction of many species, as around 70% of both flora and fauna live in forests. Indigenous people also lose their homes, which represents a great cultural loss. With the absence of trees, the soil becomes more exposed to the sun, which dries and renders it unusable for farming, and without tree roots holding the soil down, there is an increased risk of flooding and erosion. Erosion causes dangerous contaminants to enter water sources, and greatly diminishes the overall drinking water quality as a result.

Controlling measures to guarantee the responsible sourcing of timber

In order to ensure the existence and maintenance of sustainable and responsible forestry practices, timber certification systems were put into place. Organisations such as the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and the PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) ensure the promotion of Sustainable Forest Management and responsible forestry.

The presence of their certifications and logos



An oak log being processed



Deforestation in Latin America – the result of irresponsible forestry practices



across a company's website or promotional material guarantees that the business meets the highest social and environmental standards in the aid of forest protection. The FSC accreditation encompasses 10 Principles of Forest Stewardship, which begins with the compliance of all principles and laws that FSC and other governments put into place. In addition, ensuring the legality and the right of use is vital, as is ensuring indigenous people's rights of ownership above a company's.

The local communities and workers must be accounted for, guaranteeing their economical welfare, and the forest, ecosystem, landscape, resources, and the biodiversity must be respected,

maintained and restored in order to minimise the impact as much as possible.

Similarly, PEFC works towards upholding the forest supply chain and ensuring all components of transparency, accountability and ensured continuous compliance to all sustainability demands are followed.

By ensuring both the initial impact of sourcing the timber and the long-term effects are not only managed but minimised, the protection of forests and biodiversity across the world is guaranteed. With trees being such an important factor for the well-being of the entire planet, companies are required to adhere to these organisations'

principles and criteria in order to assure customers across the world that their timber is responsibly sourced. **WW**

FURTHER INFORMATION

G&S Specialist Timber are specialist hardwood timber merchants who provide high quality woodworking tools and machinery. They are certified by both the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). To find out more, see their website: www.toolsandtimber.co.uk

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airmaster

8/250

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7/250	2HP	7	24ltr	£94.99	£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
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powered by Li-Ion

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KA900E*	350W/230V	13x455	£59.98	£71.98

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* SS = Stainless Steel

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MODEL	BLADE DIA/BORE DEPTH (mm)	CROSS CUT EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
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MODEL	VOLTAGE	HEAT OUTPUT KW	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
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DEVIL 7003	230V	3	£59.98	£71.98
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DEVIL 7005	400V	5	£84.99	£101.99
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DEVIL 7009	400V	9	£139.98	£167.98
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Devil 1200	36.6	£169.98
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Clarke CON750#	750W	80/10mm	£28.99	£34.79
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MODEL	MOTOR (W)	PLUNGE (mm)	EXC.VAT	INC.VAT
CR1C*	1200	0-50	£46.99	£56.39
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CBG6RSC	HD	150mm	£54.99	£65.99
CBG6SB#	PRO	150mm	£54.99	£65.99
CBG6RWC	HD	150mm	£59.98	£71.98
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A real rocking beauty

A rocking horse is an heirloom piece made to be handed down through generations. Here, **Peter Vivian** makes 'Lady Layan', a medium-sized rocking horse using reclaimed oak, gambolling on an ash stand

Over 40 years ago while walking along the high street in nearby market town Wimborne Minster, I noticed three rocking horses: one in oak, one in mahogany and the third in walnut, in the window of the well-known furniture store, Sturtons & Tappers, which is still there to this day. I vowed then that one day I would have a go at making one of these beautiful heirloom toys, so fast forward 30 years and I finally had the tools, reason, and hopefully, the skill to make one. Several more followed, some as gifts, but some as paying commissions, as this article details.

The commission

Another 10 years passed without any further requests until recently when I received an enquiry about a commission. I visited the customer with my half-sized sample horse in its own portable horse box (**photo 1**), along with assorted photos of some of the horses I've made. They selected 'Sultan', a rocking horse made to resemble a real horse with the same name. He was made from reclaimed oak with an ash stand, and they even wanted the same colour mane, saddle blanket (numnah) and tack.

The design

I have based all of my horses on Anthony Dew's excellent plans, which, in turn, are based on an early design by Lines. I like to refine the shape slightly, rounding the body and legs more, as there

are no straight lines or flat planes on a real horse! The medium size is the most popular as it tends to suit 5-8 year olds. Much younger and they don't have the strength in their muscles to hold themselves upright; much older and they are more likely to have other interests!

Making a start

I had previously made full-sized templates from the plans as I realised early on that I would probably make more than one. After dimensioning all the timber according to the cutting list supplied with the plans, I traced the templates onto the prepared timber (**photo 2**) and cut out a large three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle of a horse on the bandsaw.

Assembly

The first part of the assembly is to glue and screw the legs to the bottom section of the body ensuring that the angles are accurate as this sets the distance between the hooves: they need to be the same front and rear where they are attached to the hoof rails (**photo 3**). The next step is to build up the rest of the body with the end blocks and sides; this leaves you with a four-legged box without a lid (**photo 4**). Before adding the top piece to close the body, I ask the customer if they would like to include anything in this 'memory box'. I have had some interesting replies in the past – someone wanted a miniature Buddha and prayer beads, while another had a USB port included in



1 Half-sized horse plus 'stable'



2 Horse (T)ricing



3 Base and legs



the chest behind the rosette, which had the number one song in the charts on the day that the baby, whose horse it was to be, was born – *Umbrella* by Rhianna. Others have included family photos, but if, as in this instance, they had nothing particular in mind, I include a daily paper from the day the horse is sealed (**photo 5**). You may think that no one will ever see the contents,

but in 100 years' time someone might be tasked with restoring your horse! Before adding the top part of the body, I drill a couple of holes where the neck will sit to enable me to glue and screw the two parts together for extra strength, but make sure the screws are well away from the extremities as you don't want to hit them when you start the carving.



4 Four-legged box



5 Sealing the memory box



6 The head and neck



7 Rough carving



8 The saddle block



9 Danish oil applied

The head & neck

The next step is to glue the four muscle blocks to the neck and add the head, not forgetting to dowel and glue it to the neck (photo 6). To make the horse appear more lifelike the head is angled slightly to one side by creating a bevel on the face where the head joins the neck. In addition, the neck block is turned to the same direction, which increases the total angle. Traditionally it seems that the head is turned to the left: I have done this both ways but if I know where the horse is to be displayed, which is usually up against a wall, I make sure the head is turned away so you can see more detail. Next, the two pieces are added to form the ears. You should now have something resembling a horse drawn by Picasso in his 'Cubist' period.

Let the carving commence

I start the carving with an angle grinder fitted with an Arbortech disc; this removes material very quickly but great care needs to be taken when using it as it can remove fingers with equal ease! I can normally rough carve a horse to shape in a day using one of these tools, before moving

on to conventional woodcarving gouges, and a variety of sanders. Refining the roughly carved horse to something resembling the finished article usually takes me another couple of days (photo 7). As the brilliant sculptor and woodcarver Ian Brennan once said (Google him): "I start with a chainsaw and finish with a scalpel."

Ears, eyes & teeth

Hollowing the ears, defining the nostrils and refining the teeth and mouth can be done using conventional gouges but I use a Dremel with a spherical sintered ball-type cutter, which leaves a slightly rough, 'furrowed' finish. I quite like the difference in finish between this and the smoothness of the rest of the horse, but you could always sand it to match. I drill the recesses for the eyes with a Forstner bit the nearest size larger than the glass eyes supplied with the tack kit (more of which later). Take great care with the positioning as it affects the whole appearance of the horse's face. I used to cut a circle of tape and try several different positions until I was happy, but now I draw around the eye and check, and sometimes I still change my mind. I secure them

in place with a small amount of clear silicone, then add the saddle block to the horse's back – here you need to carefully saw and chisel a slot for this, noting that it is angled backwards (photo 8).

Approaching the finish line

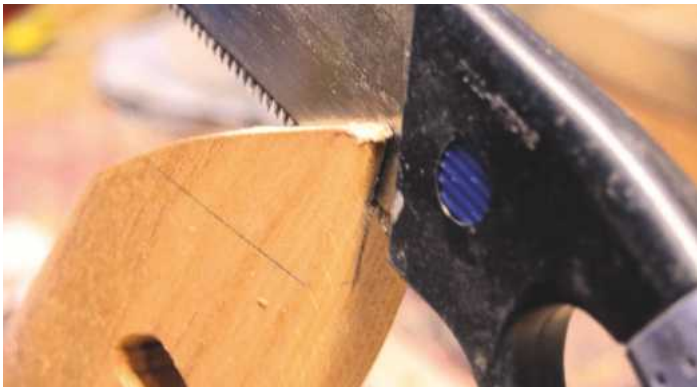
Finally sand down to 240 grit, removing as much dust with either compressed air or with a tack rag. If you want to stain the horse you will need to apply a thinned down coat of shellac sanding sealer first to prevent the stain from soaking into the end-grain of the wood, which would then appear much darker than the remainder of the horse. If you are not planning to stain it, then apply a second coat before lightly sanding out any runs or dust nibs with 240 grit, taking great care not to cut right through the shellac. I then apply as many coats of Danish oil as is required to achieve the level of sheen that suits the horse, remembering to wipe any surplus oil off after 10 minutes to avoid it becoming sticky. A glossier finish seems to suit a mahogany horse whereas a softer sheen is better on an oak horse. A couple of coats of a good quality paste wax finishes the job. This finish isn't as durable as some



10 Recess for the stirrup staples



11 Round tenons



12 & 13 Cutting the hoof notches



14 & 15 Split pins & 'bowler hats'

of the varnishes that are available, but it is much easier to 'top up' the finish after the inevitable wear and tear (photo 9). If you want to paint your horse in the traditional dapple grey, you will need to tape the joints and paint it with Gesso first, but the booklet supplied by The Rocking Horse Shop provides much more information; they even supply the stippling brushes for applying the dappling.

Preparing to tack

In preparation for the leather tack you will need to chisel out two recesses to receive the giant staples that are used to secure the stirrup straps (photo 10). Next, drill a hole for the tail, making sure that it is at approximately 90° to a tangent on the curve of the horse's bottom so the tail will protrude at the correct 'perky' angle. The mane comes attached to a strip of leather that is nailed to the neck, but you need to punch the heads just below the surface to hide them – combing the mane over them helps, too.

The tack kit supplied by The Rocking Horse Shop isn't cheap but offers good value for money owing to its comprehensive nature and great quality. All the tack is leather, the stirrups,

buckles and bit are solid brass, and the mane and tail are genuine horse hair. You can choose man-made fibre for these but if you are producing a family heirloom to be handed down through generations, it seems a shame to spoil the ship... Also supplied are all the fancy daisy head nails, brass rosettes and the large brightly coloured rosette and ribbon that are nailed to the horse's chest. If you are building a horse on a swing stand (sometimes referred to as a safety stand) rather than a horse on bows, you will need the swing irons that are supplied, but make sure you order the appropriate set.

Making a stand

The stand is relatively straightforward but needs to be accurately made. The holes on the bottom and top rails must be drilled at exactly 90° or the pillars will be crooked and look awful. I turn the pillars as per the plans: they are a traditional design also based on the Lines original but you could turn them to your own design or leave them square if you don't have access to a lathe. The round tenons on the top and bottom of the pillars need to be wedged to make sure they are at 90°

to the grain direction of the rails (photo 11).

Before you start to mount the hardware to the stand it needs to have the finish applied – I prefer to varnish the stand as it is subjected to a lot of wear and tear when getting on and off the horse and this finish is a bit more durable. Prepare the hoof rails as per the cutting list noting that the ends are rounded and they have a stopped chamfer on all four long edges.

The final hurdle

Now the horse and stand are completed it is time for the final assembly, starting with accurately drilling the holes on the top rail of the stand to accept the swing iron brackets, not forgetting to fit the bearing plates under the swing irons. A dab of grease should keep the squeaks at bay for a while, then bolt them into position. Drill the holes in the hoof rails for the ends of the swing irons to pass through. The horse's hooves need to be notched to fit over the hoof rails; this is one of the trickiest parts of the build as any gaps will look unsightly. Carefully mark the hooves and remove the bulk of the waste with a fine-toothed saw, then refine the shape with a sharp chisel.

WOODWORK Medium-sized rocking horse on a swing stand

Keep test fitting them until you are satisfied (**photos 12 & 13**). Next, drill the holes through the hooves and through the rails noting the angle required to exit the inner face of the rail in the correct position. Bolt the horse to the rails and try out the swinging action of your horse, then stand back and admire your handiwork. The swing irons may require bending a little so that they don't protrude too far through the hoof rails as this will prevent you from fitting the 'bowler hats'. Pass the supplied split pins through the pre-drilled holes in the end of the swing irons and bend them to suit, then fit the bowler hats with brass screws (**photos 14 & 15**).

Saddle up

Now you can start to tack the horse, by first fitting the bridle, reins and bit, then adding the saddle blanket using the daisy nails supplied, noting it will need a hole cut in it to access the giant staples. Pass the stirrup straps through the staples and thread the stirrups onto the straps. Next, nail the saddle in place taking care to get it in the correct position. The head and neck of the horse being angled means that the front of the saddle won't be central to the neck. The back of the saddle hangs just over the rear of the saddle block and will be trimmed later. Strips of leather are provided to form the crupper, which goes from the saddle block to the tail; a separate piece goes around the tail to hide any rough edges and helps to keep the tail at the correct angle. Another length is used to form the Martingale on the chest, and the final crowning glory is the rosette, which is nailed at the 'V' formed by the Martingale. All that's needed now is a final wax to the horse and leather, as well as remembering to take a photo of your beautiful hand-made creation (I always forget!) **www**

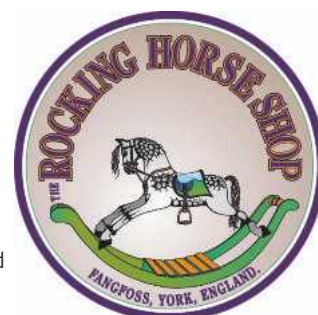


16 The finished rocking horse in all its glory



FURTHER INFORMATION

If you're inspired by Peter's article and fancy having a go at making your own heirloom rocking horse, then take a look at The Rocking Horse Shop website, or pay them a visit in person at their Yorkshire premises. They even run a range of woodcarving courses, hosted by Peter Berry and Michael Wem. To find out more, see www.rockinghorse.co.uk or call 08007 315 418



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★ STAR LETTER

Easy patina? We don't think so!



200 years in a tin, possibly

Hello Mark,

Anyone who appreciates a piece of antique furniture will know that part of its charm is the patina that develops with age. I was amused therefore when I saw this wax-based product on the shelf at my local decorating centre. If only it were that easy!

Charles Taylor

Hi Charles, thanks for sending that one in. It amazes me to see what people will come up with next. I guess some products' success (or otherwise) lies in the marketing of it and in this case, also the naming of the product. A certain naivety in the customer could also help... I'm off to buy some now!

Mark

Saw blade clock

Hi Mark,

I thought you might like to see this saw blade clock my granddad made. It's a redundant blade set in a piece of cherry, and the numerals are dominoes his grandfather made about 100 years ago to keep him company on his travels.

Kerry Dodds

Hi Kerry, well that's a bit of fun isn't it? The blade looks good in the kerf there – I just hope it lives on a shelf somewhere out of harm's way! Thanks for that one; I'm always keen to see readers' work. **Mark**



The Woodworker: cutting a swathe through ordinary time pieces

Converting wood using a chainsaw

Dear Mark,

Although my problem arises from my circumstances, I would like to suggest a line for an article for the woodturners. I live in North Norfolk but spend the winters in Portugal. I have a small bandsaw (Record 250) but only in Norfolk. I have good access to large branches and tree trunks and want to use a chainsaw to reduce the size and prepare the wood for turning. I would like to build up experience and knowledge but need guidance.

Some people have skills and experience in converting trunks to figures, which is not what I want to do, but is in the same skill set. I do not want to make a Hiawatha but see that these skills could be used in preparing wood for turning.

Could you find a worker in this activity who might make up an article showing the skills needed, safety aspects and suggesting devices for holding the raw trunk or branch safely? The opportunities for setting up courses are there so it should not lead to an expensive commission.

I think it could lead to a one-day course so

there is a financial inducement for someone to make a name for themselves.

Regards, **Charles Bradshaw**

Hi Charles, I suspect you're not alone in seeking guidance for working with a chainsaw, and I hope you find some help very soon. There's no question that this is the most dangerous piece of kit you can buy over the counter with no questions asked (don't get me started!), and it's vital that the safety basics are learned before using one in earnest.

There are a number of companies across the UK offering one-day training courses in using a chainsaw safely, and some will come to you if it's more convenient. I'd recommend that you sign up for one at your earliest convenience and would be interested to hear of any other readers' experiences in this field. And if you're a turner who regularly uses a chainsaw to prepare timber for the lathe, please write in with your tips and suggestions, and you never know, we may well make an article out of it. All the best, and keep it safe. **Mark**



When using a chainsaw, it is vital to wear the appropriate safety gear

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 on the usual address: editor.ww@mytimemedia.com

Please note that all digital photos need to be greater than **1MB** in size to guarantee sufficiently good reproduction for the printed page

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Cutting depth at 45° max.	44 mm
Motor	230 V~
Input	1100 W

WIN!

1 OF 20 IRWIN WELDTEC CSB 165MM/24T CORDLESS CIRCULAR SAW BLADES



IRWIN TOOLS IS GIVING 20 LUCKY READERS THE CHANCE TO WIN SOME OF THEIR EXTREMELY DURABLE NEW CIRCULAR SAW BLADES

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70% stronger teeth

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"Our engineers have placed an enormous amount of time and effort into the development of the IRWIN WeldTec blade because we understand the rough, rugged conditions construction professionals face every day," says Ian Birdsall, Sr., Brand Marketing Manager for IRWIN. "They need a blade that helps get the job done, quickly and cleanly. The durability of the new WeldTec blades reduces time spent changing blades and increases productivity as a result."

The range

The new range from IRWIN includes the following:

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- 20 x WeldTec blades for corded saws

DO MORE prizes

To celebrate IRWIN's innovative range of products that allow tradesmen to do more on the job, the tools manufacturer is giving end-users the chance to win some DO MORE prizes when they purchase any IRWIN product. Up until 30 June and from participating stockists, end-users can be in with a chance of winning IRWIN Impact Double-Ended Power Bits or a DO MORE experience including stunt driving, overnight sailing, hang gliding and much more. To find out more see,

www.irwin-do-more.com.

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning 1 of 20 IRWIN WeldTec CSB 165mm/24T cordless circular saw blades, just visit www.getwoodworking.com/competitions and answer this simple question:

QUESTION: WHAT PERCENT STRONGER ARE THE SUB-MICRO GRAIN CARBIDE TEETH?

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Propping up the business

Regular readers may recall that **Dennis Knight** was featured on the front cover of our May 2009 issue for his article on pen turning. Here he relates how making props for TV keeps him doubly busy in retirement

It's funny how things turn out. When I retired and set up a workshop in my garage with the firm intention of making pens and other small turnings as a hobby, I didn't imagine that my handiwork would be regularly seen on TV in over 40 countries!

Prop forward

It all began about five years ago when my son, Rob, started his own company developing eco-friendly cleaning and washing products and selling them on well-known TV shopping channels.

If you have ever watched these channels, like me, you had probably never given a thought to the various items, often small versions of the real thing, that are used to show what a particular product is designed to do. But they are vital to the sales pitch and their realism and quality can make the difference between success and failure in what is a very competitive environment.

And so it was that Rob asked if I would consider making props for him. He explained that these could be as diverse as a miniature carpeted staircase or shower screen with which he could demonstrate the effectiveness of his products.

In those early days we would design the prop on the back of an envelope and one way or another I made the deadlines (always deadlines!). Now I get fairly precise instructions or drawings, although there is always room for my own personal touches and flourishes.

Absorbing work

One particular challenge was the 'towel prop'. For a long time Rob had been demonstrating

how his eco-friendly clothes softener left towels more absorbent than those washed in the more well-known conventional chemical-laden products. He did this by manually tipping water over two adjacent towels, which clearly illustrated the difference in absorbency.

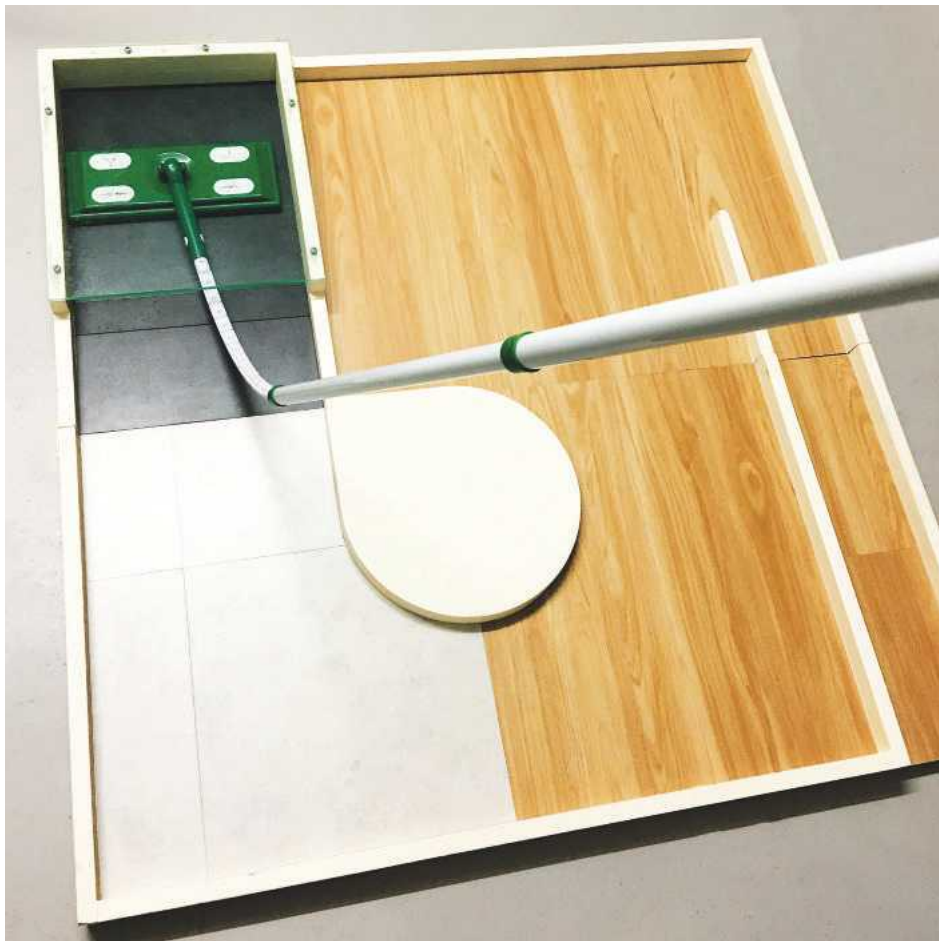
This had proved to be an accepted demonstration on shopping channels in some 34 countries and had worked well, but when he proposed this demo on American TV he



1 The prototype 'towel soak' prop freshly made...



2 ... and in action, showing that it works!



3 The 'maze' prop clearly illustrating the incredible flexibility of the mop handle

was told (typically!) that it could result in rival companies instigating litigation on the grounds that he was purposely drenching one towel more than the other. They needed a mechanical means of doing this that was obviously even-handed.

In photos 1 & 2 you can clearly see the idea I came up with. Two plastic jars, filled with an equal quantity of water, fixed to a narrow board sitting on a dowel, which, on the release of a safety bolt, could be swivelled so that the lip of the jars hit the towels at the same time. The 'paddles' on each side allow for the small independent adjustments that have to be made to allow for the thickness of the towels and the variances in the way they are folded, etc. It worked great! In fact so good that Rob decided to use it elsewhere and it is now a regular feature in other countries.



4 Our bespoke washing machines on set and ready for action – and no parts left over!

It's amazing

Another prop that called for some creativity was the 'maze'. Rob markets a plastic mop that features a head that can swivel and an incredible flexible handle, which is believed to be a world first, that is ideal for getting under low items such as furniture. But how to illustrate its effectiveness?

The answer was as shown in photo 3. You can see why we call it the maze with its narrow channel where the mop enters and then follows a path across the laminated floor, its swivel head easily coping with the roundel and then over the tiles and under the Perspex to show its versatility. Like all of the larger props, it has to be made in two or more parts for ease of handling and shipping. Again, this has been



5 The deceptive pseudo sink. It looks the part when on live TV



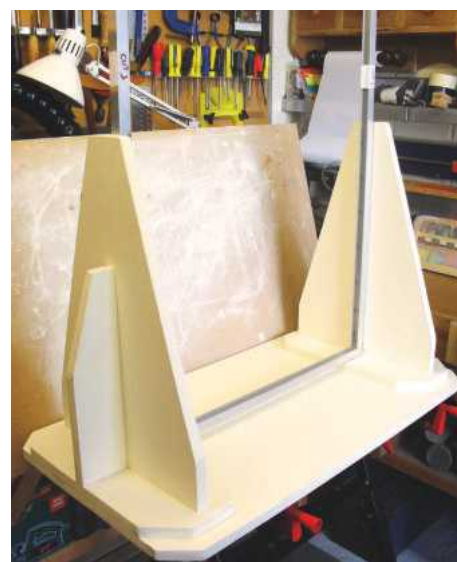
6 The race is on with the 'iron slide' prop



7 Mimicking a tiled wall



8 Small section of worktop used to demonstrate the cleaning power of our products. One of the more simple props to make



9 I'm pretending to be a window or shower screen and I won't topple over when rubbed or scrubbed!

a winning demonstration and I have made many of these. It is of course expensive to ship these props, which by their very nature are heavy, to the various countries and once there they are left in storage at the studios for use in subsequent selling slots. This of course means that any one prop may need to be made dozens of times, so I don't think my work will be finished any time soon!

Clothes prop

The product that started it all was a device to replace traditional washing powder in the form of an egg-shaped plastic container filled with pellets that produces a powerful but eco-friendly foam, which is proven to be just as effective in getting clothes clean. The 'egg' is put directly into the drum of the washing machine but the problem was how to illustrate it going through the washing cycle to compare the foam it produces with washing powder and liquid?

Getting three washing machines into the studio was not logistically possible (TV studios are surprisingly small with space always at a premium) and, in any case, they could not be plumbed in.

A partial answer was found in the form of portable camping washing machines, but, frustratingly, their plastic drums were not translucent and so the washing cycle would be invisible to the viewer. We ended up buying some bespoke clear plastic tubs, which we sat on simple MDF boxes, and into that we fitted the motor, drive mechanism and associated electrics stripped out from the camping machines (photo 4). We even managed to get the agitating action working, with no leaks!

Introducing electrics to the mix was a departure for me and I remember late one night in the workshop with Rob, frantically trying to get three machines up and running for a slot on Spanish TV the next evening. I've never seen so many small parts spread over the workbench but in the end all was well and they passed their PAT test. Many machines later and we have got it off to a fine art, but it illustrates the diversity and lateral thinking required in making props.

Top of the props

It is gratifying to know that our props are widely regarded as some of the best on the shopping channels but, of course, not all props require

that level of creativity and sometimes we just have to overcome the practical problems of working in a television studio. A good example is the dilemma we had when needing to demonstrate a sink cleaning product. TV studios are notoriously plumbing unfriendly (i.e. it doesn't exist) and each demonstration produced copious amounts of waste water.

The Producer made it clear that a bucket shoved under the sink was not acceptable (!) and any solution would have to be as realistic as possible. So, we devised a simple box attached to the work surface, which held a container into which the waste water emptied (photo 5).

The short section of work surface extending at each end of the sink allowed the whole unit to be suspended between two tables and, with the right camera angles, the deceit was complete. Simple but effective.

Another example is where we needed to show that a specially designed shoe made to fit on the sole plate of an iron would reduce the effort required to make it glide over the clothes, thus making the whole ironing process much easier. Would you believe someone doing their ironing



DENNIS' LATEST PROPS



'Dome' props finished and ready to demonstrate the 'Fresher for Longer' discs

Dome prop

The photo above shows six of these that I had just made. My son's company produce a 'Fresher for Longer' disc, which, when placed near to fruit, keeps it fresh much longer. It's all based on suppressing the levels of ethylene gas that is produced naturally by fruit, and which is the ripening agent. We needed a way to show the benefit of using these and so the demonstration consists of two domes each covering fruit bought at the same time, and, after a period of time has elapsed, showing the obvious difference in freshness that the one with the discs has. The levels of ethylene produced, with and without the discs present, is measured on a special meter, which is fed via a tube inserted through a hole in the top of the dome.

Only the bases required woodworking but the domes had to be fitted with a hinge at the back and hasp and staple at the front so they can be locked to prove the integrity of the demonstration. The most difficult part was drilling a central hole in the top of the plastic dome to allow the sensor tube to be inserted. Nail biting stuff with the ever present possibility that the custom-made domes could crack! I used foam draught strip fixed to the rim of the domes to ensure an airtight fit, with clips at the sides to ensure they were clamped down tight. These proved to be a really successful demonstration but, as I said, not much woodworking involved



10 & 11 Lights, camera, action! The TV studio set up and ready for the show

and saying how much easier it was? I thought not. Enter the 'iron slide' (photo 6), which allows two irons to race to the bottom of the slide, showing that the one fitted with the special shoe is always the winner! Again, so simple but so effective in delivering a demonstration that would otherwise be much less convincing.

Most of my work is similarly pretty straightforward. The tile board, tap corner section and window frame shown in photos 7, 8 and 9 are good examples of this. However, even these take on a very different aspect when watching Rob or one of his people using them to realistically demonstrate products in the TV studio (photos 10 & 11), from the comfort of my armchair!

Interestingly, the peaks and troughs of viewers ordering our products are continuously monitored, second by second, while on air so that we know which demonstrations are proving most successful. However, this can result in an elaborate and potentially attention grabbing prop being abandoned because it didn't earn its place in the presentation. Thankfully, these instances are quite rare.

Rob was recently awarded the Queen's Award

for Enterprise in Innovation, which is the highest business award in the UK and I'm really pleased to have played my small part and in helping my son grow his business. Of course, it keeps the old grey matter in good condition and my commute to work (garage workshop) must be all of five yards, with regular rest periods in the staff room (conservatory). Why couldn't I have done this 40 years ago? Now, where's that drawing...? **WW**



'Hot & cold' prop

'Hot & cold' prop

These twin props are used to demonstrate how a special non-scratch sponge known as 'The Eggsterminator' reconstitutes itself to become soft in hot water and rock hard in cold water. A simple MDF construction to hold bowls of hot and cold water were needed and the coloured wrap around plastic clearly indicates to the viewer which is which. These can also be seen in the background on some of the studio shots. Another example of a simple but effective solution

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Up on high

Drawn from the original in the Public Art Gallery and Museum, High Wycombe, this wonderful child's high chair from around 1820 is based on a traditional Windsor design

Until we can find a willing volunteer to catalogue the entire *Woodworker* archive of past issues, we're all going to have to rely on the current pot-luck and piecemeal process that currently exists, viz, yours truly picking something at random and hoping for the best. This month, from *The Woodworker* of August 1952, we see a very nice set of plans for a child's Windsor-backed high chair, along with useful dimensions in inches.

Full & proud history

Regular readers may recall a request from Duncan Hepburn (see *WW* June 2016) for something along these lines, but at the time I was unable to find anything much to help. I'm hoping that this page will redress the balance a bit. The Windsor chair has a full and proud history and has proved immensely popular over time, it's basic design remaining virtually unchanged for 300 years. Originally conceived as an outside chair for the garden (or grounds) they were painted dark green or sometimes grey and known as a 'forest' chair. The pleasing design and (relatively) light weight ensured they were soon to be found in parlours across the land.

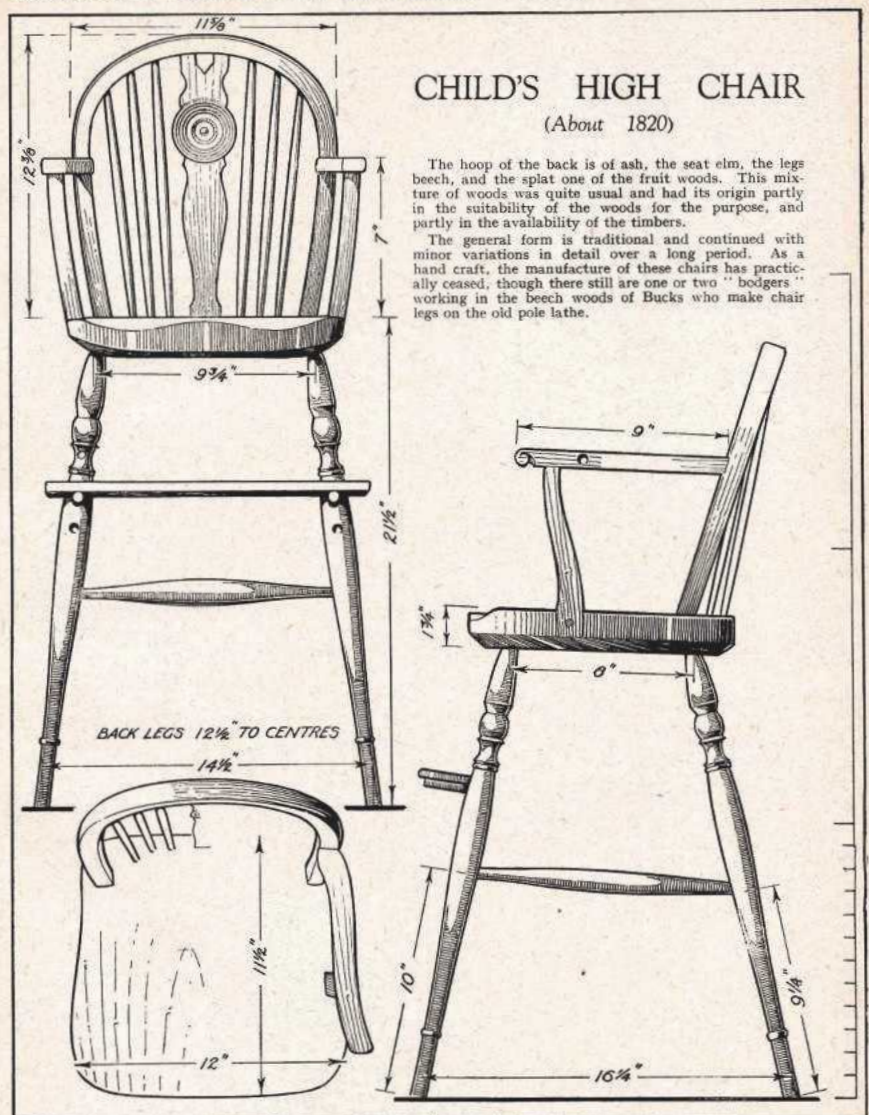
Local timbers

Traditionally made from a variety of local timbers that would invariably include beech for the turned legs and spindles, steamed ash for the curved back (and arms or stretchers), and elm for the seat, sometimes yew would also be employed for a fancy splat. I particularly like the 1950s observation that the (authentic and pre-factory) manufacture of the Windsor chair has almost ceased, with only a handful of bodgers still working their pole-lathes in the beech woods around High Wycombe. **ww**

Mark

MEASURED DRAWINGS OF PERIOD PIECES

Plate No. 20



Drawn from the original in the Public Art Gallery and Museum, High Wycombe

WOODWORKER

147

AUGUST, 1952

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 usual address: editor.ww@mytimemedia.com and we'll get them in the mag



Two for the price of one

Using his own multi-dimensional turning techniques, Rod Tallack shows how to produce some unusual platters

I was given a dozen or so pieces of iroko that were all 75mm-thick, with the widths and lengths varying up to a maximum of 250mm square. For the conventional turner what to do with such a selection, I imagine, would be to simply cut round blanks and turn some bowls. However, I do not qualify in this respect as the lathe I use is not a conventional woodturning lathe; it has been designed to produce multi-dimensional turnings, so therefore my approach was to be rather different.

Cutting the pieces

Taking inspiration from a recent article in a woodturning magazine, a square platter looked like a good idea, but with a diverse approach from the start, the piece would be segmental rather than turned from the solid. The diagonal of the platter was to be limited to approximately 300mm. Some calculations were completed to establish the approximate size for the segments and a hardboard template cut.

Using the template as a guide, a suitable piece of iroko was selected from the dozen on offer (photo 1). The piece was cut in half making two at 125mm, then cut in half again making four pieces measuring 250 × 125 × 37mm. These were then cleaned up and machined to the same size.

Using the hardboard template, the pieces were marked out ready for cutting on the bandsaw (photo 2). After cutting it was possible



1 Using the template as a guide, a suitable piece of iroko was selected



2 Using the hardboard template, the pieces were marked out ready for cutting on the bandsaw

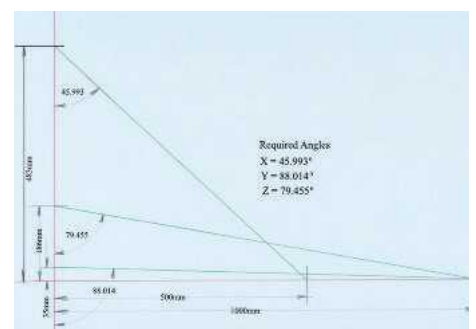


3 After cutting it was possible to match the grain patterns for the best effect

to match the grain patterns for the best effect (photo 3). Each segment was glued to its pair making an isosceles triangular segment, carefully matched at the apex. With the glue cured the base of each segment was trued and made ready for the next operation. From the original block there was material enough for two platters.

Stave jointing

With the blade in the saw bench set vertical, the angle at the apex of the segments could be



4 A practical alternative was to determine the details of a right-angle triangle containing values of X, Y & Z

cut at 90° , and the four portions glued to make a flat square component, which would be less than 37mm-thick; this thickness would limit the final height and cross-sectional potential.

To give additional height to the finished piece, the technique of stave jointing needed to be applied; this involves cutting compound angles on each segment and required some calculations to establish the three essential angles.

Before the angles can be calculated a decision regarding the height is necessary, or more



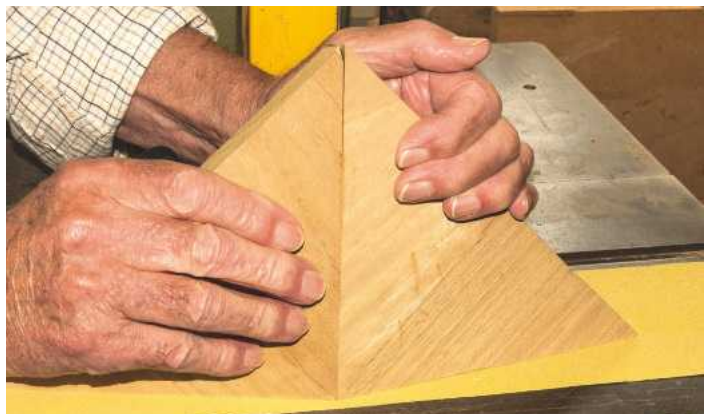
5 Using the base of the segment against the fence, the first of the cuts were made



6 Checking the sawn faces were truly flat by marking the face with a soft pencil and lightly sanding them on a flat surface



7 The eight segments are now four half segments



8 Gluing the assemblies together

correctly, the angle of the sides relative to the base. I think of it as a pyramid with the slope of the sides at 15° to the horizontal.

The first of the angles is the saw blade tilt angle (Z), the next is the angle between the base of the segment and its sides (X), and the third is the angle at the apex of the segment (Y). With the slope of the sides at 15° the calculations gave $X = 45.993^\circ$; $Y = 88.014^\circ$; and $Z = 79.455^\circ$.

With the angles calculated to three decimal places, setting a bevel using a plastic protractor was not a realistic option. A practical alternative

was to determine the details of a right-angle triangle containing the values of X, Y and Z (photo 4). By drawing the triangles very large, as shown in photo 4, it's possible to set a bevel with an acceptable degree of accuracy.

The table saw I used for this project was quite basic, necessitating an auxiliary sliding table on which to hold the segments while being cut.

The first task was to set the saw blade tilt angle (Z) correctly when measured from the auxiliary table, and then set a fence to the angle (X) ready for the first of the compound cuts. With the two

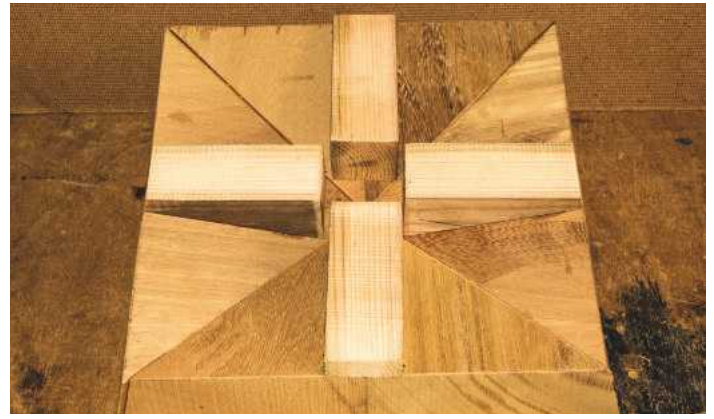
angles (X and Z) confirmed, using the base of the segment against the fence, the first of the cuts were made (photo 5).

Using the first cut on the segment as the reference face, the next step was to set the fence on the auxiliary table to cut the angle (Y). With both cuts completed, next was to check the sawn faces were truly flat by marking the face with a soft pencil and lightly sanding them on a flat surface (photo 6), until the pencil marks were only just removed.

With the compound angles cut on the four



9 The four components are made into two separate units, ready for the next stage



10 Sacrificial pieces are glued to produce a plane on which to screw a flat surface ready to accept a faceplate

segments they were glued together in two stages. I started with gluing two of the pieces together, then repeated the process until the four assemblies were complete.

With cramping not an option, glue was applied to the face of one piece and the pairing face, then joined and the glue spread equally over the two – they were rubbed together until the glue started to grab. At this stage the edges needed to be synchronised, held firmly for a few moments, then put aside for the glue to cure.

The eight segments were now four half segments (**photo 7**). With the glue cured it was time to lightly sand the faces to be joined as previously (**photo 8**), and glue the assemblies together using the same technique as before,

making the four components into two separate units ready for the next stage (**photo 9**).

Turning the platters

To make the pieces ready for turning, sacrificial pieces were glued to produce a plane on which to screw a flat surface ready to accept a faceplate (**photo 10**).

With two blanks available there were two options: the first was to turn circular as a conventional lathe to produce a platter with square corners; the second option was to mount a side cam on my lathe to produce a square platter with rounded corners.

Photo 11 shows the piece set up on the lathe and synchronised with the square cam. The first

cuts were to produce a flat face, which would be the bottom of the platter, and to establish the outer profile (**photo 12**).

With the introduction of stave jointing a problem arises: the cross-section of the sides and the diagonal of the piece will be different and the radius of the curved face for the platter will have to accommodate this disparity.

With the multi-dimensional lathe, a pattern for the curve is required and this is cut from plywood. The radius worked out to be 300mm, which ensured that the curve fits comfortably into both the diagonal and horizontal cross-sections.

With conventional turning this is not a problem; a specific dimension would be irrelevant and a competent turner with a good eye will choose



11 The piece set up on the lathe and synchronised with the square cam



12 The first cuts were to produce a flat face, which would be the bottom of the platter and would establish the outer profile



13 The bottom of the platter was cut, leaving a flat base on which the item can stand



14 The piece is reversed and mounted on the lathe, ready to cut the top face



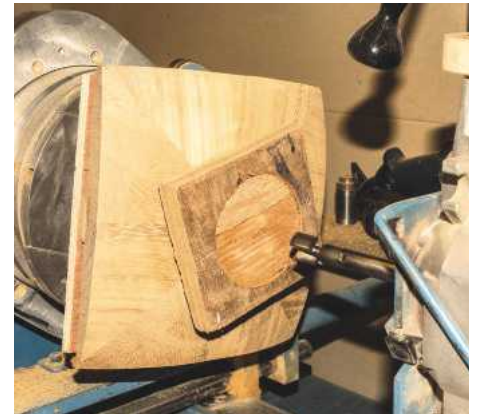
15 Initial cuts made to the bottom of the second platter



16 Further cutting produced a circular plinth on which the piece would stand



17 Initial power sanding on the bottom face, using a flexible drive fitted with a soft sanding head together with 180 grit abrasive



18 To simplify centring a shallow recess was bored, the diameter matching the faceplate to be used

and cut an appropriate curve, making adjustments as the work progresses, maybe using some sort of template to check and adjust for the final shape.

With the basic outlines determined the bottom of the platter was cut leaving a flat base on which the item can stand (**photo 13**). The shape of the base is the effect of the cam as the cut nears the centre.

Using a paper interface, a sacrificial piece is glued to the bottom allowing a faceplate to be screwed, and then the piece is reversed and mounted on the lathe ready to cut the top face. This can be seen in **photo 14**, where the face is part-sanded ready for finishing.

Moving on to the second platter, this was

mounted onto the lathe in the same way as the first, but this time all of the turning would be circular.

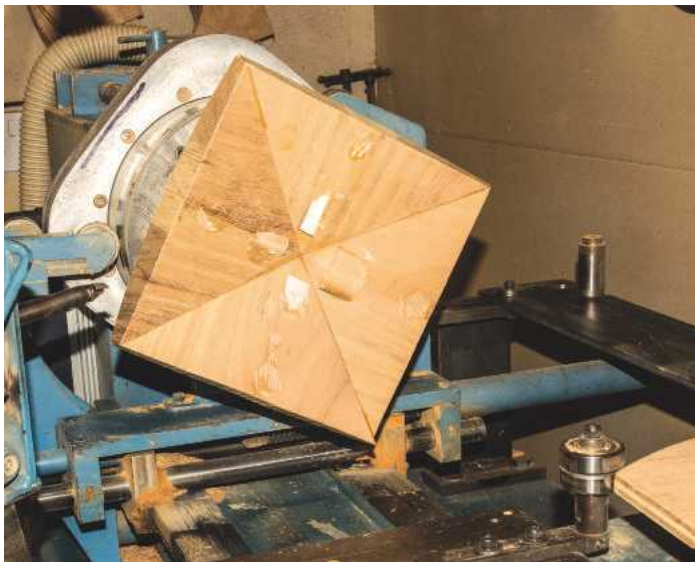
The radius of the curved face was to be the same as the first platter and the initial cuts to the bottom can be seen in **photo 15**. Further cutting produced a circular plinth on which the piece would stand (**photo 16**).

With the work revolving on the lathe it was convenient to carry out the initial power sanding on the bottom face (**photo 17**), using a flexible drive fitted with a soft sanding head together with 180 grit abrasive.

With the preliminary sanding on the bottom of the piece completed, a sacrificial piece with

a paper interface was glued to the base in preparation to reverse the work ready to cut the top face. To simplify centring a shallow recess was bored, the diameter matching the faceplate to be used (**photo 18**). With the work reversed, the sacrificial wedges that had been used were removed and the lathe was then set up to cut the top face (**photo 19**).

Photo 20 shows the top face part-sanded and the platter ready to be removed from the lathe for the final sanding and finishing. **Photo 21** shows the two platters: the diagonal with the square finish is 285mm with a height of 46mm, and the diagonal with the cam shape is 242mm with a height of 36mm. **WW**



19 The sacrificial wedges that had been used were removed and the lathe was set up to cut the top face



20 The top face part-sanded and the platter ready to be removed from the lathe for the final sanding and finishing



21 The two completed platters

FURTHER INFORMATION

As some of you may know, Rod has penned a book entitled *Woodturning: Another Dimension*. It is published as an e-book and is available on Amazon Kindle Books. To find out more, visit www.amazon.co.uk, and for anyone wanting details regarding the calculations for stave jointing, you can contact Rod via his website: www.sculptureturnery.co.uk



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Part #	Shank Dia.	Cutting Dia.	Cutting Length	Overall Length
HU4125	3/8"	3/8"	1-1/4"	3"
HU5125	1/2"	1/2"	1-1/4"	3"

Down Cut

Part #	Shank Dia.	Cutting Dia.	Cutting Length	Overall Length
HD4125	3/8"	3/8"	1-1/4"	3"
HD5125	1/2"	1/2"	1-1/4"	3"



Up / Down Cut (2+2 Compression)

Part #	Shank Dia.	Cutting Dia.	Cutting Length	Overall Length
HC4122	3/8"	3/8"	1-1/4"	3"
* HC4122M	3/8"	3/8"	1-1/4"	3"
HC5122	1/2"	1/2"	1-1/4"	3"
* HC5122M	1/2"	1/2"	1-1/4"	3"

* Mortise Style (Short up-cut flute for shallow dado cuts)

COVE NOSE SPIRALS

Two Flute



PART # RU2075CN

RU2075CN

Up Cut

Part #	Shank Dia.	Cutting Dia.	Corner Radius	Cutting Length	Overall Length
RU2075CN	1/4"	1/4"	1/16"	3/4"	2-1/2"
RU5125CN	1/2"	1/2"	1/8"	1-1/4"	3"

BALL NOSE SPIRALS

Two Flute



PART # RU1800RN

RU1800RN

RU2075RN

Up Cut

Part #	Shank Dia.	Cutting Dia.	Radius	Cutting Length	Overall Length
RU1800RN	1/4"	3/16"	3/32"	3/4"	2-1/2"
RU2075RN	1/4"	1/4"	1/8"	3/4"	2-1/2"
RU5125RN	1/2"	1/2"	1/4"	1-1/4"	3"

CONICAL BALL NOSE SPIRALS

Four Flute



SC64



PART # SC64



SC66



PART # SC66

Up Cut

Part #	Shank Dia.	Ball Dia.	Radius	Included Angle	Overall Length
SC64	1/4"	1/16"	1/32"	11°	2-1/2"
SC66	1/4"	1/8"	1/16"	7°	2-1/2"

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(A) FLUSH TRIM (B) PLUNGE / PATTERN (C) COMBINATION

Part #	Shank Dia.	Cutting Dia.	Cutting Length	Overall Length
(A) UDFT9112	1/2"	7/8"	1-1/8"	3-3/4"
(B) UDP9112	1/2"	7/8"	1-1/8"	3-1/2"
(C) UDC9112	1/2"	7/8"	1-1/8"	3-3/4"

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TOP VIEW

Up Cut Part #	Down Cut Part #	Cutting Dia.	# Of Flutes	Cutting Length	Overall Length
1/4" SHANK					
RU1581A	-	1/8"	1	1/4"	2"
RU1601A	RD1601A	1/8"	1	1/2"	2-1/2"
RU1701A	-	5/32"	1	5/8"	2-1/2"
RU1801A	-	3/16"	1	5/8"	2-1/2"
RU2074A	RD2074A	1/4"	1	3/4"	2-1/2"
RU2076A	RD2076A	1/4"	2	3/4"	2-1/2"
RU2111A	-	1/4"	1	1-1/8"	3"
3/8" SHANK					
RU4111A	RD4111A	3/8"	1	1-1/8"	3"
1/2" SHANK					
RU5121A	-	1/2"	1	1-1/4"	3"
RU5161A	-	1/2"	1	1-5/8"	3-1/2"
RU5201A	-	1/2"	1	2"	4"



PART # RU4111A

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

The RouterCutter Team would just like to notify all our valued patrons that as of 16/05/2017 we will be VAT compliant and all sales will be subject to UK VAT

Versailles planter

Phil Davy's elegant and traditional planter design would make a fantastic addition to any garden

Whether you live on a large country estate or have no garden at all, a plant or shrub growing in a container alongside the front door definitely makes a statement. Adding colour, shape and texture, you can create an elegant display with a shaped box tree either side of the entrance, or perhaps something rather less formal.

The traditional style of my piece is known as a Versailles planter, as it seems to have been designed originally for the rather splendid geometric gardens of Louis XIV's 17th century Palace. With around 1,000 orange trees that needed protection from severe frosts, individual wooden boxes were built so that they could all be moved into a huge orangery during winter.

You can make the planter any size you like – I measured a few large plant pots first before arriving at the internal dimensions. Some planters are lined with plastic or metal and then filled completely with soil, making them pretty heavy. If you choose to do this, add an internal base of exterior plywood instead of using slats. Make sure that there are adequate drainage holes, too.

It makes sense to decide on the frame jointing method before buying any timber. I used 50 × 50mm PAR softwood, which means less preparation work, but limits the construction options slightly. Originally I'd thought of using double biscuits for the frame joints, but with stiles and rails finishing at 45mm this would result in weak joints. Both No.20 and No.10 biscuits are too long for 45mm timber, while the No.0 biscuit is too narrow. You could overcome this problem by using 75 × 75mm PAR softwood, which finishes at about 70mm, though the corner posts may look

a bit heavy unless you build quite a large planter. Of course, you could cut traditional stub mortise & tenons, which I would probably have done if building with hardwood. If you own a Festool Domino joiner or Trend's mortise & tenon jig, this is an ideal project for loose tenons. I settled on dowels, which have their pros and cons: they offer a fast, strong butt joint but you do need a precise jig for drilling the holes, as if these aren't spot-on, the rails and stiles will just not go together. Use two staggered dowels and you'll have problems. With a single dowel in each corner, life is much easier, though joints will not be so strong. Make sure you use an exterior, waterproof glue such as Titebond 3 or a polyurethane.

The stiles, or corner posts, should really have decorative finials, though you could just bring them to a point. If you have a lathe it's relatively

easy to turn a ball finial at the top, and a good exercise in repeat turning. Congratulations if you can turn four identically! I fitted 50mm diameter birch balls, which came undrilled. Gripping these securely for accurate drilling was a bit tricky, so make a jig rather than take short cuts. Each finial is attached with a 10mm dowel.

To increase the lifespan of softwood used externally, always use a clear preservative such as Cuprinol, which is solvent-based.

I painted the planter with two coats of Cuprinol Garden Shades (Wild Thyme), giving it a rather classy appearance (www.cuprinol.co.uk). This is a water-based coating, so brush cleaning afterwards is simple under the tap. The four ball finials were treated with Dulux Weathershield satin varnish, glued on to the stiles after painting was completed. **WW**

TOOLS YOU'LL NEED

- Marking tools
- Mitre saw
- Drill and bits
- Router and bits
- Bench plane
- Sander
- Dowel or tenoning jig

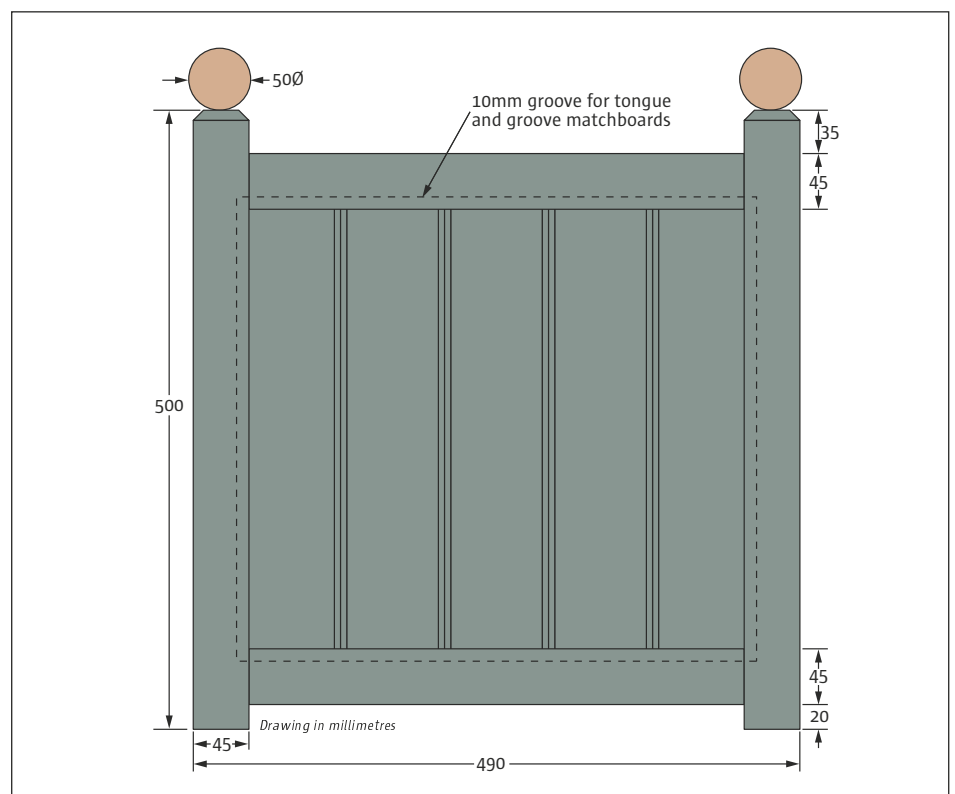


Fig.1 Versailles planter

Thanks to the folk at Whitehall Garden Centre for help with location photos – www.whitehallgardencentre.co.uk





1 The first step is to cut timber to the exact length, using a stop on the mitre saw to ensure that rails and stiles are consistent



2 Select face sides and edges, then clamp stiles together and finally mark out the joint positions



3 Check dowel spacing on stiles, allowing 10mm groove depth for the tongue-&-grooved boards



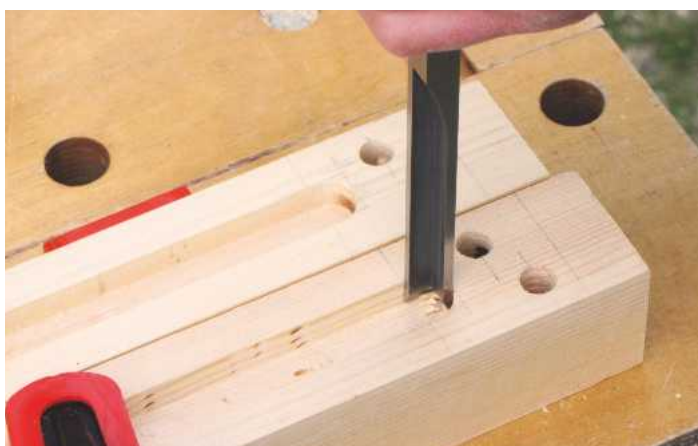
4 If you don't have a dedicated dowelling jig, drill 10mm holes in the stiles using a drill stand



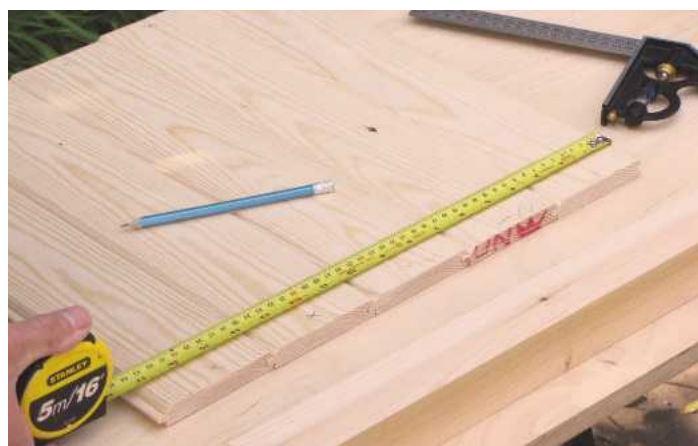
5 Drill the rails, insert dowels, and check that components will cramp up together cleanly



6 Support the router with an extra rail and rout stopped grooves to suit the matchboarding



7 Square off the rounded end of the grooves with a chisel. The T&G boards should not be glued in place



8 Next, fit the T&G boards together and measure to determine the width of the outer pieces



9 Rip the eight outer T&G boards to width with a circular saw or on a table saw



10 Without gluing, assemble one side of the planter to check that the joints, grooves and matchboard all fit



11 Using sash cramps, glue together the rails and stiles. Insert matchboarding before adding the second stile



12 Allow the glue to dry, then true up the frame with a bench plane. Glue together the second panel



13 Join both frames with the remaining four rails and dowels. Insert the matchboard, and glue up



14 Cut slats to length from the door stop. Either pin these to the lower rails or use a nail gun



15 Mark the centre of each stile for its decorative finial and pinpoint with a bradawl



16 Cramp the dowelling jig in position and drill each stile with a 10mm lip and spur bit



17 Rout a small chamfer around the edges of the rails and stiles, cleaning up corners with a chisel



18 Insert dowels and check each finial fits properly. Glue these after painting the planter



19 Brush on clear preservative, and finish the planter with two coats of exterior paint, such as Cuprinol Garden Shades



20 The completed project is now ready for planting up



How would my £12 eBay find (front) compare with the high angle Mujingfang (behind)?

Fortune cookie

What do you get for spending only £12 on a Chinese smoothing plane? **Iain Whittington** finds out and reports here

Recently I was thinking about making a wooden smoothing plane for a job that needed doing. I was using oak and was worried about a conventional metal plane leaving black track marks as a result of a chemical reaction between the oak and iron. Instead, I found a new wooden 50mm No.4 plane on eBay for £16, including P&P, from Hong Kong. I decided that it was worth a punt, as the only equivalent currently available in the UK is now £45. In the worst case, I thought, I would be able to use the blade for a homemade coffin smoother to handle the job.

The good & bad news

The anonymous Jiffy bag arrived from Hong Kong with a product by Guangzhou Feibao Tools (makers of engineering tools). On unpacking the contents, the bad news was that the advertised 50mm blade was actually a traditional Hong Kong No.3 plane size of 44mm. The good news, however, was that it was also the traditional Hong Kong 6mm-thick laminated steel. This steel is seldom found in Europe now outside Scandinavian knife making. It's where a thin



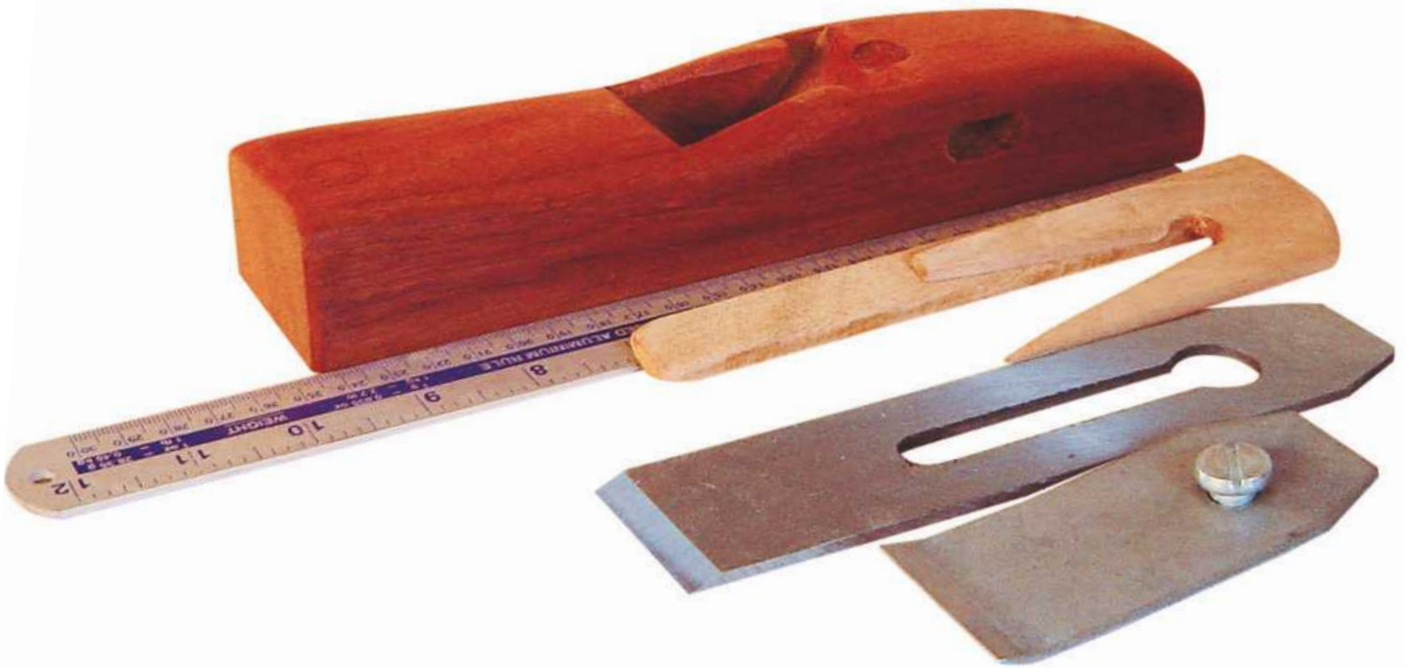
The body was real, heavy mahogany – I even checked to see if it sunk!



The sole was completely flat with brass mouth insert



The handle, however, was woeful. On the right is what you'd ideally want



layer of hard steel is pressure welded to a softer steel carrier, giving the benefits of a hard edge on a more flexible shank.

The other good news was that the 245 × 60mm body was well made from heavy mahogany ('heavy' as in 'sinks in water'), with an absolutely flat sole and a brass mouth insert. Unfortunately, the wedge and through handle were not good, having been made badly from sapwood.

While the blade finish was rough, it was otherwise well made and easily sharpened to take an excellent edge. As expected with this type of laminated blade, the back was slightly hollow, so was also easy to flatten during the sharpening process. The chipbreaker was also rough, but accurately made, and took little effort to finesse into a close fit.

Main weakness

Putting the blade and chipbreaker into the body exposed the main weakness of the plane, in that the inferior wedge and handle both also turned out to be inaccurately made and a poor fit, the wedge being too thick at the point and slightly too narrow across the opening. With a bit of

fettling, the wedge was persuaded to fit well enough to hold the blade tight and so the plane could be taken for a trial run, but the handle was so far out as to be unusable.

I had no difficulty in taking smooth shavings from a trial piece of softwood and then moved smoothly on to a scrap length of meranti, which came from an old door frame (looks like mahogany but floats in water). This again went smoothly. Finally came the oak trial, which it passed (just) – the problem stemming from the lack of a handle leaving me with insufficient push to cut through the wilder bits of grain without juddering. The sides of the poorly fitting wedge were too narrow, which meant that shavings were prone to jam in the edge of the mouth.

Money well spent?

In conclusion, the £12 has indeed bought me a good laminated blade for a homemade No.3 coffin plane, at the price of a modern replacement Stanley No.3 blade. Replacing the handle and wedge with ones that fit properly (half an hour with a bit of that meranti scrap should do it), and this should be a perfectly serviceable

smoothing plane for softwood, or a scrub plane for hardwood. Going to the local 'shed' with this sort of money will only get you a No.4 iron banana that no amount of work will ever turn into a plane. In comparison, this Chinese plane at least has some potential. However, if you are just starting out, looking for a vintage No.4 to restore in the £15 to £20 range would be a better investment.

It's worth remembering that this plane has a standard 45° blade, so if you are looking for a wooden finishing plane for hardwood, go for the 60° blade of the excellent Mujingfang Hong Kong style polishing plane. **WW**

EPILOGUE

As an afterword, I'm not an eBay regular, and it was only later that I looked more closely at the many different occurrences of these items on the internet; I came to the conclusion that they all seemed to lead back to the same source. However, as is often the case with this sort of purchase, 'buyer beware' applies. Just remember that a low price isn't always cheap...



The chipbreaker was well made, and so another plus-point



Although not the size advertised, the blade was of exceptional quality...



... and once sharpened, you can see the laminated steel edge in all its glory



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Gesso gem

Colin Simpson's beech platter features a coloured and airbrushed rim, which is then textured using Gesso to create an unusual effect

I like making large platters and either texturing or colouring the rim. There is an infinite number of ways that texture can be applied to wood and, in this article, I am going to use a product called Gesso. Gesso is a paint mixture usually used by artists to prime canvas or wood to add a little texture – more of this later.

Shaping the platter

Start with a blank – mine was beech and about 350mm in diameter and 50mm thick – and screw a faceplate to the centre of the side that will become the top of the platter (**photo 1**).

Use a 12mm fingernail profile bowl gouge to flatten the bottom of the blank. This cut is actually a scrape, using the bottom wing of the gouge and

the flute pointing towards the wood. The tool is on its side (**photo 2**). Start the cut in the very centre of the blank and gently pull the tool towards you using the bottom wing to make the cut – the pull cut. **Photo 3** shows the same cut from a different angle and you can see the shaving coming off the tool on the lower edge.

It isn't always necessary to true up the edge of the blank as it happens automatically as you shape the outside. However, this blank was out of balance and I had to turn it slower than I would have liked, so I used a push cut to true up the edge (**photo 4**); this is a bevel supported cut using the tip of the cutting edge. Next, I cut a foot on the base using the tip of the gouge to cut into the wood (**photo 5**) and then the pull cut to remove the waste (**photo 6**).

I shaped the outside of the platter to an ogee or 'S' shaped curve using a pull cut, but this time



1 Fix a faceplate to the middle of the blank



2 Use a swept-back bowl gouge to flatten the bottom...



3 ... making light cuts using the bottom wing



4 True up the edge with a push cut



5 Cut a foot using the tip of the bowl gouge...



6 ... and then the bottom wing to remove the waste



7 Rolling the tool up until the bevel rubs will give a cleaner cut



8 Cut the recess for the chuck with a parting tool



9 Refine the shape and clean up the surface using a round-nosed scraper



10 You should aim to get very fine shavings from the scraper

I had bevel support. Lower the handle and roll the tool up so the bevel starts to glide on the wood. Keep the shaving near the tip of the tool (**photo 7**), then cut a chucking recess using a parting tool (**photo 8**). Because I cut a foot on my piece, I needed to ensure that the chucking recess was deeper than the foot, which would give me the necessary strength in the wood for the chuck to expand onto.

If necessary, clean up and refine the shape of the outside using a round-nosed scraper (**photo 9**). The position of the camera doesn't show it well, but the handle of the scraper is slightly higher than the cutting edge – it's called trailing mode – and you must get shavings from the scraper (**photo 10**). If you are only getting

dust, you need to sharpen the tool. Sand the outside of the platter to a finish – I power sanded down to 600 grit (**photo 11**), and then gave it a coat of acrylic sanding sealer (**photo 12**).

The front

Remove the platter from the lathe, remove the faceplate and mount it in your chuck using the recess cut at step 8. Flatten the top surface with a pull cut (**photo 13**), and then cut the rim, cutting from the edge towards the centre (**photo 14**). Do not remove the centre of the platter at this stage. I don't like perfectly flat rims, so mine is higher at the edge, sloping down towards the middle. Sand the rim using 120 grit – there is no need to sand any finer – and then give it a thin coat of Gesso

using a cheap paintbrush (**photo 15**). The next step is best done with the piece off the lathe, so remove it together with the chuck and put it on a work surface. If you have a lazy Susan it will help you to rotate the piece. Put some Gesso in a plastic bottle that has a spout – an old glue bottle is ideal. Use the spout to draw a pattern on the rim – just as if you were icing a cake. I chose random sized rings (**photo 16**), but choose any pattern that you like. Complete the whole rim and then leave the Gesso to dry overnight.

Airbrushing

Photo 17 shows my equipment, which consists of a small compressor, a dual action airbrush and, of course, the paints. These are acrylic paints and



11 Power sand the outside down to 600 grit...



12 ... then apply acrylic sanding sealer



13 Turn the platter around and flatten the top side

I use Golden and Createx transparent colours. If you are spraying solvents, do so in a well ventilated area and wear a mask. Ideally you should use a spray booth. If you want to try airbrushing, you can buy a cheap brush and you don't even need a compressor as you can purchase the propellant in an aerosol can. Before spraying your latest masterpiece, I would strongly recommend practising on sheets of paper.

There are two types of airbrush: a gravity feed one where the reservoir is on top of the brush and a siphon feed brush where the reservoir is underneath. Within this there are also single and double action brushes. The simplest – single action – releases the paint and propellant when the trigger is depressed. You pre-set the spray pattern – the volume of paint that is propelled

– before starting. The double action brush provides more control. Depressing the trigger allows the air to flow and pulling back on the trigger allows the paint out.

I am going to colour the area that I have previously painted with Gesso. **Photo 18** shows me applying the first colour, blue, in a random pattern, but leaving some unpainted Gesso. I am spraying the paint at an oblique angle so that more paint lands on one side of the high points of the texture; this will enhance the 3D effect. I am spraying with the workpiece on my lazy Susan, but you could remount it on the lathe if you wish.

Clean the airbrush between colours. There are proprietary airbrush cleaners, but I use a diluted window cleaner in a spray bottle. I spray the cleaning agent into a special cleaning pot to prevent



14 Cut the rim, leaving some bulk in the middle of the bowl



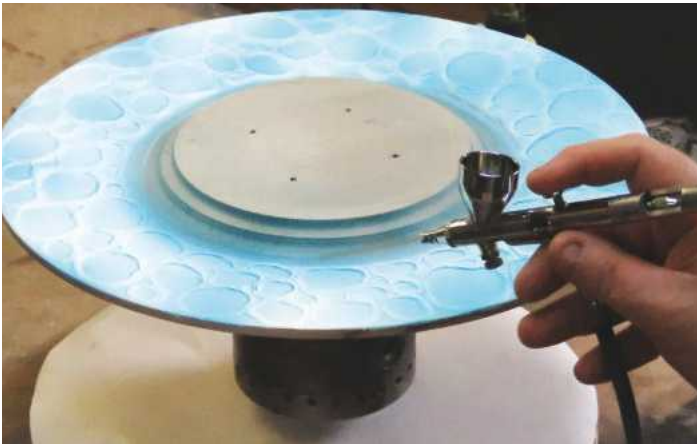
15 Apply an even coat of Gesso with a brush...



16 ... then 'draw' on your pattern with Gesso from a bottle



17 My airbrush setup



18 Lightly spray the first colour randomly...



19 ... then clean the airbrush, spraying into a cleaning jar...



20 ... before overlapping the second colour in places...



21 ... and repeating for the third colour



22 Hollow the platter in the usual way using a bowl gouge



23 Lightly sand away some of the colour to reveal the white Gesso in places



24 Apply several coats of acrylic lacquer to finish

a fine mist of cleaner becoming airborne (**photo 19**). **Photo 20** shows the rim after I have sprayed the second colour, purple, onto the piece. Overlap this colour with the blue but also cover some bare Gesso. Clean the brush again and repeat this process with yellow, overlapping the colours in places (**photo 21**). Continue to alternate colours until you are satisfied with the result, then leave the piece to dry. It is essential to clean the airbrush thoroughly after use or you will be left with a paint encrusted pile of junk.

When the paint is thoroughly dry, turn the middle of the platter out using a bowl gouge (**photo 22**), then sand the bowl area to a finish. Very lightly sand the high points of the rim to reveal some of the white Gesso (**photo 23**),

then apply acrylic sanding sealer to the bowl part of the platter and, when dry, cut back with wire wool. If there is any overspray of paint on the back of the bowl, remove this with wire wool or fine abrasive. I didn't want to disturb the coloured rim of this piece so I decided to spray the whole platter with lacquer (**photo 24**). **WW**



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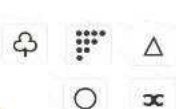


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Timber tunes

Andy Smith encourages you to give a handmade gift at least once, and his wonderful xylophone proved to be a big hit with his one-year-old niece

I have two beautiful nieces whom I love very much. At the moment they are one- and three-years-old and they love presents. For the three-year-old, she is so excited to open all of her gifts no matter what they are, and she is still young enough to enjoy handmade presents, so I am going to take advantage of that.

Unfortunately there will come a time when handmade toys will become less desirable than the cheap plastic ones, but I understand their fascination: these are not as flashy or loud and as you grow older, the stimulation you get from these kinds of toys is somewhat important.

But luckily for me they are still young enough to enjoy any toy, so I wanted to make something that they could use their imagination to play with; something that would outlast those cheap plastic equivalents. The younger of my nieces loves to bang on whatever she can get her hands on, so I thought a xylophone would be perfect.

Although I know there will come a time when this will go into the toy box or attic and not be seen for years, when it comes out again, hopefully it will look the same, work the same, and be more loved than it was when they first received it.

TOOLS & MATERIALS

- Some thin wood scraps – I used oak, cherry and walnut
- Mitre saw
- Bench sander
- Spindle sander
- Drill press
- Felt pads
- Small pegs
- Wood glue



1 The pieces of wood used for the wooden bars



2 Once cut, the bars measure from 229-150mm long

Making a start

I had some pieces of timber that were left over from a recent wood rug project I made (photo 1). I had to cut a lot of long skinny pieces for that particular project and they worked perfectly for the xylophone. I used cherry, walnut and oak because I wanted the colour contrast to look really effective. In the end, this effect worked incredibly well, but the different timbers used makes tuning the bars somewhat difficult.

I started by cutting my longest piece, which was 229mm. I cut a total of seven pieces and each was cut 12mm shorter than the last. When I had finished, the longest piece was 229mm and the shortest was 150mm (photo 2). I played around with different cut lengths but this one looked best in the end. After I had them all cut, I took my time to carefully round the blocks using a bench sander, to make sure that the edges were suitable for children and to ensure there was no danger of any splintering or sharp edges.



3 Using the spindle sander to make the groove in the bottom of the bar



4 Once sanded, the grooves should look like this



5 The two rails with seven holes drilled into each one



6 The hardwood pegs used to attach the bars to the rails



7 The felt pads that were placed between the peg and the bar



8 I punched a hole in each of the felt pads, then attached them to the rail



Tuning the bars

I was unaware of this before but it turns out that correctly tuning the bars is essential in making a working xylophone. I am by no means an expert, but I will explain how I did it as well as I can. Like I said before, each bar was cut 12mm shorter than the previous one. I thought that the length of the block would have the greatest effect on the tone that it made, but I was mistaken.

It turns out that it is the groove in the bottom of the bar that determines the tone, so I used my spindle sander to make these grooves (**photo 3**). I started by sanding everything but the outside 38mm; this gave each bar a different tone but not enough to yield the sound I was expecting.

The more you take off the bottom, the lower the tone will be. I made a small stand to check the tone, using some scrap wood that stood up with rubber bands stretched across. I would lay the bars across the rubber bands and see how each one sounded. If it sounded a little high,

I would take more off the groove; if it sounded too low, I would take a little off the end of the bar with my bench sander. Some of you may decide to use a tuner to get each bar as it should be, but as this was a gift destined for a child, I chose to use my rudimentary device instead! Once you have everything in a descending tone, you can attach the bars to the body of the xylophone.

Setting the bars

This process is really quite simple. The main goal here is to not let the bars come into direct contact with the rail; this will ensure that the bars emit the best possible sound. To do this, I firstly drilled seven holes into the rail (**photo 5**), which were the same size as the pegs I planned on using (**photo 6**). You need to make sure that you don't drill the holes too deep – I wanted the bars to be loose even when the pegs were glued into place. Next, I drilled holes in each side of the bars; this hole was one size larger than the pegs I picked



9 The pegs were then slid through the bars and glued into the rails





10 The two pieces of glued-up cherry used to make the mallet

up at a local DIY store. I used some adhesive-backed felt pads (**photo 7**) to make sure the bars did not come into contact with the rails. I punched a hole in each of them and attached them to the rail (**photo 8**); the pegs were then slid through the bars and glued into the rails (**photo 9**).

The custom mallet

I wanted to create an interesting mallet, so I glued two pieces of cherry together and let it sit overnight (**photo 10**). I drilled a hole for the dowel and then took it to my bench sander and



11 Once sanded on the bench sander, the unusual mallet shape features many different angles

added all kinds of angles (**photo 11**). There was really no rhyme or reason to this; I kept sanding until I produced a shape I liked. I then glued the dowel in place and that was it: a custom mallet that works well and looks really effective.

Conclusion

On opening her present, the xylophone was a big hit with my one-year-old niece. She loved banging on the bars and hearing the sounds that she was making. The adults seemed to have a good time with it as well! If I were to do anything differently



12 Once the shape is achieved, a hole is made in the bottom and a length of dowel used to mimic a handle

next time, I would spend more time tuning the bars. With a small amount of work, you can tune them so they sound close to perfect.

I hope those of you who read this article go on to make your own version of this project and have a go at making your own handmade gift. It isn't difficult to make and the end result is really worth it. I would encourage everyone to try making something by hand at least once; it's definitely more difficult than picking something out at a shop or online, but it's so much more rewarding. **WW**



13 The completed xylophone

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Bathroom CHALLENGE

Water, stone, wenge... here's how **Mark Griffiths** calmed his clients' perfect storm of a bathroom commission

I thought this was going to be a simple project – that is, until the clients asked for the units to be free floating with stone tops and large porcelain sinks!

The clients' brief was straightforward enough; they required a run of units to be built into a newly refurbished bathroom in which two sinks would be located. Simple. Only when the job was discussed in more detail did it become clear that it wasn't going to be as easy as I had first hoped. Isn't it always the way?

Firstly the bathroom itself was on a grand scale with lots of expensive stonework to fit around. At one end was a wet area with a

multi-head power shower, at the other a large raised Jacuzzi bath – so lots of hot-water vapour in the air. Add to this mix the bathroom's under-floor heating and you had a perfect storm of changeable atmospheres in which to fit wooden furniture.

As if this wasn't enough, the clients wanted the units to appear free floating, even though they were to carry the 30mm stone tops and large porcelain sinks. And just to finish off they were to be made in wenge, one of the most expensive and difficult timbers around. In short, not so simple. ▶



Insider's guide to a smooth-running project

A busy building project will cultivate a culture of every trade for itself, and as the furniture maker tends to be the last one in, it's the furniture maker who will be left out of the loop and expected to make good any problems that may have arisen. I find that communicating from the start, letting everybody know what I intend to do, taking a keen interest in what they intend to do and generally being an affable chap, helps avoid any difficult situations arising.

In the past, working without this spirit of friendship and understanding, I have come on site only to discover holes roughly cut into my furniture "to get to the pipework," or fitted furniture un-fitted "to get to the wiring." I've had my furniture used as a tool cupboard, a tea-making area and even a workbench.

Keeping in close contact with all of the other trades working on a site will help to avoid little surprises such as: "I thought you knew the soil pipe was going there." Let everybody know what you are doing and when you are going to do it. When you need to know the timescale of a building project, don't ask the client or the architect, but take the chief builder to one side and say: "Just between ourselves, how long are you going to take?". Getting answers to these questions at the beginning will save a lot of potential headaches further down the line

Location survey

The starting point on any fitted job has to be a full and detailed survey of the area in which the furniture is to be situated, taking note of the type and quality of walls to be fixed into, how true the walls are, and if there are any obstacles such as electric sockets or plumbing pipework to contend with. Now in this case the survey was slightly hampered by the fact that the builder had not yet built the wall. In fact not only was there no wall, but a finished floor and ceiling were also absent.

A tight schedule meant that I would have to start making my pieces without this vital information. Having found myself in this situation before I knew that the best way forward was to establish a very good working relationship with the builder. Indeed, I would stress when working on any project that involves other trades, you should always go out of your way to get on with everybody.

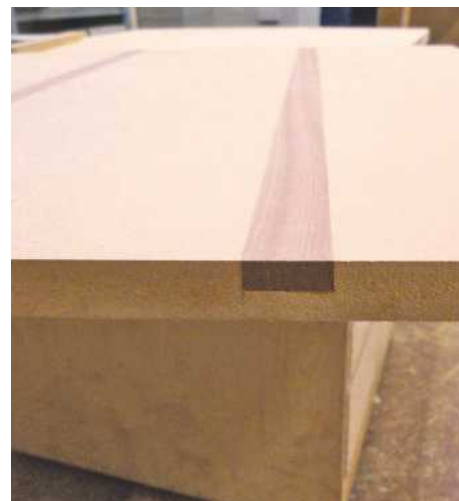
With a 30mm stone worktop, 600mm deep and running along one carcass at 3m, and the other at 2m, the 'suspended' vanity units would be carrying a considerable weight – and this wasn't including the two large porcelain sinks suspended below the worktops. Having a newly built brick

wall on which to fix my units would have helped, but the architects had specified a stud wall (timber framework covered in plasterboard).

This was where my carefully cultivated special relationship with the builder paid off (see 'in it together!'). Together we worked out how the studwork and noggins (the framework's timber cross members) would be located to connect with the carcass fixing points and provide greatest strength. A map of the studwork was drawn out to provide a reference when fitting because it's all too easy to forget the location of frame components when they have been covered in plasterboard.

French cleats

I planned to fix the carcasses to the wall using French cleats (photos 8 & 9). This style of wall fixing is strong yet easily removable, it's accurate and can be adjusted with minimal fuss. The French cleat is extremely useful when making and fitting kitchen wall cabinets, especially when working on your own and trying to locate and fix with one hand while holding a cabinet in place with the other.



1 Sapele inlay ready for the moulding rebate

The French cleat consists of two machined lengths of hardwood, say at 20mm thick for an average-size kitchen cabinet, with a 45° angle machined onto one edge. One of these pieces is fixed at the top of the back of the cabinet, set in so that it's flush with the carcass sides, and flat against the carcass back, with the sharp end of the 45° angle set to be flush with the wall when fitted. Biscuit joints are great for fixing these in place.

The second angled length is then secured to the wall with a fixing of your choice, either wood screws onto studwork or some type of anchor or raw plug into brick. This length will be fitted with the 45° angle pointing upwards, the sharp end being flush with the carcass back when in position. The cabinet can then simply be slipped down into place, the two angles locking together to form a tight union. If required, a screw or a pin can be fixed through the back of the cabinet into the angled joint to lock them together.

Marine-grade MDF

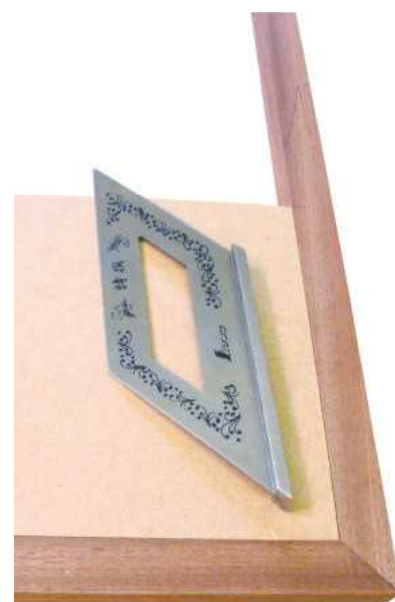
As a precaution against the wet environment the furniture was to reside in, I made the carcass and doors in a marine-grade MDF. After being cut



2 Doors and drawers ready for lipping



3 Mitred lippings ready for biscuit jointing



4 Lipping a drawer with sapele

slightly over its finished component sizes, these MDF sections were sent away to a local company who do all of my hot-press veneering. The carcasses were faced with maple and the doors with the expensive wenge.

One of the only design details on the furniture was to be two lines of astragal moulding, to be routed into place so that it would sit flush with the face of the veneered panels. One issue that would arise from fitting the moulding in this way was the problem with the small edge of MDF that would be visible in the rebate when the moulding was fitted. MDF does not stain well, and it is hard to get a good crisp edge when sanding to a finish. My way around this problem was to set lengths of 20 x 10mm sapele (photos 1-5) into the pre-veneered boards at the location where the moulding rebate would be. This was done prior to the doors having their edges lipped, again in sapele.

Stacked & stuck

While waiting for the boards to return I started to machine the solid maple for the drawer material. Mindful of the humidity of the environment, the drawer timber was machined to the correct thickness, but oversize in its other dimensions. This was then taken home and stacked in stick in my own bathroom to help equalise the timber's moisture content with its eventual home (my wife is used to this sort of thing). If any movement occurred it could be rectified at this stage rather than in the finished furniture as a dovetailed drawer.

With the boards back from the veneering company, the first task was to give the lot a jolly good sand. I know that when a newly veneered item has a lot of cash value due to the exotic species used, or because of the time spent creating marquetry or inlay work, instinct tells you to go easy with the belt sander, but without a thorough 120 grit belt workout the dangers of finding the job ruined by veneer tape ghost lines is highly likely.



5 Sanding lippings before veneering



6 Gluing in the astragal moulding



7 Carcasses ready for spraying



8 French cleat on a carcass



9 Fixing a French cleat to the wall



10 Pipework and French cleats on the wall

After sanding, the components were cut on the dimension saw to their finished sizes and the biscuit joints machined.

Cooperative work

Now that I had all of the carcass work glued, cramped, sanded and finally finished with a tough cellulose lacquer, the time had come to call my friends the builder and the plumber to arrange to fit my units on site and liaise with them about the location of the pipework. Thanks to my earlier efforts to forge an understanding between trades I found the stud wall framework to be in the agreed location, pipework neatly positioned to enter the back of my unit as arranged and no nasty surprises.

Along with the French cleat fixings, to take the immense weight of the stone top, I had made up a box-section plinth to sit in from the back about a quarter of the depth of the carcass and 300mm in from the ends. The plinth would help distribute the combined weight of the stone tops and sinks, but because it was hidden from view and painted to match the stonework, it would maintain the illusion of the piece floating.

With my units now in place it was time to clear the area for the plumber to fit the sinks and pipework (photos 10 & 11), and the stonemason to template, cut and fit the heavy 30mm stone tops.

Before moving out I brought the wenge-veneered doors, drawer fronts and side panels on site to pre-hang them and make any adjustments with a hand plane. When the point had been reached where all of these panels were fitting snugly together with 3mm 'shut lines', I ran masking tape along the edges. Due to the dark chocolate colour of the wenge the tape would enable me to mark clearly where the astragal moulding would need to be machined in order to run smoothly through the doors, drawers and side panels.

Panel rebates

The panels were then taken back to the workshop to have the necessary rebates machined using a router running along my Festool guide rail. At 800mm long and with a raised extruded section that locates into the router base, it avoids the risk of accidentally

diverting from your true course, which at this stage of the game would be disastrous.

With the grooves machined out, the astragal moulding was glued (photo 6), and pinned into place, with the overhanging ends being trimmed when the glue was dry.

Back to the drawers

Having been retrieved from my bathroom (much to the relief of my long-suffering wife), the drawer material was re-checked for movement, trimmed to size, dovetailed and glued up into boxes (photo 13). The drawer boxes were designed to be fitted with a touch-release drawer runner mechanism, available from www.hafele.co.uk, which also supplied the push-to-open catches fitted to the doors.

After sanding, the drawers were sprayed with a 50% acid catalyst lacquer from www.morrells.co.uk (photo 7). This form of lacquer provides a very strong finish that protects against water and household chemicals, and would be used on the doors and drawer fronts as well. Before spraying the doors and drawer fronts I masked off the astragal moulding and applied one coat of finish, then removed the masking tape and, using a fine paintbrush, coloured the sapele moulding with an ebony spirit stain.

Miracle workers

With all of the components finished, great care was taken to bubble wrap them to ensure they reached the site in pristine condition – polished wenge is unforgiving when it comes to displaying any slight mark or scratch.

Arriving back on site to what had been a fluorescent-lit, stone dust-encrusted battleground with five large blokes all fighting over a small working space, I now found myself in a state-of-the-art, luxury bathroom/wet room. This of course presented its own problems: as the final trade in, I had to be extra vigilant not to cause any damage when working, and I was aware that I would be the last in a long line of workmen the project-weary client would reluctantly have to deal with. By this time they had heard every excuse, dealt with every problem and been shocked by a constantly rising budget, so my task was to finish quickly, smoothly and keep



15 Finished unit showing drawer



11 Pipework fitted into one of the cabinets



12 Fitting the cabinets to the wall



any problems that might arise to myself, and just get on and solve them.

In fact, having already pre-fitted all of the doors and drawers (**photo 14**), the client saw us as miracle workers. In just two hours myself and the cabinetmaker who was assisting me had the job done (**photos 12, 15 & 16**) and we were loading up the van. The client didn't even get a chance to offer us a cup of tea.

Like a certain brand of savoury sandwich spread, site work is loved by some and hated by others. I stand firmly in the latter category. Whatever your viewpoint, it's always essential to approach it with military precision, gaining as much intelligence as you can, getting the other tradespeople on your side and trying to keep your head in the tricky situations that will always arise. Good luck out there. **WW**



13 Fitted drawer boxes waiting for their fronts



14 Pre-fitting the doors and drawers

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It all started when Linda was asked if she could make a small rocking horse for one of her Grandchildren, she was then asked to make a stepstool so that her Grandchildren could help at Grandma's table.

After seeing the amazing pieces that Linda had made for her family, people started asking for individual pieces to be made for themselves such as coat hooks, house signs and memorial plates. A seed started to grow and from it Indigenous Tree was founded, Linda's company now makes high-end wooden gifts and products from trees that are indigenous to the UK.

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wood down to a state where I don't have to do a lot of sanding!" going on to say "I hope to one day pass these machines on to my Grandchildren".



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NEXT MONTH

Coming up in the next issue...

WW July – on sale 2 June

A TALE OF THREE SMOOTHERS

Plane simple; we line up a few smoothers for a bench comparison

PLUS ■ Toy aeroplane – part 2 ■ Turn an elegant Roman leg
■ The final instalment of Peter Baker's 'Timeslip' series



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Axminster Hobby Series AWC4 250mm deluxe combination machine

This combination machine is fairly easy on the pocket, but it takes up more space than you might expect

Specification

General

Number of motors: 3
Power: 3,000W (saw);
2,000W (planer);
3,000W (spindle) 230V
Weight: 370kg

Saw function

Blade speed: 4,050rpm
Blade tilt: 0-45°
Max depth of cut @45°:
45mm
Max depth of cut @90°:
65mm
Max ripping width:
460mm
Scoring blade diameter:
80mm

Spindle function

Cutterblock diameter:
75mm
Cutterblock speed:
4,000rpm
Spindle speeds: 3,500,
5,500 & 7,500rpm

Planer function

Feed speed: 8m/min
Fence tilting: 0-45°
Knives: HSS x 3
Max depth of cut: 2.5mm
Max planing width:
250mm
Max thicknesser
capacity: 180mm

Price: £3,425.57
Web: www.axminster.co.uk

PROS

- Smooth adjustments
- Great capacities
- Micro fence adjustments

CONS

- A couple of cheap knobs
- Odd sub fence configuration
- Fine adjuster could get damaged

RATING: 4 out of 5

When you go down the route of combination machines there are usually two main factors that play their part: space and budget. There tends to be a train of thought that believes a combi frees up space and will work in smaller workshops. However, with a combi you generally need good all-round access to be able to use it to its full potential as they tend to come with a lot of features that need space.

This particular model, with its sliding carriage for the saw table as well as the gull-wing outboard tilting planer beds for the thickening function, requires a wide work area but it does come with a wheel kit and jockey wheel so you can move it around easily enough to orient for the job in hand.

On the budget side, the AW4 certainly gives you plenty for your money and with decent capacities across the board.

The three-motor system means you don't have to start

swapping belts to move between functions, although there's still swapping or moving of fences and tables on the top of the machine as with any combi. While the three motors are advantageous, the setup demands a 16amp power supply.

Taking a look at the individual functions reveals some excellent features...

First, the saw

Starting with the saw, there's a scoring function as standard; alongside the sliding carriage it gives clean splinter-free cuts on veneered or laminated stock.

It's a single blade, not a shimmable one, so it must be matched to the main blade if you swap it for a different tooth count, etc. The scorer is easily adjusted with the top-accessible setting points.



The jockey wheel makes it easy to reposition the machine as needed



Sliding the carriage back gives excellent access to both blades



There are adjustments for the scoring blade through the table



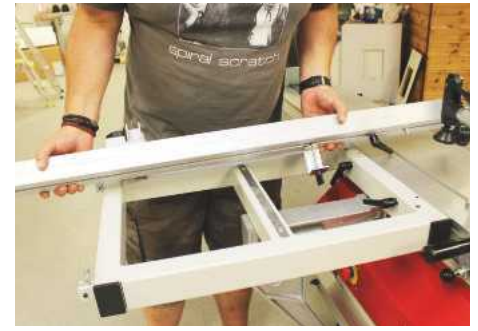
There's also a raft of adjustments for setting the fences and tables



A heavy casting supports the squaring table well



Adjustment wheels run fluidly and sit flush when not required



The sliding carriage fence locates on a pivot pin

The carriage has a 2,000mm cross-cut capacity when using the adjustable fence. The fence will also alter on the carriage for angled cuts. It's certainly solid enough; a heavy-duty cast bracket supports the squaring table frame well, and there are adjustments that ensure the carriage tracks perfectly to the blade. The clamping shoe on the fence is nothing to write home about, but it retains its setting well enough; as with many machines where savings need to be made, things like this tend to be some of the areas where this happens, along with the odd locking knob or two.

Ripping capacities are maybe a little shy for a 250mm-diameter blade: 65mm at 90° is fine but the 45° tilt is a tad limited at 45mm. The maximum overall ripping width with the ripping fence is limited to 460mm, and this is an area where combi machines in general can come up short, more so on a compact model like this one.

The fence cam locks to the front running rail well, and there's also a rack & pinion fine adjustment facility that does a good job of tweaking any setting.

Separate rise and fall/tilt wheels work well, and have folding handles to give a clearer work area when walking work through the functions.

Spindle function

Spindle work makes good use of the sliding carriage; ideal for working end-grain mouldings and scribing cuts, and with a top-threaded spindle, it is fitted with a suitable flush rebating block to enable tenon cuts to be made as well.

There is a set of collars as well as reducing rings along with a central blanking cap to give a clear flat table when the spindle is wound below the table and isn't in use.

Spindle speed adjustment is accessed through a hatch and needs a spanner to release the tension on the belt to allow it to be moved and there's decent room to do so, making it fast and easy to achieve.

The hood is much the same as most on the market, but certainly better than many budget offerings. It has a heavily cast-alloy main section with thick walled box section aluminium for the guarding, so everything is kept rigid while the work is fed through. I found the use of a set of rollers on the top hold down was a bonus as it helped the work feed through more slickly while still keeping it down to the table.

The fences are aluminium with the standard adjustments for offset work, with each fence facing having jacking screws to gain perfect parallel and coplanar alignment.

Planer talk

Moving to the planer, if there is an area where it could prove frustrating, it's the need to bolt down the dovetailed fence-retaining plate to the table when you want to face up stock. I found that while it worked well when needed, to use the other machine functions I had to remove it, and with a hex wrench needed, along with the chance that the retaining bolts could be mislaid, I'd prefer an easier system to secure the fence as well as swapping the functions over.

The plus side of things makes up for it though: a three-knife



A big hold-down clamp keeps things secured and can be used in conjunction with the flip stop



The fence has a solid cam lock along with a neat adjuster



A spanner and hex key are used to swap blocks



Reducing and blanking rings are supplied



The spindle hood is solidly made and secures with Bristol levers



The fences are fully adjustable to suit the work



These wheels allow the work to pass through easily



Heavy box sections ensure the guards stay rigid under load



The bridge guard can be removed when not required



The planer tables have to tilt away for thickness work



You have to have the hood in place in order to use the thicknesser



This bracket has to be fitted for the planer fence



A cast-iron fence is a great feature and I was pleased to find that it adjusts easily



The central ram is a feature normally found on more expensive models



Various power options are dotted around the machine



The saw functions are powerful and accurate



The gull wing tables aren't ideal for thicknessing work



There's loads of table space to support the work on the spindle

block, while still offering the similar cuts per millimetre of a two-knife block, does gain faster feed speeds through the thicknesser – 8m per minute in this case.

Alongside this there's a central ram-supported table that runs easily. You have to swing both tables away from the block and reposition the hinged fabricated dust hood to cover the block safely during this operation.

While access to the thickness table itself is first class, I found the tables themselves can get in the way when feeding stock through on your own as they restrict easy access around the machine to pick up the work as it ejects.

In summary

A foible or two doesn't detract from what is a very well-constructed machine for the money; the three motors all seem to be man enough for the tasks in hand, and with switching for the functions well positioned for either initial start up or to switch off after use, it's pretty user friendly.

It takes a more methodical approach to get a combi to work well as you don't want to be constantly swapping modes, but if you can get along in this way then you have three decent core machines here for a lot less than the individual machines would cost if you bought them as separates. **AK**

Trend 46/521X1/4TC Guided Rebater/Profiler



This guided 1mm rebater profiler could be worth its weight in gold to anyone who does a lot of kitchen refits

If you've ever had to deal with damaged laminate worktop lippings you'll know it can be a pain to remove them easily as well as dealing with the underlying contact adhesive so that a replacement can be successfully fitted. As long as the top can be easily removed, this cutter looks to be a great solution, allowing the damaged lipping to be taken away in two hits.



A damaged lipping can be a pain to remove and replace



Set the router to make the first pass just over half the depth of the worktop



The resulting cut removes the top part, leaving a clean surface

Nifty trick

Looking to all intents and purposes like a top and bottom bearing-guided flush bit, it has a nifty trick up its sleeve by having a lower bearing that is 2mm shy of the 16mm cutter diameter.

By plunging the router low enough to make a pass just below half the thickness of the work it will make a 1mm rebated cut, removing the top part of the damaged lipping in doing so.

Plunging the router further so that the flush-cut top bearing engages the newly formed rebate, the second pass now completes the cut and removes the bottom part of the damaged lipping to leave a clean flat cut ready for the new lipping.

Worktop work

As with other routing tasks on worktops, depending on the lipping's position the worktop may have to be flipped and the cuts made from the underside to prevent the front edge from chipping out.

If you can't get the worktop out, you can still remove the majority of the lipping by working the cut in the same way but stopping short either from the front edge if it can break out, or working the cut from the front until the router comes up against another surface.

The remaining lipping can then be pared away and tidied up with a sharp chisel or plane.

Putting it to the test on a damaged lipping the process was not only fast but left a perfectly clean and true edge ready for re-lipping. There are also a couple of other bearings available to give offset rebates for 1.5, 2 and 3mm-thick lippings.

In summary

While not a cheap cutter, it does exactly what it says on the tin. It's a great accessory for anyone who is doing refurb work. **AK**

Specification

Min work depth: 12mm
Max work depth: 38mm
Cutter diameter: 16mm
Lower bearing diameter: 14mm

Price: £54.78

Web: www.trend-uk.com

PROS

- Quick to set up
- Excellent finish

CONS

- Won't take a full cut if the top can't be removed

RATING: 4.5 out of 5



Set the router so the top bearing engages the new rebate and is deep enough to remove the rest



A second pass then removes the rest of the lipping for a clean, smooth surface



Specification

Irons: 3.5mm thick, hardened to 60-62Rc
Castings: stress-relieved grey iron

Prices: No.4 – £159.60;
 No.62 – £195.98

Web: www.johnsonstools.co.uk

PROS

- Neat cap iron retention
- Excellent machining
- Fine castings

CONS

- Backlash when altering laterally

RATING: 4.5 out of 5

Kunz Plus planes

We take a look at the 12.4plus (No.4 smoother) & 12.62plus (No.62 low-angle jack)

On a recent jaunt to the Harrogate show I came across these two little beauties on the Johnsons Tools stand. Kunz tools usually bear garish bright green and red to signify their place in the cheaper end of the market, so it wasn't until I saw the engraved lever cap that I realised they were from the same company. These are a massive step away from those lower-end planes, targeting makes like Lie-Nielsen, Veritas and Clifton as well as the excellent WoodRiver planes and their ilk. And while the design of both the low-angled bevel-up jack and the No.4 smoother look to be little different from other premium planes, they are in fact unique.

Adjustments

First off, the lateral adjustment moves the blade in the same direction as the lever, opposite to the way lateral levers normally work. It takes some getting used to after spending a lifetime of opposing alteration! It works well, though, and alongside the Norris-style adjuster for blade advance used on both planes, the action is very smooth.

There is some backlash when altering between retracting and advancing the blade, close to two full turns on both of them, but to be honest I've never lost any sleep over this; as long as the wheel runs freely to take up the slack, as these do, then it's a fraction of a second to do so. I was a tad frustrated,

however, on finding that making alterations to the lateral adjuster immediately introduced almost a full turn of backlash that has to be taken up each time it's altered, but the overall performance of the plane makes up for small niggles.

In the same vein, I was initially pleased to find that both these adjusting wheels are within index finger reach as well, allowing me to make adjustments to the cut without having to remove the plane from the work and sight it down, something that the longer Norris-style adjusters prevent you from doing; but you need to find a sweet spot in tensioning the lever cap that allows the cutter to be advanced without inadvertently altering the lateral setting; get it right and you can make fine adjustments without taking the plane from the work, much the same as a standard Bailey design.

On the smoother, it acts as a resting place for the index finger, but it can be easy to push it across when you are planing heavily, so you might find a four-finger grip better.

Lever cap retention

A neat piece of innovation is the lever cap retention method used on both planes. The screw-down threaded knob that applies the pressure has been drilled out on its underside allowing it to sit over the location pin for the cutting iron, which has been extended in length on the low-angle plane;



The double irons connect together with a screw through a slot



A longer screw on the iron acts as a stud to connect to the lever cap screw



The milling of the frog is very clean and finely done



A single hex adjuster moves the Bedrock-style frog



Pushing the lever to the right or the left moves the blade the same way



There's a natural index finger resting point on the smoother but take care not to move the lever



A large milled bedding surface on the low-angle jack gives great support



A stud projection on the Norris adjuster connects to the lever cap

on the smoother a longer screw connects the cutting and cap irons. The Kunz design gives it a very positive double retention to keep the cap firmly in position when any adjustments are made, without any restriction on the adjustments themselves.

The simpler design of the bevel-up low-angle plane eliminates any frog adjustment; the mouth aperture is controlled with a standard twist-lock front knob and cam lever.

The smoother, with its traditional bevel-down, 45° pitched frog, has a remodelled Bedrock design. Traditional Bedrocks utilise a three-pin adjustment to set the mouth opening, but the Kunz requires just one adjustment; a hex key-adjusted central screw at the back of the frog controls the setting so it's a tad quicker than a standard Bedrock.

The position of this adjuster is tricky to get to with a standard hex wrench, but a longer ball-head wrench makes it easier to access.

Crisp build quality

The planes are backed up with crisp build quality. The bodies are made from stress-relieved grey cast-iron so you may have to be a tad more careful not to drop them, but the milling is fine, flat and square.

Equally fine is the large bedding area for the irons, and with

3.5mm-thick cutting irons, made from optimised tool steel hardened to 60-62, there's a solid fit to keep chatter down on harder and gnarly timbers.

The irons take a good edge with no need to spend hours working the backs as they are very flat, so it was seconds of prepping before I could get to work and see how they performed. A rough board of wild-grained cherry was easily tamed with the LA jack, coping perfectly with the wild grain patterns within to leave a smooth glassy surface.

The smoother did an equally fine job on cherry as well as some ash with edges raised straight off my usual Trend diamond stone sharpening regime.

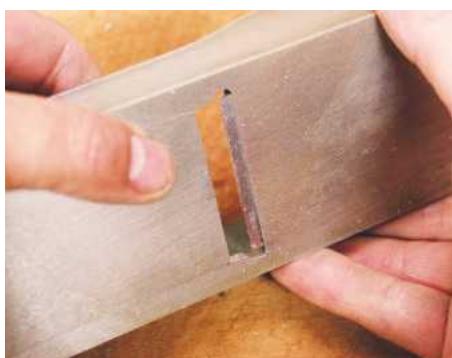
In summary

Overall, I'm pretty impressed by these planes; their unique features set them apart from their main rivals while still performing as well as them and will provide more choice when on the hunt for a higher-end tool that offers quality and performance with minimal fuss.

The backlash niggles I encountered when altering the lateral adjustment is a small negative against the overall smooth drive. **AK**



A simple cam adjuster alters the mouth opening



The maximum opening is massive...



... but it also closes down to a hair for finer work



Specification

Speeds: 6,000-20,000rpm

Battery: 18V Li-ion

Prices: £159.60 (body only); £205.20 (body only plus accessories)

Web: www.makitauk.com

PROS

- Tool-free fast accessory swaps
- Good dust kit
- Accessories and stacking container supplied

CONS

- Bulky

RATING: 3.5 out of 5

Makita DTM51 cordless multitool

Where most tools have slimmed down, this one appears to have been on the steroids, so expect big and fast performance

Like other tools based on a small angle grinder design, the bodies can be quite bulky but this is certainly one of the bigger ones, and its dust extraction setup further fattens it.

The upgrade of the original BTM50, this machine now sports a fast-release system for swapping the cutters. A top-mounted lever links to a lower mushroom-head retaining pin as on the tried-and-tested Fein and Bosch models. Operating the lever releases the clamping action, allowing the pin to be removed to swap the cutters. The cam lever action is quite stiff to rotate past its tightest point but it does secure the cutters or sanding head very securely once it's re-engaged.

Attributes

A simple slide power switch on top of the tool is well positioned for either handed use and to get the most from the tool it has a variable-speed dial tucked in at the left-hand rear that allows

easy access and 20 clickable positions. This works well enough, allowing decent control on the fly and is suited to cutting work, especially where you want to start on a slower speed and then move up through the gears to complete the cut quickly and efficiently.

Sanding work is equally efficient and the kit comes with a range of abrasives and a sanding head. The dust kit clips firmly to the tool and is easy to remove without having to strip the tool down to do so, and it works well.

In summary

While bulky, this tool is efficient. As a body-only kit it comes in a stackable Systainer-style case along with a fitted insert, dust kit and a starter pack comprising a single cutting blade, sanding pad, abrasives and adaptor to fit a variety of other manufacturers' blades. **AK**



The top-mounted cam lever is pushed fully forwards to disengage the clamp...



... this allows the retaining pin to pull out so the attachment can be swapped



The clamp lever is reset and the attachment held securely



Sanding in tight spots is just one area where this multitool shines



With the dust kit fitted the body becomes pretty bulky

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01604 411 568 (Northampton)

Luna W59 combination machine & Startrite 301 bandsaw – both used only for hobby work. £950 for the two; buyer to collect
01684 772 020 (Gloucestershire)

Australian Symtec woodturning lathe – in good condition, complete with turning tools
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01254 830 592 (Lancs)

Kity planer/thicknesser – never used; £175 OVNO – collection only
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07779 746 603 (Kent)

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A walk around the factory PART 6



Vehicles from the Lebus fleet of lorries that transported furniture across the land

In the penultimate part of this series, **Peter Baker** tells us about the factory's dedicated surgery, and how the introduction of a principal contractor to deliver furniture signalled the advent of change at Harris Lebus

I left my readers at the end of the conveyor lines of the polishing shop, where the Inspector would place furniture on to another conveyor to take the piece along to the warehouse. Here it would be stored until 'called-off' for despatch to a retailer somewhere in the country. But, back to where the polishing shop conveyors crossed the main corridor in the factory and slightly south, for here we will find The Surgery. One would expect to find a first aid room in a factory of this size, with qualified first aiders and suitable equipment. The Surgery was not only staffed by nurses, with a matron, but had a doctor as well. They shift worked to cover the time when the factory was in operation – usually 16 hours a day. My first realisation of this facility was when, while working as Goods Inwards Inspector, I took in a quantity of fairly large boxes, which were also very light in weight. I checked the quantity, signed the driver's delivery sheet, logged them in and called for a labourer to take them to The Surgery. He arrived with a sack barrow, took one look and said:

"Oh, man-hole covers!" and went to get a much larger trolley. After loading all the boxes on to the trolley, I asked what he meant by man-hole covers when the boxes were so light. He scathingly replied that they were sanitary towels for The Surgery and set off to deliver them. I soon perceived that the company employed many ladies, not only in the offices but also in the factory. What a caring employer. On another occasion I was grinding a piece of metal for a job I was doing when a tiny chip of metal went into my eye. Off to The Surgery where it was identified and here I was told that I was being sent to the Prince of Wales General Hospital, in Tottenham High Road, for them to deal with. At the hospital the offending metal was removed with a high powered magnet, and given a lotion to apply to the eye, I was returned to work.

The offices

The offices I will leave to your imaginations, for I only went into them for my interviews at the beginning. Our Powers-Samas punch cards were

placed into a compartmented box, collected by a young lady each week and taken to the office for calculation. Pay was always one week in arrears because of this. On the subject of pay and payment-by-results, national average earnings at this time were around £6 a week. Because I worked PBR my earnings were fairly consistent and I always used to clear at least £12 each week, after all stoppages like tax and insurance, plus a further sum for a savings account. I was saving a deposit for my first house.

Furniture by road

When I began at Lebus all the furniture was delivered by contract delivery companies. In the late '50s Lebus took over the principal contractor, D H Transport, located further along Ferry Lane, painted all the vehicles grey and fixed a board on the side, which stated that this was 'Lebus Furniture'. After the last piece of furniture was delivered, the board was lowered on hinges to read 'Merchandise Transport' and a 'Return Load' would be picked up. This avoided a vehicle running empty, as is usual with furniture companies. A slight change from pre-war days when furniture was loaded onto railway wagons in the company's own sidings. I will leave you to imagine how delivery to the retailer was accomplished at the other end of the journey. **www**

GET IN TOUCH

In the final part of this series, Peter recaps on his memories and shares a few new anecdotes, as well as offering his thoughts on the company and the family that created it. And if any other readers have a story to tell, we'd be glad to listen. Just write to editor.ww@mytimemedia.com and we'll see how we get on



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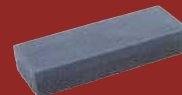
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