

# The Woodworker

**& Goodwoodworking**

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## TURNED TREEEN

Andrew Hall makes a full dinnerware service in ash



### PLUS...

- ON TEST: AUKTOOLS BENCH TOP ROUTER TABLE
- TONY 'BODGER' SCOTT MAKES A FUN GARDEN QUILTS GAME
- JOHN GREEVES LEARNS MORE ABOUT BESPOKE CRICKET BAT MAKING

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# Welcome

Sometimes we all need a break, and as many of our loyal readers will no doubt know by now, my go-to destination is Cornwall. I'm not sure what it is, but there's something about the country air and sea breeze that just lifts the senses and spirits, and whenever I'm feeling like I need to kick back for a few days or find some inspiration, I always escape to the West Country. So this is where I am as I write this month's welcome page, gazing out across rolling fields, where I can see stunning coastline and the gentle rise and fall of waves, while listening to various types of bird song. I have to admit that even though I love living in the city and couldn't imagine not having so many things on my doorstep, all within walking distance, as I inevitably get older, I do find myself craving the calmer countryside more and more...

## Local crafts

While exploring Tintagel the other day, I was most pleased to find a selection of local crafts in a number of different gift shops, many of them wooden, including a fine selection of bowls and platters, all turned by local craftsmen, as well as some turned pens, honey dippers and wooden pendants, crafted in the Celtic style. While these are relatively small items, I don't doubt that no matter where we are in the country, or indeed the world, we are never far from a woodworker – be that a tradesman or hobbyist – which means that, using this logic, we should have a fair few readers down here!

## Letters & emails

Talking about readers, as ever, we have been delighted to receive your correspondence, and one email that particularly made me smile was from long-time reader,

Sammy Bogle. Sammy's passion for woodworking and the magazine (which he's been reading since the mid-80s) really came across and hearing from him certainly made my day, so thank you, Sammy! We were also thrilled to have another update on Matt Russell's woodworking journey. Matt wrote in a while back telling us how he'd just started to get in to it, and having now retired, he's been able to dedicate even more time to his hobby, so much so that he's even built a second workshop to house his growing amount of kit! The luxury of more space has obviously allowed Matt to broaden his repertoire, so look out for some photos of what he's been making next month.

## The Alan Peters Furniture Award

We're also pleased to announce that following our exciting announcement in the May issue, the finishing touches are being made to the T&Cs and logistics for our forthcoming Alan Peters Furniture Award, and we hope it won't be long until we can bring you full entry and prize details. In the meantime, you can be assured that we're working hard behind the scenes to bring this all together to ensure that we come up with a competition which Alan Peters himself would be proud of. So for all you woodworkers out there, we hope you continue to enjoy your journey, learning and growing all the while, and long may our magazine continue to play an important part in that.

Enjoy!

*Tegan*

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Technical & Consultant Editor



**Dave Roberts**

Consultant Editor

*We endeavour to ensure all techniques shown in this issue are safe, but take no responsibility for readers' actions.*

*Take care when woodworking and always use guards, goggles, masks, hold-down devices and ear protection, and above all, plenty of common sense. Do remember to enjoy yourself, though!*

## 73 TRADITIONAL COTTAGE CHARM

Following on from the December issue, Phil Davy replaces an outhouse door with a more fitting traditional framed, ledged and braced pattern, which is perfect for a period property

# WIN!



### Triton Tools TTS185KIT 1,400W track saw kit

Don't miss your chance to get your hands on this brand-new powerful 1,400W track saw kit from Triton Tools, complete with 1,400mm track for smooth, precise, straight and bevel cutting of larger workpieces – see page 24 for details



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See page 78 for details

# The Woodworker

Good Woodworking

JUNE 2019

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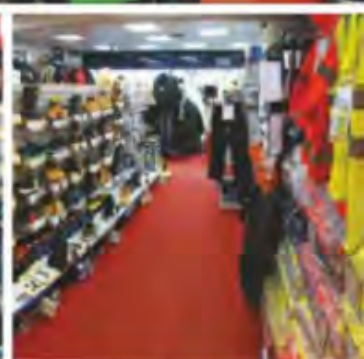
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## WOOD AWARDS 2019 CALL FOR ENTRIES LAUNCHED



Storey's Field Centre & Eddington Nursery – Mears Group Gold Award and Commercial & Leisure Winner 2018

The Wood Awards: Excellence in British Architecture and Product Design has now launched its 2019 call for entries. Anyone involved in a UK-based wood project is invited to enter and has until 24 May to submit their applications. The competition is free to enter and entrants may submit more than one project.

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 Wood Awards shortlist will be announced in July and the winners will be announced at the Wood Awards ceremony, due to be held on 19

November 2019 at Carpenters' Hall in London. The shortlisted projects will be on display at the ceremony and during the London Design Festival in September.

With permission from the owner, anyone associated with a building or product, completed within the last two years, can enter. Buildings must be located within the UK while furniture and other products must have either been designed or manufactured in the UK. Fitted furniture must be in the UK. There are no restrictions on the size or budget of a project.

The Furniture & Product competition will be split into 'Bespoke', 'Production Made' and 'Student Designer', which is open to anyone currently in education or who has left education in the past 12 months.



Look! Look! Look! – Small Project Winner 2018

Within the Student category there are two cash prizes (£1,000 for the Winner and £500 for the People's Choice). The 2019 buildings categories will be confirmed later this year. These are likely to be 'Commercial & Leisure', 'Education & Public Sector', 'Interiors', 'Private' and 'Small Project'. Other awards, such as 'Structural and Existing Building', can be given at the judges' discretion.

To submit an entry and to find out more, see [www.woodawards.com](http://www.woodawards.com).

Ballot Chair – Production Winner 2018



## DIARY – JUNE

- 3–6 Intro to woodworking – side table
- 4–5\* Bowls & platters
- 8\* Sharpening hand tools with Tormek
- 11 Bandsaws
- 12–13 Wood machining
- 12–14\* & 25–27 Adirondack chair
- 19–20 Woodturning
- 20–21\* Woodturning
- 25\* Pyrography
- 28\* Intro to Leigh Jigs
- \* Course held in Sittingbourne, Kent

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- 6–9 An introduction to picture framing
  - 17–19 Shaker box making
  - 23 Woodcarving
  - 23–28 Advanced furniture making
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- 15 Mother's day Greenwood experience
  - 16 Father's day Greenwood experience
  - 24–30 Windsor chairmaking
  - 29 Spoon carving
  - 30 Fan bird carving
- ### Greenwood Days
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- 7–9 Basic jointing weekend
  - 10–15 Make your own workbench
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- 1 Willow basket making
  - 4 Make a wooden chair – 12 evenings
  - 9 Greenwood low stool
  - 19 Intro to woodcarving – 4 evenings
  - 23 Intro to woodturning
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## DICKIES PARTNERS CITY OF BRISTOL COLLEGE TO INSPIRE NEXT GENERATION OF TRADESPEOPLE

Global workwear brand Dickies is partnering City of Bristol College to support students and apprentices who are preparing for a career in a range of vocational and technical trades and professions.

As part of a commitment to inspire the next generation of tradespeople, the partnership is aimed at raising ambitions and supporting high expectations for students and apprentices, and helping them focus on developing their professional behaviours as they prepare to start their careers. It will also provide extended opportunities for learning through a co-delivery of specific curriculum content with the focus on employability and personal development.

The partnership may also include a series of Dickies sponsored talks by inspirational speakers and mentors and sponsorship of the College's Student Awards, in addition to items of specialist clothing and student induction packs to help students and apprentices with their studies and development.

"We're excited to be working with City of Bristol College as part of our commitment to instil pride in the next generation of tradespeople," said James Whitaker, Marketing Director for Dickies.

"Workwear can play a big part in feeling confident and ready to do a good job, but we know that's just one aspect to starting a career on the right note. By supporting colleges like this to motivate and encourage students and apprentices, we hope we can make a difference to the careers of future tradespeople."

Emma Jarman, Vice Principal – Curriculum and Quality commented: "A skilled, knowledgeable and motivated workforce is an essential ingredient



Emma Jarman (right) with CoBC construction students

for building a strong and sustainable economy. Our students were delighted with their Dickies induction packs containing essential items to help them make good progress in their studies and career development.

"Our partnership with Dickies will enable us to continue developing rich and stimulating learning experiences of our students and apprentices through co-design and co-delivery of our curriculum and engagement with current and highly respected industry practitioners."

Dickies' activity with City of Bristol College will support all students and apprentices aged 16-18. Those studying in the fields of plumbing, carpentry, electrical and construction programmes, horticulture, engineering, motor vehicle maintenance and animal care will additionally benefit from opportunities specifically related to their chosen industry.

Dickies welcomes enquiries from other colleges interested in forming similar partnerships – please contact [dickiesukmarketing@vfc.com](mailto:dickiesukmarketing@vfc.com) or visit [www.dickiesworkwear.com](http://www.dickiesworkwear.com).

## SÖDRA SPONSORS ARCHITECTURE AT THE CASS, LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

Södra Wood was delighted to recently sponsor the undergraduate architecture students' timber workshop at The Cass, London Metropolitan University.

The construction workshop is an annual event for the School of Architecture, taking place in February each year. Second year architecture students travel offsite to Mudchute



Park and Farm, where they get to learn more about working with natural construction materials. Last year the workshop was awarded a prestigious 'Excellence in Structural Engineering Education' Award.

This year's timber materials were donated by Södra Wood. Jeremy English, Sales Director at Södra Wood, commented: "We're really pleased to be able to help with this workshop. Timber is something we are passionate about – it is fast becoming the construction material of choice, enabling quick, versatile, efficient and sustainable construction. It's brilliant to see the future generation of architects working with wood and getting first-hand experience of the many benefits that it has to offer the construction environment."

George Fereday, Senior Lecturer at The Cass, London Metropolitan University, said: "Thank you to Södra Wood for sponsoring our workshop this year, it is something the students really enjoy every year. It is a great way for the students to learn how to work with the materials and gain valuable skills needed for their future careers, and it also allows them to fully immerse themselves in working with natural materials. We are pleased to know that our materials this year have come from a really sustainable timber source."

For further information about Södra Wood, visit [www.sodra.uk](http://www.sodra.uk).

## HIKOKI POWER TOOLS LAUNCHES NEW SLIMLINE 12V BATTERY & CORDLESS TOOL RANGE

HIKOKI Power Tools has launched its 12V Peak Slide cordless tool series, featuring a new range of powerful, slimline batteries. The new 12V range is ideal for professional users who need to work in confined spaces, over long periods of time, or where the job places demands more from a power tool other than just brute force. However, the 12V Combi still packs a serious punch with 38Nm of torque.

The new slimline slide 12V battery range powers the DS12DD brushless cordless driver drill, the DV12DD brushless cordless impact driver drill and the WH12DD brushless cordless impact driver.



The compact but powerful batteries make the tools lightweight and easy to handle – none weigh any more than 1.2kg. More tools will be added to the range later in the year.

Battery models BSL1225M and BSL1240M have a capacity of 2.5Ah and 4Ah respectively with minimal charging times of 37 and 60 minutes

only. The BSL1225M has a height of just 42mm and weighs just 220g while the BSL1240M stands at 45mm high and weighs only 330g. The BSL1225M and BSL1240M both come with a battery level indicator.

HIKOKI has also launched a new charger for the 12V battery series. Compact and lightweight, the UC125L charger offers a rapid charge – 37 minutes for the 2.5Ah battery and 60 minutes for the 4.0Ah battery.

"The demand for cordless power tools is growing all the time," says Marketing Director, Simon Miller. "Our research shows that professional users are looking to get the job done anywhere and powerful, compact cordless tools like these give them the power and flexibility to do this."

For further details, visit [www.hikoki-powertools.co.uk](http://www.hikoki-powertools.co.uk).

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The all new C3610DRA 36V cordless mitre saw is coming to a HiKOKI dealer near you very soon. The saw features a powerful brushless motor, and a compact slide system eliminates the need for rear clearance.



## NEW NORTON MESHPOWER: POWERFUL DUST EXTRACTION

The demand for a cleaner working environment, better quality finish and reduced consumable cost has inspired the latest sanding solution from Saint-Gobain Abrasives – the Norton MeshPower.

Developed to create a virtually dust-free working environment, the product range features a MeshPower matrix backing structure, which aids

in extracting dust from surfaces during sanding and brings a breath of fresh air to traditionally dirty sanding operations. Ideal for manufacturing and industry – including transportation and energy, collision repair and woodworking – the Norton MeshPower range offers a new solution to a wide variety of applications.

### A breath of fresh air

Norton MeshPower features a matrix backing containing thousands of tiny holes to help extract dust from the surface being worked on, enhancing the finish and controlling the dispersion of dust. When used in conjunction with a machine sander with dust extraction, dust is efficiently removed throughout the sanding process, ensuring harmful particles that fill the air during traditional sanding operations are diminished. This allows operators to work in a cleaner, healthier environment, and reduces cleaning after use, thus saving time and boosting productivity.

### Increased efficiency & consistency

Norton No-Fil® technology is applied to the abrasive grains of the Norton MeshPower range, which works to prevent clogging in combination with the mesh matrix. This means products can be used for longer and operators save both time and money. It also helps to achieve a better finish with a finer scratch pattern for faster sanding, with consistent results throughout the product life as the grain wears evenly. With the open structure and the premium resin bond system, operators can use Norton MeshPower products wet or dry to achieve the perfect finish.

When the abrasive does eventually need to be changed, the self-gripping backing enables a quick and easy changeover. Due to the innovative mesh matrix, there is no defined hole pattern, and therefore no need to align any holes; simply apply to the backing pad and sanding can recommence.

The highly versatile Norton MeshPower product range can be used on many materials, with or without a machine and on flat and contoured surfaces. Available in two quality tiers: 'Best' with premium ceramic grain and 'Better' with aluminium oxide grain, with the coarser grits featuring harder backing for heavy-duty applications, and the light-weight backing on finer grits offering flexibility to work on curves and contours.

Norton MeshPower is available in discs, cut sheets, rolls and with a range of accessories to meet all operation requirements. For more information, see [www.nortonabrasives.com](http://www.nortonabrasives.com).

## OUT NOW – MACHINE MART'S NEW SPRING/ SUMMER CATALOGUE

The new Machine Mart catalogue is packed full of all the tools and equipment you need whether for a hobbyist, DIY enthusiast or professional. Featuring over 600 price cuts and new products, the new 508-page Spring/Summer catalogue is a 'must have' for anyone seeking a huge choice of tools and equipment at unbeatable value.

With over 21,000 items of tools and machinery in stores across the country and online, you'll be sure to find the products you need! To order your catalogue, simply go online to [www.machinemart.co.uk](http://www.machinemart.co.uk), call 0844 880 1265 or visit your local store.



## NEXT-GENERATION HILTI ON!TRACK ASSET MANAGEMENT SOLUTION GOES THE DISTANCE

A next-generation Hilti ON!Track asset management solution has been launched, which allows equipment to be tracked at a far greater distance than was previously possible.

Utilising new Bluetooth-enabled ON!Track AI T380 smart tags, the system can locate tools at distances of up to 30m (100ft) ensuring users can keep an even more accurate record of all assets, check which ones are nearby, where they were last seen and monitor their usage.

The tags can be attached to any tool and surface, regardless of item, size and manufacturer, and have been tested to withstand corrosion, impact and exposure to chemicals. They communicate with Hilti's cloud-based ON!Track asset management software that runs on a downloadable app across mobile hand-held devices.

Benefits of Hilti ON!Track include: digitising asset management; controlling asset transfers; recording compliance and maintenance records and managing employee certificates.

Hilti's team of specialists provide full lifecycle support and work closely with customers to tailor the system to their precise needs, including: tagging tools and assets; configuring the software; training employees and providing ongoing support.

To find out more, see [www.hilti.co.uk](http://www.hilti.co.uk).



## MAKITA'S FIRST 'FUTURE PROOF' JOB SITE RADIO WITH BLUETOOTH & DAB+

Makita's first DAB job site radio with Bluetooth, the Makita DMR112, is the latest addition to the audio range that will meet everyone's taste in music and quality. With a dual power source by either AC adaptor or by Makita's CXT or LXT Lithium-Ion batteries, that can be found in Makita's cordless power tools range, this radio provides total convenience and cost efficiency.

The Makita DMR112 radio with Bluetooth is capable of receiving DAB, DAB+ and many national and local radio stations. DAB+ is the current standard across much of Europe with the main advantage of being three times more efficient, carries far more radio stations than DAB, and at a far higher audio quality. DAB+ is also a much greener technology because the overall transmission power required is far lower.

This radio has a two-way speaker system of twin 89mm diameter speakers that provide high quality sound and a maximum output, when using an 18V LXT Li-ion battery, of 4.9W from each. This rugged IP64 protection-rated dust and showerproof site radio has an elastomer bump-protecting casing, foldable antenna for added protection, an AC adaptor jack and digital amplifier and LCD display, which offers equal protection to the existing range from Makita.

This new body only radio has a Band III frequency range of 87.5–108MHz and is equipped with Bluetooth Class 2 to wirelessly play music from a mobile phone, MP3 player or tablet with a range of up to 10m. A neat, flat top surface provides stability for mobile devices and features a USB output port that allows mobile devices to be charged from the radio. An AUX-IN jack allows connection to personal audio players.

This intelligent and rugged job site radio with Bluetooth has a soft grip carry handle, that swivels to 90°, and is compact and light weight at just 4.3kg plus batteries. For more information, see [www.makita.co.uk](http://www.makita.co.uk).





## AFTER THE SUCCESS – TORMEK T-4 BUSHCRAFT BECOMES PERMANENT WITH THE NEW CONCEPT 'PREPARE FOR NATURE'

The Tormek T-4 Bushcraft now becomes a permanent sharpening machine in Tormek's range and part of a long-term investment in the hunting and outdoor markets. The new concept 'prepare for nature' urges us to care for our tools as we care for nature. The package includes all the equipment needed to sharpen knives and axes to razor sharpness.

Tormek CEO, Håkan Persson, states: "The high demand for the limited Tormek T-4 Bushcraft convinced us to continue offering a specially designed sharpening package for hunters and outdoor people. Sharpening your knives and axes is an important part of the preparations for hunting and hiking."

With the Tormek T-4 Bushcraft you can sharpen a wide variety of hunting knives, outdoor knives and axes. The sharpening machine is supplied with the Tormek Original Grindstone and a genuine leather honing wheel. The package also includes jigs for sharpening knives and axes together with all the standard accessories: Stone Grader, AngleMaster, Honing Compound, Tormek Handbook and an instruction DVD on sharpening.

The Tormek way of sharpening gives the user complete control over the angle and shape of the edge. The method removes the minimum amount of material and thereby prolongs the life of the tools. Also, the water cooling prevents any loss of temper in the steel and leaves a longer lasting edge.

With over 45 years' experience in sharpening, Tormek has a well proven method for sharpening edge tools. Today the company exports to over 30 countries worldwide and the products are appreciated by woodturners, carpenters and woodworkers as well as professional chefs.

Tormek offers a range of jigs for various tools, which can be purchased separately and used on the same system according to your needs. Chisels, drill bits, scissors and woodturning tools are examples of other tools that you can sharpen with the Tormek T-4 Bushcraft.

To find out more, see [www.tormek.com](http://www.tormek.com) and [www.brimarc.com](http://www.brimarc.com).



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## METABO 12V: THE NEW COMPACT CLASS – LIGHT, COMPACT & POWERFUL



**MANUFACTURER:** Metabo

**D&M GUIDE PRICE:** See our website

The new 12V cordless machines from Metabo make your daily work easier in the real sense of the word. The devices are particularly light and fit perfectly and ergonomically in your hand. They are of a small and compact design; however, they deliver full power. The small power packs have a slim handle for optimum handling when in use. Thanks to the low weight, even longer working or working overhead doesn't pose a problem and the particularly short design of the housing is ideal when operating in tight spaces. Also, the 12V slide-on battery pack is particularly compact and underlines the handy design of the Metabo 12V class.

All 12V cordless machines can be easily recognised by the '12' in their name: there are four drill/screwdriver models available in this class. The simplest model is the BS 12, which is a typical representative of the 12V class with exactly 1kg of weight and a hard torque of 40Nm. It fits well in the hand and is powerful in use. Even more compact and also more powerful is the 12V BS 12 BL drill/screwdriver with a brushless motor for highest efficiency; it also features a very compact design. Both models are available with a quick system for fast tool holder replacement and accessory replacement for flexible working.

Metabo also offers two models with 12V for the cordless hammer drills: the SB 12 cordless hammer drill and the brushless SB 12 BL. This also applies to the SSD 12 cordless impact drivers and the brushless SSD 12 BL, both with a hexagon recess to receive screwdriver bits. Two 12V cordless caulking guns with different pipe lengths and a discharge pressure of 4,400Nm also form part of Metabo's range. The 12V class is rounded off with a cordless portable lamp and a power adaptor – a compact multi-function adaptor that can be used as a desktop charger, energy source and lamp.



## REISSER CRATE MATE – HIGH QUALITY SELF-LOCKING STORAGE SYSTEM

**MANUFACTURER:** Reisser

**D&M GUIDE PRICE:** See our website

A practical and versatile system, Crate Mate offers a quality solution for the transporting and storage of tools, equipment and fixings in a professional and flexible way. Enhanced technical and structural features exceed alternative systems on the market making it an irreplaceable partner on the job.

The unique self-balancing design handle distributes weight more evenly for increased comfortable handling during transport and stows flat when stacked for ease of use. Two spring-loaded snap locks automatically lock cases together when placed on top of one another. With a larger internal volume than most others on the market, these cases offer greater storage options as well as the option for the user to carry more tools and products.

Manufactured with thicker profiles, more material and unique design features from highest quality German ABS, the Crate Mate is tough, waterproof and robust and will give years of protection to your tools. A range of optional accessories is also available including moulded inserts and removable tool panels, allowing you to customise the boxes to your individual requirements.



PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE – WWW.DM-TOOLS.CO.UK – FOR THE LATEST PRICES AND DEALS

Pen Size – 13in overall



Full Size – 25in overall



Mid Size – 15in overall



## WOODPECKERS ULTRA-SHEAR TURNING TOOLS

Thanks to nano-grain carbide inserts mounted to induction-hardened alloy steel shafts, these Ultra-Shear turning tools don't require sharpening, as **Ian Wilkie** discovers

**T**he Ultra-Shear turning tools from Woodpeckers are manufactured in the USA and there are three different tools in each size. They have very sharp inserts held securely at the end of the shank with each insert dedicated to the individual tool; they are not interchangeable.

The shaft is made from hardened steel and the round pen detail version has a flat on the underside. The larger tool shafts are more complex in design and have an additional milled

surface on the underside so that the tool can be rested 45° right and left to aid shear cutting.

At the end of the shaft is a precision-machined insert seat to secure the inserts: square, round and detail. The square insert can catch at the corner and so an alternative design with a slight radius is available; there is similarly an alternative insert for the detail tool.

### Blades & inserts

The blades are held securely in the seat with a

small high-tensile countersunk screw, which is tightened with an Allen key. The inserts are highly polished nano-grain carbide; they are very sharp, long lasting and cannot be resharpened. The insert can be rotated to expose a new sharp edge so that, in theory, the turner does not need to invest in expensive sharpening equipment. It is a simple matter to reposition or replace the inserts but beware they are very sharp! The screw is extremely small and once dropped into shavings it would be very hard to find, but a spare



The turned maple handle has an anodised red aluminium ferrule



A helpful matching coloured plate on the end of the handle indicates which insert fits which tool



The shaft is made from hardened steel and the round pen detail version has a flat on the underside



At the end of the shaft is a precision-machined insert seat to secure the inserts: square, round and detail



The blades are held securely in the seat with a small high-tensile countersunk screw, which is tightened with an Allen key



Each tool is supplied in a strong, clear, plastic tube with a hanging loop at the end and they could be stored in this way if desired

is included with each tool. It is important to clean the screw hole before inserting a replacement because jamming could occur. When the insert eventually becomes dull a replacement is available at approximately £18.

Each tool is supplied in a strong, clear, plastic tube with a hanging loop at the end and they could be stored in this way if desired. The instructions provided are brief but excellent and demonstration videos can be found on YouTube and are worth looking at.

#### In use

I was particularly interested in the pen tools and successfully turned the three pens shown in acrylic and diamond wood. The cutters worked well but I did lose two blanks when the tool shattered the material. This was overcome by using the alternative radius cutter. I have turned many, many pens over the years and I would still prefer to use conventional pen tools to do this. Robert Sorby, Hamlet, Ashley Iles and Crown all produce excellent pen tool kits, which are well proven and much cheaper. For example, a set of three Robert Sorby pen tools costs £68.

I also turned a small sycamore bowl using the Mid Size tools. The flat on the shaft is positioned down on the toolrest. To achieve the angle of sheer cut at 45° the alternative flats on the left and right are placed on the toolrest. The result was quite pleasing, the wood was removed quickly, but as I have said before, considerable sanding was required to get a smooth surface.

The Woodpeckers tools have been designed

with the newcomer to woodturning in mind. They are single bevel scrapers and are easy to use. However, even if shear scraping is mastered with the tool tilted at an angle for the final cuts, there will be a considerable amount of sanding necessary to achieve a smooth surface. Scraping, rather than cutting, does generate more heat and on some woods, such as sycamore, small cracks may occur on the surface. A new turner would be pleased with early results as the tool removes the wood quickly, especially when hollowing out bowls; however, a very fine finish is better achieved with a traditional gouge and a skew chisel will give a smooth cut on a spindle, but these tools are harder to master and require constant practice. Much is made of not having to purchase a sharpening system and it is undoubtedly an advantage; later when more traditional tools are added, such as a parting tool, sharpening will become necessary and have to be mastered.

#### Conclusion

Undoubtedly these Woodpeckers tools from America are very well made and of good quality, but they would be an expensive purchase for a newcomer to woodturning. True, they are easier to use than conventional tools and it is a big advantage that the inserts keep their edge and do not need sharpening as this task can be quite daunting when you are new to the craft. I do feel, however, that they are very expensive. If the cutters were interchangeable and you only needed one handle and shaft, then they would

be of interest, but this is not the case and, unfortunately, the price factor will put them out of reach of many hobby woodturners. ✘



I was particularly interested in the pen tools



I successfully turned the three pens shown here in acrylic and diamond wood



I turned a small sycamore bowl using the Mid Size tools. The flat on the shaft is positioned down on the toolrest. To achieve the angle of sheer cut at 45° the alternative flats on the left and right are placed on the toolrest



The result was quite pleasing, the wood was removed quickly, but as I have said before, considerable sanding was required in order to achieve a smooth surface

#### SPECIFICATION

Prices: Pen Size – £85.95 each (13in overall)

Mid Size – £106.95 each (15in overall)

Full Size – £149.95 each (25in overall)

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

#### THE VERDICT

##### PROS

- Easy to use, no sharpening required; excellent quality

##### CONS

- Too expensive | Inserts not interchangeable

RATING: 4 out of 5

# MAKITA DBN600 18V LXT FINISHING NAILER

**Cameron Sidgwick** is impressed with this finishing nailer from Makita, which is designed for second-fix carpenters, cabinetmakers and joiners

**T**he Makita DBN600 finishing nailer is a modern, efficient and powerful nail gun that takes the new generation of second-fixing to the next level. Its slick style, powerful firing and long lasting battery life make it an all-round 'must have' tool for the modern carpenter and joiner.

## First impressions

On unboxing the DBN600, my attention was first drawn to the style of the gun. The classic Makita colours really stand out and look great in a complete Makita kit. It's slightly larger than other comparative nailers on the market, but with a larger size comes increased power and strength during use. The battery slots straight



The Makita DBN600 finishing nailer, out of the box

into the bottom and then you're away and ready for use, unlike the older models of gas-powered gun. This tool is battery-powered and the nails are inserted by pulling up the lock catch, loading your preferred size, then releasing the catch to secure the nails.

This is a swift method of loading, and especially handy if it's going to be subject to a lot of use. You simply press the nailer into your timber, hold, then accurately fire your nails.

The rubber handle is very comfortable in use, and the nailer fits well in the hand with your index finger on the trigger. It is, however, quite a heavy piece of kit in comparison to its competitors, with a bulky top half, and this does take some getting used to.

## Impressive features

The DBN600 has many features that really impressed me. The side holster makes carrying the nailer around site all day really easy. I clipped it onto my Makita tool pouch and found I could still fit my hammer alongside it. Another great feature is the LED job light, which automatically reacts when pressed and just before the nailer fires, and this really comes into its own when you are fixing something in a dark or awkward space. The speed of firing makes your work a lot faster and more efficient. Having no gas, the battery-powered nailer takes no time to reload, so the next nail is always ready to fire. The detailing on the nail



holder section is numbered, which helps to make sure you always know what size you are shooting. If, for example, you are fixing two thin pieces of timber together, you can quickly check that the nails you have loaded are the correct size for the sizings shown, which avoids a nail ever coming through the back of your material. The rapid fire switch is also a great addition and allows you to flick to a faster shooting mode in order to fire more nails per minute. So when mass fixing, whether it be in architraves or skirting, etc., this feature ensures the job can be completed much more quickly.

## Batteries & storage

There have been a number of similar tools on the market for some time, and having used them over the years, I was excited to see what Makita have come up with in the DBN600. The no gas feature certainly makes everything a lot smoother, faster, and a whole lot cheaper. The DBN600 also exhibits great power with every fixing, so you can feel confident that every nail is doing its job. I do feel, however, that Makita could try and downsize



The DBN600 with its supplied Makpac systainer



Nails loaded and ready to go



Loading 50mm nails through the reload slot



The nail depth setter is a handy addition



Fully charged 4Ah battery



An LED job light automatically engages once the nailer is fired

this tool when looking to develop future models. The bulk of the top and the front body seem very large and can feel rather heavy after repeated use. It's a closer size to that of a first-fix nailer, which I feel could put new buyers off when it comes to doing a practicality comparison.

The battery power is amazing, lasting two or three full days of use and taking a very short amount of time to fully reload, so kudos to Makita on that front. The new design of the Makpac, which the nailer is supplied in, offers a real step up when it comes to storing your tool boxes. The tool fits comfortably in the Makpac, and there are compartments for nails, battery and charger, which makes life a whole lot easier when packing away – something I've found some rival brands really struggle with. The connector clips that fit onto other Makita Makpacs also comes in handy when loading the van and helps you to make efficient use of available space.

### Conclusion

Overall, the DBN600 performed to a very high standard. Its power assures a great fixing,

### SPECIFICATION

Voltage: 18V

Battery compatibility: LXT Lithium-ion

Nail gauge: 16Ga

Nail length: 25-64mm

Nail type: Finish

Shots per 4.0Ah battery charge: 800

Magazine capacity: 110

Weight: 3.4kg

Typical price: £546 (RRP – body only)

Web: [www.makita.com](http://www.makita.com)



Speed switch and holster



The nailer in action

and long battery life is a huge selling point for those looking to move away from the gas-powered nailers. All the fine details Makita have incorporated into this piece of kit helps to make it a top of the range tool. It's more affordable,

and fits really well into a Makita setup with the batteries and chargers. The bulk and weight of the nailer could be reduced slightly, but I'm sure that, in time, this will be narrowed down to create a pretty flawless tool. ✖



Material packed into position and fixed with the nailer

### THE VERDICT

#### PROS

- Affordable; stylish; powerful; great attention to detail; long lasting battery life

#### CONS

- Heavy; bulkier than it needs to be

RATING: 4.5 out of 5

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# Tempus fugit

Robin Gates looks forward to hours in the sun with a sundial from the April 1914 issue of *The Woodworker*

With the longest day of the year in the offing it's a good time to be thinking of sundials. Besides which, they've been in the news lately. First there was Sir David Attenborough in the gardens at Buckingham Palace with HM The Queen, finding a sundial 'neatly planted in the shade'. Then we had Cambridge academic Dr Frank King, chairman of the British Sundial Society, lamenting how the young seem not to be interested in this 'perfect collaboration of science and art'.

My own interest stems from school days when I had a Saturday job in Chichester, glancing up at the cathedral's sundial as I hurried to work, more out of curiosity than for telling the time. Even now, a sundial is the first thing I look for when visiting an old church. It seems to convey a profound message about time, which all our fancy wristwatches and smartphones fail to express. But I've never given a thought as to how this curious play with light is mathematically tuned to measure time so accurately.

It was the 'south vertical' design of the sundial which drew me to this article 'A Garden Sun-dial' from the April 1914 issue of *The Woodworker & Arts Craftsman* (as this journal was then called), because it's the type so much a character of old church walls, although I admit to growing slightly anxious on seeing that spider's web of 'setting out the lines' awaiting in Figure 6.

## Making the dial

As with many an uncredited article of yesteryear, you can never be sure who's speaking, whether in this case it's the Editor of the day, an authority on sundials, or the likes of yours truly who's dabbled in the subject and endeavoured to pass on to fellow readers what they've learned. But it begins in friendly fashion, assuring us that 'the ancient method of marking the time of the day by means of a sundial is still of interest, even in these days of clocks'. Find a south-facing wall to support it and this sundial promises to tell the time from 7am to 5pm, working year-upon-year without winding or recharging.

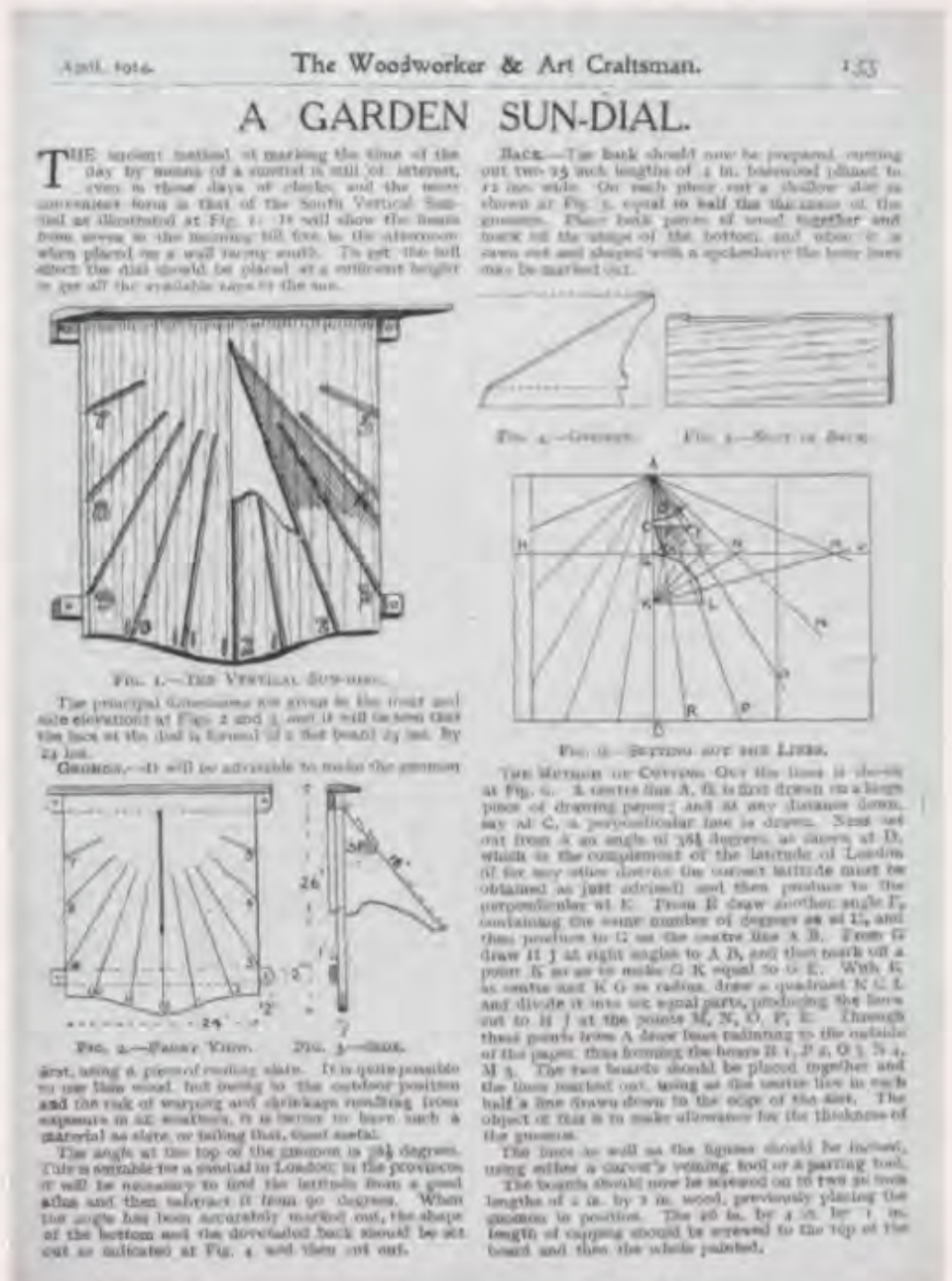
The dial is assembled from two boards (I'd use marine plywood, for its stability in all weathers) with a half-depth slot at the join to accept the gnomon, which is suggested to be of slate or sheet metal rather than wood, which might warp. The downward facing edges of both dial and gnomon can be shaped to pleasing curves but the edge of the gnomon, which casts the time-telling shadow – the style – must be straight and at the correct angle to the dial, which is 90° minus your local latitude. For me, that's a little over 38°.

## Constructing the hour lines

Now, about constructing those hour lines, and having worked through the procedure on paper I'm happy to say it's not as tricky as the non-trigonometrically minded might fear, with not a mention of any of those tricky sines, cosines and tangents. It's all done with a straight edge, a set square, compasses and a protractor. That said, although my old school protractor seemed adequate for marking off the gnomon angle (D and F) of 38-and-a-bit° I felt less confident of using it to divide the

90° angle GKL into six, and used proportional dividers instead.

But back to the woodwork: setting in those hour lines with a fine gouge, joining the boards around the dovetailed foot of the gnomon, adding battens across the back and a capping piece on top before painting and fixing the thing to the wall – it all looks pretty straightforward. Taking the old cathedral sundial as my guide, I'd favour Roman numerals for the hours (which would be easier to carve) and pick out the lines in gold. Now all we need is sunshine. ✕





## AUKTOOLS BENCH TOP ROUTER TABLE

The AUKTools Bench Top Router Table is an all-rounder; it's compact but doesn't compromise on quality, as **Jamie Smith** of **Atelier Cabinet Makers** finds here

**T**he AUKTools Bench Top Router Table is a compact, portable model that can easily be lifted and moved around the workshop while keeping everything set up and consistently ready to use. On first handling, I noticed the heavy-duty 32mm black anodised tubular frame, which is fully welded with no joints to construct and bolt together, thus making for a very strong frame. The frame is fitted with four large levelling feet so minor adjustment will keep the table wobble-free and provide a good grip for whichever surface the table is placed on.

The black frame holds a large downdraft bag, which is attached with straps and has external pockets for convenient storage of frequently used routing accessories. There is also a large zip opening on the front of the downdraft bag which allows the router to be placed inside the table, along with a 2.5in extraction port.



AUKTools' compact router table features convenient storage for accessories

### Table top

The top is constructed from 26mm thick phenolic laminated HDF board and is edgebanded for durability. I found the laminated surface provides very low friction when routing, which means less effort when passing timber over the router. However, this surface could dent or chip on the edges if accidentally knocked with a hard object or heavy timber, so this is worth bearing in mind during use. This type of router table top is a very cost effective option that will provide a solid, flat surface. The table top size is 400 x 600mm, which is ideal for a portable router table and will ensure it is not awkward or cumbersome to move around.

### Bit changing & accessories

The HDF top is also handily cut out to accept all AUKTools, INCRA, JessEm and Woodpeckers router insert plates and is lined with a stainless steel levelling pad. The insert I used for this test was the metric version of the JessEm Rout-R-Lift Prestige. This system allows the user to adjust the height of the router from above the table without having to fiddle around with the router settings underneath. I fitted the table with a DeWalt 625 router coupled with the Router Technologies Xtreme Xtension, which is a collet extension for  $\frac{1}{2}$ in collets. This enables router bit changes to be made from above the table using the supplied T-handle ball hex key. Overall, when using this setup, I found bit changing to be very simple: you leave the router secured in the router lift



Dust extraction is excellent while routing a rebate in solid oak

with the collet extension pre-fitted in the router, and then when raising the router fully, the collet extension will rise through the table to expose a tightening screw that allows the bit changes to be made from above the table. My only concern when using this setup with the collet extension is that I found it a bit tricky to tighten the collet extension screw using the supplied ball-end hex key. This was due to the tightening screw being at table level and I therefore had to rely on the ball-end of the hex key to work at an angle. I also found I still needed to press the spindle lock on the router underneath the table in order to stop the spindle turning while trying to tighten the collet extension. If you are using a router lift like this, I would recommend purchasing the collet extension, otherwise you may need to lift the insert plate out of the table each time you change a cutter (depending on which router you're using). Setting cutter height is very easy using the router lift, which shows half a rotation with a hex key to give 1mm of rise or fall. The lift



The router table fitted with the JessEm Rout-R-Lift Prestige



A lockable isolation switch allows for easy access



Router table fitted with JessEm clear-cut stock guides



The compact size enables use on the workbench or on the ground

is incredibly smooth and easy to use, unlike trying to plunge a router while used in an upside down configuration.

### Features

The AUKTools router table has a variety of other features including the lockable isolation switch with 2.8m power cord. There is also a 3/4in mitre track set into the top, which allows the use of many handy routing accessories and sliding squares or sleds. The router fence is built from extruded aluminium and has two adjustable laminated faces that can also be adjusted with shims for edging tasks, plus another 2.5in dust extraction port on the back of the fence. I found the extraction works superbly well and used an adaptor fitted with my 27mm extraction hose.

The overall setup and use of this table was easy and user-friendly. The insert plate can be levelled with the screw adjustment and timber passes very smoothly over the surface. I used JessEm clear-cut stock guides fitted in the 3/4in 'T' slot of the router fence, which made for very accurate routing passes. These are an alternative to regular feather boards yet allow a much smoother friction-free pass. The insert plate has various sized downdraft insert rings, which feature a quick change twist to lock them in place.

There is also a small, clear reversible sliding bit guard that offers the user increased dust extraction performance and protection; this simply fits in the standard size fence track.

### Conclusion

I have been using this setup for many different routing tasks and have experimented with a variety of cutters. For each application I found the dust extraction to be sufficient. I have carried out many tasks from small template guided shaping of solid oak handles, up to routing grooves and rebates for panels in cabinet components. I am very pleased with the build quality of the table and highly impressed with the robustness of the router lift. This setup is compatible with most of the popular 3/4in routers available on the market, but you can check the website for specifics. For some applications, I found the bench top router worked well on my workbench and at other times I used it directly on the floor. Its portability makes it ideal for site use or it can also be used out of the back of a van, for example. I would recommend this router table to anyone who is short of space in their workshop, or to those who are looking for an additional portable router table for use in different locations or on the jobsite. ✖



The router table features two large dust extraction ports with a downdraft bag

### SPECIFICATION

- 32mm black anodised tubular frame
- Compatible with most router insert plates of 235 x 298mm
- Tool-free, easily adjustable extruded aluminium fence with two fence shims
- Phenolic HDF top – 600 x 400 x 26mm edgebanded for durability with 3/4in mitre track
- Downdraft bag under table with 2 1/2in OD bottom extraction point
- Side-storage bags for tools
- Lockable isolation switch with 2.8m power cord

**Typical prices:** AUKTools bench top table – £349.95; Rout-R-Lift Prestige – £334.95; Router Technologies Xtreme Xtension – £74.95; JessEm clear-cut stock guides – £98.95; AUKTools downdraft insert rings – £39.95  
**Web:** [www.woodworkersworkshop.co.uk](http://www.woodworkersworkshop.co.uk)



Using the Rout-R-Lift enables easy and precise router height adjustment



Following a template while routing small, intricate oak parts

### FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about Atelier Cabinet Makers, see their website:  
[www.ateliercabinetmakers.com](http://www.ateliercabinetmakers.com)

### THE VERDICT

#### PROS

- Compact and easily portable; great features and available accessories make for quick setup and ease of use; compatible with most 3/4in routers on the market; heavy-duty base frame with adjustable feet

#### CONS

- HDF phenolic laminated top may be susceptible to damage if knocked on edges; cutter changes can be awkward when using a collet extension due to limited access to the tightening screw (may differ depending on router used)

**RATING:** 4.5 out of 5

# WIN!

## A TRITON TOOLS TTS185KIT 1,400W TRACK SAW KIT

Don't miss your chance to get your hands on this brand-new powerful 1,400W track saw kit from **Triton Tools**, complete with 1,400mm track for smooth, precise, straight and bevel cutting

Triton Tools, the leading manufacturer of award-winning precision woodworking power tools, has added the 1,400W track saw kit to its popular and extensive product portfolio.

This powerful tool features a larger, 185mm diameter blade capacity for a deeper plunge cut, and a 0-48° bevel cutting range.

Speed is easily changed using an adjustable dial, which delivers power smoothly with the soft start, and cuts through material with constant speed under load.

An easy access dial allows quick-changing of the cutting modes between full plunge and scribe or for blade change.

When used with the included track, the saw's safety features are engaged, which includes an automatic anti-kickback mechanism, front and rear bevel locks for bevel cutting, and stationary track lock for plunge cutting.

Dust is effectively dealt with by a universal vacuum dust extraction port that can be connected to the dust bag or a dust extraction system, thus increasing user safety and creating a clean work space.

Ergonomic rubber over-moulded grips reduce vibration and increase user comfort, precision and safety.

Weighing just 5.7kg, the 1,400W saw is light and easy to manoeuvre across wood, cutting in close proximity (15mm) to a wall.



### An essential tool

Mark Pearson, Global Brand Manager at Triton Tools, said: "We are delighted to bring this track saw kit to market and we're encouraged that it has already been well received by woodworkers.

"We are the number one choice for woodworking power tools, and this is another strong addition to our range."

The TTS185KIT's scribe mode plunges the blade only 2.5mm, 'scribing' a delicate work surface first before completing a plunge cut, which significantly reduces the chance of tear-out. This mode is one of the many reasons that Triton track saws are considered essential tools for kitchen fitters, carpenters and cabinetmakers.

Included in the kit is a 1,400mm track pack with connectors, dust extraction adaptor, hex keys and a set of work clamps. For more information, see [www.tritontools.com](http://www.tritontools.com).



### HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning the Triton Tools TTS185KIT 1,400W track saw kit, just visit [www.getwoodworking.com/competitions](http://www.getwoodworking.com/competitions) and answer this simple question:

**QUESTION:** What is the bevel cutting range of the track saw?

The winner will be randomly drawn from all correct entries. The closing date for the competition is **7 June 2019**

Only one entry per person; multiple entries will be discarded. Employees of MyTimeMedia Ltd and Triton Tools are not eligible to enter this competition



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# ROUTING WITH DREMEL – HOW TO GET STARTED

If you're new to routing and are looking for a range of useful tips, then this handy guide from Dremel will provide you with some key information

**A**re you feeling inspired to learn some new DIY know-how and have you ever considered trying your hand at routing? This is the process of creating a groove or 'hollowing out' materials.

This handy beginners' guide introduces you to the routing trade and the tools you'll need so you can get creative with decorative edges or have a go at joinery. From choosing the right router bit to working with Dremel's Plunge Router, this article ensures you'll be routing in no time.

## Tip 1: Gather your materials



Before you embark on a new DIY adventure, it's good to look at the basics. First, exactly what is a rout? A rout is a groove or hollow created with a power tool, and routing is the process of 'hollowing out' materials. When you're starting, it's best to choose materials that are easy to rout. Softwoods are great, as is carbon, chipboard, fibreboard, laminates, plastic, plexiglass, plywood and rubber. You can also use your hand-held router on hardwoods – just move the tool a bit more slowly. Here you'll need to be careful of burning the wood and/or bit (see **Tip 7** for more on this).

## Tip 2: Get to know the different rout types

The type of rout you want depends on the job at hand. If you're starting out, you'll be using your router quite often to make grooves. Grooves, which are long cuts in surfaces, can be flat, V-shaped or rounded. You can create functional inlays with them in wooden tables, cutting boards or your kitchen worktop, for example. Another type of rout is a cove; also known as a rounded groove. This is a simple way of adding an interesting edge to a plain surface. For a decorative rout, the chamfer is the best option as it's straight but doesn't extend across the material's entire profile; think of it as a 'flattened

corner'. Specific types of routs require specific bits, which brings us to our next point.

## Tip 3: Choose the right router bit



Let's take a look at router bits. A straight bit (650, 652, 654) cuts straight, square-bottomed grooves, such as rebates and trench grooves.

A piloted bit is a guide that keeps the bit in place and is suitable for routs such as coves and chamfers. There are two main types: the first (612) is a piloted beading bit, and is used most often for decorative work. The second is a piloted rounding-over bit (615), which is used for smoothing edges.

A V-groove bit (640) cuts decorative V-shaped grooves, while the keyhole bit (655) cuts narrow slots. It routs grooves into picture frames or anything else that needs to be hung.

## Tip 4: Equip yourself with the Plunge Router attachment



The most essential attachment, when it comes to routing, is the Plunge Router attachment. When woodworking or doing other DIY projects involving routing, this attachment converts a Dremel Multi-Tool into a plunge router. In other words, it negates the need for a separate plunge router tool. With just this one attachment, you can use your tool to rout circles, cut letters and signs, as well as inlay work. Want to rout in a straight line? Use the edge guide that comes with the Plunge Router attachment.



## Tip 5: Tick off the safety precautions



Before you start your new DIY project, it's wise to do a quick safety recap. Protect your hands with gloves to avoid any accidental cuts. Goggles and a dust mask are also essential when it comes to routing; you don't want to be breathing in sawdust or plastic particles, or getting them anywhere near your eyes. Complete your router safety preparations with a pair of insulating earmuffs, and then you're ready to go.



**Tip 6: Hold the router slightly slanted**



Now that you've got the right router bits and ticked off all the safety precautions, it's time to get routing. When you turn on the tool, hold it slightly slanted. Why? The tip of most router bits doesn't actually cut: the working part is on the side of the bit. Holding the router at an angle creates a 'slide' in the wood. Once you start routing in the wood (or whatever material you're working with), you can then hold the router upright.

[www.getwoodworking.com](http://www.getwoodworking.com)

**Tip 7: Set the rpm and move slowly**



Ensure that your material or router bit doesn't burn by letting the tool do the work and pausing when you see the material getting hot. Move slowly, especially with hardwoods like oak. If you're routing in plexiglass, keep the Rotations Per Minute (rpm) low. The packaging of each router bit has information on the advised rpm. Finally, always rout in stages – don't remove more than 3mm of material at once. Want your groove to be 1cm deep? Set your router's depth to 3mm, and complete it in three phases.

And finally, always test it on some scrap material, and you'll be routing in no time. ✖

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you're looking for more inspiration for your woodworking projects, then take a look at Dremel's webpage – [www.dremeleurope.com](http://www.dremeleurope.com) – which is full of projects and inspiration or follow on Facebook – [www.facebook.com/UKDremel](https://www.facebook.com/UKDremel) – for regular hints, tips and competitions

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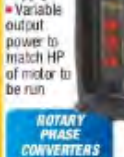


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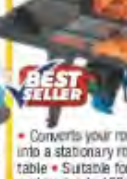
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# FROM TREE TO CLEFT & CRICKET BAT

John Greeves learns more about the bespoke cricket bat making process and discovers what it takes to deliver the precision required

**N**o one is absolutely sure how cricket began. Some have suggested it may have derived from shepherds playing a game with their crooks. Today it represents something inherently British in our psyche, which carries with it the notion of fair play. "It's just not cricket," you hear, but in 1624, an inquest was carried out after a fielder was killed by a batsman. The batsman had tried to prevent the fielder from catching the ball by hitting him over the head. Over the years, the game evolved with new rules being introduced concerning all aspects of the game, including those focusing on the development of the cricket bat. This has continued through the centuries to the present day. Fortunately for us, 'sledging' has also taken on a milder connotation in the modern game compared to former times, and the cricket bat has continued to change considerably from its original conception.

The early shape of the bat was very similar to that of a modern day hockey stick and was used in the days when only bowling underarm was allowed. By 1770, the cricket bat had become roughly rectangular in form but their design was extremely heavy with a swell on the bottom. Sportsmanship still remained to be challenged and in 1771 an Englishman, representing Ryegate,

walked into bat against Hambledon with a bat as wide as the stumps. A new law rapidly followed with a prescribed width of 4.25in being introduced, which has remained the same to this day.

Bats continued to be made of one piece of willow but by the 1830s bat makers started to splice handles into bats made of willow or ash. The length of the cricket bat also became standardised around this period, when the length was restricted to no greater than 38in. By the 1850s, cane handles with Indian rubber grips were introduced as a further innovation. The cricket bat has always undergone change as a batsman attempts to gain the advantage over the bowler. In the 1960s, shoulderless bats appeared from Slazenger. The real change, however, came in the 1970s when bat manufacturers experimented with the distribution of weight with new bats.

Gray Nicholls and John Newbery became the pioneers of the movement that resulted in 'Super Scoop' bats. In 1979, Australian cricketer Dennis Lillee used a Combat aluminium metal bat until another rule change decreed that all bats were to be made entirely of wood.

This has never deterred innovation and new bats continued to emerge, such as the Uzi Twenty

## FURTHER INFORMATION

J.S Wright – world's largest English cricket bat willow supplier – [www.cricketbatwillow.com](http://www.cricketbatwillow.com)

Aldred Cricket Bats – [www.aldredcricketbats.com](http://www.aldredcricketbats.com)

Trent Bridge – home of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club – [www.trentbridge.co.uk](http://www.trentbridge.co.uk)

MCC – Marylebone Cricket Club – [www.lords.org/mcc/](http://www.lords.org/mcc/)

20 and the Kookaburra Monster bat with carbon fibre back in the 2000s. An underlining paradox has always existed, it seems, between innovation of new bat design, versus the laws of the game, which want to ensure a fair and level playing pitch for all concerned. It must be remembered too that not all new profile bats perform well and some marketing claims are often greatly exaggerated.

## From tree to cleft

The finest quality cricket bats are made from cricket bat willow (*Salix alba 'Caerulea'*), which is grown all over the UK from Devon and Somerset to Carlisle and in Wales. J.S Wright is the world's largest and oldest established company, and has been supplying English cricket bat willow since 1894. The species is fast growing and grows well near running water, but not in marsh or water-logged ground.

The trees are tended very carefully in order to prevent disease and other defects, which can seriously detract from the quality of timber required for bat making. Healthy trees can be struck with the bacterial watermark disease or with honey fungus and pests such as aphids, goats, moths or woodworm can also incur serious damage. Rabbits, hares, deer and squirrels can be invasive and often strip the bark off young trees, and therefore require careful monitoring.

As Jeremy Ruggles, director and great grandson of the founder tells me, constant vigilance and care is needed in growing willows to produce top quality cricket bat willow. "We have nurtured the *Salix alba 'Caerulea'* over the last 50 years, taking stock from the best trees all the time," he says. Attention is also given to the buds as well and these are rubbed off the stem regularly to prevent the formation of lower branches, which can cause knots in the timber. Unlike most timber users, the cricket bat industry differs in wanting abnormal width of white or light coloured sapwood and straight grain.



The 'Chitty Bat' – the oldest surviving cricket bat  
Photograph courtesy of Surrey County Cricket Club



English cricket bat willow is planted in sets



Good and bad trees. You can't always tell until they have been felled



Felling an English cricket bat willow



Wide grain – 3-4 grains on face of blade

Cricket bats – historical to modern  
Photograph courtesy of  
Marylebone Cricket Club

Photographs courtesy of JS Wright & Sons  
Ltd & Paul Aldred, unless otherwise stated



Trees with a wider grain are generally felled between the ages of 12 to 18, but can be ready to be cut as early as 10 years. Some older trees

of 25 years or more with narrower grains may also be cut. Narrow grains will play quicker but have a shorter lifespan than a wider grain bat,

which will take longer to bed in but will have a longer life. After felling, the trees are taken to the yard where they are then cross-cut into 28in lengths with chainsaws. Each length or roll is then longitudinally split into pieces called clefts in a process known as riving. This process is highly skilled and only experience determines the best way to split the timber to avoid imperfections and maximising the use of top quality timber for cricket bats.

Jeremy explains the next part of the process in which "the clefts are sawn into blades, then graded. These are then stored and dried and all of them regraded by me." The company is the only manufacturer to supply part-naturally dried cricket bat blades to the world market, which results in a more even moisture content. ▶



Narrow grain – sometimes over 15 grains on the blade



Wide and narrow grain on blades



Trees are cross-cut in 28in lengths with a chainsaw



Jeremy grading production of blades



Storage of willow blades after being cut from the cleft

The blades are then placed in the driers to achieve the correct moisture content. Not everyone refers to these products as 'blades'; many bat makers, especially in India and Pakistan, still refer to them as 'clefts'.

Grading of the blade takes into account various factors. Many grades exist by which these blades are assessed by Jeremy. The only main differences in the grade (they have six main ones) occur in the visual appearance of the wood. This may include the amount of butterfly stain, the number of blemishes, such as pin knots or 'specks' on the bat, as well as the straightness of the grain. It is, after all, a natural product.

Sadly, the more colour in the blade, the lower the grade it's given, even though there is negligible difference in the playing performance. Nowadays 'looks' appear to count for everything and if a bat doesn't look 'clean and white', people simply won't pay a fair price for it.

It's a negative perception as butterfly stained blades have superior strength and playing ability. What makes a good bat seems to depend largely on the taste of the customer. Too much emphasis is put on appearance alone. A good bat should be based on the 'feel', the quality of the willow

used and the skill of the bat maker. When I asked Jeremy what willow he would use for his ideal cricket bat, he said: "I would want a blade with butterfly stain as it gives a good punch and doesn't break."

**What do you want in your cricket bat?**

All bats must conform to the Laws of Cricket. Law 5 states the overall length of the bat should be no more than 38in, and the blade width no greater than 4.2in. The bat should not exceed a depth of 2.64in and edges should be no more than 1.56in. The handle, except for bats of size 6 and less, should not exceed 52% of the overall length of the bat, with the maximum permitted thickness of protective material placed on the toe of the blade being 0.12in.

Paul Aldred is a former English first class cricketer who played for Derbyshire between 1996 and 2002 and is very much aware of these dimensions. When Paul stopped playing cricket, he took up coaching and then decided he wanted to manufacture bespoke cricket bats. It was quite a long journey and a lengthy self-apprenticeship. Paul had been a builder and craftsman prior to becoming a professional cricketer, but there was

still much to learn about becoming a bespoke cricket bat maker. As a professional cricketer, he had seen bats being made, which gave him an initial introduction to bat making. It was a long haul and Paul spent a considerable amount of time researching and developing his craft and skills. He was fortunate to be given 'ongoing' advice from a traditional bat maker in New Zealand before he finally set up his own company. Today, his bats are used all over the world by international professional cricketers in test matches and also by members of the public.

Paul wanted to provide a service not solely for professional cricketers but for members of the public, so everyone had the same opportunity to use a quality cricket bat. "Let's say a professional comes in today, he won't get treated any differently from a member of the public," Paul insists.

Machines may mass-produce bats for the market: they can cut the shape, but they can't feel the bat. Paul constantly assesses his bats by handling them at every stage of production. When he's making one, he's perpetually picking up and testing 'the feel'. He uses all his previous knowledge as a professional player to decide if



Paul Aldred in his workshop today



Blades, also called clefts, ready to be processed



Clefts or blades have been cleaned up. They are then spliced into bats below the handles



Cutting the cleft to working dimensions



Cleft being cut down to size



Additional cutting of the bat down to its working size



Two controlled pressings make up the bat



The cane cricket bat handles awaiting use



Jig for cutting the 'V' splice

the bat will perform well. He only makes 500-600 quality bats a year, but believes that real quality in a bat can never be truly replicated by a machine. As he says: "The skill of the bat maker is to create the best feel for every piece of willow and so produce a consistently quality bat"

Before making the bat, Paul finds out what the individual requires, be it the number of grains, the amount of wood in the back, the specific profile, small or big edges, oval or round handle, the weight of the bat, etc. A popular weight is between 2lb 9oz-2lb 12oz, but there's no cricket law stating the actual weight a bat needs to be, and Paul has made some up to 3lb 6oz.

### From cleft to bat

Paul buys in his willow blades from J. S Wright & Son Ltd. Like some other bat makers, he refers to them as clefts. For those who haven't seen one, he describes "looking at them end on as the shape of a child's drawing of a house." Length-wise they are approximately 28in with an edge size from 1½-2in and from the face to the highest point; the ridge of the house is 3in. Paul uses an electric saw and an electric plane to rough out and cut away any surplus willow, which gives a uniform

and working size. "You cut the cleft down to the length you need and then plane it down to just about the working width and any surplus from the back of the cleft," he says.

This makes it easier later on when the handle is fitted. It is then passed through its first pressing before the surplus is removed. Not only is the willow pressed, but the face emerges with a gentle crown or camber on it from the roller.

### Handles

The handles are made from Sarawak cane. These are now imported, as the quality of the cane from the Asian market hasn't been as good as Paul requires. He uses two types of handles: round or oval. These have already been hand-crafted and are laminated with cork or rubber layers placed in between.

Cane handles were first used in 1853 but due to vibration, rubber laminates are fitted nowadays (anything from one to three), which act as shock absorbers. Paul tends to prefer slightly thicker handles and rubber laminates.

Each handle has to be spliced into the main body of the bat. The shoulders of the bat are put in according to the length of the handle.

A female and male jig is then used to cut the initial 'V' shaped splice into the cleft. For the male part, the handle is carefully cut using the second jig to ensure a tight fit.

"Ideally when you splice you want the bottom part of the 'V' to be slightly looser than the top, so that when you drive the handle in, it wedges itself in the splice. If it's too snug at the bottom, it tends not to sit properly in the 'V' and can result in a loose handle. It's fractions of millimetres you're playing with," Paul says. Sometimes there is a discrepancy in the straightness of the handle he's sent, so he has to account for this during the process.

The handle is first cast in to ensure a perfect fit and then released out while still dry. After this, a modern flexible adhesive is applied and the handle is tapped in with a wooden mallet before being allowed to dry for 24 hours. Once the handle is dry, Paul cleans up the splice where it protrudes out of the face of the bat, then it goes back in the press.

The pressure is all determined by feel. Whereas some companies will use one set pressure for everything, Paul believes every piece of willow is different and uses a hand-operated crank shaft



Preparing the handle for splicing



Here the 'V' shape cut has been made on the jig and the glue is about to be applied to the splice



Splice glued and cane handle tapped in



Once the splice has been glued and the cane handle tapped in, the glue is allowed to set with G clamps



Once the handles have been glued and spliced in, they await cleaning up with a spokeshave



Paul can adjust the press for individual bats



Traditional hand tools used for shaping the profile of the bat

to put the roller down on the willow. "I do it by feel so I can get the best performance out of every piece of willow," he says.

### Shaping & finishing

The next stage is the shaping with wood taken off the back of the bat. Shaping uses traditional hand tools including drawknives, spokeshaves, wooden block planes, metal smoothing planes and a travisher. "Every bat maker has his own preference when it comes down to the tools," Paul says.

From now on he is shaping the profile of the back by drawing off wood. At the same time he's



Shaping the back of the bat with a plane



Using the spokeshave to clean out the back and splice

taking the greatest care to obtain the correct shape and balance of the bat. Using a wide drawknife, he starts drawing wood off towards the back of the handle in order to create the cricket bat shape. The wide, flat drawknife is used to carve the back and toe of the bat while a thin blade is used to blend the shoulders into the handle of the bat.

I watched as Paul turned the bat around in the vice, removing wood, checking by eye along the back of the bat as the contours began to form. "Once you get a rough profile shape," he says "that's when you start using your shaped hand planes and travishers to get the wood out of the



The profile of the bat is nearly there as Paul removes wood from the back



Working the drawknife to shape the back

back of the bat." Paul uses a range of planes and spokeshaves all the time. He often interchanges the tools. The shoulder and lower part of the handle are smoothed and tidied up with a spokeshave. Sometimes he reverts to his drawknife, which can also be used to do delicate work. Throughout the process he assesses the profile of the bat.

He frequently picks it up to get 'the feel' of the bat and then resumes with his carving. Sometimes he will stop to test the bat with a ball and listens to it as it strikes the face, to check that all is well. He may weigh it several times before he returns to the bench to make minor adjustments. The handle is rounded off with a Surform rasp and Paul finally gets the profile down to a practically finished state.

The bat is then taken to the drum sander: "This is where you get your final weight and intricacies of detail on the sander," Paul says. He uses two grades of abrasive on the drum sander and another three to four grades on the hand sander.

After it's sanded, the bat is transferred to the buffing machine to be polished. Paul then takes the bat to his lathe to bind the handle with cotton twine from the top of the handle down to the shoulder. "Basically, I put glue all over the handle, then I wind the cotton twine round until it gets to the shoulder," he comments.

Paul applies another coat of glue over the top of the binding, then it's left to dry before the grip is put on and bat stickers are added. It's now complete and just needs 'knocking in' with a ball.

Paul Aldred's bats are beautifully crafted, whether with concaving, big edges or truly traditional shapes. They have the perfect pick up and the ultimate performance regardless of the grade of willow chosen and, once made, they only await the batsman at the crease. ✘



Bat on the buffing machine



The handle is bound with cotton twine



Finished face and edge of bat



Back has been sanded, buffed and labelled



Side profile of the bat wood is taken from the back

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Tormek's Pontus Gyllby will be demonstrating at Makers Central in May

## TORMEK TEAMS UP WITH CLASSIC HAND TOOLS AT MAKERS CENTRAL

Classic Hand Tools will be welcoming Pontus Gyllby of Tormek to their stand at Makers Central at the NEC later this month.

Pontus, from Tormek in Sweden, has been with the company for over 20 years and has played a big part in their growth and success in recent times. With his experience and knowledge in edge tool sharpening, he will expertly demonstrate the sharpening of woodturning, woodworking and other edge tools. Pontus will also be focusing on the new Tormek Diamond Wheels that allow accurate sharpening on the side for a flat bevel and easier, cleaner grinding. Learn how Tormek is by far the best way to make sharpening easy.

Many of you will be familiar with Makers Central, when it took place for the first time last year. The event brings together makers from a whole raft of disciplines including woodturning, carving, furniture making, metalworking, art and design.

If you are looking for inspiration, don't miss Makers Central on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 May at the NEC, Birmingham. You will find Tormek in Hall 2, stand P7.

For more information, visit [www.makerscentral.co.uk](http://www.makerscentral.co.uk).



The new Tormek Diamond Wheels allow accurate sharpening on the side for a flat bevel and easier, cleaner grinding.

Pontus will expertly demonstrate the sharpening of woodturning, woodworking and other edge tools

# HILLS & MOUNTAINS

The more things change, Dave Roberts finds, the more they seem to stay the same, but in new ways



“F or some odd reason lost in the mists of time,” says the narrator at the beginning of *The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain*, “there’s an extraordinary shortage of last names in Wales. Almost everyone seems to be a Williams, a Jones, or an Evans.” Filmed in 1994 – the year Tim Berners-Lee ‘invented’ the world-wide web, and a world now far removed in terms of change – it is a gentle, and not wholly fictional story of English cartographers abroad in Wales in the even more technologically remote period just after World War I. Even so, many of the aspects of village and rural life portrayed in the film are still recognisable today: during that memorable summer, it seems that almost everyone in Llanrhaeadr YM had a part in the production, and still talk about it at the drop of a hat; the hill on The Old Vic’s right shoulder doubled as the eponymous ‘mountain’

in many shots (the house even shares the frame with Hugh Grant in one scene; now there’s fame...); and Felin Fach, to which last month’s Bauhaus amble brought us, briefly served as the back garden of the film’s pub (whose front door was actually over the hill in Llan’).

Another enduring feature, as the narrator continues, is that, “to avoid widespread confusion, Welsh people often add an occupation to a name. For example, there was Williams the Petroleum, and Williams the Death...” And today it’ll be Tom the Digger who re-erects The Old Vic’s gateposts, and Dai the Wood who provides the timber-framing for its garage. How curious, then, to find that 21st-century cartographers have adapted this easily memorable convention in the what3words mapping project (use Tim B-L’s brainchild to visit [www.what3words.com](http://www.what3words.com)) – a thing of which I was cheerfully unaware before a trip up the hill to Foel Ortho the other day.

## The view ahead

It’s one of the joys of the borderlands that you never quite know who or what you’ll encounter under a neighbour’s roof – on this occasion it was someone who teaches design and technology at one of the country’s leading schools – or where a conversation might go. When last at Foel, the drift of the discussion was music, landscape and furniture; this time, the general direction seemed to be the perils and possibilities for technology, which is where what3words (w3w) came in. It seems that the surface of the world – the ‘global village’, so called – has been mapped with a grid of 57 trillion 3x3m squares, each one of which has a unique, three-word identifier: enter ‘taxi.eggplants.bronzes’ into the w3w app, for example, and it’ll put you more or less at the front door to that pub in *The Englishman Who*, etc.

Odd, isn’t it, how some things change completely and others stay the same in new



watershed ever came to pass (it isn't a certainty), a machine's lack of beliefs, desires or motivations mean that AI couldn't wholly eclipse human consciousness, there are those like Elon Musk who argue that, to avoid being made obsolete by machines, we need to 'augment' human performance. Whether the consequence of augmentation means being human-but-more-so, or becoming more machine-like is a matter for debate, but it's being said that there is enough room in the spine for additional 'cabling' to provide the brain with extra memory and processing power; and there are reports that Oxford University (among others) has, crudely speaking, mapped the correlation between brain activity and language to the extent that articulated but unspoken thoughts can now be 'heard'; providing a high-bandwidth alternative to the low tech' medium of speech. Goodness knows what the Bauhaus would've made of this kind of synthesis, not of craft and mass-production, but of the craftsman and mass-production; however, it all makes IKEA's combination of furniture and built-in wireless charging look rather simplistic, doesn't it?

that house is surrounded by a different generation of trees which, to modern imaginations, offer the example for new types of buildings: just as their natural 'high-rise' structures can resist the force of high winds on the huge sail area of their leaves and branches, so too can the strength and flexibility of laminated timber carry the stresses of multistorey buildings, reducing in turn our reliance on concrete. You can also discuss whether a laminated timber joist is wooden-but-more-so, of course, but again it seems that the more things change the more they seem to stay the same in new ways.

The irony, it appears, is that in terms of the way industrial design and technology is currently taught, woodworking skills are regarded as out-dated; ask if we still need wood, and someone is sure to say, 'heck no; we'll just 3D print it with bioplastic!' People want information about how things are produced now, says my companion over Foel's kitchen table, though he believes that, "old-fashioned manufacturing methods will come back with a vengeance. We'll be having a reversion in thought in terms of our materials, and wood will



Foel Ortho revisited: when last at Foel, the drift of the discussion was music, landscape and furniture

ways? Yet it seems that, thanks to a 'squaring effect' caused by the interaction of disruptive technologies (innovations that serve to upset the status quo), the things that are changing are changing several times faster than even modern crystal ball-gazers like Bill Gates expected. While it's some consolation, then, that the world's three trillion or so trees (according to 2015 estimates) still out-number humans by several hundred to one, the prospect envisioned by some futurists appears very dystopian.

As if the rapacious use of natural resources to satisfy an appetite for consumption wasn't worry enough, according to some the time when artificial intelligence (AI) reaches the point of 'singularity' – that is, the moment when it achieves self-awareness – is only as far in the future as filming of *The Englishman*, etc. is in the past. While it would be more comfortable to side with those who maintain that, even if such a technological

### Material for modern imaginations

Speaking of IKEA, though, in 2016 the Swedish company's head of sustainability, Steve Howard, said: "[We] will be increasingly building a 'circular' IKEA where you can repair and recycle products." The statement appeared to acknowledge that the headlong push of manufacturers simply to sell more 'stuff' cannot continue; the necessity for environmental responsibility has become a key marketing claim, and when it comes to making good on that message, of course, wood is a key resource in the pursuit of all manner of sustainability.

There's a prime example of timber's sustained role in human affairs at Foel Ortho, whose heart is a 15th century cruck made from a single oak tree that had almost certainly grown near the site, and which was selected for its shape, then split, jointed, hauled upright with a team of oxen, and which still supports the old farmhouse. Today,

come back into date." Except, of course, on the evidence of this admittedly limited sample, institutions may have been left behind by the change they're trying to teach. Wood has never been either unfashionable or out of date; the rest of us have allowed ourselves a fling with Formica (figuratively speaking, let's hope) before beginning to re-discover the basics, not necessarily through the reactive policies of multi-nationals, but often through the pro-active work of individuals like Ben Law ([www.Ben-Law.co.uk](http://www.Ben-Law.co.uk)).

### Time-honoured practices...

Ben lives in another type of borderland – the 100 or so acres of Prickly Nut Wood, West Sussex where he practices sustainable woodland management – but became a household name in 2002 when *Grand Designs* featured his cruck house, built largely of timber harvest from the woods around it (see 'Working in the round').



Renewables: wood is a key resource in the pursuit of all manner of sustainability

Much of the woodland is sweet chestnut which, being fast-growing, has lent itself to the practice of coppicing since time immemorial. "Chestnut," said Ben when *Good Woodworking* visited him in 2011, "is often referred to as 'poor man's oak,'" for which it's a practical alternative: though not as dense, it has relatively little sapwood, which means less waste, and similar tannic acid content, which means it has comparable durability; moreover, in the 80 years that oak typically needs to provide a good yield, chestnut will give up three harvests. "We also need to be thinking ahead," he said. "We need to be thinking about other timbers" – woods like black locust (false acacia). Regarded as a prime hardwood in its native North America, it has the durability of oak, and a hardness that makes it a viable substitute for more exotic, tropical woods. Though not widely grown in the UK as yet, it was Ben's suggestion that, if the UK climate continues to warm – and look how that particular issue has progressed over the last eight years – black locust may well be an alternative.



Ben Law became a household name in 2002 when *Grand Designs* featured his cruck house, built largely of timber harvest from the woods he manages

**... and a universal currency**

When the talk turned to Swedes' enthusiasm for implanting chips in themselves to save the labour of carrying key fobs and cash cards, it was clearly time to leave the kitchen table, come back down the mountain, and return to the steam-age privations of The Old Vic, where a roughly 3x3m heap of timber had been left on the drive. The windfalls of the last four or five winters, the hardwood limbs were part of a cache heaped between an ash and an oak just over the river, one of many such piles you'll see along hedgerows, in farm yards, and beneath the eaves of woods; in a landscape of stone houses, uncertain weather, wood-burners and open fires, they're little hills of wooden gold. Now thoroughly seasoned and only in need of cutting and stacking in the boiler house, the arrival of these particular logs was an answer – whose delivery admittedly required the 20th century science of a large tractor – to part of a five-pint conversation in the pub, but which will in due course be answered, with no necessity of

**WORKING IN THE ROUND**

Working with coppiced timber is an opportunity to stop thinking in straight lines and try woodworking in the round. One of the advantages of wood in this form, says Ben, is its strength and stability: because their fibres haven't been cut, round sections of timber are half as strong again as their square-sectioned counterparts. Retaining its natural order also means that there's less scope for movement in round wood, and even when it is taken out of the round, it tends to be cleaved along the line of the fibres rather than sawn across them, so again subsequent movement is limited.

For the same reason, exploiting naturally occurring shapes will also provide a stronger result than cutting timber to shape, which of course brings us back to the medieval eye that saw the opportunity in the oak that made Foel Ortho's ancient cruck frame...



Cash crop: within 15 to 20 years of planting western red cedar can be used in buildings, and can be coppiced on a four-year cycle

direct speech, through the transparent medium of a couple of bottles of gin. There's so much to be said for the old ways. ✕



Not to scale: in a land of uncertain weather and wood-burners, (real) timber stacks are little hills of wooden gold



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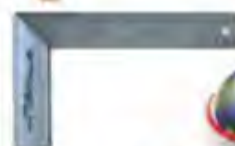


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# PEDAL POWER

Clint Rose makes use of pallet wood to build his very own bench-top spring pole-lathe, which can handily be packed up and put into the back of a car

I needed a lathe but have such little room in my shed that it had to be able to be packed away when I wasn't using it. Its design allows it to be clamped down to a bench or table, so if need be, I can chuck it in my car and set it up somewhere else. This lathe is made entirely from pallet wood, as many of my projects are.

I hope you enjoy this article – you can view

the accompanying video on my YouTube channel, details of which can be found in the 'further information' sidebar on page 47.

## Marking up & cutting the stocks

Fig.1 shows detailed measurements of every piece of the lathe besides the pedal and toolrests, as I think they have to be cut in a way that suits



1 Stock pieces cut to length



2 Planing the pieces square with a hand plane

**PALLET SAFETY**

For some great tips on how to tell whether or not your pallet is safe for reuse, see [www.1001pallets.com/pallet-safety](http://www.1001pallets.com/pallet-safety)

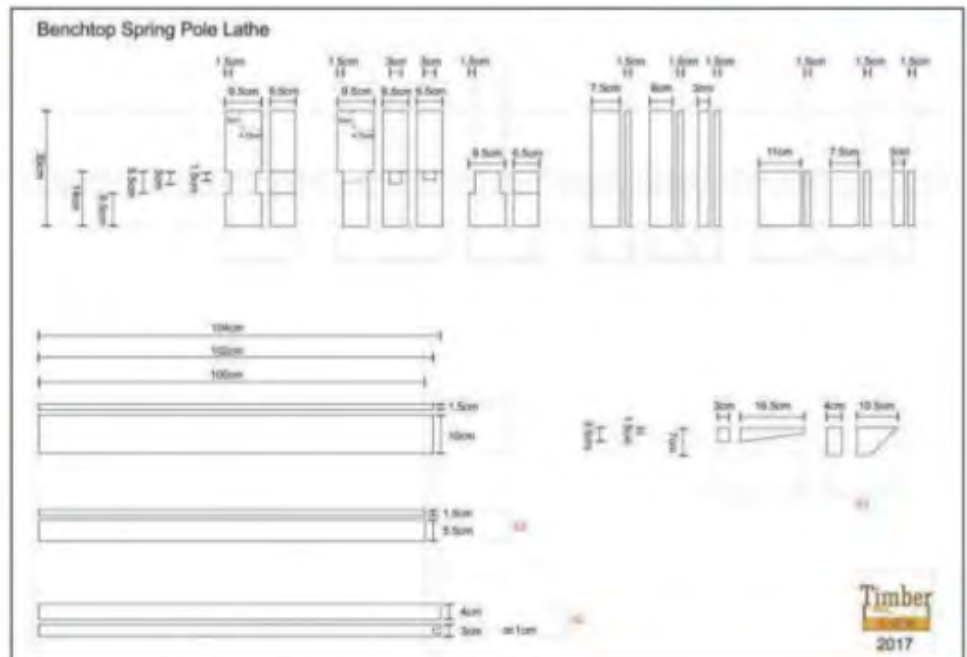


Fig 1. Dimensions for the portable bench-top spring pole-lathe

you and your shop/work area. I didn't have big blocks of wood to use for the stocks, so I just cut some pieces and glued them together. Not everyone will have to do that of course but if you do then you can see how I went about that process in the video.

Once you've cut the pieces you can then mark where the wedge will go; this is where I had an advantage with having slimmer pieces of wood to make the stocks. I could plan exactly where the wedge would go through the centre of the piece and then glue the two pieces together as you can see in the photos. If you have solid blocks for the stocks, then of course you have to bore a hole through and clean it out with a chisel. For the purpose of this article, however, I'll stick to what I did.

When all the pieces are cut and you check to make sure the wedge fits snugly, you can glue them all together. It's a good idea to make sure the pressure of the wedge is on the top and

bottom of the stock and not towards the sides, and this is for two reasons: firstly, a wedge that pressures the wood width ways can cause it to split, and secondly, the wedge needs to make contact with the side rails in order to clamp the stock firmly in place; this is why you should make the hole for the wedge slightly higher up the stock than it needs to be.

**Attaching the side rails & centres**

Lining up the stocks with each other, you can then plan where the side rails will go. These are the rails that the moving stock will ride along and clamp to. You can see that I've set the bottom line of where the rail will go just under the top of the wedge hole. This is to make sure that when the wedge is tapped into place, it makes contact with the rails on both sides and therefore locks the stock in place.

Taking the two bolts, I sharpened them to an angle and then installed one of them onto



3 Finding the optimum position for the wedge



4 Measuring the entrance of the wedge mortise



5 Marking the correct angle for the wedge

## TOOLS &amp; MATERIALS REQUIRED

## TOOLS

- Pencil, measure & square
- Cross-cut & rip saw (I only have a cross-cut) or table saw
- Hand plane or planer/thicknesser
- Clamps
- Brace & 8mm bit (or drill)
- 2mm pilot hole bit
- Wood chisel & mallet
- Screwdriver (size and type depending on the screws used)
- 2 × 13mm spanners (or one spanner & one set of pliers)
- Optional – turning tools if you wish to have a good go at turning when it's finished!

## MATERIALS

- 1 length of wood: 1,020 × 100 × 15mm
- 1 length of wood: 2,000 × 55 × 15mm
- 1 length of wood: 2,080 × 40 × 30mm
- 1 length of wood: 740 × 95 × 65mm
- 1 length of wood: 1,320 × 110 × 15mm
- Scrap wood for the wedge & toolrests
- 2,000mm of bungee cord or strong elastic
- 4,000mm of para cord or rope
- Wood/PVA glue
- 2 × 8mm bolts, 80mm long bolt with 4 nuts & 4 washers
- 40 × 40mm screws
- 20 × 60mm screws

the sliding stock. I clamped the rails to the other pieces, put the sliding stock between them and slid it over to the fixed stock. Giving the back of the sliding stock a little knock with the mallet marked the centre point for the bolt to go through the fixed stock. I did it this way instead of measuring the fixed stock and putting the bolt through in case there were any inaccuracies with my measurements. Luckily I did because there



6 The wedge mortise cut out



7 Test fitting the wedge in the mortise



8 Gluing up the stocks



9 Finding the location for the cross rails



10 Marking the width of the cross rails on the stocks



11 The stocks all marked up and ready to be cut



12 Section cut out of the stock to receive the rail



13 Two long bolts pointed at the ends, which act as centres



15 Using one centre to locate the opposite centre



14 Marking the centre point



17 Clamping the rails to the stocks to make drilling and screwing easier



16 Holes drilled and bolts ready to be inserted



18 Clamping the bottom ready to be screwed on

certainly were! After these pieces are all sorted out you can then glue and screw the side rails on and fix the two end stocks to the bottom of the lathe. This bottom piece is what allows it to be clamped to a bench-top.

### Making slots for the vertical poles

I wanted the vertical poles that hold the elastic to be removable so I could store them away when I'm not using the lathe. They also needed to be firmly held onto the two fixed stocks, however, as they'd be under a fair bit of pressure as the elastic gets pulled down by the pedal. To overcome this problem, I placed the vertical pieces on the fixed stocks and made a kind of wooden casing around them, just like a mortise & tenon joint. This meant I could put them in and pull them out as much as I like without sacrificing any of their stability.

### Attaching the elastic, rope & making the pedal

Attaching the elastic is a pretty simple job, which I was glad of after all the earlier complications! I made two little notches for the elastic to fit into, which would prevent it wobbling around, and drilled a hole on the vertical pole, which was attached to the larger of the fixed stocks. Passing the cord through, I tied a knot at the end and then pulled it up and over the notch and over to the other pole. I pulled the elastic down the side of the other pole until I felt that I had the correct tension, made a loop at the end of the cord, screwed a screw in at a severe angle and looped the cord over. I later found this to be too tight and had to adjust it, as you'll see at the end of the video. I think it just takes a little tweaking. ▶



19 Finding the position for the vertical posts



20 Clamping sections to hold the posts



21 Screwing the post housing on



22 Clamping the other side of the post housing on



23 Screwing a back piece onto the post housing



24 Clamping and putting final screws into housing



25 The posts inside their housings

To make the pedal, I just used some scrap pieces and screwed them together in a pedal shape that I liked the feel of. Later, to stop the pedal moving around everywhere, I attached another piece to the pedal with a hinge, which I could stand on with my right foot to prevent it moving around. I think this is another situation where you have to keep tweaking things to suit your personal requirements.

Making a small loop around the elastic with

the rope, I was then able to tie the other end onto my pedal.

### Making the toolrests

The toolrests were very simple and really another part of the build which is down to personal preference, I think. All the measurements for my rests are shown on the plans. I just made simple, triangular shapes and screwed them on with three screws each. I then found a scrap piece of wood



26 Cutting slots in the posts to receive bungee cord



27 Inserting one end of cord through the post



28 Testing the tension across the posts



29 Inserting a screw to receive the loop of the cord



30 A simple pedal screwed together



31 Cutting wood for the toolrests



32 Using a scrap piece of wood for the rest



33 The lathe clamped down and ready to use



34 A cherry branch clamped onto the lathe



35 A bit of turning to experiment with the lathe



36 A few simple rough shapes and lines cut using the pole-lathe

that sat on them nicely and got my chisel to the correct height.

### Using the lathe

This was the most fun and perhaps the most challenging part of the build as I've never really used a lathe before, let alone a pedal-powered version. I currently don't have any turning chisels either so the results of my attempted turning are from a severe lack of skills and from using normal bench chisels.

A couple of last things to remember are to firstly have the wood spinning towards you: you want the wood to turn downwards into the chisel and you can also use beeswax or paste to lubricate the centres. Secondly, ALWAYS wear eye protection when using a lathe. This may be pedal-powered but it still has enough force to make a splinter fly towards your eyes and the chisel fly out of your hands. Wear suitable eye/face protection at all times and keep a firm hold on the chisel during turning. Ensure to take it slowly and build up your confidence as you go. Your eyes are incredibly valuable!

When you've got all that down, enjoy! I'm hoping my next attempt will yield better results and my dad has some old rusty turning chisels lying around, so I'm going to clean those up and give them a go. ✂

### FURTHER INFORMATION

If you'd like to see extra photos and videos of Clint's projects as well as what happens in and around his shed, then give the Timber Anew Facebook page a like, and to see a video of this project being made as well as others, visit his YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/timberanew](http://www.youtube.com/timberanew)



37 My first turning experiment

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## BE YOURSELF, NOT A VERSION OF YOURSELF

Woodworking should be an expression of your individual passion, says **Anselm Fraser**, principal of **The Chippendale International School of Furniture**. What you make should reflect who you are, not an imitation of who you would like to be

**A** common mistake that many woodworkers make is to spend too much time trying to create originality. The fact is that originality is over-rated and, instead, the advice I give to my woodworking students is to simply follow their instincts, and see where it takes them. Another fact is that there is nothing new under the sun, because furniture has been around for as long as human beings, and the human body hasn't changed much.

The example I give is Skara Brae, a small Neolithic settlement on Orkney, which comprises eight dwellings and dates to between 3,200BC and 2,200BC. But, what's remarkable to me as a furniture maker, is that each house has beds, cupboards, dressers and shelves – Stone Age furniture made from stone, because the island archipelago doesn't have many trees.

Over the centuries, furniture designers have tinkered with Skara Brae's furniture designs and, over that huge span of years, we've ended up with beds, tables and chairs that look good and, crucially, are fit for purpose.

The American novelist Herman Melville, best known for *Moby Dick*, once remarked that it is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation, and that's very good advice. Aim to be different, aim to create furniture that has your DNA embedded in it, using design tweaks that make it absolutely yours, but don't necessarily



aim for utter originality, because there is nothing new under the sun.

### Working to exploit strengths

Think instead of Robert Thompson, the British furniture maker whose career spanned the 19th and 20th centuries, and who incorporated a carved mouse on virtually everything he made. In furniture making, that mouse is as good as a signature. Whatever he made, everyone knew who made it. The mouse helped to turn Robert Thompson into a brand and, as any marketer will now tell you, people buy into brands.

After more than 30 years of teaching woodworking, I have seen the good, bad and ugly of furniture design. I have seen hugely gifted students try to design the impossible and fail, and I have seen less gifted students simply be themselves, and let their creativity shine through in smaller ways.

That's the kind of originality I like because it means that a student is not thinking about changing the face of furniture design, but recognising that a small tweak here and there is all that's needed. It's about recognising their strengths and working to exploit them. After all, as Judy Garland said: "Always be a first-rate version of yourself, instead of a second-rate version of somebody else."

### Making the small things different

We had an American student last year – John Grillo from Denver – who won the Richard Demarco Prize 2018, for a table that was "a piece of furniture, which, like a painting or piece of sculpture, transcends craftsmanship and design to become genuine art," according to the renowned arts commentator. It was a table that was well designed and crafted but conformed in all respects to what a round dining table should look like to perform its everyday function. Except one. John's table

was veneered with pieces of pepperwood to form a simple, flowing yet geometrically-complex design. Pepperwood is native to the south-eastern USA, and is sometimes called the 'toothache tree' because chewing its leaves or bark causes a tingling numbness in the mouth. For that reason, it was used by Native Americans and early settlers to treat toothache.

But the use of that highly unusual veneer elevated John's table from the ordinary to the extraordinary, creating something with real functionality but with dollops of 'WOW' factor. Or take, for example, the bikini. Designed in France and unveiled in Paris in 1946, its name was inspired by a US atomic test on an atoll in the Pacific Ocean. It was hailed as something new and exciting, and swiftly became an icon of emancipation. Except that it wasn't, because the earliest surviving depiction of a bikini is on a mosaic found in Sicily and dating from the 4th century AD. In the intervening 16 centuries, the bikini hadn't changed at all.

For me, therefore, originality is an over-used concept. It implies that a piece of furniture is ground-breakingly different when, in fact, it may only have a small design flourish – a carved mouse or an unusual veneer. But that's what originality in furniture design is all about: making the small things different, tinkering with a basic design and adding in a little bit of yourself.

That last bit is the most important. Woodworking should be an expression of your individual passion. What you make should reflect who you are, not an imitation of who you would like to be. Believe me, that authenticity will shine through. ✂

### FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more about courses offered by The Chippendale International School of Furniture, see [www.chippendaleschool.com](http://www.chippendaleschool.com)



John Grillo and his stunning round dining table, which was made using veneered pieces of pepperwood

# EGYPTIAN BOX

Edward Hopkins makes a gift for the pharaohist of them all



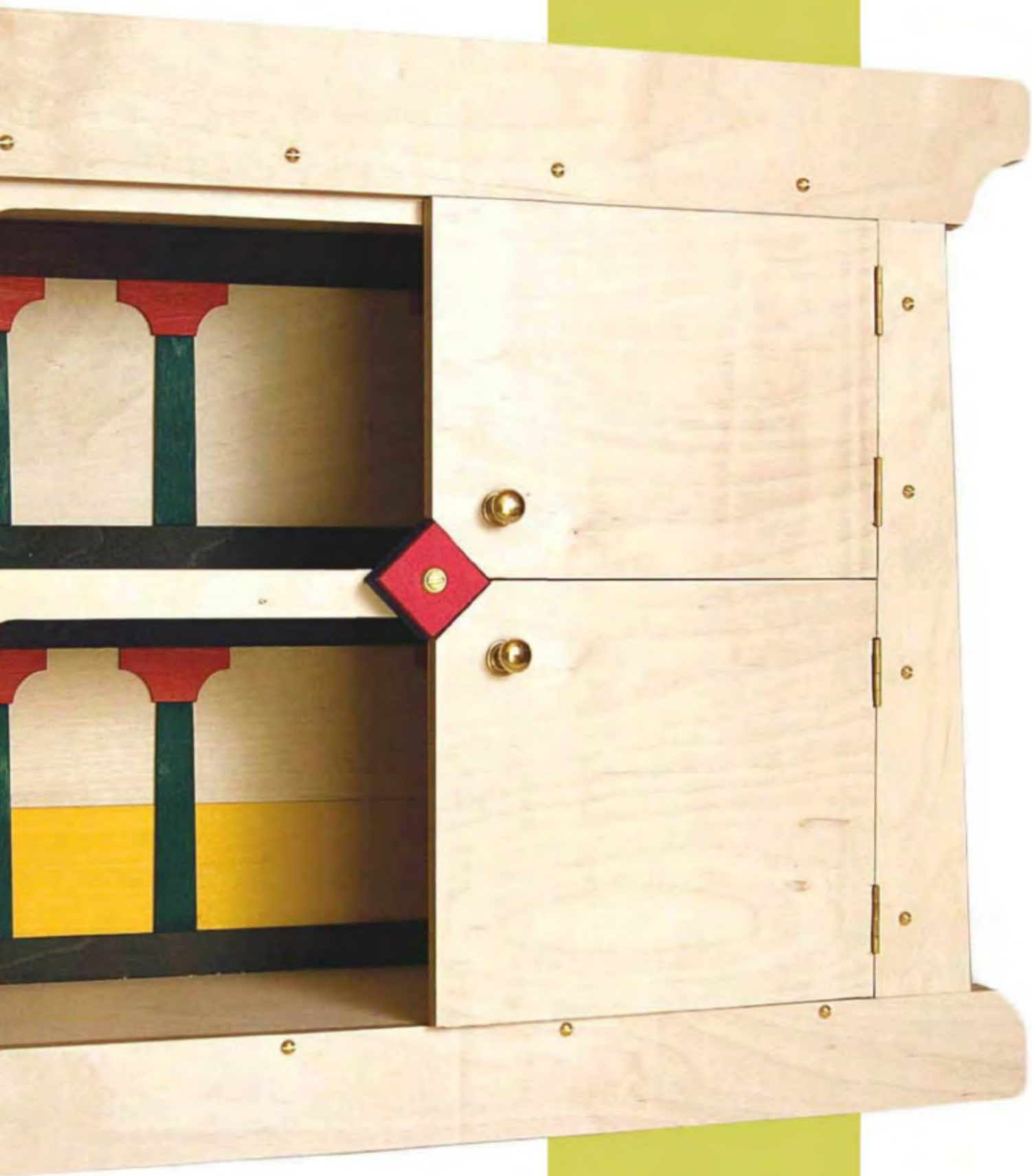
I'm not sure how long I can keep this up. How many grandchildren am I going to have? Now I have established that I want to give each one a present that will represent to them their immediate heritage (me) and still be appropriate when they are 40 years old and more, how far will my imagination stretch? I don't know. I had real trouble with Risha (pictured above), and she's only the third. (1) Jaya: a treasure chest from engineered board; 2) Freya: an oak aedicula. I didn't want to repeat myself. Couldn't do that could I? Couldn't replicate an article or even a theme as if Risha were a clone of her sister or cousin. It had to be something for her and her alone. She's a sweet little thing.

## Stages of invention

How about a dolls' house? Not a scale model accurate down to down-pipes; I wouldn't be capable of that. Or willing. I wouldn't want to confine her imagination (or mine) to one particular style. And yet a building inevitably has a style. It is that which lends charm, and a dolls' house must be charming.

I'm still playing with birch ply, and loving it. I sketched out a simple classical façade and thought my way through the construction. Dolls' houses are generally 1:12 scale (an inch representing a foot). Furniture made to that scale is easily bought, but that would be up to Risha in later years. The cabinet should work as a grown-up architectural cupboard irrespective of dolls. I launched into making the case, and thoroughly enjoyed a day or so of careful, accurate, simple work.







**1** I went for four doors because that has a miniature feel. I had kept the catching till last (wrong) and thankfully came up with this bejewelled turn button that locks all four doors at once, the only drawback being that you need an amount of manual dexterity to close them. Or open them. Sorry, Imogen. The underside of the button is chamfered to feed into the doors. I hope that with wax and use it will wear in



**2** I don't see why children's toys and equipment comes in primary colours, as if the child must be shocked awake. Ancient Egyptian murals are more muted than this. I thought of blending the paints in their pots (a high risk and messy strategy), then I overlaid colours. It turned out a bit brighter than I'd anticipated, but the colours do add to the surprise as you open the doors



**3** I'd bought a couple of boxes of acrylic paint sprays in Lidl for £5 each just in case they'd come in useful. Here they did

Then I smacked into a wall. I was unhinged and unhingable. One side of a hinge could safely be fixed with long screws into end-grain ply, but 12mm ply is not thick enough to take hinges on its face. I thought of bolts. I thought of added strips of ply, but this was a house! The hinges should be unobtrusive, not a feature! I drew a blank. Hinges and catches can be troublesome.



**4** I like the clear distinction between the box and the façade. It gives a touch of theatricality

It pays to work them out from the very beginning. Perhaps I should listen to myself? I was so thoroughly stopped that I put the cabinet and the doors, which were not yet doors, to one side for later. Much later.

I couldn't make a living out of this sort of thing. Let me re-phrase that. I've never been able to make a living out of this sort of thing. One-offs. Never-been-seen-before. And yet, out of some cavalier pig-headedness, I keep making them. One-offs are just too time-consuming to be economically viable. Thankfully, with Risha, money doesn't enter into it.

I came back to it a few days ago. The solution was immediate and (blindingly) obvious. I could set the doors in a frame. However, I didn't want the interior to be obstructed. The frame would have to be outside the box. It would be a façade, no more – and proud to be one.

I went all Queen Anne for a bit, trying to stay off Romanesque for once, and anyway, this is a



**5** Aristowax Wood Silk: I'm experimenting with this as a spray wax finish

house, not a cathedral or a castle. Risha is half Indian. It would be good to honour that in the style. Multi-cusped arches: I started to draw these out but they're not as simple as they look. Then I slipped sideways into Egyptian. Ancient Egyptian resembles Art Deco in bold geometric pattern: it is timeless and cannot go out of fashion. Only when I'd finished the box did it occur to me that Egypt is halfway (ish) between England and India!

If Risha plays happily with the box (as a dolls' house, or a decorated cupboard) as a child, she will remember that happiness when she is an adult. It will be a favourite possession. I'd better make a good one then.



**6** A tiny and missable detail, but I think, an important one: when I turned around to see the box for the first time, the top of the frame was too blank and bland. Four vertical screws along the top, midway between the pieces of ply, gives the eye somewhere to go. It says that the very top is considered, and part of the design. The door frame is backed up double thickness because this is neatest, and increases the distinction between box and façade. The Triton oscillating bobbin sander is now a member of the family – I would have been pushed to achieve the many curves without it

## GOOD GREEN FUN



7 Theo helping out in the garden

### Six years ago...

... Ori, just out of the Israeli army and wanting to recall his old self, volunteered to help in our garden. The two of us marked out a circle, down in the bottom corner and, quite unnecessarily, I rotovated a trench. Elsewhere in the garden we were attempting to eradicate willow, so we cut lengths of probably 2-3ft and planted them in the ground. I took great care to establish with the best cuttings the corners of an octagon skewed to the hedge so that the doorway would offer the best view (including the setting sun). Such an attachment to geometry was not

necessary either (as it happens) but the view is important. This, you see, was to be a building; an iron-age roundhouse; a Saxon hut but in living willow. I would weave an upturned conical basket with door and windows; that grew its own waterproof roof of foliage, a magical place for a picnic supper. Ha! Still, nothing wrong with dreaming (discuss).

They grew. I think it is sallow willow, but I wouldn't swear. Only one or two cuttings failed to root. On the near side (photo 7) they grew like billy-o! On the far side less so, but still healthily. This year it was time to lay them.



8 The inner and outer rings

### Seven years ago...

... I attacked my hedge – a Devon hedge; being a high ridge of stone and earth planted or self-sown; in my case with hazel, sycamore, oak and holly. I like a well-laid hedge, I think we all do. How hard could it be? There was a course on hedge-laying at RHS Rosemoor; I didn't go on that. I was given an authoritative booklet on the subject by the author's niece, my neighbour, and lovely though that is, the illustrations look nothing like my boundary hedge. Instead, I spent 10 minutes on YouTube.

Cut low to, but not at, the ground, about five-sixths of the way through the stem; far further than you think is safe. Bend the stem towards the ground (removing tips and side-shoots previously out-of-reach) weaving it between other stems. Peg it in place, if needs be, with a trimmed upturned forked branch. Take the drift uphill; its inclination, depending on how much growth you have to play with. Take it away from the prevailing weather. Sometimes you can't do both, so you have to choose one or the other. This should be called hedging your bets, but it isn't.

In subsequent years, trim back the sides of the hedge but let the middle verticals go. In a few years' time they'll be ready to lay; and where before there were only a few stems along the way, now there are dozens, and the woven mesh denser. A prime reason for laying a hedge is not to make it look nice, but to keep livestock securely penned.

It doesn't seem at all likely. Strips of sap and bark, so thin, bent and exposed, don't look capable of sustaining a tree. But if there's one thing a tree – and especially willow – wants to do, it is to grow, and within weeks, shoots were bursting out all along my now-horizontal branches like slow-motion fireworks.

### Eight days ago...

... Theo came to help in the garden. It was mid-March now, and late for laying. I'd already trimmed the lower side shoots. The main stems were 12 or 15ft tall and enmeshed with each other in twiggy growth. This was not a one-man job. I cut the stem – with a pruning saw rather than the bill-hook that a professional would use for speed and neatness because I find it more controllable – and held the almost-severed limb as Theo wrestled it through the tangle of twigs to the ground, and the unnatural neatness of his lopping shears.

I haven't grown a building before. My initial idealistic vision of vertical walls up to 5-6ft, then a conical ascent to a smoke-hole; when I thought about the structural business of making it, it didn't seem to work. How would I weave? There was an inner ring and an outer ring. Should one go clockwise and the other anti-clockwise? Did I need to leave standards?

When we came to it we just did it. I left several uprights to grow thick and strong; the rest I laid. I had thought that the weave would be closer to the ground, but cut-by-cut, this is the pattern that emerged. I have no doubt that it will sprout.



9 The crop from one tree, six years old

I hope the bottom part grows vigorously so as to hide the central seat from view – incoming and outgoing – for this is the power of the place: to sit alone in the force-field of nature.

**Part of my boundary hedge...**

... isn't a hedge at all. Three substantial sycamores were heavily pruned just before I moved in. In the first year shoots rocketed in the air. Now it's the sixth year and some of those shoots are as thick as my arm and six or eight times as long. They have to be useful for something. I vaguely thought of a tipi, but I knew I wasn't going to make one because I wouldn't want to live in it. Plus, making a tipi from scratch, however many books you have, sounds to me like hang-gliding off a cliff. Nevertheless, I wanted the option.

This too was a two-man job. Two men work 10 times as fast as one man can. There's less travel involved (with a chainsaw up in the branches; making a cut; getting down from the branches; tugging out a cutting; needing another cut; getting up in the branches...) and a lot more motivation. It feels like a real job. This is coppicing or pollarding; a deliberate farming of structural timber. Grow-your-own! Guaranteed straight grain; no weak spots. Cost? Zero (once you own the tree) but patience.

My poles are not as straight as they looked on the tree. They're not long enough or straight enough for a tipi. I have no idea what I'll do with them. I want them off the ground on trestles of some sort. Or maybe concrete blocks. Let them air dry. Cover if possible. Wait. Their day will come, especially as I will be half-looking for it. Perhaps the rafters of a lean-to. A log shed roof? That would be fitting.

Perhaps rustic furniture? Rustic in that the bark is still on, but structurally rigid because of long dowelled joints. And sycamore, remember! Hard, clean and durable. Probably as good as beech. At first thought, it seems wrong to cut



10 Hazel's will to live: the first stage of turning neglected growth into a hedge

such lengths into smaller pieces, but they would not grow thick enough to be a table-leg if they had not grown that tall. I'd need a huge pencil-sharpener to cut shallow tapers on the dowels: I can't see me doing that by hand. And some clever structures. Trapezoids. Cross-bracing. A jig for drilling accurately angled holes. Semi-industrial bodging. Sounds like more fun, doesn't it?

As I came back from town a few minutes ago, I passed a parked pick-up piled with poles much longer and straighter than mine. I'd heard

the buzzing of a saw on and off throughout the morning. I said hello to Barry, "What are they for?" I asked him. "Tipis," he replied. One tipi takes 15 or 17 Douglas fir saplings, 25ft long. This time of year (late March) is a good time to strip the bark (tipi poles must be smooth so as to shed rain). Spruce is also viable but it doesn't strip so easily; and Douglas fir is readily available in these woods. He's doing the estate managers a favour thinning the forest. He sells the poles to tipi makers for £8 each. ✕



11 The sycamore stump cut as low as I could (it's a big clump). In between the stump and the holly, laid hazel shoots thick and strong

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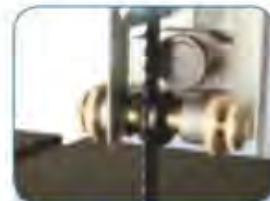
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**NEXT MONTH**

In the next issue, Peter looks at more terms from badger to bridle joint

# WOODWORKER'S ENCYCLOPAEDIA **PART 4**

Bent and bevelled with a few biscuits thrown in for luck, join **Peter Bishop** as he presents some more words and phrases for you to ponder on



Stained beech steam-bent chair by Benchmark Furniture

**Bent wood**

I've seen some pretty badly bent stuff over the years, but this phrase is the generic term for wood that has been bent on purpose. Bent wood furniture was very popular earlier on in the 20th century. To bend wood it's heated and steamed in a process that makes it become elastic. When it has reached this stage, it can be placed in a pre-formed pattern and allowed to cool. Once this has occurred it will regain its rigidity. There are a number of famous continental makers whose pieces make good money, but you can pick up some very interesting pieces quite cheaply if you search around.



Steam-bent table by Tom Raffield



A besom is the traditional witch's broom, and can be used for ritually cleansing a space

**Besom**

When I discovered one of these in the in-laws' shed just after getting married, I thought I'd found the answer to a lot of questions! A besom is an old-fashioned broom, still available today, which is made from a central wooden shaft with twigs lashed onto one end – a witch's broomstick!



Traditional besom brooms



Japanese Shinwa sliding bevel from Axminster Tools & Machinery



Infilled sliding bevel square by Vesper Toolworks

**Bevel**

Bevels come in all sorts of sizes and in different applications, but in the workshop we most probably use it as a shortened version of 'sliding bevel'. A useful bit of kit to help set or establish the angles of a bevel or joint, there are a number on the market – large and small. I have a few but the one I find most useful has a lever locking action that folds back into the main body of the bevel. The reason I like it is because, with the locking lever folded away, you can flip it over and use it both sides. A lot of sliding bevels have a wing nut locking mechanism that I'd avoid.

**Bevel-edge chisel**

Probably the most used chisel type in the workshop. The edges are bevelled to allow easier access into tight corners, making them a lot more manoeuvrable than their straight-edged cousins. However, they are not designed to be belted with hammer or mallet like a mortise chisel. They should be 'eased' through the wood. Keep them sharp and this will prove to be a much smoother cutting tool.



Japanese bevel-edge chisel from Axminster Tools & Machinery



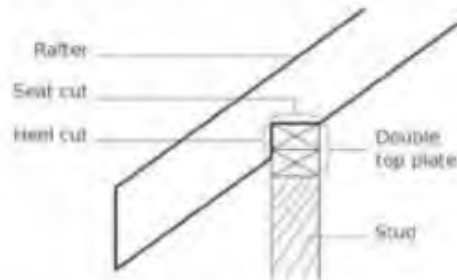
Axminster Rider bevel-edge chisel with hornbeam handle



Commemoration funeral bier

**Bier**

Not a misspelling but the name of a structure upon which a coffin can be transported – I restored one of these for the magazine a few years ago. Biers come with wheels or legs, and they have a platform upon which the coffin sits and is secured. Those with wheels can be pulled along; those with legs need two or four people to carry them.



Birdsmouth joint explained



Showing how a birdsmouth joint fits together

**Birdsmouth joint**

This is the joint you make when attaching roof rafters to the wallplate. It doesn't matter if the rafter joins the wallplate full on or runs on past it, the notched joint is still called a birdsmouth. Easy enough to make, with just a couple of saw cuts, but getting a snug fit can be trying. Best to draw out the roof structure to scale and then use a sliding bevel to mark the saw cuts.



Makita P-08838 biscuit dowels



Festool Domino DF 500

**Biscuits**

A common name for those ovoid-ended, compressed beech, flat dowels used in the jointer described overleaf. Each of these biscuits are inserted into the pre-cut slots in adjoining faces and when glue is applied they fill the gaps and make the joint. The best glues to use with them are water-based ones like PVAs. If these are applied the biscuit will swell, with the added moisture, and make a really tight bond. It is vitally important that you store your flat dowels in a dry place. If you simply chuck them in a workshop cupboard they will invariably pick up moisture, swell and become difficult to insert when trying to make the joint. In addition to the simple wooden biscuits, there are a range of metal and plastic ones available for a variety of different jobs.

## Biscuit joiners

This refers to the tool itself that cuts the primary slot or recess for the joint to be made. A small, circular saw blade is fitted into the hand-held tool and, with face and edge fences adjusted, it will plunge into the wood making half a joint. An opposing half slot is cut to fit the complete biscuit and the joint can be made. The saw blades must match the thickness of your flat dowels and the cut must be set to be just over half its depth. These tools are certainly one of the most useful to be found in a workshop and are only challenged by the Domino joiner, which we'll describe later on.



Makita DPJ180Z cordless biscuit joiner

Lamello Zeta P2 biscuit joiner HW with Systainer case

## Bits

Tapping, twisting, reaming, glass, flat, sawtooth etc., etc., are all bits – 'drill bits' by rights. Anything that we can fit into a drill chuck that goes round safely and makes a hole, enlarges or makes a recess in the target workpiece, is a bit. The most common ones we'll use in woodworking will be the twist, Forstner, flat, dowel and countersinkers, but we'll all have a range of others and varying sizes in our collections. If you keep them sharp, it always pays in the end.



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Forstner bit



FISCH eight-piece SP wood twist drill bit set



Black heart in Gabon ebony

## Black heart

In lighter woods this is a defect that is recognised by a darkening of the heartwood. It's generally thought to be caused by some sort of mineral inclusion while the tree grows. It should not alter the structural properties of the wood but with ash, for example, where white/cream coloured wood is prized, it might be a problem. Frankly, I quite like the darker streaks and, when it's included, is often called 'olive ash'.

## Bleeding

In softwoods we might find some resins 'bleeding' out from the sub-structure onto the surface or, when staining, the colour bleeds into an area it shouldn't. Adhesives can also bleed out of joints, but with these you should be able to wipe the excess away.



Tree resin



Small box with half-blind dovetail joints

### Blind dovetail

A blind dovetail is a dovetail joint that you can't see when it's assembled. It's constructed so that parts of the outer layers mask what's going on underneath. The ultimate blind dovetail is the secret mitre one where, on the outer corner faces, the joint is seamless and totally hidden. Give it a go; they're really fun to make and get right!

### Blockboard

One of the different types of sheet materials available to the woodworker. The basic structure of the board is that strips of solid hard- or softwood are sandwiched between two thick veneer sheets. By applying the outer layers to the strips of inner, solid core wood the whole structure should become more stable. There are a couple of variations, which I'll describe here. The first is 'Laminboard', which uses narrower strips of best quality wood for the core. With extra gluing as the sheet is constructed, and finer veneer faces, this is found in furniture making. The other is 'Battenboard', which uses wider, near plank-like strips of wood. If you can find it, this is a not so stable and cheap alternative to some of the other sheet materials.



Laminboard



Continuous Battenboard (single layer)



A secret dovetail joint

### Block flooring

Block flooring used to be the choice for factory floors and other areas where a hard-wearing surface was required. End-grain block flooring was a particular favourite because this was really tough when made from, say, maple or oak. It was also used extensively in the munitions industry; if you dropped something on it there would not be a spark! 'Parquet' flooring is the name used



Fitting end-grain hexagon wood tiles



Reclaimed sapele parquet flooring

for domestic, lighter weight block flooring. Today we salvage old block flooring and reuse it as an attractive floor covering. Most blocks were laid tight together onto a layer of hot tar, which, if you're reusing them, can be a pain to remove. The favourite pattern is probably 'herring bone'. Rather than simple rectangular shapes there are others available such as hexagonal ones, etc.

### Block plane

A small, hand-held wood plane with a blade that does not reach the outer edges of the body. Must be kept sharp because they are invariably used on end-grain for, say, trimming mitres, etc. This is not a plane to use for bulk removal of waste; it's more of a finishing tool for light work.



Veritas low-angle block plane



DICTUM rabbit block plane with adjustable mouth

### Blue stain

This is any fungal discolouration to light coloured woods that have a blue or black hue. Blue stain normally only attacks sapwood and the best way to deal with it is to apply a fungicide at the early stages or before. Light tropical hardwoods, such as ramin, used a lot for dowels and small beadings, are normally treated straight off the conversion saw. You'll know if it has because a splinter will give you a sore, inflamed and infected spot pretty quickly!



Blue staining on wood

### Boards

We tend to call anything with square cut edges boards, or maybe planks or deals! The trade baseline for a board is anything over about 100mm wide x 50mm thick.

### Board measure

A way to calculate volume by measuring surface area. Traditionally used to calculate how many cubic feet would be contained in an individual board. Totalling a number of boards provides a collective volume to meet an order or establish how much is in a stack. The basic measure is a square of 12in. 12 of these at 1in thick equal a cubic foot, six at 2in, four at 3in, and so on with fractions in between. ✘

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Woodworker's Journal

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# ME AND MY WORKSHOP

Dave Wheaton



Dave Wheaton in his Welsh brick workshop

## Works Manager Dave Wheaton's workshop is situated in West Wales, as we discover here

### 1. What is it – and where is it?

It's a 9 x 5m brick workshop within the inner service courtyard on a private estate near Cardigan, in West Wales.

### 2. What's the best thing about it?

I can walk to it from our staff accommodation and not get wet.

### 3. And what's the worst?

It's directly below another staff apartment, so it restricts when I can work in it.

### 4. How important is it to you?

It's a fantastic space, well equipped and perfect for the sort of maintenance jobs I currently have to do on the mansion.

### 5. What do you make in it?

The property here is undergoing major restoration, so it's making repairs and adjustments to windows, doors and panelling.

### 6. What is your favourite workshop tip?

Always return your tools to the same place (which saves a huge amount of time).

### 7. What's your best piece of kit?

It's a new item for me – the Makita compound mitre saw – which is very powerful, accurate and great for repetitive jobs.

### 8. If your workshop caught fire, what one thing would you rescue?

My tape measure and pencil – I can't do a thing without them!

### 9. What's your biggest workshop mistake?

Not investing in dust extraction.

### 10. What's the nicest thing you've ever made?

That's a hard question to answer as I have had so much pleasure from just about everything I've made from wood. Making a chair with greenwood was great fun, as it was really getting back to basics and all done by eye.

### 11. And what's the worst?

Probably some shop fitting jobs that I did back in the '90s; not very creative and using too much of the dreaded MDF.

### 12. What's the best lesson you've learned?

Measure twice and cut once, a lesson my Grandad Bill taught me at a very early age.

### 13. If you won the lottery, what would you buy for your workshop?

I'd have LED lighting (my eyesight is not what it was), effective dust extraction and really lovely storage – it's great to have everything neatly put away. ✂

## NEXT MONTH

In the next issue, we look around blind woodturner Chris Fisher's workshop in Lancashire. We'd love to hear about your workshops too, so do feel free to send in a photo of your beloved workspace, and please answer the same questions as shown here – just email [tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com](mailto:tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com)

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**Precisa 6.0VR**  
1.4m Panel Sizing Saw

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2.6m Panel Sizing Saw

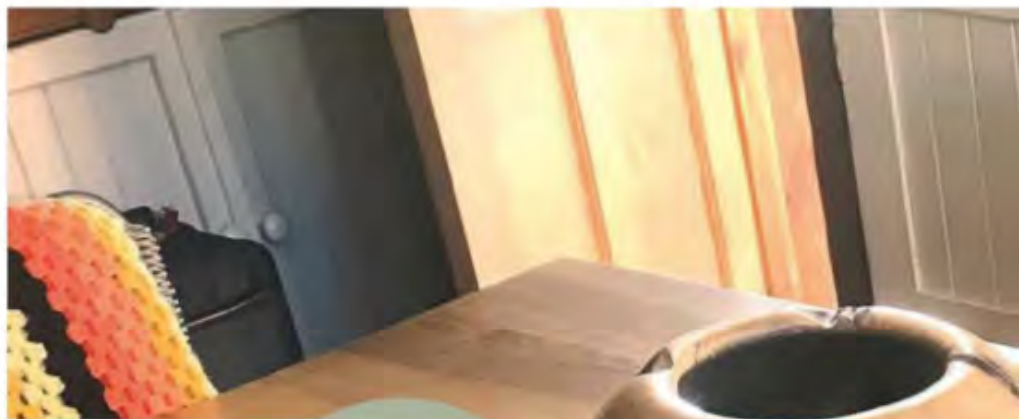


Model	Product Group Series	Specification Includes (as per quoted price)	Machine HP / Scorer HP / Volts	Depth of cut & length of stroke	Price Exc VAT - Plus Carriage	Price Inc VAT - Plus Carriage
Precisa 6.0VR - P1	Workshop	Inc Standard STC + TWE + Scorer	4.0 / 1.1 / 230v or 6.5 / 1.1 / 415v	107 mm x 1.4 m	£2,740.00	£3,288.00
Forsa 4.0 - P1	Workshop	Inc Professional STC + TWE + TLE + Scorer	6.5 / 1.1 / 415v	107 mm x 1.6 m	£3,895.00	£4,674.00
Forsa 4.1 - P1	Workshop	Inc Professional STC + TWE + TLE + Scorer	6.5 / 1.1 / 415v	107 mm x 2.1 m	£3,995.00	£4,794.00
Forsa 8.0 - P3	Professional	As Illustrated above	6.5 / 1.1 / 415v	107 mm x 2.6 m	£5,420.00	£6,504.00
Forsa 9.0 - P3	Professional	As Illustrated above	6.5 / 1.1 / 415v	107 mm x 3.2 m	£5,575.00	£6,690.00

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

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# EAT, DRINK & BE MERRY



**Andrew Hall** shows you how to create your very own dinner service using pieces of air-dried ash

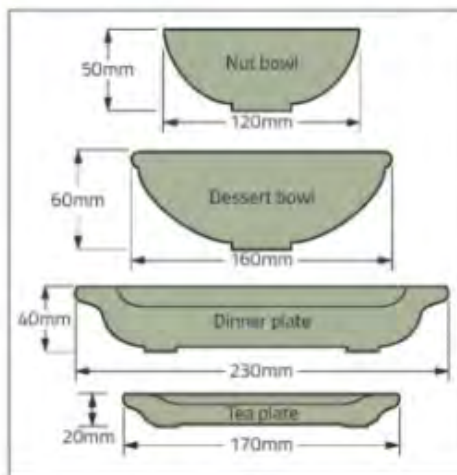
**T**his article came about after I'd demonstrated at Mike Butterfield's club in Mid Wales, and while staying with him, we used a lovely stoneware dinner service and wine goblets. I liked the organic shape so much that I sketched the exact measurements, which would allow me to replicate them in timber. We have always eaten and drank from wooden items since starting the woodturning business and students are treated to lunch from a wood platter.

The utilitarian items shown below were made about 15 years ago. They've been used daily and were originally finished using Chestnut Products' food-safe oil, then washed each day in warm soapy water and allowed to dry on the draining board. ✕

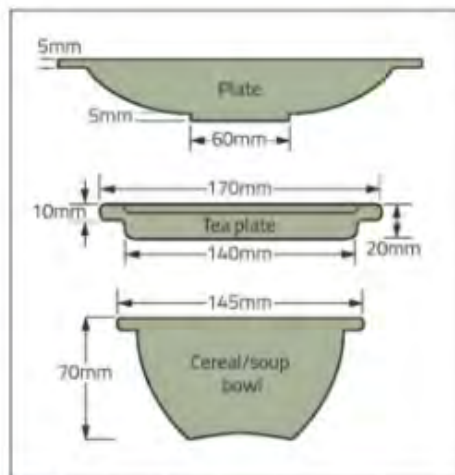


The wooden utilitarian items shown here were made about 15 years ago

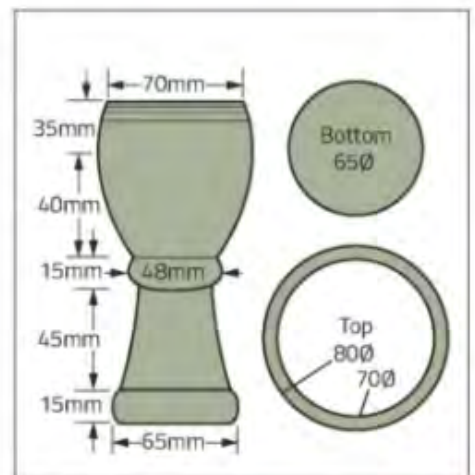




**Fig.1** Nut bowl, dessert bowl, dinner plate and tea plate



**Fig.2** Plate, tea plate and cereal/soup bowl



**Fig.3** Wine goblet



**1** I decided to make our new dinner service using pieces of ash. I harvested a wind-blown ash tree about two years ago and cut it up into 100mm planks, then allowed it to air-dry. Ash does dry quite quickly and was down to about 14-16% moisture content, which is ideal for turning into table wear as it will be washed each day and never really dry out. It will move a little but I think it adds to the appeal and if red wine is used in the goblet, it will go nutty brown but does take on a lovely patina. Tools used for this project are a bowl gouge, parting tool, skew chisel, spindle gouge and a spindle roughing gouge. Firstly, cut the blanks to size and use a Forstner bit in a pillar drill to create a 50mm recess to be held in the jaws of a 100mm chuck. Alternatively, a screw chuck, faceplate or faceplate ring could also be used



**2** Set the callipers to the dimensions shown on the drawing for the tea plate (**Figs.1 & 2**). The blank I used was large enough to produce two of these



**3** Start by truing up the blank across the edge with a bevel cut and the face with a draw cut



**4** Next, using a 3mm parting tool, mark and cut a 100mm dovetail on the base of the plate to a depth of just under 3mm. Check the width of the jaws to ensure they will fit into the recess. Leave the maximum thickness on the plate at the recess...



**5** ... this needs to be slightly undercut so that it sits flat on the table



**6** Mark the size of the base and thickness of the tea plate – both 20mm...



**7** ... then, using a swept-back bowl gouge, turn a cove on the edge of the tea plate



**8** Sand the base of the tea plate using 80, 120, 180 and 240 grit abrasives, but don't go beyond 240 as when the material is in contact with moisture, whether using a finish or not, the grain will be raised. In between grits, dust with a soft paintbrush to remove any grit left from the previous abrasive



**9** Part the first plate off to a 50mm dowel and finish with a hand saw, then repeat the process on the second plate



**10** Hold the tea plate in a set of 100mm jaws and true up the surface, measuring 20mm on the rim of the plate



**11** Next, turn the centre of the plate with a bowl gouge using a push cut. Remove the bulk with a swept-back grind and for the finish cut, use a bowl gouge, ground with a short traditional grind



**12** Using a bowl gouge, cut a camber on the edge, with the flute of the tool almost closed into a shear cut



**13** Power sand through the above grits to a finish – I use a cordless drill and the Simon Hope arbors – brushing dust and grit off with a soft brush



**14** Carry out the same process with the second plate and you'll be left with a matching pair



**15** True up the dinner plate blank and mark out the dimensions, using the same process as for the tea plate



**16** The base of the dinner plate has the same profile as that of the tea plate; however, the thickness is 30mm and instead of a cove the edge is turned as a half bead



**17** Finish the underside of the dinner plate using the same process as for the tea plate...



**18** ... then turn and finish the face of the item in the same way as for the tea plate



**19** Soup, cereal and dessert bowls are turned using the same process as for the tea and dinner plates



**20** Finish the base of the bowl off with a set of expansion/Cole or Longworth jaws...



**21** ... and sand in the same way as above – that will complete your tea, dinner plates and bowls



**22** The final items to complete are the goblets. Start with a blank and find the centre on each end using either a centre finder or finger gauge. Turn from a square to a cylinder between centres using a Steb and revolving tailstock centre



**23** Turn a tenon or spigot and mount in the chuck – I use a 10mm parting tool ground to an angle of 5° to reflect the dovetail jaws and callipers; this will allow you to achieve the optimum circle



**24** Size the opening of the goblet...



25 ... and turn a half bead on top of the goblet



26 Create a lead in with a parting tool and drill a 10mm hole to the depth of the cup, which is 75mm



27 Hollow out the cup of the goblet – I used a Simon Hope tungsten cutting tool to achieve this and illuminated the interior while turning, using a magnetic light from Woodart Products



28 Sand the inside of the goblet through to 240 grit using a sanding stick or ball sander



29 Using a parting tool, gauge and reference the three diameters on the stem of the goblet...



30 ... and turn using a 10mm swept-back spindle and bowl gouge



31 Sand and part off using a 3mm parting tool, then undercut the base of the goblet



32 Re-chuck and turn the base of the goblet with the spindle gouge...



33 ... and sand to a 240 grit finish as before



34 Finish with Chestnut food-safe oil, or you can choose to use no finish as I do. They will be used daily, washed in warm soapy water and left to drain, so this isn't absolutely necessary



35 Leave the dinner service to dry for a couple of days and then you're ready to eat, drink and be happy!



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## AROUND THE HOUSE WITH PHIL DAVY



You may have seen a rather amusing news item in the media recently concerning a retired Gloucestershire electrician. He was baffled as to why certain odds and ends left on his workbench in the garden shed at the end of each day ended up in an ice cream tub the next morning. This mystery apparently took place over several weeks, so with a friend's help he set up a camera to find out just what was going on during the dark hours. They were amazed to discover that the culprit was a mouse, caught on camera heaving the various items (including screws, jubilee clips, plastic fittings, almost anything not secured to the bench top) into the box and generally tidying up. Not surprisingly, pensioner Stephen Mckears nicknamed him Metal Mickey. Whoever would have thought that a small rodent could be so industrious and generally helpful... Maybe we should think twice before setting those mouse traps!

### WORKSHOP: WORKTOP OIL CHANGE



Although it's good to have a wide choice when it comes to finishing products, with so many systems available it can be difficult to select the most suitable. Recently I fitted solid oak worktops in my new kitchen and decided to choose Osmo oil, which I'd used on a previous worktop. Some oil finishes tend to give oak a slightly orange tint, which I wanted to avoid this time, preferring a more natural effect.

To check the colour I experimented on an oak offcut, starting with a base coat of Osmo Clear Wood Protector, which is low viscosity and penetrates deeply into the timber, so increasing water repellency. This was followed by two coats of Polyx-Oil, which dries overnight and comes in several different tints, including white and grey. I chose 3044 Raw, which created an almost smokey effect to the oak. Certainly classier than the original citrus-like finish created by a clear oil. Although denibbing between coats is not essential, I did this out of habit using a 280 grit abrasive pad. The final result was fantastic, leaving the worktops looking almost unfinished but with plenty of protection. In fact, I tried a clear semi-matt oil on the sample board but wasn't so keen on the effect. I applied both oils with a 60mm pure bristle Osmo brush, which was perfect and easy to clean afterwards.

It's important to apply the same number of coats to the underside of a hardwood worktop as the face side, which makes it quite a laborious process. Worth it for the compliments you're likely to receive when completed, though! See [www.osmouk.com](http://www.osmouk.com).



To check the colour I experimented on an oak offcut, starting with a base coat of Osmo Clear Wood Protector



I chose 3044 Raw, which created an almost smokey effect to the oak



Although denibbing between coats is not essential, I did this out of habit using a 280 grit abrasive pad

### USEFUL KIT/PRODUCT: AXMINSTER ULTIMATE EDGE ANGLE GAUGE SET



Checking the bevel on most edge tools can be tricky, particularly where accuracy is really important. This set of stainless steel gauges from Axminster should help, however. Supplied in a folding plastic wallet, you get 18 individual profiles covering angles from 90 down to 5°, in increments of 5°. They may be simple but they're darned clever, each featuring three variations of the same angle: two external cut-outs and one internal. In use you just hold a gauge against an edge tool until you find the nearest profile. Ideal for checking how an old tool has been ground or if you want to change its bevel.

#### Conclusion

You may only use a handful of these angle gauges, but the set is still good value.

#### Ultimate Edge system update

When we tested the Ultimate Edge Honing Guide Assembly it was missing a simple device – an edge tool setting jig. This L-shaped stainless steel gauge is held against the end of the blade as you tighten the honing guide's locking screw. It gives a constant 25mm projection, the same for any tool that's to be ground on the Ultimate Edge machine. The gauge comes as standard with the honing guide.



This L-shaped stainless steel gauge is held against the end of the blade as you tighten the honing guide's locking screw



In use you just hold a gauge against an edge tool until you find the nearest profile

#### SPECIFICATION

Typical price: £15.95

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

#### THE VERDICT

##### PROS

- Easy to determine edge tool bevels

##### CONS

- You may not use the full set

RATING: 4.5 out of 5

## USEFUL KIT/PRODUCT: AXMINSTER ULTIMATE EDGE MICRO BEVEL GUIDE

Sometimes a new woodworking machine offers a range of optional extras, which are not always released simultaneously. This was the case when I tested Axminster's Ultimate Edge sharpening system a couple of months back. There's now a Micro Bevel guide available, designed to be used with the Honing Guide Assembly. The honing guide is built specifically for gripping chisels and plane irons securely when using the machine, which is based around a variable-speed vertical sanding belt. The Ultimate Edge system produces a precise, uniform bevel at pretty well whatever angle you choose. All well and good, but until the Micro Bevel appeared there was no way of adding a secondary bevel to your chisels or plane irons, without resetting the blade into a traditional guide. I'd guess most woodworkers prefer a secondary or micro bevel on their edge tools, though Japanese chisels are usually honed with just one bevel.

### Precision engineered

But back to the micro bevel guide. Like the honing guide assembly it's beautifully made from aluminium (almost 10mm thick sections), with stainless steel locating rods. These fit into the honing guide, although I found them too tight to slide smoothly through the nylon bushes, even when sprayed with WD40. The rods have tapered ends to aid entry, but I had to tap the guide sideways with a mallet and block of wood. I'd imagine these will ease over time, though.

The guide consists of a curved arm with a 57mm wide rubber roller fitted at the bottom. Attached to a second plate (which houses the 10mm diameter rods) via a large, knurled locking knob, this includes a protractor scale for setting your chosen angle. With a range from 20 to 40°, it's easy

to read and a doddle to set the exact angle, even in increments of half a degree. Unlocking the knob enables you to raise or lower the jig, which effectively alters the angle of the blade as it meets the sharpening stone. For honing the odd tool it's a bit of a faff to set up, though that's largely due to rod tightness. I'd be tempted to sharpen several blades on the Ultimate Edge machine first, then refit each tool for a session on the diamond or water stone. Incidentally, the blade locking screw on the honing guide is still accessible when both jigs are fitted together, so removing or swapping a tool is straightforward.

### Conclusion

On the downside, the micro bevel guide must be used with the honing guide assembly, which costs another £23.95, so together they're quite pricey. Can you use the jigs without the Ultimate Edge system, though? You can, although together they're quite cumbersome, making it awkward to flatten the back of a blade on a stone when removing the wire edge. Axminster recommend doing this after you've ground the blade on the machine and before the final bevel, though. The combined weight and size make the micro bevel very stable in use. Roller width is a real advantage and the big protractor scale makes it easy to obtain a precise micro bevel.



The guide consists of a curved arm with a 57mm wide rubber roller fitted at the bottom



Attached to a second plate (which houses the 10mm diameter rods) via a large, knurled locking knob, this includes a protractor scale for setting your chosen angle



Unlocking the knob enables you to raise or lower the jig



I'd be tempted to sharpen several blades on the Ultimate Edge machine first, then refit each tool for a session on the diamond or water stone



Roller width is a real advantage and the big protractor scale makes it easy to obtain a precise micro bevel

### SPECIFICATION

Typical price: £34.96

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

### THE VERDICT

#### PROS

- Easy to select specific angles; beautifully engineered for precise bevels

#### CONS

- Sample was tricky to set up

RATING: 4 out of 5

## SPRING PROJECT COTTAGE DOOR

Takes: A few weekends

Tools you'll need: Circular saw, planer/thicknesser, mortiser, cordless drill, router, sander

# TRADITIONAL COTTAGE CHARM



Following on from the December issue, **Phil Davy** replaces an outhouse door with a more fitting traditional framed, ledged and braced pattern, which is perfect for a period property

Back in December's issue I explained how to make and install an exterior door frame for the outhouse adjoining my old cottage. Both frame and door were way beyond repair, so needed replacing. To follow this I'll tell you how to build the door itself, a traditional framed, ledged and braced pattern, and perfect for a period property.

If you're making both, always install the frame first. It's much easier to build the door to fit the frame, rather than vice versa. Always draw a full size setting-out rod first, before cutting timber to length. This doesn't need to be complicated but shows the positions of mortises, tenon shoulders, rebates and so on, so it must be accurate. You can then mark off your timber without needing a tape measure.

### Traditional joinery

Traditional ledged and braced doors and gates are among the most basic projects for the woodworker. With no framework, the vertical tongued & grooved boards are held together by horizontal ledges. Simple to make, this type of construction is OK for internal cottage doors, but not sturdy or secure enough for external use.

Without stiles you can't fit a mortise lock and butt hinges are awkward to fit.

A framed, ledged and braced door is much sturdier but its construction requires a lot more work. Middle and bottom rails are wider than the top rail, the centre one jointed to the stiles with twin tenons. Because tongued & grooved boards (matchboarding) are flush with the front of the door, both mid and bottom rails must be thinner than the top rail, so these tenons are bare-faced. This enables the boards to slide over them when assembling, so thickness is important. Heavier matchboard is recommended at about 15mm thick.

On this door, stiles and top rail are from 95 x 44mm softwood, with mid and bottom rails finishing at 145 x 29mm. Both diagonal braces are 95 x 29mm and fitted tightly between the rails.

### Decorative matchboard

Buying your matchboard is by far the easiest option, though this can present a problem due to board width (usually about 85mm). You'll already have the overall width between stiles from the

setting-out rod, but this measurement rarely coincides when you divide it by the board width.

Almost inevitably you'll need to rip both outer boards to size. Along one of these you'll need to rout a tongue to fit the groove in the stile. This groove runs around the face edges of top rail and both stiles. Don't make these too tight as you're likely to have problems with swelling during wet weather. Before installing the matchboarding make sure you paint both tongues & grooves of every board with a suitable wood primer.

If uniform board width across the door is important visually you'll probably have to machine the timber from scratch. This is a lot more work as you'll need to rout tongues & grooves along the edges, plus add a decorative chamfer. You could take the opportunity to add a more elegant beaded profile, though.

On external joinery I like to treat joints before they're assembled with two coats of wood preservative. Once glued up and sanded, the whole project should then be treated again before painting. To create more interest you could add a small window to the top of the door, which can be glazed with obscured or clear glass. ▶



**1** The original door to the outhouse was in a pretty bad way. A new frame was made and installed before work could start on a replacement door



**2** Rip timber to width, allowing at least 6mm for planing to width and thickness. Plane face sides and edges, then thickness wood to exact size



**3** Check face mark orientation, then lay rails on stiles for exact mortise positions. Stiles should be cramped, then marked across with a try square



**4** The mid and bottom rails are thinner to accommodate the matchboard thickness, which in turn determines the position of the mortises



**5** Set your mortise gauge pins to the chisel and mark the stiles. With this door style it's easier to work with the face side at the rear, not the front



**6** For most of the mortising cutting I used a router fitted with a 12.7mm straight bit, arguably giving a cleaner cut than my old mortiser



**7** A mortiser can be used to square up the ends of the slots, though, chopping to just over half depth. Turn the timber over and repeat



**8** The mid rail is fitted with twin tenons, so mortises are chopped to match, with a gap between them. Clean up with a wide chisel where necessary



**9** Both mid and bottom rails are jointed with bare-faced tenons, with only one cheek as such. Set these out with a single pin marking gauge



**10** Carefully cut down the cheeks of each tenon, either with a bandsaw or by hand. Keep just outside the lines marked with the gauge



**11** Cut across the shoulders with a sliding mitre saw or tenon saw. Clean up the faces of each tenon with a finely-set shoulder plane



**12** Mark out the twin tenons, which are about one third the width of the rail. Don't forget the haunch between them for extra strength



**13** The waste wood between the twin tenons is used for wedges you'll need later. Use a hand saw for the straight cuts, followed by a coping saw



**14** Check each tenon fits snugly into its corresponding mortise. Trim the cheeks if necessary, but joints should not be too slack



**15** Rout a groove around the inside edges of both stiles and top rail. Each T&G board is rebated along its upper edge to fit into this



**16** Chop back about 3mm at the ends of each mortise with a suitable chisel. Cuts should be tapered to enable wedges to be fitted when gluing up



**17** Make sure rails and stiles are placed on a dead flat surface to avoid twist. Brush exterior PVA or polyurethane glue to tenons and assemble



**18** Use sash cramps to bring the stiles and rails together tightly. It's important to always check for square when gluing up a framework



**19** Correctly fitted wedges will hold each joint together securely. Cramps can be removed before the glue has dried, if you wish



**20** Saw off protruding tenons and wedges, keeping them slightly proud, then clean up the exposed end-grain with a bench plane



**21** Fit the matchboard loosely together and check the distance you'll need to fill with the outer two boards. These will probably need to be cut down



**22** Once the outer boards have been cut and planed to width, rout a matching chamfer along their edges. Check cutter depth on an offcut first



**23** After applying wood preservative, paint tongues and grooves with an oil-based primer; this gives protection as the timber expands and contracts



**24** Slide the boards into place on the door and check they're not too tight. You can add a chamfer along their top edges or butt them tight to the rail



**25** With pencilled lines as a guide, nail the boards to the mid and bottom rails. Use either brads or lost head nails, at least twice board thickness



**26** Mark the door for final length and cramp a guide rail across the bottom. Set blade depth and cut the stiles and boards in one pass of the saw



**27** Lay a brace across the stiles to determine the necessary bevels. Make sure it's sloping the correct way so the door is in tension when hung



**28** Cut the brace to fit and trim with a block plane if the bevels are too tight. Repeat for the other brace and nail through the boards to secure them



**29** Punch all nail heads below the surface and fill holes and any defects with a two-part filler



**30** Saw off the protruding upper horns, then you can check how the door sits in the frame. Shoot edges if necessary with a try plane or similar



**31** Check the front and back surfaces of the door and clean up with a bench plane. Finally, sand the front ready for brushing on a coat of primer



**32** Mark out the hinge positions and cut their recesses, either with a router or by hand. Fit a sturdy pair of 100mm butt hinges, preferably washed



**33** Avoiding the middle rail, mark the position for the mortise lock on the stile. Drill an appropriate recess, cleaning it out with a chisel



**34** With the door wedged, screw the hinges into the frame and check for clearance when closed. Now you can fit the lock's striker plate to the jamb



**35** Mark the handle position and drill holes for both the spindle and key. Insert the mortise lock and screw this in place. Finish painting the door



**36** Finally, drill mounting holes for the handle and check that the lock operates smoothly. Then you can undercoat and complete with a final top coat

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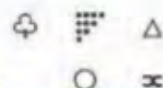
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## LETTERS

## ★ LETTER OF THE MONTH



Michael's aeroplane is based on Ian Wilkie's original design

## FROM ROCKING HORSE TO TOY AEROPLANE

Hi Tegan,

I'm making the aeroplane model for my nephew from Ian Wilkie's article shown in the June 2017 edition of *The Woodworker*. Unfortunately I do not have part 2 of the instructions from the July issue. I was wondering if you would be kind enough to send me a copy of these instructions?

Regards, **Michael Excell**

*Hi Michael, thanks for your email. I will happily send you a PDF detailing part 2 of Ian Wilkie's aeroplane build. I hope this helps and please do send a photo of the completed toy once finished as we'd love to see it!*

Best wishes, **Tegan**

Hi Tegan,

Please find attached some snaps of the finished aeroplane as promised. In the same issue of your excellent mag there is an article about rocking horses. I have made this horse from the same plans as the article – see attached photos of this. I am proud to say that it is one of the best examples I have seen, not because I made it, but due to the way it has been painted by my daughter-in-law, who is a fine art teacher.

Bye for now and keep up the good work!

Regards, **Michael Excell**

*Hi Michael, thanks so much for sending us the photos – you've done an excellent job on both projects! I'm sure fellow readers would love to see them so I will happily feature them in our letters section. Thanks again!*

Best wishes, **Tegan**



Michael also made the rocking horse shown here, based on Peter Vivian's design, and his daughter-in-law did a fine paint job on the finished item



Max – a carpentry apprentice from Richmond upon Thames College – refurbishing a sash window

## THE YOUNG APPRENTICE

Dear Tegan,

Just recently I got thinking about my journey as an apprentice carpenter and in particular buying my first set of hand tools. With my first week's wages I bought a set of Blue Chip wood chisels and a few weeks later a Stanley No.5 hand plane. Over the years I built up a good selection of hand tools that were put to good use for quite a few years. I carried them from jobsite to jobsite in a green canvas tool sack and learned many a trick from other carpenters over the years.

By the 1990s, power tools came into play – i.e. circular saws, power planers and drills – and these have been around for quite a while now. Today I look at the young apprentice carpenter and wonder whether we are losing the skills of our forefathers – the men who built it all with just hand tools.

It's 2019 and the young apprentice carpenter's tool kit consists of cordless power tools and while these are very much needed, the use of hand tools is less and less prevalent and indeed the older carpenters are few and far between. There's a certain joy in using hand tools, whether it's a chisel or a saw, to start and finish a project. I do hope the young apprentice carpenters remain using hand tools, as if not, they are surely missing out on a skill and a craft which has been handed down for hundreds of years.

I feel the need to invest more time in teaching the next generation of apprentices, and I know the magazine echoes my thoughts.

Kind regards, **Phil Gaynor**

*Hi Phil, thank you for your thought provoking letter and I'm sure your concerns and observations are shared by many readers of the magazine. As you say, there is definitely a place for power tools in the young apprentice's arsenal, but hand tools and skills should not be forgotten. If these aren't practised then they stand a high chance of dying out and being lost forever, and that would be incredibly sad. Luckily many others out there share your passion for hand tools and we must remain hopeful that these continue to be passed down through many generations to come.*

Best wishes, **Tegan**

## PILLAR DRILL INSTRUCTIONS

Hi Tegan,

I have previously seen people asking for help locating technical information on equipment, so therefore wondered whether you'd ever heard of 'CHIN' as a manufacturer? I am after a set of instructions and wondered if you could help? Many thanks, **Richard Pringle**

*Hi Richard, I've asked Phil Davy and he says he's never heard of the brand, but he suspects this was a generic machine sold under various names. As a drill press it's not a particularly complex machine, so it could be that a reader has a similar model and may be able to copy the instructions. Photos of the whole machine would perhaps be useful to publish.*

Best wishes, **Tegan**



Is anyone aware of instructions for Richard's 'CHIN' manufactured pillar drill? If so, please do get in touch

## READERS' HINTS & TIPS

Veritas

For the next nine issues, in conjunction with Veritas and BriMarc Tools & Machinery, we're giving one lucky reader per month the chance to get their hands on a fantastic low-angle jack plane, worth over £250! Ideal for shooting mitres, working end-grain and initial smoothing, this must-have hand tool also features a combined feed and lateral adjustment knob for fast, accurate changes to depth of cut. To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic piece of kit, just email your top workshop hint or tip to [tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com](mailto:tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com), and if you can, please also attach a photo illustrating your tip in action. Good luck! To find out more about Veritas tools, see [www.brimarc.com](http://www.brimarc.com)

### VARIOUS WORKSHOP TIPS



Denis' homemade 'hooked' turning tool

#### Homemade 'hooked' turning tool

A surplus Allen key makes a useful 'hooked' turning tool when ground to a cutting edge and fixed in a homemade handle using epoxy resin adhesive. Great for inside the necks of small pots and for initial turning of pewter. The one shown has been well used and is ready for replacement.

#### Cutting 45° mitres

Cutting corners is not usually good practice but this one is! For 45° angles in inlay banding, stringing etc., viewing the reflection of the proposed cut in the back of the chisel reveals a 90° angle, which is much easier to judge than 45°. A little practice produces surprising accuracy.



Using a chisel to reveal a 90° angle

#### Woodworker's aprons

My third offering is simple, safe and concerns the traditional woodworker's apron. These mostly have long tapes, which pass round the back and are tied at the front. My tip is when donning the garment, allow the bib part to drop below the waistline until the tapes are tied, then lean slightly forward, lift up the bib part of the apron and pass your head through the top loop. This practice secures the garment's tapes beneath the apron leaving no chance of catches on tools, machinery or anything else. It also allows easy access to apron pockets – and my wife has even adopted the practice for her kitchen aprons!



Allow the bib to fall in front and below the waistline

#### Denis Whittaker



Pass the tapes round the back and tie in front



Bend forward and pass the top loop over your head



No tapes offers easy access to the pockets...



... and keeps everything nice and tidy at the back

## CUTTING LIST ERROR GUIDANCE

Dear Tegan,

I have a big favour to ask. I am currently constructing the hanging cabinet from an old issue of *The Woodworker* (October 1994) and have discovered an obvious error in the cutting list with regard to the castle moulding. From your archives, can you tell me whether a correction was ever published and what the dimensions should be for that item? I hope this is not too onerous an undertaking – I'd be very grateful for any assistance.

Regards, **Martin Woodman**

*Hi Martin, I'm sorry but our digital archives don't go back that far. I am hoping that one of our readers who has the issue in their collection will be able to advise. If anyone can, and who knows what the incorrect dimension should be, please can you email me on the usual address? Many thanks in advance.*

Best wishes, **Tegan**

## WRITE & WIN!

We always love hearing about your projects, ideas, hints and tips, and/or like to receive feedback about the magazine's features, so do drop us a line – you never know, you might win our great 'Letter of the Month' prize, currently the new Trend Kin 30-piece Router Cutter Set, worth over £100. Simply email [tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com](mailto:tegan.foley@mytimemedia.com) for a chance to get your hands on this fantastic prize – good luck!

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# ANYONE FOR QUOITS?

Inspired by  
an exhibit in a  
Yorkshire abbey,  
Tony 'Bodger' Scott  
turns a couple of scraps  
into a garden game



**O**n the sea-cliffs above the town of Whitby in north Yorkshire stand the remains of a huge and magnificent medieval abbey. It's one of the ruins that Henry knocked about a bit, when he was transferring the wealth of the Catholic church into his royal treasury in the 16th century.

Beside the abbey is a small museum. When I happened to pass by earlier this year, there was a set of quoits on the floor in one corner (photo 1). It looked like a replica of a game that might have been being played when Anne Boleyn was encouraging Henry VIII to go for the first royal divorce – and I thought it might be fun to make a bodger's replica for my grandchildren to use in the garden. It turned out to be a project that can be completed in an afternoon, and be ready for use in 24 hours.

#### Broom handles, pallets & nylon rope

As always, I aimed to re-use old materials. In this case, that amounted to a couple of left-over broom handles, a plank from a wooden pallet retrieved from a skip, and some stiff nylon rope.

Once I'd got rid of all the nails in the plank, I ran it through a thicknesser to remove the surface grime and saw marks, then cut it into two 450mm lengths, rounded the ends on a bandsaw, and cut rough halving joints across the middle (photo 2).



**1** A replica game spotted in the corner of a museum became the starting-point for a quick and easy project



**2** Nail holes are still visible in the pallet plank that was cut down to form the base of the game



3 To make the game easier to play, I spaced out the nine posts as far as I could on the available lengths

Rough because the project is, after all, about making a knockabout game for the garden, not an heirloom for the drawing room.

Having marked centreline holes about 90mm apart down each arm (photo 3), I drilled out broom-handle-sized holes through most of the depth of the planks (photo 4). I had initially planned to reinforce the posts by inserting dowels or screws from underneath, but in the event, the posts were such a snug fit in their holes that glue alone turned out to be strong enough to hold them in place.

### Putting it all together

For a time, I dithered about whether to paint the numbers on – with or without routed freehand grooves to guide the paint. But my painting skills are rudimentary, and freehand routing can be very fiddly. So in the end I went for pyrography, starting off by gluing paper templates into position (photo 5), tracing through them with the hot tip (photo 6), then touching up the lines once the paper had been removed (photo 7).

My two broom handles were of slightly different thicknesses (one had a plastic sleeve).



4 A 25mm drill bit had to be ground slightly narrower to make the broom handle posts fit firmly in the holes

I used the thicker handle to make the nine posts, squeezing as much length as I could from the handle, rounding over the top of each post (photo 8) to make the game slightly easier, and leaving the central post about 20mm taller than the rest.

The thinner handle – minus its shrink-wrapped plastic sleeve, which was easily sliced away with a Stanley knife – was cut into 25mm lengths to act as clasps for the quoits. That meant drilling a rope-sized hole through each length. After one



5 A paper template glued temporarily on to the wood helped to guide the placing and size of the numbers



6 A large and unfussy typeface – 48pt Helvetica bold – made the numbers clear and the tracing fast



7 Once the numbers had been burned on lightly, I removed the paper and darkened the lines as necessary



8 I modified my copy of the museum game by rounding off the tips of the posts. That makes it easier for the quoits to drop over, which makes the game more fun for youngsters



9 When drilling holes in small pieces like the clasps for the quoits, use something to keep your hands well away from the bit. The wood gets very hot and can break apart without warning



**10** I felt more comfortable about rounding off the ends of the clasps by hand, but a pair of pliers would have been safer



**11** Each of the eight quoits consisted of a 25mm length of thin broom handle and a 300mm length of stiff rope – making a ring about 100mm across

length flew apart under the drill, I learned to hold each piece firmly in an adjustable spanner so that my fingers stayed well out of the way (**photo 9**).

A little careful sanding (**photo 10**) rounded off the ends, ready for the rope to be inserted (**photo 11**). Melting one end of the rope over a candle (**photo 12**) and squashing the nylon gently under a knife blade while it was still malleable made it easier to thread the rope in (**photo 13**). Melting the other end allowed me to weld the two ends together and hide the join neatly in the centre of the clasp (**photo 14**).

I made each quoit about 100mm across – big enough to slip easily over any one post, but too small to fall over two posts at once. The quoits are also light enough for even a toddler to handle, and stiff enough to hold their shape in the air.

A lick of paint from a couple of left-over cans in the shed created two sets of four quoits, and a quick coat of outdoor varnish finished the job (**photo 15**). Once the paint and varnish had dried overnight, the game was ready to go. ✘



**12** Nylon melts in seconds over a candle flame and can be shaped and smoothed with a knife blade while it's still soft. Don't be tempted to use fingers – molten nylon is very hot and sticks almost instantly to skin. I have a couple of careless burns to prove it



**13** Once you have one end of the rope threaded on to the clasp...



**14** ... melt the other end and join the two ends midway through the clasp. The two ends should fuse together and stick to the wood without any need for glue



**15** With two sets of quoits painted in contrasting colours, and posts and base varnished to protect them from the weather, the game is ready to play on any spare patch of ground



## PRACTICAL ARTS IN EDUCATION & SOCIETY

Jeremy Broun argues the hidden value of practical art education in our schools

Young people who had left school without any qualifications learning numeracy skills by making a guitar under the guidance of experienced teacher Jeremy Broun

**M**astery of technique is common across the arts. Whether you are a dancer, musician, or furniture maker, technique defines much of what you do. Technique has a magic; it has to be worked at, and is admired, as well as something lasting to hand on. Particularly rooted in technique are the practical arts, traditionally called 'craft' and the poor relation to art.

If you design a chair that breaks or is uncomfortable and lacks any kind of aesthetic quality, it fails. The joy of using hands and mind creatively and purposefully and in working within these grounded and honest parameters can lead to a sense of well-being and foster the kind of innovation that the economy could ultimately benefit from.

### Identifying potential

I am not arguing a case for training up loads of carpenters and glass blowers or suggesting there is any one fix to the hugely complex problems facing us. But we do have an obligation to help young people develop their identity and potential and prepare them for the world. This is a messy task because children's core values are already entrenched before they walk through the school gates.

School is not just about getting a place at university that will lead to a degree to become a biochemist that will lead to working as a waitress. The quest to make university education the right of every child is political blindness when seven out of 10 parents do not read out

loud to their young and one in 10 can't read properly by the time they get to secondary school.

Children learn by doing and most enjoy making things. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) rarely occurs among children playing computer games or engaged in making things.

An electrically powered micro catamaran that fits into the back of a Smart car, designed by Jeremy, combines science with art



Integrating designing with making is hugely empowering as the child is not just learning dexterous skills by copying crafted objects, but is challenged to make decisions about how things can be put together, what tools and materials to use (involving ethical choices) and how things can look.

The practical arts are an ideal vehicle for fostering a wide variety of life skills such as perseverance, numeracy, a sense of history and accountability (see main photo). There is no copy, paste and delete button or predictive text, and patience is a key feature.

Not least the benefits of craft activity in pacifying anti-social behaviour. The therapeutic value of working wood in an absorbing way for many otherwise disengaged youngsters in the past could well be noted today. Of course this applies to all materials but wood is particularly engaging, forgiving and indeed beckoning.

### Making 'craft' respectable

In the quest to make 'craft' respectable, in our schools the subject has evolved from Handicraft to Design and Technology, which covers a range of resistant and non-resistant materials such as food, textiles, pneumatics, electronics and woodwork. This dilutes the purpose of the practical arts being physical (hugely important) while engaging the intellect. In overloading pupils (and their teachers) with such a broad curriculum, in our panic about where we think the future jobs will lie and what children should know, many really valuable life skills are skated over.

'Craft' is a confusing and socially divisive term and sociology certainly plays its part. Despite the low status of the practical arts in schools the opposite has happened in society where growing numbers of highly articulate upper middle class



16-19 year olds making guitars

professionals (some are ex bankers) change career to become designer-makers producing expensive one-off pieces (e.g. furniture). Interestingly, in the past 40 years or so an underground movement (well, hardly anybody in Britain knows about it) of furniture designer-makers leads the world in both quality and design and surpasses any previous era. Yet in our schools it is de-valued.

With an older generation predominantly enjoying the pursuit of retirement woodworking within the luxury of garage workshops or garden sheds, a younger generation is concerned about

how they will pay off huge university debts while working as bar staff. We have a serious obligation to not only pass on these essential skills but to also encourage and enable young people to use their hands and minds creatively as well as finding a way to do it. ✕

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Jeremy Broun is an internationally known furniture designer-maker and author – to find out more, see [www.jeremybroun.co.uk](http://www.jeremybroun.co.uk)



Acoustic guitar making for disengaged youngsters

# THREE STEM GOBLET

Les Thorne's novel design combines bubinga, metal and plastic to create a mixed media goblet that is a true piece of turned modern art

According to Wikipedia, "mixed media is an artwork in which more than one medium or material has been employed. Assemblages and collages are two common examples of art using different media that will make use of various materials including cloth, paper, and/or wood." Here, I'm going to add metal and plastic to that list, but of course, you could substitute a piece of wood for the stem, and a piece of tight-grained ebony or blackwood.

The decorative goblet is one of the hobby turner's mainstays following on from when they would have made drinking vessels before the common use of glass and ceramic. Waterproofing a piece like this so it can be used for drinking is another thing completely and probably an area we can visit in the future, but for now we are firmly in the objet d'art camp.

I started making three-piece goblets when I decided that turning all that timber away to make a stem was wasteful, especially when you are working with the more exotic and sometimes irreplaceable timbers, such as some of the rosewoods, for example. The technique of making these was taught to me by the master of the decorative goblet himself, Stuart Mortimer, whose twisted stem goblets are just amazing. ✂



**1** Getting the proportions correct for a piece such as this is likely to pose a challenge, so before starting, I suggest laying the wood out to give you a rough idea. I chose to use 100mm square bubinga for the wooden part



**2** The smaller the spigot, the better you'll be able to get the shape on the initial fixing. Here, I was very conscious about not wasting any of the expensive timber



**3** I like to put a rough shape on the outside before remounting for the hollowing. Don't make the bottom section too thin at this stage as you will weaken it, thus making the timber too flimsy to hollow



**4** The next stage is to mount the piece in a chuck – I'm using a Charnwood version here as it has nice small dovetail jaws. The tailstock is used to centre the wood but you could always make a light cut on the outside in order to true it up



**5** Here I'm working to a fixed depth, so used a 10mm drill bit to remove the timber in the centre, which would give me a guide as to how far to hollow. A twist drill will work better on this type of timber as opposed to a Forstner bit, but it will still generate some heat



**6** The 13mm signature gouge is perfect for the initial hollowing. Keep the flute of the tool pointing at around 10 o'clock and pivot the tool on the rest by swinging the handle away from you



**7** These locking collars on my toolrest make life easier when the rest is constantly being moved. They ensure you can always find the perfect height for the hollowing process



**8** Here I'm working on getting the thickness of the bowl section to about 3-4mm, so experiencing some vibration as a result is highly likely. If you're confident in supporting the work on the outside, you will overcome this, but do make sure there is no way you can trap your fingers



**9** I like to gauge the wall thickness by stopping the lathe and feeling with my fingers. You can see how I've left the bulk at the bottom; this supports the top section during the hollowing process



**10** As you get deeper, the spindle gouge becomes less effective due to the overhang of the tool, then it's time to reach for a more specialist tool such as this Simon Hope carbide hollower. The square bar presents the cutter at exactly the right angle and works perfectly on this end-grain piece



**11** Before you weaken the bowl section any more, sand the inside with the coarser grits. I started with 120 grit as I ended up with a slight ridge that disappeared quickly. Try not to generate too much heat as this can crack the timber



**12** Once you're happy with the inside it's a simple job of turning the outside to the same shape. Here you can see how the bevel of the spindle gouge is in contact with the surface of the timber; this affords you control as well as delivering a brilliant finish



**13** Constantly check the depth and wall thickness using a combination of fingers, callipers and depth gauges. To make this piece as good as can be, you need to get the wall thickness as even as possible



**14** The transition between the bowl and stem is where a lot of turners make mistakes. I like to make it quite subtle with a small bead, fillet and half a cove; this is a shape combination that's regularly seen on pieces of period furniture



**15** Carefully part off the bowl using a thin parting tool. The cut is made at a slight angle, which will make drilling the stem easier



**16** Remounting something so delicate is a bit of a leap of faith but can be done if you're careful. You need to measure the outside diameter using a pair of dividers



**17** A piece of MDF mounted on a faceplate is ideal to use as a jam chuck. Cut a groove in the face with a 10mm skew chisel. The slot needs to be parallel for the best fit and a piece of tissue could be used to strengthen the fixing if needed



**18** With the lathe set on a low speed of around 500rpm you can clean up the end. I have my fingers wrapped around the end bead, which keeps the work in the jam chuck



**19** With a 6mm drill mounted in the tailstock carefully drill a shallow hole to accept the stem. You do need a good interference fit for maximum strength and here I think I've got the relationship between the metal and the wooden part spot on



**20** The base section is made of the same timber and is mounted between centres. Make it round and create a spigot to suit your chuck. The diameter of the base is around 10mm smaller than the diameter of the bowl section



**21** I initially cut the base too thick so I thought it would be a nice touch to add a bead to the aluminium stem. I drilled a 6mm hole and turned a small fillet and bead detail before parting off with the skew parting tool



**22** Bubinga is a dense timber so a cut with the bevel rubbing can leave small ridges on the surface, like you can see here. Quite often these will sand out but it's always more satisfying to use the tool to get the best finish



**23** The 10mm signature gouge has a micro bevel so it's almost impossible to get the ridging on the timber's surface. Also, the size of the tool allows it to get right underneath the bead at the end of the cut



**24** I always turn an angle on the edge of my bases; this lifts the piece up and gives the impression of the base floating due to the shadow created by the undercut. Be careful not to chip the edge, though, especially as bubinga can be quite brittle



**25** You can use the same MDF jam chuck for the base. Make sure there is a hole all the way through or you run the risk of not being able to get the base out again



**26** This is one of those occasions when you have to watch the size of your cuts; if you try and take too much away with each pass, you run the risk of knocking the base off. Using a small gouge helps remind me to take it easy



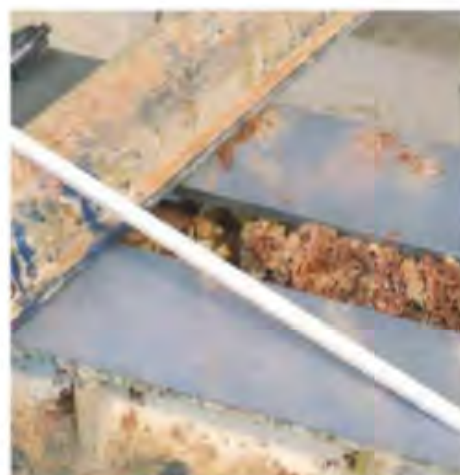
**27** Because the base is thin, when sanding you have to be careful not to heat up the surface and for that reason I decided to hand sand the bottom with the lathe off; it only takes a minute or so and you eliminate the risk of ruining the piece



**28** I bought the aluminium stem on eBay – it was pretty cheap as was the glass rod that I used for one of them. I found the Chestnut Products' burnishing cream ideal for creating the desired satin finish on the metal



**29** I pushed the small bead detail onto the aluminium rod by letting the rod feed through my hollow live centre. Not gluing the bead meant that I could play around with its position on the stem, which allowed me to achieve the ideal position



**30** This is a product called Parapan, which is used for doors in kitchens, etc. and comes in sheets. It turns like Corian and is available in many different colours, but it's not cheap



**31** The hollow headstock on my Oneway lathe means I only need to have a small amount sticking out from the chuck. I turned a short 6mm spigot on one end, as I thought that taking the whole stem down to 6mm was pushing the material to the limit



**32** You turn this material like acrylic, which means that it's not quite a bevel rubbing cut and not quite a scrape. It takes a little practise to find the best way to remove the excess stock. The right-hand end is supported by feeding it through the tailstock



**33** In order to sand and finish the stem, I needed to support the whole length between centres, so I turned a small cone with a 6mm hole in the end, which fitted perfectly into my hollow centre



**34** The Parapan is finished with an initial sanding of 180 grit before moving through to 320 grit, then the burnishing cream is applied with an artificial wire wool pad; this gives a nice shiny finish to the acrylic



**35** You can see how the rod fits into the hole perfectly as does the glass stem. The glass is a cocktail stirring stick and, once again, available online. The only problem with the glass was the fact it wasn't a true 6mm like the other two, so therefore required a little adjustment



**36** The completed mixed media goblet should look something like this

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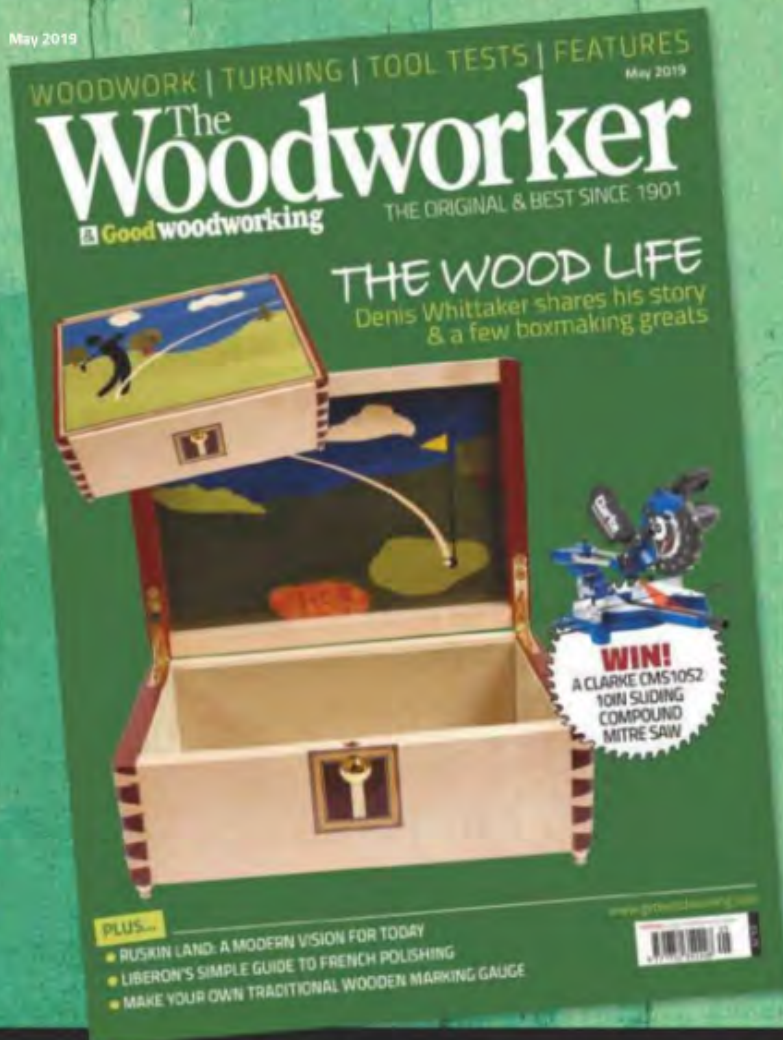
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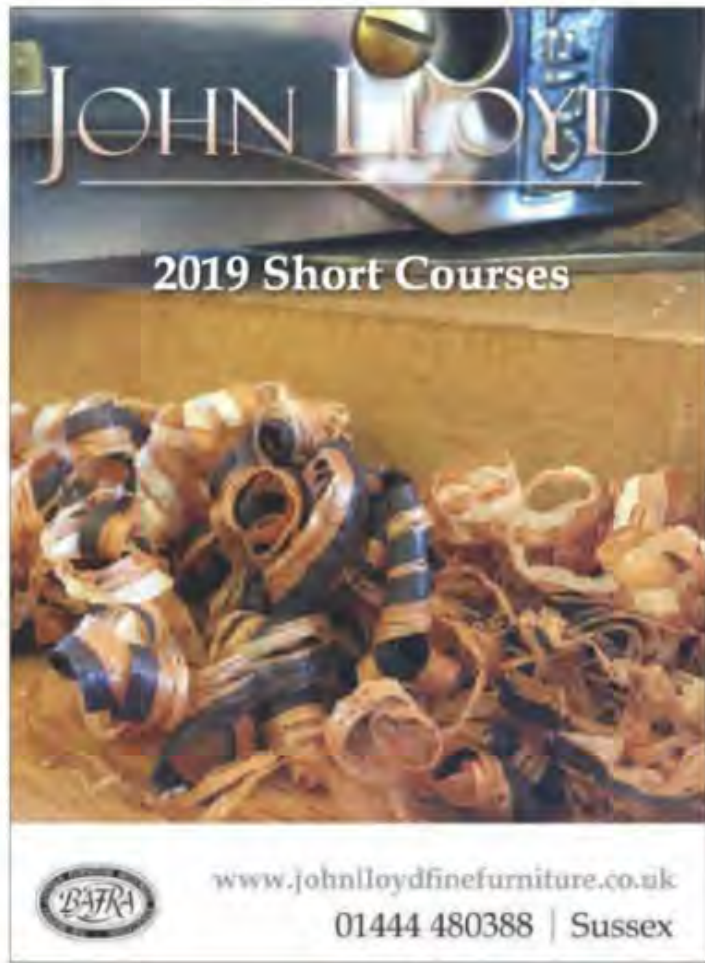
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# A TIME TO GIVE

and a time to rather not

**A** knock on the door. "We're organising a ball up at the recreational field in aid of charity. Big marquee. Lots of tables. Champagne. After the meal, there'll be an auction, and we wondered if you would like to donate one of your pieces?" I said no. How would I have felt if no one had bid for it? Or if it sold for less than the cost of materials? What would that have done for my global image (were I to have had one)?

It is risky business giving gifts. What if your mother-in-law (sorry, but it's always your mother-in-law) gives you one of her biggest and best oil paintings for Christmas? What will you do with it? You won't keep it behind the sofa and hang it on the wall when you see her pulling up the drive, because you might not be looking out of that window at the time. You won't hang it in the downstairs toilet (where it might look quite good) because she wouldn't get the joke and would be seriously upset. You'll probably redecorate the spare bedroom to make it the perfect colour match despite the fact that no one ever goes in there.

I've done it myself with the best of intentions. Lumbered someone with a token of my appreciation, but a token too big or too peculiar. I gave an especially grand pyramid to Dave for a major birthday. I can't remember if it brought

a tear to his eye. I saw it on his side table a couple of times, then I didn't. The last time I saw it, it was buried deep underground in a nuclear bunker (really) and not necessarily, I thought, for posterity.

## Small or tiny

Wait for the candidate to say: "Gosh, that's amazing!" before you give it to them. Try to distinguish between good manners and true desire – people are generally far too polite. Or listen for: "I'd really like that if it were smaller/taller/octagonal," and get busy. Maybe have them commission a piece and then refuse payment – though this can be awkward. Giving a hefty discount is an alternative, but in order for this to work, they have to know the true value; it was £80 but you can have it for half that. This too is hazardous: "£40? Strewth! Sorry, I had no idea."

If you're going to make things as gifts, make them small. Tiny would be good. Easy to lose behind a china dog. Inconspicuous so that the recipient knows that you can't be sure if it's there at all, or has been stuffed into a drawer, accidentally used as kindling, or given, anonymously, to a charity auction.

## A charitable donation

Around the corner from my shop were the lingering remains of a pig farm. I saw, nailed

askew against a pen door, the black and yellow of an old enamelled AA sign, 2ft in diameter: BATH 10, BECKINGTON, LONDON 107, and SAFETY FIRST. I hopped over the gate and went to talk to the farmer. Why was it there? "They kick 'em in," he said, looking at the door, and at a pig, but speaking to me. "Can I buy it?" I asked. We amicably agreed a sum.

I nailed it carefully to the back wall of my garden, and there it stayed for several years, proclaiming like an archetypal GPS signal: here I am! Then I was shortly not to be: I was on the move. I wasn't going to take the sign with me. It would lose its pertinence in another village: it belonged where it was, in the heart of Beckington. "I'll give you something else instead," I said to the charity organiser.

I think it was a good evening with a meal of many courses and a band (I wasn't there). I think copious wine flowed, and harmless rivalry reared its head. Rachel and Mary were left in the bidding, and neither was going to give way. I'd paid the farmer a fiver for the sign (this was a long time ago) and he was happy. Rachel had the last wave. The auctioneer clacked down his gavel at £545! None of my pieces would have cut that sort of mustard. ✖

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