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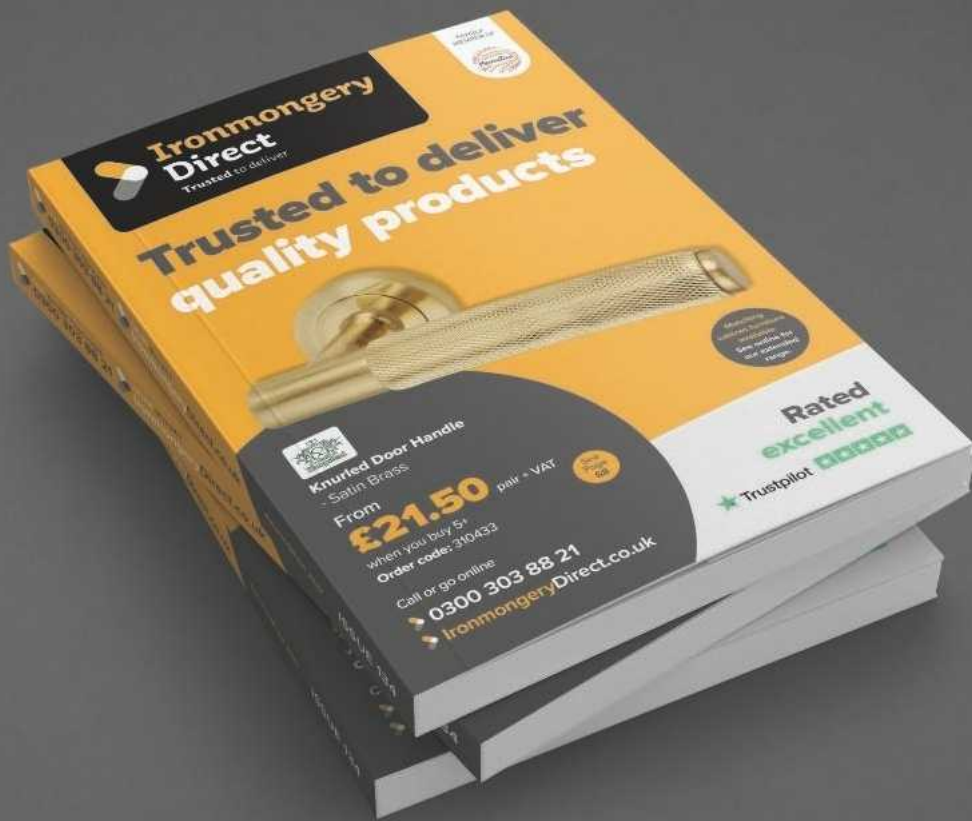
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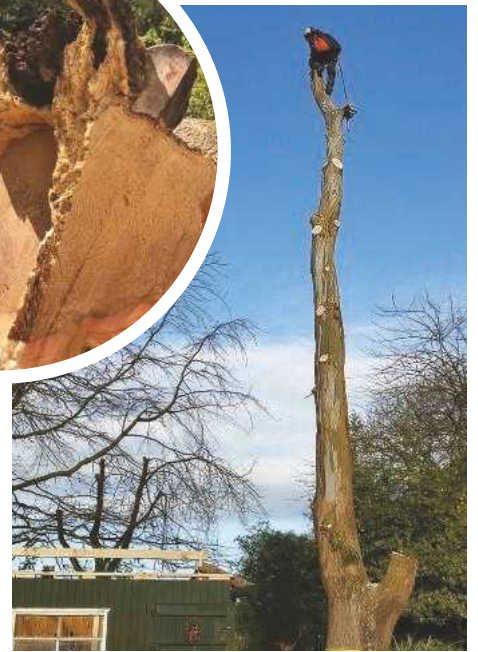
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Welcome

The incredibly cold snap just before Christmas happened to coincide with a local tree surgeon coming round and spending a very frosty few hours tidying up the garden. The appointment had been booked a fair few months prior, when the weather was unseasonably warm, so I really felt for the chaps as they set about cutting down several trees, and doing some serious pruning/general sprucing up of this green space.

Of course, I was the only one to feel the cold that day as the team of three came well prepared for working in such conditions. Despite the frozen lawn, which hadn't thawed for several days, and temperatures that made my fingers and toes go numb, they seemed in remarkably good spirits as the day progressed – singing, laughing and keeping us informed as to planned works.

A new workshop

Due to there being no access to the back garden from the side of the property, the team had to set up an access route through the French doors that open onto the garden, which led all the way through the front room, hallway and out the front door. While not an ideal solution in winter, it was nevertheless executed with the minimum of fuss and disruption to ourselves. Dust sheets were laid to cover the path, and door opening and closing managed to ensure that **a)** the cat didn't make a run for it; **b)** too much warm air wasn't lost from inside.

The remit for the day was to remove several trees in order to make room for a new shed/workshop, which



my partner has been dreaming of for years. An avid hobbyist woodworker, he's very eager to set up his tools and equipment and start making things once more, as well as finally having space for a vast amount of fishing gear and beloved 1966 Lambretta Li 150 Special.

Trees Understood

Armed with all manner of kit from chainsaws, telescopic loppers, pruning saws, axes, tripod ladders and – my favourite – a backpack leaf blower, all branches and garden waste was carried through and deposited in the chipper set up outside. Also, as a final flourish, the extremely powerful leaf blower was used to ensure the garden was left neat and tidy, with the end result being incredibly impressive.

Demonstrating an extensive knowledge and understanding of trees, the team managed to transform the garden within just a few hours; this has resulted in a great deal more light being let into the property as well as a previously undiscovered area, which is likely to be transformed into a pond in the not-too-distant future.

I definitely have a newfound appreciation for those who work outdoors in all weathers and while thermal layers can be used to good effect, I can say for absolute certain that I don't think I'd survive long outside of my cosy office!

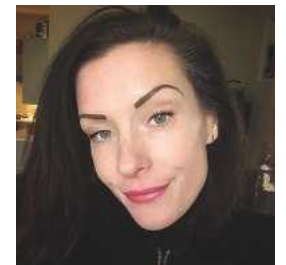
New year, new projects

On the subject of workshops, we hope you've managed to find the time to use yours and carry on making, despite the colder temperatures. With the start of a new year comes more opportunities for practising skills and trying your hand at some of the projects within the pages of our new February 2023 issue. We hope you enjoy this month's selection and don't forget to keep sending in top workshop hints and tips as well as sharing photos of your latest woodworking creations.

Enjoy!

Tegan

Email tegan.foley@dhpublishing.co.uk



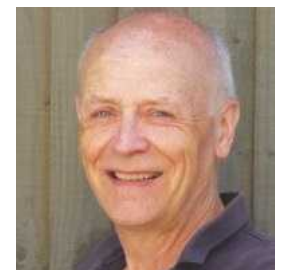
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Technical & Consultant Editor

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



veritas

SEND IN YOUR TOP WORKSHOP HINT/TIP/POINTER OR PIECE OF ADVICE & YOU COULD BE IN WITH A CHANCE OF WINNING A VERITAS APRON PLANE – see page 61 for details



44 OFF GRID

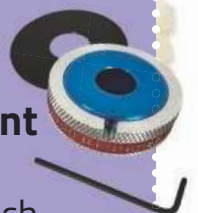
Martin Aplin could've just copied a cartographic chest, but we persuaded him to do something a little more organic...

Double WIN!



Win 1 of 3 Clarke power planers, courtesy of Machine Mart see page 17 for details

Win 1 of 5 Robert Sorby TRACs – Tool Rest Adjustment Collars



worth £25.99 each – see page 21 for details

Good Luck!

CHISEL RATING

PROJECT DIFFICULTY 1-5

Each project in this issue includes a difficulty rating from 1-5, so you can readily see whether or not a particular one is suited to you. While it's good to try and push yourself and develop skills, workshop safety should always be a main consideration and we urge you not to attempt a project/use specified tools or machinery, if you're unsure how to do so in a safe manner. A wide range of safety information is available online and a good place to start is www.hse.gov.uk

- 1 Very easy; only requires basic tools
- 2 Simple to make; only a few tools required
- 3 Aimed at beginners-intermediate; some specific equipment/tools required
- 4 Aimed at intermediate-advanced; sound woodworking knowledge required in addition to a wide range of hand/power tools
- 5 Advanced skills/knowledge required; a wide range of specialist equipment is needed to complete the project

PROJECTS & TURNING

50 Zip it!

Bryn Edwards exploits a natural crack defect by incorporating a zip

66 Sofa so good

Itching to paint again, Mike Riley reuses the frame from an old futon sofa bed to make himself an easel



70 Two for the birds

Phil Davy's simple tit and sparrow boxes are a win-win all round: the birds will love them and they're very easy to construct

76 Jessica's bed

Tasked with building a 'grown up' bed for his young granddaughter, David Long had to maximise available space as well as incorporating integrated storage boxes that would fit neatly underneath

83 Getting back to (spindle) basics

New to turning or need a bit of a refresher in terms of spindle turning tools and their uses? Great news if so as Les Thorne goes back to basics and covers each tool in detail

ON TEST

14 Clarke power planers comparison

18 Collins Spring Clamp Starter Kit

19 UJK Bandsaw Buddy



TECHNICAL

ON THE COVER 32 Shoot for the moon

Jeff Maker of Storied Furniture explains the processes involved in the making of his technical and considered 'Luna' chair, from researching subject matter to final glue-up, and many others in between



56 Tormek T-8 Custom

Supplied bare, without grinding or honing wheels, the T-8 Custom allows you to create a personalised water-cooled sharpening system according to individual preferences

89 All change...

.. or how to make the best of what you've got, by Peter Scaife

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FEATURES

26 'Harrogate' returns

Following a two-year break, the country's longest running, highest attended retail woodworking event – the North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show – made a welcome return to the Yorkshire Event Centre, Harrogate in November 2022

30 Doors with diminished stiles

Robin Gates explores details of door making in the May 1924 issue of *The Woodworker*



40 Turning in the face of adversity

Discovering woodturning as a way of channelling creativity and alleviating anxiety having lost his sight, Chris Fisher – otherwise known as the Blind Woodturner – is the UK's only completely blind professional turner and the first to be accepted on to the RPT. We learn more about Chris' incredible journey and how, for him, blindness really presents no barrier

62 Lots of veneer in 'ere

Having paid a visit to Freed Veneers, we discover there's a lot more to veneer than meets the eye

98 Take 5

This month's selection includes a sideboard that showcases the maker's hard work and skill in addition to a classic piece by Pat Carroll, who demonstrated at the recently held North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show

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GDP102B	350/5	5	£115.95	£139.14
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GDP202B	450/16	16	£269.00	£322.80
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CON185B*	1600W	63/43	£66.99	£80.39

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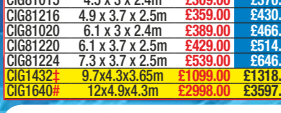
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CPT800	8" (204mm)	120mm	£299.99	£359.98
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CBG6250L	HD	150mm	£75.99	£91.19
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LASER GUIDE

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BRITISH HARDWOODS' timber sale & open day

British Hardwoods is pleased to announce the date of its next timber shop sale and open day, which will be held on Saturday 4 February from 10am-3pm. Discounted prices will be available on ranges of sawn Native, European, American and Canadian timbers, and there'll be plenty of popular sale day packs and bargains galore, so come along and don't miss out – all discounts are only valid on this day.

In addition, visitors can expect to see a great line-up of exhibitors and demonstrators, including Turners Retreat, Classic Hand Tools,



Special prices will be available on ranges of sawn Native, European, American and Canadian timbers

as well as pyrography taster sessions, woodturning and woodcarving demonstrations. And if that's not enough, there'll also be plenty of craft makers and gift stalls to see and enjoy.

The open day will be held at British Hardwoods' premises, which is situated at Unit 9A Riparian Way, The Crossings Business Park, Cross Hills,



A spoon whittling demonstration on Classic Hand Tools' stand

Keighley BD20 7BW. Entry and event parking is free of charge and everyone's welcome to attend. Refreshments will also be available for visitors on the day.

For more information, call British Hardwoods on **01535 637 755** or visit the website www.britishhardwoods.co.uk.

LIBERON polishes up student woodworking competition

Students at Burton & South Derbyshire College have been put through their paces by Liberon as part of a carpentry and joinery competition. The woodcare experts called on learners studying the college's City & Guilds Bench Joinery course, to design, build and finish a child's stool, using Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison Paste.

Teams of students were given a total of 15 teaching hours to complete the project. The winning team came up with the idea of incorporating a cartoon-like rabbit theme, with eye-catching ears forming a back rest and highly appealing bunny face seared into the stool's main surface. For the majority of the project, a European softwood was used, and Douglas fir to create the bunny ears, with the latter being taken from former local church pews, which had been salvaged by the college. A laser was programmed to sear in the facial features and the legs were turned on a lathe. The design went through several iterations, with the students finally settling on an endearing flopped-down style for one of the rabbit's ears. A feature of the ears was a contrasting central section, created to resemble those of the real-life animal. This was achieved by inlaying Douglas fir, then smoothing it off.



Liberon carpentry and joinery competition winners, from left to right: Brandon Sweeney, James Hall and Tom Woodyet

Richard Bradley, Liberon Marketing Manager, said: "The students' designs were wonderful – a real testament to their skills. We'd like to congratulate the winning team, and wish all students the best of luck in their future carpentry and joinery careers."

Course leader, Ian Vanes-Jones, added: "All the students should be very proud of what they achieved in this competition. I've been so impressed with the way they worked together in teams. Being asked to design, build and finish a project within a tight time-frame has brought out the best in them. It's great that they've also been introduced to new skills such as using a

lathe and laser. I've always been a strong advocate of Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison Paste, which really brings out the beauty of wood, but this competition has highlighted its attributes even further."

The entries were judged by college staff who agreed that the standard of work was high and as such, choosing the winning design wasn't an easy decision. Each of the winning team's three members won a £25 Amazon voucher, which was provided by Liberon.

Waxing furniture has been carried out for hundreds of years, and while traditional beeswax has its place, it's advisable to seek out a solid wax with a modern formulation, which makes it more hard-wearing. Liberon recommends choosing one with a good content of carnauba wax, which contributes to the superior durability of the complete wax formulation, making it ideal for nourishing and protecting all types of wood, including lacquers and French polishes. Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison has a good content of carnauba wax and, being highly lustrous, makes wood look simply beautiful. Made from a blend of waxes, it provides good resistance to finger and water marks, and is ideal for small surfaces such as chairs. Known for its high quality and pleasant, distinctive aroma, it feeds, polishes and helps to prevent wood drying out, and has traditionally been used on antiques.

For further information on Liberon and the company's extensive range of woodcare products, visit www.liberon.co.uk.

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Unlimited power – on all substrates: The RENOFIX RG 130 ECI surface-restoration grinder from FESTOOL

Technical data

Power consumption: 1,600W

No-load speed: 2,200-6,500rpm

Tool holder: D25/M14

Tool diameter: 130mm

Dust extraction connection diameter: 36mm

Weight: 3.9kg

Festool guarantees unlimited power with its new surface-restoration grinder. The brushless EC-TEC motor boasts impressive performance with outstanding, constant power, and all with no risk of overheating. It's perfect for carpenters, painters, parquet flooring and floor layers as the new powerhouse achieves perfect substrate preparation in no time at all – effortlessly and without interruptions. The brushless, extremely efficient EC-TEC motor combined with the robust gearbox guarantees an excellent service life. In addition, the CTM 36 AC RENOFIX extractor ensures a flawlessly clean workplace and the CT-VA pre-separator is the perfect helper for particularly high volumes of dust. This protects your health when working and keeps the workplace clean – particularly in rooms that remain occupied.

When carrying out restoration work, perfect substrate preparation is the prerequisite for a perfect result. With its new RENOFIX RG 130 ECI surface-restoration grinder, Festool is providing a powerful and reliable aid for removing old coatings and adhesive residue.



The EC-TEC motor ensures optimum power and reliability

Unlimited power with excellent service life

The brushless EC-TEC motor impresses with constant power, long service life and rapid work progress. This allows you to work reliably and with high efficiency. Overheating and forced shutdowns are therefore a thing of the past. The powerful motor allows a constant high material removal capacity, and ensures that perfect substrate preparation is quickly achieved. The extremely robust, resilient gearbox combined with the highly efficient, brushless EC-TEC motor guarantees an excellent service life. If something should go wrong, however, the all-inclusive warranty fully covers all free repairs during the first three years*.

Healthy working with a system

When used with the CTM 36 AC RENOFIX mobile dust extractor, the surface-restoration grinder guarantees healthy working. The CT-VA pre-separator is the perfect addition for particularly high dust volumes, and helps to achieve a thoroughly clean workplace.



Perfect for carpenters, painters, parquet flooring and floor layers, for optimum substrate preparation

This protects the health of both tradesman and customer – particularly in rooms that remain occupied. Uneven substrates may cause leaks between brush ring and material. To prevent this from happening, the spring-loaded brush ring adapts to the surface being sanded and therefore ensures excellent extraction. The folding brush segment is particularly practical, as it allows old coatings and adhesive residue to be removed right up to the wall or edge. Thanks to the diamond disc, recessed by 0.5mm, there's virtually no damage.

As always, Festool has thought of even the smallest details, since the new RG 130 ECI can establish a connection to the extractor via Bluetooth®. This ensures that extraction can be started automatically if the surface-restoration grinder is connected to another electricity source.



The RG 130 ECI can establish a connection to the extractor via Bluetooth®

Expert, practical tips for the new RENOFIX RG 130 ECI

Philipp Stahl – Application Engineer at Festool and master painter – recommends paying attention to adapting work to suit the material, in the case of renovation work: "From an economic point of view, and in the long-term, it's always worth using the optimum disc. A few steps are all it takes to quickly and easily swap out the disc. This ensures the disc can't get clogged and that it's perfectly fit for purpose. Here we've thought about most substrates, and as such, there's discs perfectly suited to concrete, screed, paint, adhesive and other coatings, as well as the DIA HARD, ABRASIVE, STONE, THERMO and PAINT diamond discs."

Philipp also advises setting the ideal speed for each application. Depending on material and requirement, the speed of the new surface-restoration grinder can be adjusted flexibly between 2,200 and 6,500rpm. The fact that the intelligent EC-TEC motor keeps the speed extremely constant, even in the lower ranges, makes it particularly practical for day-to-day work. "What I really like about the new surface-restoration grinder is that the guide table allows the grinder to be guided steadily and that the removal height can be variably adjusted. This is perfect for the removal of old coatings on wooden floorboards," he finishes.

The new RENOFIX RG 130 ECI surface-restoration grinder is now available to buy from specialist retailers; for further information, visit www.festool.co.uk.

*Valid for all Festool tools registered within 30 days of purchase. T&Cs apply, see www.festool.co.uk/service





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Writers & QEST Scholars gather for **CRAFT FESTIVAL CHELTENHAM: 10–12 March 2023**



Craft Festival Cheltenham will return to Cheltenham Town Hall from 10–12 March, boasting 100 exceptional designer-makers.

New for Spring 2023: demonstrations & workshops led by QEST Scholars

Craft Festival Cheltenham will welcome The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QEST) who's scholars will host craft workshops and demonstrations throughout the weekend. Founded by the Royal Warrant Holders Association, QEST supports excellence in British craftsmanship, and will be sharing information regarding the valuable funding

and training opportunities available for makers.

"We're delighted to join Craft Festival Cheltenham for the first time," said Deborah Pocock, CEO of QEST. "QEST offers training and education funding of up to £18,000 for talented and aspiring craftspeople. We look forward to meeting new friends and inviting inspiring makers from the Cotswolds and beyond to apply."

'The Capital of Craft' podcast LIVE shows at Craft Festival Cheltenham

The popular podcast 'The Capital of Craft' will host show recordings in front of a live



audience during the event. Returning to chat will be Keith Brymer Jones, master potter, TV host and author. Also, Dr Kate Strasdin, author, fashion historian and lecturer, will be talking about her exciting new book, *The Dress Diary of Mrs Anne Sykes*, and sharing secrets of a Victorian woman's wardrobe. Also, Sue Pryke, accomplished ceramicist and former *The Great Pottery Throwdown* judge, will share details of her new book, *Contemporary Tableware*.

Free activities for families

Jim Parkyn, acclaimed Aardman Animations Ambassador and clay model maker, will return to host his popular 'Amazing Scene Machine' family workshop with Llantarnham Grange Arts Centre and Unit Twelve Gallery supporting the free children's programme. Craft Festival Cheltenham warmly welcomes visitors of all ages.

Tickets for the event are now on sale; see www.craftfestival.co.uk/cheltenham to book yours and for further information.

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MAKITA celebrates 50 years of UK trading with special anniversary promotion

To celebrate half a century in the UK market, leading power tool manufacturer Makita has launched a special 50th anniversary promotion, offering end users the opportunity to claim free products when purchasing selected items within its range.

With the purchase of either the DHP482JX14 18V LXT combi drill kit, DHP484TJX9, or DHP485TJX8, end users can choose between a free ADPO5 USB adaptor, to power mobile devices via Makita LXT batteries, or Makita's 18V LXT DML186 LED torch.

Alternatively, purchasing one of the two-piece combo kits with 18V combi drill and jigsaw – either the DLX2202TJ1 or DLX2134TJ – gives customers the choice of a free DMR110 DAB+ site radio or BL1850B 18V LXT 5.0Ah battery.

Makita has also included a free B-53811 100-piece drill and screwdriver bit set in the promotional offer, which can be redeemed when purchasing the DHP453F001 18V LXT combi drill or DHP485T001 brushless combi drill.

Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager at Makita UK, said: "This has been a very exciting year in celebrating 50 years of successful operation in the UK. To thank our customers, we're delighted to offer a fantastic choice of free gifts and we've even included some of our most popular LXT products in the promotion."

Makita's redemption offer runs until 31 March 2023. Customers who've bought any of the qualifying models from an authorised dealer must register their purchase online within 28 days in order to claim the free product.

On successful application, customers will then receive this after 30 days.

For more information on the promotion and its terms and conditions, visit www.makitauk.com/redemption.

Europe's largest Woodturning Competitions – call for entries now open



Turned, pierced and airbrushed work by Joey Richardson

The Worshipful Company of Turners will hold its next Woodturning Competitions on 18 and 19 October 2023 in Pewterers' Hall, London. Competition categories have been slightly revised for 2023 to include a mixed media category and an invitational themed exhibition to showcase the UK's finest, most elite woodturning. Those interested are asked to visit the website – www.turnersco.com – for further details on how to enter the competition of their choice. If you're looking to enter the mixed media competition and would like an introduction to another craft specialist with which to collaborate, please email assistantclerk@turnersco.com.

By entering, your work will be seen by many turning enthusiasts, interior designers, art purchasers and curators from the V&A, as well as the City Livery. This is also an opportunity to sell your work in London.

As Melissa Scott, Deputy Master of the Turners' Company, said at the 2021 Wizardry in Wood Exhibition: "Our Competitions are now firmly embedded in the turning community's calendar, and we're excited to provide a platform that reveals the very best in contemporary turning as well as an opportunity for those turners new to the craft. Simply by entering, your work is seen by other woodturners, art lovers and the curious public who choose to come to the Competitions and are amazed at our time-honoured craft."

MICROJIG debuts next-generation Matchfit hardware

Microjig, the industry leader in table saw accessories, is known for introducing innovative products to help woodworkers work smarter and safer. Now, the company has improved a fan-favourite to open up further workshop possibilities.



The company is proud to introduce the next generation of Matchfit Dovetail Track Hardware: "The Microjig team has done an amazing job in creating a universally accessible and easy-to-use track hardware system," said CEO Bruce Wang. "We've now made it even more durable and also added a 2in long track screw in addition to the 1.5in, 1in and Female Track Nut models. The universe for jigs, fixtures, sleds and workbenches has expanded with Matchfit hardware."

The Matchfit Dovetail Track Hardware, the most versatile track hardware ever made, features several upgrades to make workshop life even more intuitive. The new hardware has been manufactured from stronger, more durable material, which ensures it can withstand even the toughest projects. It also features longer thread lengths.



Additionally, the upgraded 2.0in track screw now allows for even more versatile builds.

Matchfit Dovetail Track Hardware is available in a variety of configurations; to find a retailer or to order, visit www.microjig.com.

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CLARKE POWER PLANERS COMPARISON

Machine Mart sent three Clarke power planers to Jonathan Salisbury for review – how will the committed hand plane enthusiast get on with them?

There's no doubt about it: the noise and mess associated with electric planers is something I prefer to do without. However, when it comes to speed, this power tool does have its place. Aspiring to non-powered purism goes out the window when faced with a large batch of rough, reclaimed timber in need of tidying up.

How they work

Power planers feature a spinning drum with two cutting knives mounted opposite one another. The sole is made up of two plates: one behind the blades, which is fixed, and one in front that's adjustable, from level with to several millimetres higher than the rear. The difference between front and back plates determines the amount of material removed. On each of the planers I reviewed, this is set by rotating the adjustment dial at the front, which also provides the knob to guide and apply pressure at the start of a cut on two of the models.

Three tools on test

The planers feature almost identical totes (rear handles) with the same trigger and release button, which facilitates easy



The three models tested, from left to right: Contractor CON950, CEP720 and CEP450

switching between each. Cut depth adjustment uses the same method, but each has a slightly different knob. Settings are all indexed and placed at 0.25mm intervals.

All three planers can be used to cut rebates and although the CEP450 has no provision for attachments, the two larger models benefit from detachable depth stops and parallel guide fences. All soles have 'V' grooves for guiding the plane along the edges to cut chamfers. The CEP720 has only one, the others two, of different sizes to match the size of chamfer required, or to

cut in two passes. Shavings are channelled into the planer body and out of a port located on top. The CEP450 has one outlet, on the right, and the others have two with a shutter to ensure that only one is operational. All ports can – and ought to be – connected to an extractor; the CON950 is supplied with an adaptor.

Only the CEP720 comes with a collection bag, which fills up very quickly; however, it's better to use it otherwise the shavings tend to go everywhere. The Contractor is the worst for scattering shavings as it generates more



All planes use a similar two-blade drum



Each has an indexed dial to adjust the cut – this one's the smallest



Each rear handle 'tote' provides the same grip



Triggers and release buttons are standard, too



Depth guides are removable



One of the shavings outlets on the CE450

CLARKE CEP720B 720W ELECTRIC PLANER

Please note that the CEP720 is no longer available for purchase and is being phased out and replaced by the new and improved CEP720B model, priced at £53.99 inc VAT



and is completely open on each side; the CEP720 has a spring-loaded shutter on the right to close the gap, which makes it cleaner, and this moves up for rebate cutting.

Well designed

Having tested each of the models thoroughly, I can say that they're all very much up to the job for which they've been designed. The smallest CEP450 has a maximum depth of 1½mm, while the others can trim up to 3mm – although the published maximum for the CE720 is 2mm. Each has a motor that can easily cope with the maximum cut without any noticeable strain. All blades are sharp and give an exceptionally clean and smooth finish straight out of the box, removing them for sharpening is simple, and the spanners for this task are included. Setting blades level with the rear plate is less of a fiddle as they all have grub screws in the blade carriers, which makes this task a lot easier. Small stands at the back of each keep the blades off the surface when not in use; these move up into the sole as they contact the timber being planed. The CON950's is spring-loaded and can be kept out of the way – a good thing, as it can otherwise snag on the workpiece's back edge. Even with this feature, it's important to wait until the drum has completely stopped before putting it down. This takes seven seconds for the CON950, four for the 720, and a mere two for the 450.

Niggles & maintenance

All three can be used for full-width rebates, but no fence is included with the 450. Using the 720 and CON950 with fences, a single pass yielded good results, but I couldn't prevent steps in the second and third passes required to cut deeper. I think that a small adjustment of the blade position relative to the sole's edge is required, but I haven't had time to play with this yet, or perhaps my technique needs improving! The total depth possible is of course limited to the clearance under the bulges at each side of the casing.

As for maintenance, all planers have replaceable carbon brushes and drive belts, which need checking frequently, but will hopefully last a lot longer than the 60 hours suggested! The blades will also need a bit of honing, and regrinding if they chip. Unlike hand planes, this isn't a straightforward task due to the blades having to be perfectly balanced with each other in order to achieve a good finish.



The CE720's published maximum cut is 2mm!



The others have two; the lever shows which is open



With adaptor fitted, the bag also fits the CON950...



... and shavings still go everywhere

Anything more than a quick, gentle hone really requires the help of a specialist.

Conclusion

It's difficult to recommend any one of these planers above another; they're all very good, and none is clearly the best at everything. It might be tempting to go for the top Contractor model; nothing beats its power and the wide planing capability, gliding through 3mm of the timber surface 110mm wide as easily as when removing the thinnest of shavings. Its greater



It's difficult to show the smooth finish achieved



Only the CEP720 is supplied with a collection bag



... but quickly fills up...



A spring-loaded shutter guards the CE720's edge

weight and handle position made it less steady on thinner sections and snipe was trickier to control. With the handle located on top, there isn't clear access to the depth adjustment knob, which I'd prefer to use when guiding the plane. A twist of the arm is required in order to grip it properly, but even then the top handle presses into the wrist. It's not uncomfortable, just a little awkward! If only the handle was removable – without a saw! – this wouldn't then pose a problem. There's more sideways ejection of shavings ▶



Blade removal spanners are stored in the body



Stands keep the blades off the surface when not in use



The CON950 features a spring-loaded stand



Wide rebates are possible...



... but I've not yet mastered two passes without a step

than the others, even with an extractor connected, due to the open sides. It's ideal for removing rough surfaces on wider timber, although the planing of an exceptionally wide piece of hardwood indicated the need for a small amount of blade adjustment.

The smallest of the three – the CEP450 – is nimble and easier to balance on thinner sections and when chamfering edges, but the 60mm blade width isn't sufficient for all my planing needs and the depth control isn't big enough to provide good grip – like a block plane, but bigger. There's only one outlet for shavings, which limits extraction to the right. If you only need something for



The CON950's handle makes using the adjustment knob more difficult when planing



The CEP720 is my favourite as it's the most hand-plane-like of the three!

light work, you won't be disappointed with its performance, however.

If I was forced to choose one, it would have to be the mid-range CEP720, which is due to be superseded by the new CEP720B model. Of the three it feels the best balanced and easiest to control, with geometry similar to the jack planes I'm more accustomed to. The depth control knob is a good size, it's supplied with a guide fence and depth stop, and the switchable double extraction port and dust bag allows for more flexible use. It's a shame that the blade isn't wider, but perhaps that would affect its handling?

We're perfectly used to requiring several hand planes to complete different tasks – a smoothing plane, jack plane and jointer, for example – and planers are no different in this respect. I'm very pleased to say that they're all good value for money, as I've always found Clarke power tools to be. Not as fancy or robust-feeling as more expensive models, perhaps, but so far I've not experienced evidence of cost-cutting affecting their performance. I shall be undertaking more testing to verify long-term reliability, but in the meantime, I've certainly not given up on my trusty hand planes! ✂



Some blade adjustment required, I think

SPECIFICATION

Clarke CEP450 60mm 450W planer (230V)

Volts: 230V
Watts: 450W
Depth of cut: 1.5mm
Width of cut: 60mm
Rebating depth: 8mm
Typical price: £44.39 (inc VAT)

Clarke CEP720 82mm planer

Volts: 230V
Watts: 720W
Depth of cut: 3mm
Width of cut: 82mm
Rebating depth: 18mm
Typical price: £27.59 (inc VAT)

Clarke Contractor CON950 110mm planer

Volts: 230V
Watts: 950W
Depth of cut: 3mm
Width of cut: 110mm
Rebating depth: 8mm
Typical price: £89.99 (inc VAT)

Web: www.machinemart.co.uk

THE VERDICT

Clarke CEP450 60mm 450W planer (230V) PROS

- Light; easy to manoeuvre; convenient for small planing tasks

CONS

- Limited width; depth adjustment knob too small to hold firmly

Clarke CEP720 82mm planer

PROS

- Well balanced; features large adjustment knob for comfortable use and good control

CONS

- If only it had a slightly wider blade!

Clarke Contractor CON950 110mm planer

PROS

- Width of blade ideal for larger pieces; powerful motor gives 3mm cut

CONS

- The front handle would be better if placed further forwards; snipe is more difficult to control on shorter pieces of wood

Clarke CEP450 60mm 450W planer (230V)
RATING – VALUE: 4.5 OUT OF 5
PERFORMANCE: 4 OUT OF 5

Clarke CEP720 82mm planer
RATING – VALUE: 4.5 OUT OF 5
PERFORMANCE: 4.5 OUT OF 5

Clarke Contractor CON950 110mm planer
RATING – VALUE: 4 OUT OF 5
PERFORMANCE: 4 OUT OF 5

WIN!

1 of 3 Clarke power planers – courtesy of Machine Mart

In conjunction with Machine Mart, we have three different Clarke power planer models to give away from their extensive range – two of which are high performance and one lightweight

CLARKE CEP450 60MM 450W PLANER – £44.39

A versatile lightweight planer with 450W, 230V motor. Capable of achieving a 60mm wide cut, this model is ideal for hanging doors, for example. Featuring a safety lock switch to prevent accidental start-up, there's two sizes of V-groove for chamfering workpiece corners.

Technical specification

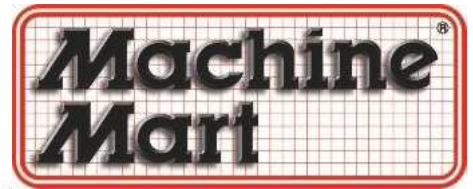
Width of cut: 60mm
 Depth of cut: 1.5mm
 Rebating depth: 8mm
 Watts: 450W
 Volts: 230V
 Dust extraction: Yes

CLARKE CEP720B 720W PLANER – £53.99

A high performance planer with powerful 720W, 230V motor. It has a V-groove base for chamfering and a park rest to avoid unintentional damage to the workpiece and blades. For added safety, there's a lock-off button that prevents accidental operation. An easy to empty zipped dust collection bag can be attached to either side of the planer body with left or right chip/dust extraction.

Technical specification

Width of cut: 82mm
 Depth of cut: 3mm
 Rebating depth: 18mm
 Watts: 720W
 Volts: 230V



CLARKE CONTRACTOR CON950 110MM PLANER – £89.99

A high performance professional grade planer with powerful 950W, 230V motor, this model has two V-groove depths on the base for chamfering and a park rest to avoid unintentional damage to both workpiece and blades. For added safety, there's a lock-off button that prevents accidental operation. A dust bag or vacuum extraction hose can be attached to either side with selectable left or right chip/dust extraction.



Technical specification

Width of cut: 110mm
 Depth of cut: 3mm
 Rebating depth: 8mm
 Watts: 950W
 Volts: 230V
 Dust extraction: Yes

To find out more, see www.machinemart.co.uk.

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning 1 of 3 Clarke power planers, courtesy of Machine Mart, visit www.thewoodworkermag.com/category/win and answer the multiple choice question below:

QUESTION: What size of motor does the CEP720B planer have?

- A: 720W, 230V**
- B: 950W, 230V**
- C: 450W, 230V**

The winners will be randomly drawn from all correct entries – the first to be drawn will receive the CEP450 model; the second drawn the CEP720B, and the third will receive the Contractor CON950 planer. If any of these models aren't in stock when the competition closes, Machine Mart will offer the winner a gift card of equivalent value. The closing date for the competition is **17 February 2023**. Only one entry per person; multiple entries will be discarded. Employees of David Hall Publishing Ltd and Machine Mart are not eligible to enter this competition

COLLINS SPRING CLAMP STARTER KIT



Simple yet effective, these clever **Spring Clamps** are ideal toolbox additions when it comes to standard mitre frame-type work



The clamps sit onto the pliers over hooked ends



Squeezing the pliers easily opens the spring clamp



Here, clamps span the joint and apply pressure to this skirting mitre



Applying clamp to mitre brings all together tightly...

Simplicity is often the key to successful woodworking and when it comes to clamping, getting things secured quickly plays an important part. Where sash clamps, speed clamps and variants of these are ideal for general assembly work, securing mitres involves systems all to themselves. With alignment, the key to a good mitre – and tightening the joint quickly – is where these simple but effective spring clamps come in.

Clamps

On a simple, flat mitre, a single spring on the outer edge will be sufficient to hold the joint while still allowing it to be manipulated enough so that it's fully aligned, but on a wider moulded piece, such as an ornate frame, compound mitre or cornice, for example, they can be doubled up to pull the moulding in accordingly.

What makes them all the more appealing is the fact they'll work on a mitre of any angle as it's pressure from the spring and the grip from the sharp points that do the work, spanning over the mitre itself without addressing the component edges, as with standard clamps.

The issue, of course, concerns these points piercing the surface as they're indeed very sharp, but on solid timber and similar stock, this actually works in their favour as they tend to pierce the grain without leaving big dents or blemishes,

so therefore require very little, if any, filling work. Foil wrapped or pre-finished mouldings would require a great deal more thought by placing the clamps on an unseen area if possible, or in the quirk line where a small puncture may not be easily spotted. However, due to the way they work, the clamps aren't really suited to this particular area.

Pliers

Clamp application can be achieved with hand pressure, but they do require a fair bit of force in order to open to the full extent; this makes them a tad difficult to control when applying to a joint. The solution is to use the pliers, which work in a similar way to the circlip variety. By squeezing the plier handles together, the spring points can be fully extended, thus allowing easy application to the mitre.

The springing action also allows variable pressure to be applied to a joint, which is ideal if you're working with more delicate materials that only require light pressure to secure the joint while the adhesive sets – in which case, these present the perfect option.

Conclusion

I love the simple and effective nature of these clamps, and they're handy toolbox additions for site work on skirtings and architraves alongside

standard mitre frame-type work. The downside will be felt by the kitchen and built-in furniture installers where the foil wrapped or other pre-finished mouldings are predominant and need to be kept pristine, but in general applications, where a finish is applied once fitted, these will prove to be a real boon. ✂

SPECIFICATION

Clamp material: Spring steel

Max. clamping capacity: 45mm

Max. opening capacity – pliers: 75mm

Typical price: Pack of 4 × 75mm clamps & 75mm capacity pliers – £32.70

Web: www.toolovation.co.uk

THE VERDICT

PROS

- Present a fast and easy way of nipping up mitres; works on all mitre angles

CONS

- Not ideal for foil-wrapped stock or finished work; leaves small pin holes after use

RATING – VALUE: 4 OUT OF 5
PERFORMANCE: 4 OUT OF 5



... while still allowing you to slide it around and ensure everything is accurately positioned



On ornate moulds, additional clamps can be added to the profiles



The Spring Clamp's design allows them to span any mitre angle

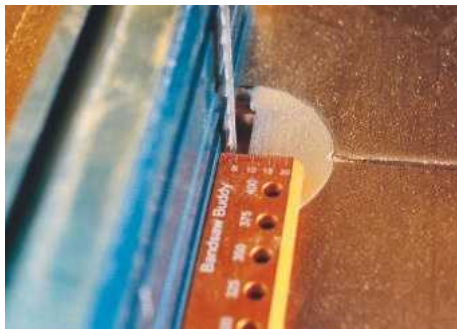


UJK BANDSAW BUDDY

If you're looking for an easy, quick and accurate way of aligning your blade, fence or table, this handy gadget from Axminster Tools' UJK range could well fit the bill

Woodworking abounds with gadgets, and while great provided they can prove their worth, the huge range available inevitably means that some will be good, some bad, and some indifferent. When this one from Axminster's UJK range turned up, closer inspection showed it to be a well thought out piece of kit, and for the bandsaw, certainly worth keeping close to hand.

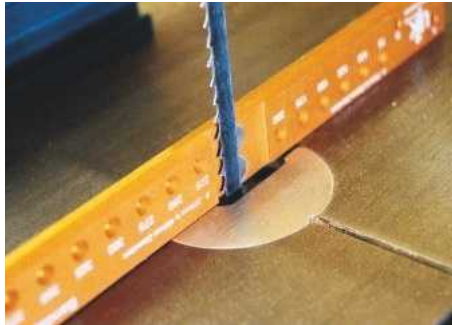
Although consisting of only one component, you can't fault the quality; a bar of anodised aluminium with a series of holes drilled that when used in conjunction with either of the two pivot point holes, turns it into a compass for marking up bowl blanks from 75-400mm, at 25mm increments. It also doubles up as a simple straightedge, although lacks any imperial or metric increments on the long edge. This is an oversight in my mind as doing so would add an extra dimension, especially for setting the bandsaw fence for general ripping, etc.



The simple ruler scale makes setting up veneer rips a straightforward task



A series of 25mm holes allows bowl blanks to be marked up for cutting



Rare-earth magnets secure the Bandsaw Buddy firmly to the blade

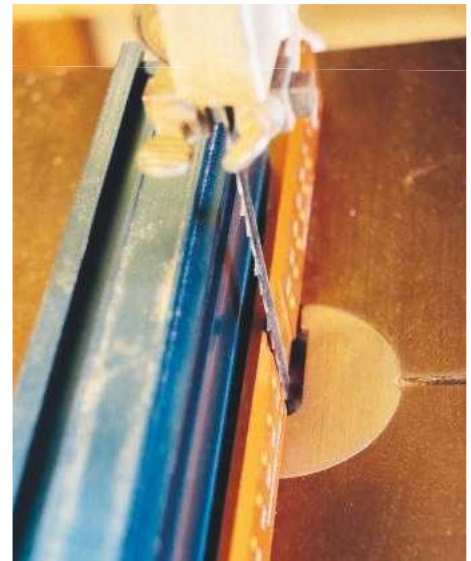
Multi-functional

In order to control blade drift, it can also be used as a gauge for setting the fence parallel to the blade. A couple of rare-earth magnets secure the Bandsaw Buddy to the blade; a groove in front of the magnets allows the teeth set to drop in so that it sits flat against the blade. The idea is to then bring the fence up to the Buddy with any difference between blade and fence accentuated; this then allows you to make any fence adjustments required to bring it parallel to the device. Trying it on my bandsaw fitted with a 12mm blade, it clamped solidly but would be even better on a wider blade, as there's more surface area to contact with.

With a twist against the blade, it settled back in the same position each time, so does what it's designed to do. Checking against my fence – which I know to be accurate – addresses it



When not in use, the Bandsaw Buddy can be secured to any of the machine's metal surfaces



The fence is brought up and adjusted so that it's parallel to the blade aligning tool

smack on, so for a quick check now and then, the Buddy certainly seems reliable.

For me, the most useful of all is the simple but effective metric scale located on one end. With only 20mm of markings, in 1mm increments, the idea is that you can adjust your fence using the Bandsaw Buddy and set it consistently for finer veneer cuts, and if previously used to set your saw fence, the resulting veneers should therefore cut consistently.

Conclusion

You could of course use a steel rule or similar to do the same job, but the Bandsaw Buddy's beauty lies in its rare-earth magnets. Designed to be stuck to a bandsaw's metal surfaces ensures it's always to hand and within reach; this is useful in its own right, but in my opinion the addition of a ruler function would make it even better. ✕

SPECIFICATION

Length: 250mm

Circle diameters: 75-400mm

Typical price: £22.98

Web: www.axminstertools.com

THE VERDICT

PROS

- Neat multi-function; sticks to the bandsaw for easy accessibility

CONS

- No measuring scale on long edge

RATING:
PERFORMANCE: 4 OUT OF 5

RATING:
VALUE: 4.5 OUT OF 5

Robert Sorby

TRAC

TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR

NEW

The NEW Robert Sorby TRAC

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It allows the tool rest height to be easily adjusted up or down, by up to 1/2"/13mm, by just turning the outer adjustment ring.



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The Robert Sorby TRAC is available in nine sizes, to suit the standard tool rest stem of virtually every lathe available in the world, as well as the full range of stems from the Robert Sorby modular tool rest system.

For ease of recognition, the inner collar is colour coded for each of the nine sizes available.

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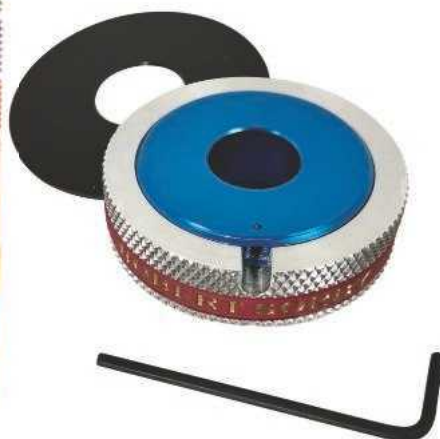
1 of 5 Robert Sorby TRAC – Tool Rest Adjustment Collars – worth £25.99 each



The perfect addition for every woodturner, and available in nine sizes to suit the standard toolrest stem of virtually every lathe available worldwide, we have five Tool Rest Adjustment Collars to give away, courtesy of Robert Sorby



When it comes to requiring a new toolrest height position during turning, a common problem often experienced is that when the locking handle is released, the toolrest drops and the position is therefore lost. The new Robert Sorby TRAC allows the toolrest height to be easily adjusted up or down, by up to 13mm, by turning the outer adjustment ring.



To allow for easy adjustment up and down, simply adjust the outer ring so that around 6mm of inner ring protrudes. The TRAC ensures the toolrest stays at the personally set height, even when the locking handle is released; this allows it to be moved to a new position without having to reset the height prior to locking in place.

The Acetal seating disc allows the TRAC to operate smoothly

and easily. Available in nine sizes, to suit the standard toolrest stem of virtually every lathe available worldwide, as well as the full range of stems within the Robert Sorby modular tool rest system, the inner rings are colour-coded for ease of recognition to fit the stem diameter required.

To find out more, see www.robert-sorby.co.uk.

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning 1 of 5 new Robert Sorby TRAC – Tool Rest Adjustment Collars – to suit your toolrest stem size, in one of nine different colours, visit www.thewoodworkermag.com/category/win and answer the multiple choice question below:

QUESTION: Name one of the colours the TRAC is available in:

- A: Teal**
- B: Purple**
- C: Indigo**

The winners will be randomly drawn from all correct entries. The closing date for the competition is **17 February 2023**. Only one entry per person; multiple entries will be discarded. Employees of David Hall Publishing Ltd and Robert Sorby are not eligible to enter this competition

Code	Description
LRSTRAC13	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC16	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC19	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC20	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC22	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC24	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC25	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC28	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR
LRSTRAC30	TOOL REST ADJUSTMENT COLLAR

Colour	Stem size
GREEN	½in
BLUE	¾in
GOLD	¾in
ORANGE	20mm
PINK	¾in
RED	1in
PURPLE	25mm
GREY	28mm
SILVER	30mm



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★★★★★

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★★★★★

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★★★★★

"Service support was excellent with a prompt and helpful response to my query. Item was as described and keenly priced."

★★★★★

"Quality products, great price and quick delivery well done again."

★★★★★

"Excellent deal best price around. Dispatch and delivery quicker than expected and exactly as promised. Will absolutely use again."

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FESTOOL CORDLESS TABLE SAW CSC SYS 50 – PRECISE SAWING TO GO!

MANUFACTURER: Festool
D&M GUIDE PRICE: See website

Extremely compact, versatile and benefitting from a modern and sophisticated design, Festool's new CSC SYS 50 cordless table saw includes digital technologies as well as redefining industry standards. What's more, the new cordless table saw is so compact that it perfectly fits in a Systainer. This means that the new CSC SYS 50 delivers the same cutting precision on construction sites as a mains-powered panel saw does in the workshop. It performs excellently in every discipline, with parallel cuts up to 280mm, cross cut width of up to 450mm, and angled cuts of -2° to 47°.

Its centrally positioned and easy-to-read display allows the user to adjust the height and angle with absolute precision and in next to no time; this ensures 100% repetition accuracy – cut after cut. In practice, it's more precise than with any yardstick. Even the most demanding cuts can be made with maximum precision, thanks to the robust stop system, which comprises a parallel side fence, angle stop and sliding table.

Stock is expected to be available from February 2023.

FESTOOL



RECORD POWER 62065 SC4 PROFESSIONAL GEARED SCROLL CHUCK PACKAGE – DIRECT THREAD

MANUFACTURER: Record Power
D&M GUIDE PRICE: £139.99 (inc VAT)

Ideally suited to the demanding woodturner, the SC4 geared scroll chuck is capable of holding large workpieces yet possesses the precision and compactness to handle more delicate work. This model features an enclosed back with full indexing plate and pinions driven by a long ball-ended hex key to achieve easy access, even when large workpieces are mounted.

The chuck features a M33 x 3.5 direct thread, making it compatible with Record Power's full range of lathes as well as those from many other manufacturers.

Supplied with deep wood screw, standard jaws and 87mm faceplate, this chuck package offers professional performance at an exceptionally affordable price.

Includes: 62313 50mm Standard Jaws; 62572 87mm (3.5in) Faceplate Ring; 62825 Universal Wrench; 62826 Hex Key For SC4; 62833 Deep Wood Screw (right-hand thread); 62836 SC3; and SC4 Chuck Fastening Kit.

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We also have an area dedicated to a wide selection of woodworking machinery by leading manufacturers including Record Power and Scheppach, which is available to view on request.

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'HARROGATE' RETURNS

Following a two-year break, the country's longest running, highest attended retail woodworking event – the **North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show** – made a welcome return to the Yorkshire Event Centre, Harrogate, in November 2022



The show gives people the chance to see and try new tools/equipment before they buy, along with expert help if needed

A big thank you to everyone who attended the recent 28th North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show – otherwise known as the 'Harrogate' show – from 11–13 November 2022.

The UK's finest woodworking event

Returning to the Yorkshire Event Centre following a two-year hiatus, show organisers and exhibitors



Demonstrators are happy to talk to interested visitors and discuss techniques, such as woodturner Margaret Garrard in relation to her wood-piercing

were thrilled to welcome so many visitors across the three days. As usual, there was a great mix of hobbyist woodworkers and woodturners as well as small business owners. Over the entire weekend, around 8,500 visitors were recorded, all looking forward to the country's longest established, highest attended retail woodworking event making a comeback.

Proudly showing itself to still carry the mantle of being the UK's finest woodworking event, woodworkers from all over the country and further afield came out in droves to see a wide variety of demonstrations, check out the latest kit and tools, visit the many trade stands, as well as meet like-minded people. At various points over the weekend, the hall corridors were filled along their length and breadth such was the desire to get amongst the hustle and bustle and sample all that was on offer.

High visitor numbers

Many new exhibitors attended the 2022 event including Felder Group UK Ltd, Rubio Monocoat UK, Shenton Woodcraft, House of Resin and Metal Clay Ltd, to name but a few. ▶



HALL 2

NORTH OF
ENGLAND
**WOODWORKING
& POWER TOOL**
SHOW



More than 8,500 visitors descended on the Yorkshire Event Centre over the weekend of 11–13 November 2022 to attend the eagerly-awaited North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show

Of course, all the leading industry names could also be found including Axminster Tools, Classic Hand Tools, Robert Sorby, Turners Retreat, Record Power, along with a plethora of others.

Matthew Applegarth, Chief Executive of Felder Group UK Ltd, commented on how the show was "a great success" for the company and its range of Hammer machinery, and that "visitor numbers were very high." He continues: "Not only did we sell a good number of machines directly, but were also really pleased to meet and talk to many serious machine investors in both the hobby and small business sector. The entire show was well organised and we're already looking forward to the 2023 event."

Undoubtedly, among the readers who visited the magazine stand and talked directly to us, a great many spoke of their local Men's Shed and how much of an influence the group had made on their individual woodworking journey. It was fantastic to see so many people's faces light up when asked how they discovered woodworking and also to see photos of projects made in the workshop.

The Robert Sorby and Turners Retreat team were also very excited to be back in Harrogate for the 28th North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show, as Marketing Manager Joanne Dyson explained: "It was great to see so many familiar faces, fellow exhibitors, demonstrators, and lots of young, new ones, too! The show was a huge success, with lots of interest in our new demonstration areas and customers eager to have a go. We're now all looking forward to The Midlands Woodworking Show in Newark, which is due to be held from 10–11 March 2023."

Demonstrators & 'hands-on' stands

As usual, the show also boasted a fantastic range of demonstrators and 'hands-on' stands, with hoards of people crowded around to see live demos across a variety of disciplines, the most popular one being woodturning. Leading names included Emma Cook – 'The Tiny Turner'; Les Thorne; Margaret Garrard; Pat Carroll; Philip Greenwood; Simon Hope; Chris Fisher – The Blind Woodturner; Darren Breeze and Mick Hanbury. There was also pyrography from Bob Neill, Tic Challis and Kez Halliday, and Windsor chairmaking with Steve Langton and Peter Tree. Arbortech was represented by Radha Siyver – bespoke



At many points over the weekend, the hall corridors were filled with crowds of attendees, many of whom were queuing to pay for various items



There's a wide range and mix of the latest kit and tools available to see and buy, from all the leading industry names as well as smaller businesses, which makes a refreshing change

furniture maker & *Handmade: Britain's Best Woodworker* contestant; with Pontus Gyllby flying the flag for Tormek; Ryan Saunders for Veritas, and Simon Clements with Flexcut. Shane Skelton of Skelton Saws also gave an insight into sawmaking and the International Boatbuilding Training College (IBTC) spoke about techniques such as steam-bending.

An enormous success

We were thrilled to see lots of regular attendees at the show, who always stop by and say hello,



Demonstrations form a big part of the show and cover a wide range of disciplines, the most popular of which is woodturning. Visitors can watch these live across five individual mini 'theatres'



Power tools form a healthy portion of trade stands and visitors have the chance to talk to experts, try before they buy, as well as taking advantage of exclusive show deals

as well as meeting many new readers, and receiving much praise regarding the magazine. A fair number of new subscribers were enlisted and some people even visited the show on all three days – now that's what we call dedication!

A significant number of people commented on how they felt the show represented great value for money in terms of ticket price, with lots of visitors making a day or even a weekend of it, and ensuring they were able to see as many demonstrators/trade stands as possible.

Overall, the 2022 'Harrogate' show was an enormous success – visitor numbers were incredibly healthy; there was a definite desire to get back out there and attend such an event; and everyone involved worked together to ensure things were well organised and ran smoothly.

Thank you again to all those who attended and we look forward to welcoming you back with a 2023 offering that's better than ever! ✂



WWW author and professional production turner Les Thorne drew in the crowds as he shared his expert tips and techniques

FURTHER INFORMATION

The 2023 event will be held over the weekend of 10–12 November at the Yorkshire Event Centre. Further information regarding exhibitors, demonstrators and advance tickets will be made available soon. In the meantime, visit www.harrogatewoodworkingshow.co.uk

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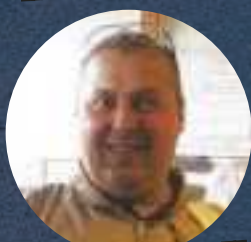
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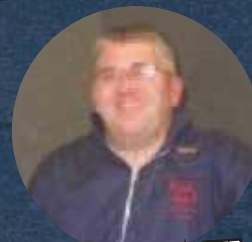
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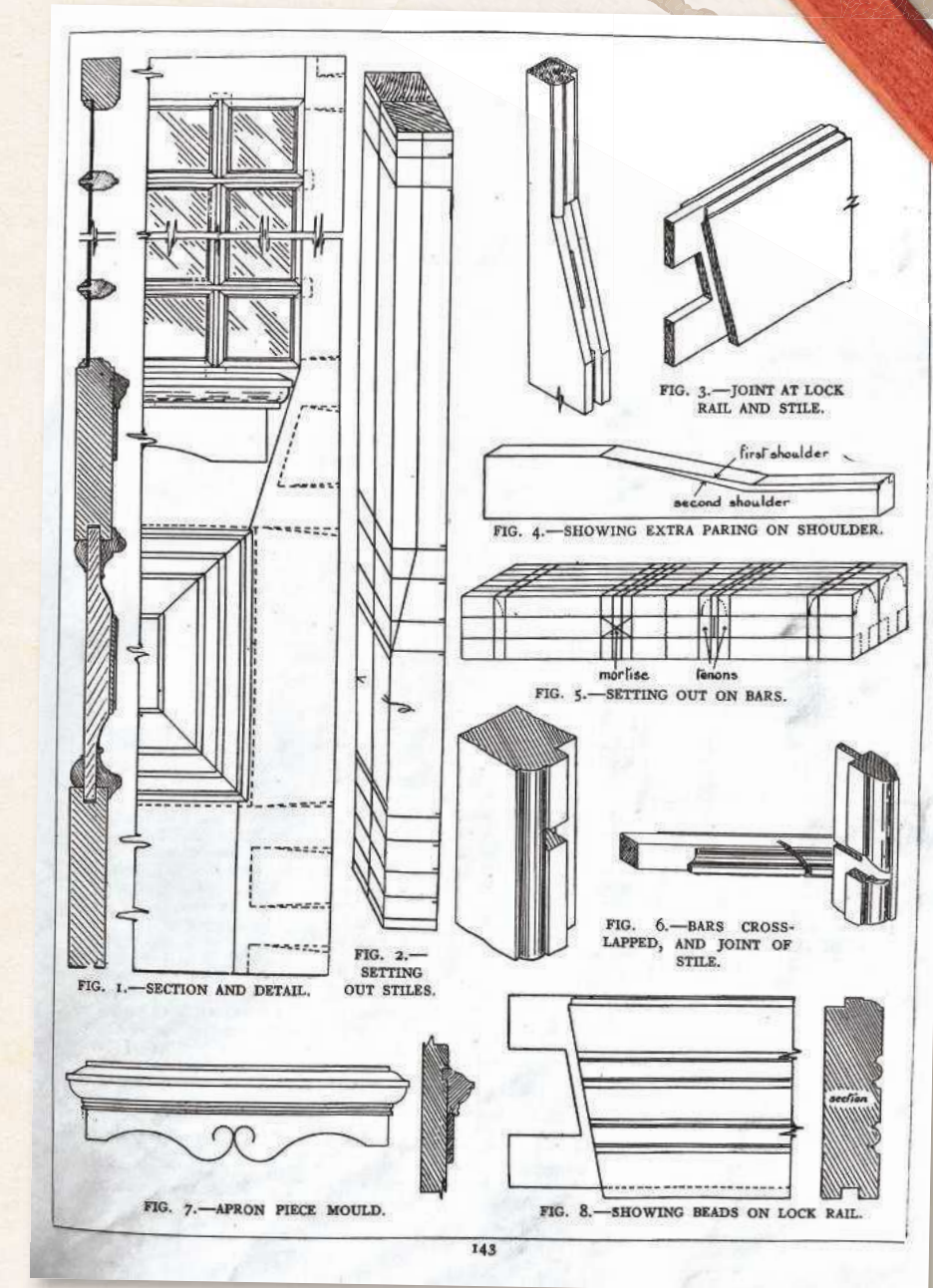
Robin Gates explores details of door making in the May 1924 issue of *The Woodworker*

Charmed by their elegant pediments and fanlights, as a teenager I somehow found the nerve to cycle around Chichester photographing the town's Georgian doors, returning later in the hope of flogging my rapidly framed photos to the doors' respective owners. Commercially the enterprise was a flop, but it did further my appreciation of domestic architecture and gave me practice in hand-sawing mitre joints; a skill which, unlike riding a bike, I seem to have forgotten. My last attempt at picture framing produced mitres gaping like the mouths of hungry nestlings.

'Gunstock' stile

I mention this because, while revisiting *The Woodworker* of 1924 – in search of a 'Newspaper Tidy': found, page 39, February – the May issue flopped open at a page of technical drawings for doors with 'diminished stiles'. Although I hadn't taken note of this detail of door design before, I feel sure I must've encountered it because its purpose is to admit more light to retail premises, hallways and workshops, all of which figured prominently in childhood; I'm remembering the sweet shops, the shared vestibules of once-grand houses converted to flats for elderly relatives, and the home-built sheds and greenhouses where people would potter by the fading light of day.

Looking at that obliquely cut joint between stile and lock rail (**Fig.3**), I can see why its shape gave rise to the alternative name of a 'gunstock' stile. But there's a lot going on here besides a pleasing slope. Above the broad rail, the stiles are rebated for glass while below it they must be grooved for solid panels using the plough plane. Transitioning cleanly between groove and rebate using hand tools must surely be a tricky operation, and then there are glazing bars to be mortised top and bottom to receive the uprights. Above the raised panels, themselves bordered by shapely bolection mouldings one side and flush beads on the other, the suggestion is either for a cupid's-bow style of apron piece joined by tongue & groove (**Fig.7**), or horizontal double beads (**Fig.8**) cut with a double quirk bead moulding plane. While describing shoulders, the author conveys a hint of difficulties faced by a 1920s worker doing everything by hand, commenting 'there is invariably a certain amount of damage done to the first shoulder during the process of mortising, rebating and moulding' and then 'some joiners prefer to chop the mortises in the stiles before they are diminished'.



A handsome window for the shed

Just recently my appreciation of door joinery went up a level while dismantling a not dissimilar door, albeit machine-made and with stiles undiminished, which a local replacement doors and windows firm had offered gratis 'to a good home'. Having persuaded my son to 'sleep' his computer in favour of a healthy stroll beside the river that day, I'm sure he felt decidedly miffed at having to help lug the weighty and unwieldy door homewards, but it was an opportunity too good to miss. I'd seen in its glazed upper half the potential for upcycling as a handsome window for the shed, where its criss-crossed glazing bars now recall the traditional multi-paned windows of the

joiner's shop I've admired in old paintings.

Bisecting the door with a 1960s Eclipse General Purpose saw – 'the same blade cuts both wood and metal' – was a hard slog, but I'd opted to use this saw in case of hitting hidden fastenings. And despite it not being a door of diminished stiles, the job of salvaging wood from its lower half has certainly put a new twist on the economic law of diminishing returns. Making some four-square timber of that structure assembled with such deep mortises & tenons, grooves and mouldings, has had me sawing and planing for hours on end. I suspect I'll end up with barely enough wood to make a nestbox! ✂

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SHOOT FOR THE MOON



Jeff Maker of Storied Furniture explains the processes involved in the making of his technical and considered 'Luna' chair, from researching subject matter to final glue-up, and many others in between

Before winning first prize as part of The Alan Peters Furniture Award 2022, Jeff Maker established his workshop in the heart of the National Forest – which spans from Leicestershire across part of South Derbyshire and on to Staffordshire – back in 2021, having completed a year's training at the Waters and Acland Furniture School in Cumbria.

Storied Furniture

Attracted by the area's natural beauty and incredible story of landscape change from coal mines, clay extraction, pipeworks, potteries, brewing, etc. – which fuelled the industrial revolution – to a green landscape of tree planting, encouraging biodiversity, and a burgeoning green economy, this felt like the perfect place for Jeff to locate himself and the new venture.

Naming the business 'Storied Furniture', the idea for this stems from the notion that the objects with which we surround ourselves functioning as both symbols of the story we wish to tell about ourselves, as well as becoming receptacles for the narrative of our daily lives – shaping, and being shaped by, personal experiences. "This is what I aspire to with my work; everything I make should contain a bit of myself, as well as that of its owner."

As a furniture maker, Jeff produces pieces that embrace the craftsmanship and quality learnt during his time studying at Waters and Acland, bringing a creative and personalised approach to design in order to create pieces that are sensitive to their owners and the setting in which they live. "I also couple this with a localised approach to sustainability," Jeff explains. "I'm fortunate to be able to source excellent quality timber from several suppliers, which is grown, harvested and seasoned within 30 miles of my workshop, with the nearest less than five miles away. As so much timber is imported to the UK, it's important for me to utilise home-grown materials in order to help, support and promote sustainable woodland management."

Creative outlet & practical enjoyment

Before deciding to pursue a career in furniture making, Jeff studied Fine Art at Nottingham Trent University. Having graduated, he went on to spend a number of years as a practising



artist before focusing on developing a successful career working in art galleries and the commercial events sector, in various roles from audio visual technician, to exhibition carpenter and project manager: "I always enjoyed the creative and practical problem solving aspects of this work, whether as part of the design or hands-on construction; however, I always found myself at odds with the industry's inherent wastefulness, especially on the commercial side, with some things I built only being used for a matter of hours before they were demolished."

After exploring a number of avenues, Jeff settled on the fine furniture making route, as it presented a perfect balance between the creative outlet and practical enjoyment of making: "It appealed to me both as a practical craft – creating objects intended for use with a deep tradition of craftsmanship – and as a design form that allowed creative expression and a means of communicating ideas you can live with."

Waters and Acland Furniture School

Jeff discovered the Waters and Acland Furniture School while researching training options, which was shortly before the first COVID-19 lockdown took place. Luckily, he was able to visit the school before this came into effect and recalls

coming away with a "buzzing" feeling of excitement having found somewhere that taught the highest standards of craftsmanship while supporting students to be bold with their designs and encouraging creativity, all with a grounding in traditional hand skills. "When I started to develop designs for the 'Luna' chair, Will and Ollie's excitement for the design and critical feedback really helped me focus on refining the design intent and structure to ensure it communicated my interests while also being a comfortable piece of furniture that was strong enough to withstand a lifetime – or two – of use."

'Luna' chair was the final piece made by Jeff during his time at Waters and Acland, as he explains: "I knew I wanted to make a chair during my time there, and I thought a lounge chair would provide an opportunity to really challenge myself from both a design and making perspective, as well as creating a piece capable of showcasing my skill and design style."

Researching the subject

Having long had a fascination with astronomy and space exploration, as well as folk stories and traditions, for Jeff, the moon felt like a





1 'Luna' chair's initial design was modelled using Fusion 360 CAD software

perfect point of inspiration to bring these together and express overlapping interests. "My design process begins with a lot of research. I read many traditional folk stories surrounding our nearest celestial body as well as spending hours trawling the open archive of photos made available by NASA on the Jet Propulsion Lab website. I also spent a lot of time researching mid-century modern lounge chairs and many variations of stick chairs from Windsor to Orkney, and others in between, looking for threads in these areas that I could bring together to create a coherent design."

Sketchbook & central design

The sketchbook phase saw Jeff quickly honing in on a central design focus – the chair back's



2 Following a visit to Shelmore Timber in Staffordshire, I selected a few boards of beautiful olive ash, which were used to build a prototype chair



3 It's great to have British-grown timber, but knowing it's come from the estate on which the mill is located is a definite plus



abstract lunar form – which presents the Apollo lunar lander in visual form, which is considered a potent symbol of space exploration. "It took a huge amount of iteration and refinement to get the right combination of physical structure and aesthetic balance into the frame," says Jeff. "Not only did I share this with Will and Ollie, but also fellow students to better gauge their perceptions of the evolving design."

CAD & Fusion 360

As the design concept was resolved, Jeff moved into CAD, where he modelled the design using Fusion 360: "Having previously trained and worked in Solidworks for two years, transitioning to Fusion – a very powerful but much more affordable CAD package – was relatively easy. At this stage, I could start defining the design and resolving its geometry and ergonomics."

Starting out using ergonomic geometry taken from another chair, this acted as a guide and would allow Jeff to arrive at a comfortable sitting position. From here, he built the model outwards from the seat and back position.

Jigs & prototypes

"Once modelled in CAD, I then made a prototype seat and back in poplar; this allowed me to



4 My first sit on the prototype chair



practice the shaping process on less costly material and, most critically, help refine the ergonomics to ensure it'd be a comfortable chair to sit in once complete." For this, Jeff built an adjustable MDF jig – to alter the height and angle of both seat and back – in addition to the distance between these.

With the circular seat form, Jeff found that the front edge put a bit too much pressure on the inside of the knee, unless the sitter had their legs spread. "After some jig adjustment and a test sitting using various heights of fellow students, I was able to gather feedback, take some measurements from the jig, then adjust the CAD model accordingly. To rectify this, I slightly lowered the seat and brought the backrest forwards a touch, thus removing this pressure point."

The build commences

With final design alterations made, Jeff was ready to start the build; a process that relied on a synergy of both digital production processes and accurate hand tool work.

Throughout the design process, Jeff considered several timber options but eventually settled on olive ash, which he sourced from Shelmore Timber in Staffordshire: "I chose this timber species as I wanted a distinctive grain pattern, which would give a sense of the lunar surface's geological strata while also accentuating the more subtle aspects of shaping in the design."

Visualising the end result

The first stage of the making process involved spending some time with the boards, trying to imagine the components held within them: "This involved laying out rough measurements of each component, starting with the most visually prominent through to the least visible. After several revisions, I was ready to machine up the blanks for all the turned spindles. Due to the way in which the pieces nested onto each board – i.e. working around knots, inclusions, etc. – this was mostly carried out using a jigsaw and bandsaw before planing up.

Jeff explains the importance of the chair spindles being consistent and accurate in dimension, with a precisely angled taper into the tenon: "As I didn't have access to a large



5 An MDF framework tested the seat position's geometry as well as helping to refine seat and back shaping to ensure maximum comfort

enough lathe for the longest spindles, I had these produced on a copy lathe by a nearby joinery workshop. I produced the templates for these with the Shaper Origin CNC router. I used Fusion 360 to produce a DXF file for each of the turned components, with the four legs produced oversize. These files were imported into the Origin and machined from 18mm MDF. I was then able to take these to the production turner and explain the requirements and tolerances of these components."

Seat underframe & compound angles

While these parts were being produced, Jeff started work on the seat underframe, as well as making up the blanks for both seat and back. "The underframe sweeps out to meet the legs, creating an elegant junction and also increasing the amount of material around the coped joints where the frame meets the legs. This massively increases the joint's strength without adding too much weight to the piece visually."

After roughing out the components to squared sections, Jeff was able to cut all the necessary compound angles with the aid of a crosscut sled fitted on a table saw, then jointed these with Dominos. "Finally, after having cut the correct angle where the component meets the leg,



8 Dry fit of the underframe components before final shaping



6 I started shaping the back panel and added a roundover to the edges; this gave a reference from which to work when shaping the convex face

I made the coped joint using a spindle moulder fitted with a custom-made cutterblock and sled, which holds the workpiece at the desired point. Having played around with various leg spindle diameters, I settled on 44mm, which provided the correct balance between strength and elegance. Unfortunately, this required a custom-made cutter for the coped joint, but the end result was worth the expense. I made these cuts in several passes to ensure a clean surface as well as reducing any potential risk."

Once Jeff had produced all the joint faces, he carried out final shaping using MDF templates, which were cut on the bandsaw and sanded to final shape using 1:1 printouts taken from CAD. These templates were then used to create the final shape on a router table once the components had been roughed out on a bandsaw. A stopped roundover, using a router cutter, was then applied to all visible edges.

Poplar test piece

In addition to the olive ash chair components, Jeff also produced an underframe and set of legs in less expensive poplar – otherwise known as canary or tulipwood – so he could test all the joinery processes. This ensured the success of each joint as there were many compound angles,



9 Further seat shaping was carried out before tackling the concave faces



7 The first phase of shaping the 'Luna' chair back following some sanding to remove tool marks

and as such, any slight discrepancies were likely to quickly cause issues.

Baseboard jig

Once the production turner had returned Jeff's completed spindles, he set about making a baseboard jig from which to build off: "This created my base plane, and from here, I could lay out all measurements." The four legs were turned with a small 20mm tenon on the end, to locate them into the baseboard. "Going back to the CAD model for measurements, I laid out and drilled four angled holes into the baseboard; this held the feet in the correct position as well as at the correct splay angle." Next, Jeff marked coped joint heights and positioned the clamped up underframe components so he could check for fit. Final adjustments were made to the coped joints using abrasive paper wrapped around a poplar offcut.

Joint reinforcing

The coped joints were further reinforced with several lengths of threaded rod: "As these would be glued up with epoxy mixed with a colloidal silica to thicken the mixture, it was important that the holes for the threaded rod weren't too tight; this would allow a good amount of epoxy



10 Test seat and back begin to take shape following slight deviations from the CAD design



11 After a few sketches, I flipped the seat blank to try out the shape shown here, which resulted in exposing the Dominos. I was much happier with this shape, even though it's a little difficult to see

to bond to the threaded rod's surface instead of just soaking into the timber and squeezing out of the joint." This ensures the strongest possible joint in an area that'll see the greatest stress when the chair is in use. One hole, however, was drilled for a tight fit; this located the joint to ensure there wasn't any risk of slippage when it came to glue-up.

Frame construction

These holes were drilled by hand using direction lines, drawn onto the workpieces as angle guides, and a paper template used to transfer each hole's centre point from one component to another. The underframe was then glued up using epoxy, with the legs dry fitted to ensure the structure would come together while allowing the legs and



14 Legs with the practice shaped seat and back in position, as modelled by fellow Waters and Acland student, Henryk



15 It'd been a slow process, but I finally completed the underframe glue-up following further shaping and lots of tweaks and adjustments to the joint



12 Prior to dry fitting, I'd made a lot of progress, from having the legs and rounds all turned to machining and jointing the underseat frame. It was now starting to look a lot more like the drawing

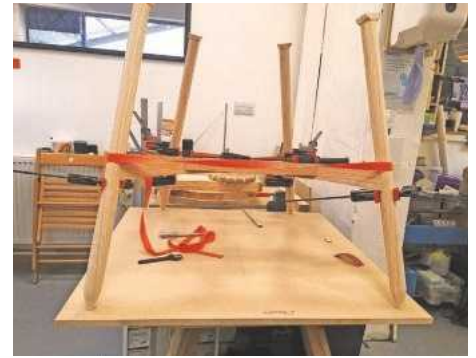
underframe to be separated during creation of the spindle mortises. With a relatively simple part of the frame construction completed, Jeff could now turn his attention to the mortises: "Having discussed various options for creating these with Tim Smith – lead maker and my instructor at the furniture school – we came up with a design for a series of jigs that'd allow the joints to be made three dimensionally. This meant that rather than creating each mortise where it should be located on each component – a strategy involving a huge amount of risk for cumulative discrepancies to create poorly fitting joints – they could instead be made where they were actually relative to one another within the finished piece."

Critical components

On the baseboard, the first step was to lay out each spindle's direction in addition to the junction where it met the surface of the component it was mortised into. This gave Jeff an 'XY' position for each joint and from here, he was able to measure off this using a homemade height gauge in order to reveal the desired 'Z' coordinate. "I had my starting position and 'XY' angle," Jeff explains, "but I now needed a means of finding a reliable 'ZX' angle to ensure the mortises at each end of the spindles lined up perfectly. For this, I went back to Fusion where I was able to produce models for a series of jigs – these came to be referred to as 'bird box jigs' within the workshop. Once designed, the critical components were made using the Shaper Origin with the remainder



16 The structural heart of the chair, which establishes the geometry and relationship of all components, so getting this perfect was therefore important. If all goes well, it'll look just as good when out of clamp



13 Owing to the leg angles, the moon lander influence is made clearer

cut on a table saw." These jigs allowed a 240V drill to be secured in a sled that ran in a rebate cut in a pedestal; this presented Jeff with a perfect 'ZX' angle for the mortise. He could also clamp a stop block to the jig in order to set each mortise's depth. Once drilled out with a straight auger, he could then taper the mortise using the same jig with a Veritas tapered reamer, which he'd modified. "I had two reamers, both of which I'd cut with an angle grinder to create the two mortise depths shown in my design."

A big advantage of this methodology was the fact the sled would ensure the reamer ran perfectly concentrically with the hole produced using an auger. As the mortises run into the components at obtuse angles, simply putting the reamer into the existing hole would lead to it cutting more material from one side than the other, thus throwing off the hole centre.

Mortise & tenon joints & legs

Despite all this, it took Jeff a fair amount of time to produce each pair of joints to give a perfect fit at the end of each spindle – for example, taking the assembly apart for a test fit, ensuring the spindle wasn't pushing apart the coped joints, and reassembling it to then ream the mortise a little further. "Although the methodology was devised and enabled by using CAD and the Shaper Origin, final fitting of each joint was completed by eye," Jeff reveals.

Having completed the mortise & tenon joints, Jeff cut the front legs to final length



17 Test joint for the angled tapered mortising jig made for the stick jointed rails. Thankfully, it worked perfectly...



18 Using this method, the geometry and symmetry should be kept identical to the original design and the joints tight and clean

and machined the crater detail in the top of the leg using a 50mm radius dished panel mould cutter. Doing so required using a jig to clamp the leg in place, with the router bolted to the top of the jig.

Two separate glue-ups

It was then time for the big glue-up: "This would bring together the legs, underframe and all the tapered mortise & tenons. As such, I decided to do this as two separate glue-ups – the first bringing together one front and back leg with their three turned spindle braces as well as the underseat frame. The second glue-up brought together the other side along with the mid rail that supports the chair back." For the first glue-up, the second side was also fitted and clamped to ensure the full assembly's geometry remained correct and nothing was thrown out of alignment.

Sculptural aspects

With this big and technically demanding area now complete, it was time for Jeff to get his teeth into the more free-form sculptural aspects of both the seat back and armrests: "Starting with the seat and back, these were made from several boards that I'd previously jointed. The joints were reinforced with strategically-placed Dominos to ensure there wasn't any risk of carving into them as I'd done with the poplar test pieces used to trial the chair geometry."

The initial radius was formed with a router



21 Four bird box-shaped drilling jigs



19 The jig was modelled in Fusion 360 and core components machined using the Shaper Origin

trammel making a shallow pass. Jeff then removed waste using a bandsaw before flush trimming the remainder with a bearing guide positioned on the edge created by the trammel. He then machined each side with a roundover cutter to different depths on each of the faces; this gave a clear and consistent apex for the convex shaping, which was designed to be uneven with a more convex shape on the backrest's front face and seat underside, thus resulting in a flatter seat and back. "With this formed, I marked out a series of concentric circles, which were offset from the edge on both sides. These allowed me to keep a consistent shape as I worked around the circle with a couple of spokeshaves."

As the pebble shape emerged, Jeff gave this a sand with a 120 grit disc to remove remaining hand tool marks as well as highlighting any subtle discrepancies felt by rubbing a hand across the seat surface.

Carving & initial shaping

With the convex shape formed, Jeff could now lay out for the hollowing, which was carried out using tracing paper and a 3B pencil; this allowed him to copy from the Fusion 360 produced 1:1 printout. "This was then laid face down onto the workpiece and by drawing over the line shown on the paper's reverse, I transferred the image onto the workpiece." As another guide, Jeff also marked out and drilled a series of depth holes across each of the workpieces; these were approximately 1.5mm short of the finished depth, but doing so provided



22 Dialling in the mortising process required for the rails



20 All turned components were completed using a copy lathe; a process I decided to outsource to a local joinery workshop

an indicator as to where to stop using the carving disc and instead switch to hand tools. The initial shaping was carried out using a combination of medium and fine Saburrtooth carving discs fitted to an angle grinder with workpiece and extractor hood clamped to a workbench. "Although feeling slightly unnerved when I first started using this tool – due to the fact it can remove a lot of material very quickly, even with a fine tooth disc fitted – I soon got the knack of it and really enjoyed the process, as very rapidly, you can see and feel the final shape beginning to emerge." Once he'd got as far as he could with this tool, Jeff swapped to using a travisher.

"I'd made my travisher at the start of this project using a blade made by Ben Orford, ▶



23 To create accurate craters, I used a dedicated jig



24 Detailing on the ends of the front legs looked really effective



25 Another homemade jig allowed me to flush cut the angle of the back legs, where they met the seat back



26 After flush cutting with a hand saw, the joint was refined to meet the seat back's curved face, using a sharp block plane and pieces of abrasive



27 After dimensioning the blanks to square, the angled cope joint was cut on the spindle...

purchased from James Mursell of The Windsor Workshop. The tool body was made from maple to ensure it'd be durable; the blade mortise was formed using a router mounted in a WoodRat, with four holes drilled for the blade tines and their corresponding grub screws. The tool's outer shape was then refined using a combination of spokeshaves and bobbin sander, before finishing with Renaissance Wax." Being able to very quickly create a tool that fitted his hands perfectly was a satisfying process, which resulted in a very pleasing and versatile tool, allowing material to be hogged out fairly quickly or setting for very fine cuts.

This allowed Jeff to finesse the shape of both seat and back, judging by touch and feel, as well as allowing him to create clean, consistent sweeping lines around the edge of the dished section. "Once complete, I removed tool marks with an orbital sander, ensuring to stay clear of the crisp edges, which I finished by hand sanding."

Jeff then returned to the seat frame – making final adjustments to the underframe with a

spokeshave to create a subtle dishing to accept the seat. This was followed by drilling out bolt holes to allow for wood movement, with a clearance hole in the underframe and insert nuts glued into the seat. "This meant that I could easily finish the seat separately prior to fitting."

Here, Jeff made another jig for cutting the back legs using a flush cut saw: the jig was clamped to the seat underframe, which created a reference point at the precise angle required; this was then adjusted for a perfect fit with a subtle curve on the backrest's rear face, using a piece of abrasive stuck to the backrest with double-sided tape and a "little '70s TV car driving mime action to rotate the seat backrest back and forth until the legs met the back perfectly." Next, a small, flat hollow was created in the backrest support rail to provide a decent joint surface, before drilling holes for a threaded rod and epoxy joint where the back would then meet the legs and lower rail.



28 ... before machining the crater detail into the arm's reverse



29 This detail was added prior to shaping, which ensured the workpiece could be easily held in the correct position



30 Final stages of arm shaping – a comparison between an unshaped...

Armrests

The last piece of the puzzle were the armrests: "After making blanks, the first step was to mark out and cut the dished crater detail in the arm's rear end. Although it may seem counter-intuitive to machine this detail first, it was actually the easiest method as the blank was still square and therefore easy to clamp in the router jig. I knew that once the arms were shaped, the only way to create this feature would've been to hand carve it, and although I wasn't averse to doing this, I wanted the aesthetic to be consistent with the craters on top of the front legs, and this was the best method for achieving that."

Next, a deep coping joint was made in the blank using an angled guide block to hold the armrest at the required angle relative to the cutterblock. Jeff then made a series of templates to shape as much of the arms as possible with machines before switching to hand tools. "The first jig created a dished bevelled face on top of the blank using a spindle moulder fitted with a bearing guide and the spindle tilted forwards. Few benefit from this functionality, so it was therefore a luxury to have this at my disposal when forming the armrest's top face." Next, two more templates shaped the armrest's inner and outer profile, and from here, using a router table, Jeff was able to cut a radius on these blanks to form the inner roundover.

At this point, Jeff had to switch back to hand tools – namely spokeshaves, a travisher, carving chisels and abrasives – to form the arm's hollowed underside and tapered tenon to mortise into the front leg. "I really enjoyed forming these transitions with the sweep of the flared armrest coming in to meet the cylinder at either end of the arm."

Legs & sanding

"One more bird box jig formed the front leg mortise; due to the large amount of unsupported length, this had to be wedged into position to prevent the leg from vibrating or flexing as the



... and a shaped arm. Unfortunately, the photos don't really do the shape justice



31 While the first arm was easy, the second took a bit longer as regular checks had to be made to ensure perfect symmetry

holes were drilled, and as the frame was fully glued up at this stage, I only had one chance to get it right."

Once complete, Jeff could then finesse the mortise shaping and finish shaping the arms to ensure perfect symmetry was achieved. Next, the armrests were glued into position with a single threaded rod locating and reinforcing the coped joint at the rear.

With all but the backrest glued into final position, everything was sanded from 150 through to 400 grit to give the final surface finish.

"After numerous sample finish combinations, I opted for Osmo white tint Polyx-Oil, liberally applied in two coats, then as it began to gel, buffing off the excess to achieve a good quality, hard-wearing finish. The white tint eliminates the yellowing effect that most finishes have on ash, which would've affected the olive ash's stripe, and, I felt, made it rather overpowering."

Next, Jeff went over this with a single coat of Osmo Hardwax-Oil in white, applied with a cloth, wiping on and buffing off immediately. "This is a much more heavily pigmented finish, but applying it over the Polyx-Oil and buffing straight off meant that it didn't soak into the grain, which would've obliterated much of the olive ash's characteristics. Instead, this enhanced the surface tones, adding flecks of white in the open grain, and giving the effect of a light layer of moon dust having settled on the piece."



32 I was really pleased with the crater detailing achieved on the arms...

Final glue-up

Once the finish was applied, Jeff ensured to leave plenty of time for this to cure before embarking on the final glue-up: "I'd taped the glue areas during finishing so that this didn't affect the bond. Extra care was taken here to ensure that just the right amount of glue was used – too much and there'd be epoxy squeeze out, which would damage the finish; too little and the joint would be weak and therefore break." Jeff also took extra care when clamping – opting to use foam rather than wooden cauls – as only gentle pressure was needed to bring these joints together. ✂



35 The final glue-up



33 ... as well as the junction of joints around the back leg



34 Working towards clean lines and smooth surfaces was made more challenging due to hot weather and high workshop temperatures



36 This crater detail in the front leg creates a tactile focal point, which invites the sitter's hand

FURTHER INFORMATION
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37 The completed chair, photographed as close to the moon as I could get – on the flats of Morecambe Bay estuary



38 My favourite detail on the 'Luna' chair is this collection of joints: two tapered tenons and a coped joint, with the arm's gentle curve creating just enough space for the backrest and side rail

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TURNING IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY



Discovering woodturning as a way of channelling creativity and alleviating anxiety having lost his sight, **Chris Fisher** – otherwise known as **the Blind Woodturner** – is the UK's only completely blind professional turner and the first to be accepted on to the RPT. We learn more about Chris' incredible journey and how, for him, blindness really presents no barrier

Chris Fisher lives with his wife Nicola and Guide Dog, Bamber, in Derbyshire and is currently the UK's first – and only – completely blind, accredited, professional woodturner. Having been diagnosed with Toxoplasmosis – a parasitic infection – at the age of 38, within four weeks, Chris had lost his sight completely.

Using the senses

It's a life-changing shock that most of us can't imagine and, as a result, Chris had to spend time relearning life skills before he came to discover, then proceed to take up woodturning. Incredibly, Chris is completely self-taught and prior to trying his hand at turning once he'd lost his sight, had



For Chris, turning requires relying on senses other than sight

no experience whatsoever. How exactly, then, did Chris come to find woodturning and go on to master the skills, without the aid of sight? It all began with a turned wooden stake, which Chris wanted to use as a Hallowe'en prop. He watched various YouTube videos and tutorials on the subject, totalling over 600 hours, before feeling ready to face the lathe. And the rest, as they say, is history.

From this point, it became clear that Chris had a natural aptitude for the craft, despite his blindness, and instead of relying on being able to see the turning process, he found his other senses came to the fore, such as hearing, smell, and even taste. While it may take Chris longer to complete a piece, due to having to

continuously stop the lathe, feel the piece, make judgments and adjustments, his skill is undeniable. Chris went on to become the first blind woodturner to be accepted on to the RPT (Register of Professional Turners) – a fantastic and unprecedented achievement. He's also a member of the AWGB (Association of Woodturners of Great Britain).

Challenging perceptions

Completing his first commission in 2014, Chris has worked on a huge variety of projects from then to now, including one for St John's Church in Ashbourne. Here, he turned a 4ft tall candle stand for Easter to celebrate their 150th anniversary. Since then, his beautifully crafted items have been selling faster than he ever imagined. In addition to turning items, Chris also set up a YouTube channel as an outlet for sharing his woodturning experiences and challenging the perceptions of what people with disabilities can achieve. He now has over 8,000 subscribers and as a result of increased awareness, has gone on to become a popular motivational speaker.

Realising the positive benefits of woodturning and the importance of having a creative outlet, Chris felt driven to pass on and share his knowledge base, along with quiet determination, to autistic schoolchildren, other blind and visually impaired students, as well as mentoring a young woodturner with cerebral palsy. Chris' goal is to inspire others by demonstrating that anything

Spalted and textured platter



Chris Fisher and his
guide dog, Bamber



FURTHER INFORMATION

www.theblindwoodturner.co.uk
www.instagram.com/blindwoodturner
www.facebook.com/blindwoodturner

is possible, and to show the world that having a disability isn't the end; it's just a new beginning.

A life-changing partnership

Chris was matched with his German Shepherd guide dog, Bamber, in 2017, as he explains: "I had a support worker for eight years prior to Bamber, but he had to leave for full-time work. I always knew that having a guide dog was an option, and it's certainly a life-changing partnership. Bamber's now six-years-old and he not only helps me navigate the local area, but accompanies me when I demonstrate at exhibitions and shows all over the UK. He's loved by thousands of people all around the country." Bamber was part of Guide Dogs' Name a Puppy scheme, sponsored by Sainsbury's in Bamber Bridge near Preston. And from there came a strange coincidence, as Chris tells us: "They named him Bamber, an old English word for tree trunk; they had no idea he'd be matched with the Blind Woodturner!"

Chris explains that before this point, he'd endured four or five years of crippling anxiety and depression: "Bamber's played an important part in my positive mental health and having your guide dog there works on so many different levels. He's always by my side."



Sculptural turning on stand

Men's Sheds patron

As well as being a professional woodturner, Chris is now Patron of the UK Men's Sheds Association, a charity that raises awareness of workshops, sheds and garages all over the country. Chris comments how "it was a huge honour" to receive this accolade, and the importance of these groups for people facing loneliness and isolation: "They give people a place to go where they can make things and be creative, whether it be through metalwork, woodcarving and more."

Keep on turning

As part of his day-to-day life, Chris travels around the UK giving woodturning demonstrations and sharing his story at various events such as the recently-held North of England Woodworking & Power Tool Show in Harrogate. In addition to passing on skills and inspiring others by telling his incredible story, Chris also has a burgeoning TV career and is the woodturning artisan for the BBC1 show *Money For Nothing*.

Hearing Chris' story and being given an insight into the struggles he's faced and managed to overcome – before discovering woodturning and after – his passion, determination and drive are nothing short of awe-inspiring. But if Chris had the choice, would he



Various examples of Chris' turned work

want to have his sight back? His answer will understandably come as a shock to many, but it's a no, as he explains: "I've become comfortable with being blind; it's who I am now. In the past few years, I've realised I can have a concept or design in my head and make it become a reality. I certainly can't be complacent when I'm at the lathe – it demands all my attention – but that's great, because every ounce of concentration goes into whatever it is I'm turning."

Chris' aim is to continue being a woodturner for as long as he can, and comments that: "I feel there's a lot more to come from me; I'm just scratching the surface." In terms of what this entails, we'll have to wait and see, but looking ahead, more demonstrations and talks are planned for 2023 and beyond, so if you'd like to see Chris in action, be sure to check the website for details.

Finally, when talking to people about the challenges and hardships he's battled, Chris' advice, and words we all need to hear every now and then, is that "whenever you feel like giving up, keep on turning." ✂





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OFF GRID

Martin Aplin could've just copied a cartographic chest, but we persuaded him to do something a little more organic...

Grids and scales, contours and colouring – maps are marvellous things. There's something beautiful about the way in which they capture the shapes and patterns of a landscape with their symbols and shading, and frame it with graduated borders. The combination of the ordered and the organic is a little like cabinet-making, which is why 'cartography' seemed a significant enough style to provide sufficient

inspiration for my latest project.

It would've been easy to simply copy a chart cabinet, of course, but that wasn't what I wanted. Instead, I decided to create something small and intricate; something with the feel of a jewellery cabinet, say, or a small collector's chest, which incorporates details drawn from the art and science of cartography. I also wanted to incorporate glass and a complex pattern, so let's get started.

depths: the front panel of the top drawer is 50mm deep, and each successive drawer increases in depth by 10mm, so that the bottom one is 100mm. This feature is underscored by the decorative scale ribbons across the drawer fronts, which also increase in size.

I decided to make these ribbons from glass – see 'A touch of glass' – in order to create a sharp contrast between the black and white sections, something that I couldn't have achieved with timber. Also, while timber inlay would fade and bleach with age, lessening further still the ribbon's contrast, the glass won't change.

The choice of American cherry for the cabinet was also influenced by the piece's cartographic theme. Not only is cherry an excellent timber for small cabinets but, when polished, its wavy grain pattern gives the impression of contour lines on a map. The theme was interpreted more literally, of course, by the marquetry map on the cabinet's top. This borrows some of the familiar elements and colours seen on conventional maps – sea, sand, built-up areas, different classes of roads, as well as grid squares.

Scaled-down design

At first, I thought the cabinet was going to have to hold unfolded A0-size charts, but the brief allowed me to scale the piece down, sizing the six drawers so that they'd usefully hold A4-size documents.

The drawers themselves are made up using simple lapped joints, which are strengthened with brass pins. Dovetailed joints were eschewed not because of their complexity, but so that more time and effort could be channelled into decorating the cabinet. That said, the drawers add some visual interest thanks to their different



1 Mortising the cabinet sides...



2 ... ready for tenons on the front rails



3 The top and bottom rails, meanwhile, were dovetailed into the sides...



4 ... in which the tails were formed using a small pull-saw...

PROJECT

Map chest



5 ... to create a neat, strong joint



8 The plinth was attached by screwing through the bottom rails into blocks glued to the plinth's inner faces

The carcass

Making the cabinet's carcass is straightforward. As with any small piece of furniture, however, flaws will be made all the more obvious, so good workmanship is therefore essential, especially in the fit of the drawers and joints in the carcass' front face.



9 The dyed and hardwood veneers used in the marquetry panel are available in these small sheets



6 Here's the assembled carcass; note the single mid-rail at the back

The cabinet sides are made up of two planks, edge-jointed, with their growth rings alternated to reduce the risk of cupping. These panels are then joined with rails front and back. The intermediate front rails are tenoned into the side panels; the top and bottom rails, both front and back, are dovetailed into the side panels.

Before assembly, the sides' inside edges are rebated for the back panel, as are the upper and lower back rails. The side panels rebates' have to be stopped short of where they meet the back rail, the corners of the rebate being trimmed square after assembly. The mid-rear rail is inset by the rebate's depth in order to give clearance for the back panel.

The plinth is made up of three sections,

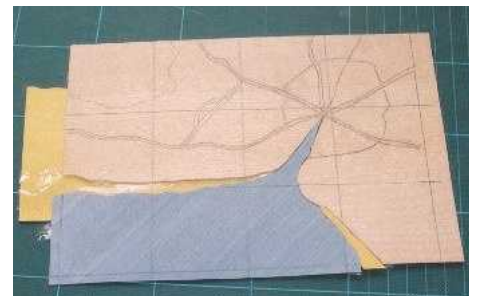


7 The plinth has mitred joints, strengthened with blocks that are glued and screwed into the corners

which are mitred together and strengthened with blocks glued and screwed into the corners. A simple shallow curved section is removed to lighten its appearance. To attach plinth to cabinet, I used blocks of wood glued to the plinth, which allowed me to screw through the lower rails; the screw holes themselves were elongated to allow for timber movement.

Map-making

Rather than inlaying the map directly into the top panel, as would usually be the case, I built up the design on a sub-base, which was then let into a rebate routed into the panel. The veneers used for the map are either sycamore, coloured with water-based dyes, or chemically treated



10 Map-making: the design was drawn onto veneer to create the pieces...



11 ... which were assembled on a sheet of 1.5mm ply, divided along the grid lines...

A TOUCH OF GLASS

I chose glass for the scale ribbons for no other reason than it's a material I'm used to handling: I make simple leaded-glass panels, usually in Art Deco or Art Nouveau designs, for inclusion in the frames of decorative mirrors. For the scale bars, then, I cut the glass sheet into thin strips by scoring the glass with an oil-lubricated tungsten wheel cutter, then snapping it along the score line. The strips were then scored again to produce segments of the required size. I used a diamond grinder to trim the pieces to the exact width and length required to fit in the drawer fronts' and cabinet top's routed grooves. I used an instant-grab adhesive to fix the glass in place, as it'll stick just about any two materials to one another!



12 ... then re-assembled on the sub-base together with the veneer grid lines

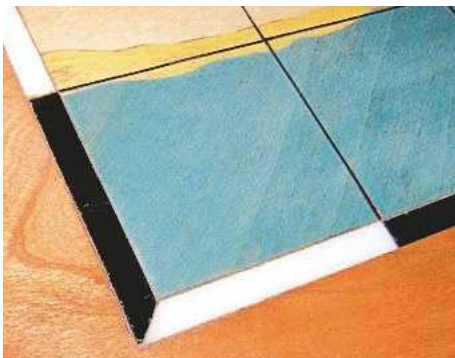
veneers called harewoods. Typically, harewoods are made from ash, maple and plane, and the process by which they're produced involves oxidising the timber rather than dyeing it, resulting in a range of silver-grey colours. If this is your first foray into veneering, you'll be able to source the materials quite economically by buying packs of small sheets.

Having cut all the necessary pieces, the map is made up by gluing them to a sheet of 1.5mm ply. Once dry, the grid line positions are carefully marked out, and used as guides to cut the map into separate squares. The lines themselves are represented by black-dyed timber, laid on edge. To make room for the thickness of grid lines, each piece of the map will need to be sanded slightly; this will also square-up any bevelled

edge left by the cutting knife. The map, which has become a very simple jigsaw puzzle of squares and grid lines, is then reassembled on a 6mm MDF sub-base.

Like the cabinet sides, the top panel was made up of two edge-jointed planks. Once the rebate for the map had been marked out centrally – I left room for a border of black and white glass sections that represent a scale ribbon – the bulk of the waste can be removed free-hand before fitting a guide fence to produce the straight edges.

Once the corners have been made square, the marquetry panel can be glued into the rebate, taking care to ensure that the panel is flush with the table top. If you're



14 I allowed for a border of glass sections between marquetry panel and top panel



15 The top panel was attached with screws, countersunk so as to clear the drawer back panel



16 The drawer side and front panels were routed for the drawer runners, MDF bottom panels, and glass inlay



17 The drawers were constructed with simple half lap joints...



13 The marquetry panel sits in a rebate routed in the top panel; the router's large sub-base prevents it tipping

adding the glass scale ribbon, the top needs to be scraped and planed smooth now, as the glass segments obviously can't be sanded.

Drawers...

Apart from their bases, which are made of cherry-veneered MDF, the drawers are made from solid cherry using simple lapped joints strengthened with brass pins. The drawer sides are grooved to accept the drawer runners, the groove itself being hidden from view by the front panel. The runners themselves are made from thin strips of cherry pinned to the side panels, and so positioned to act as drawer stops, too. Once again, the glass scale ribbons are set into routed grooves. ▶



TIP

When routing the map rebate in the top panel, you can prevent the router tipping into the rebate by attaching a larger baseplate to the router. All you need is a piece of MDF or ply that's drilled to match the tapped holes on the regular baseplate



18 ... and strengthened with decorative brass pins



19 The glass sections were glued into routed grooves with builder's epoxy



20 Drawer runners were made using thin strips of cherry glued and pinned to the side panels

Because each ribbon has an odd number of sections, the outside pieces are the same colour – black in the case of my cabinet – while the centre pieces alternate between black and white. As a finishing touch, I fitted contemporary brass knobs.

... & decorations

Compass roses – the figures that show the orientation of the cardinal points on a map or chart – were simply drawn on white card using draughting equipment; the coloured section in the north point is coloured card let into the rose, marquetry fashion. To mount the roses, I used some items that are sold as 'open box lids', which are intended for turned boxes, and consist of a polished brass bezel that's a press-fit over a steel backing plate.



21 The compass roses were based on common designs and hand-drawn, although you could always try some more marquetry



22 I turned some thicker acrylic windows for the brass bezels...

The protective acetate sheet supplied with the lids was far too thin for my purposes, however, so I turned some new discs from clear acrylic sheet. The steel back plates were drilled and screwed to the cabinet's sides, and the brass bezel pressed into place.

The brief set called for grids and scales, contours and colouring? Well, I think this piece has all those, though there's plenty of room to develop the theme further – incorporating different materials, scaling up the design, or sub-dividing those drawers to create a collector's cabinet. ✂



23 ... and drilled the steel back plate so that it could be screwed to the side panels



24 The compass rose acrylic window and brass bezel, ready for fitting



ZIP IT!

**CHISEL
RATING**

Bryn Edwards exploits a natural crack defect by incorporating a zip

I wanted to make a vase, so started off by drawing myself a rough plan. Little did I know that once turned, there'd be a split in the piece's neck area. However, rather than starting again, I decided to incorporate the crack into my plan and as such, insert a zip into the vase's neck. Having carried out some research, I discovered that zips can be bought in a variety of different sizes and are available in a vast array of colours. I chose a black zip for this design, as I wanted the natural colour of the sycamore to set it off.

If you find that your timber stock is free of shakes, you can still make the piece using ordinary wood.



Zips are available to buy in a wide range of colours and sizes

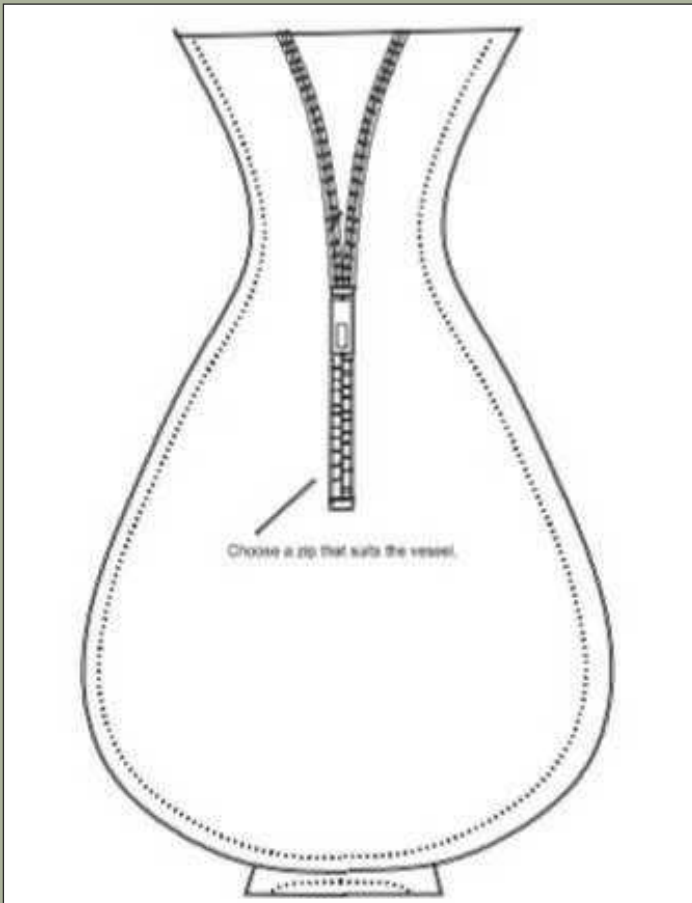


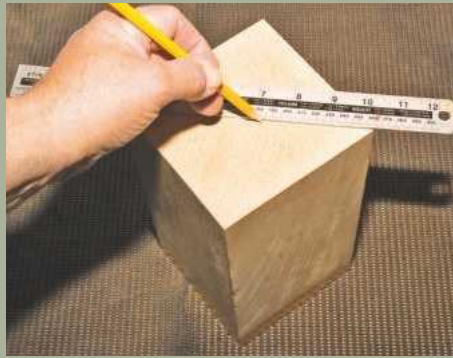
Fig.1 Zipped vase construction



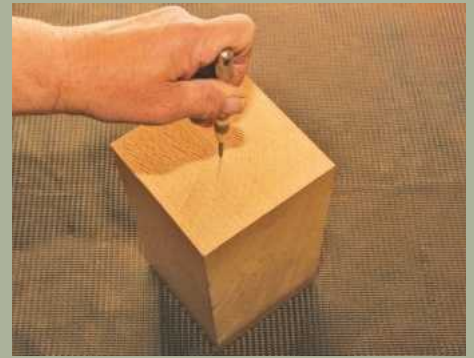




1 Start by choosing a suitable piece of hardwood – I used a piece of sycamore measuring 1,500 × 100 × 100mm. You'll also need a zip. The photo here shows three zips, all of the same colour, but each a little longer than the next. It's best to establish the vase's shape before deciding on a specific length



2 Before mounting your timber between centres, start by marking the ends



3 Once you've found the centre, using the preferred method, mark this on both ends



4 Mount the blank on the lathe, checking you've tightened it sufficiently, then start to turn the piece of timber...



5 ... and continue to do so until the blank is round



6 Once round, true up the ends of your vase



7 Turn a spigot on the end of the piece, which will allow it to be mounted into the chuck. Measure the spigot using a pair of Vernier callipers – mine was 60mm, but yours might be a different size depending on timber dimensions



8 You can now begin to shape the vase body. For my version, I decided to go with a traditional design



9 Continue shaping and refining the vase body



10 Finally, using a scraper, further refine the shape until you achieve the design proportions you're looking for



11 Next, mount the chuck on the lathe and place the vase into it, checking that all is securely held; you can then drill a 25mm hole down the centre



12 Mark your chosen depth position on the drill shank. When the blue tape comes up against the neck, you know the hole has been correctly drilled



13 Use your chosen hollowing tool to remove the waste material – here I'm using a Rolly Munro mini hollower



14 As you can see, I'm almost there. Once you're at the same stage, begin to tidy up the vessel



15 Next, choose a zip that best fits the dimensions and shape of your vase and place this in its intended position. Using a pencil, begin to mark out the opening as shown



16 Using a fine kerf saw, start to cut away the unwanted area. Once the 'V' is removed, move on to tidying up the split using a file and abrasives



17 Using a flex shaft tool fitted with a dentil drill-type handpiece, refine the area where the zip will be placed



18 Next, mount a large faceplate with sponge backing on the lathe, along with the vase. You can now turn the bottom of the piece so that it blends in



19 The next step is to turn the vase's foot to your desired shape



20 Finally, hand sand the vase, starting with 180 grit abrasive and working your way up to 400



21 Once sanded, apply your choice of finish – I'm using oil but you may prefer to omit this step



22 Remove the vase from the lathe and using the flex shaft motor as before, carve out the centre pip on the bottom



23 Using CA adhesive, glue the zip in place so that it corresponds with the 'V' cut out of the neck



24 The completed zipped vase in sycamore should look something like this ✂

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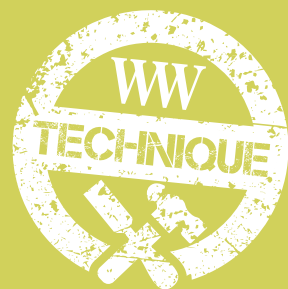
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CODE TWW2023

TORMEK

T-8 CUSTOM



Supplied bare, without grinding or honing wheels, the **T-8 Custom** allows you to create a personalised water-cooled sharpening system according to individual preferences

Customise your own water-cooled sharpening system with the Tormek T-8 Custom. Create a Tormek sharpening system tailored to various individual requirements, which contains all your favourite accessories. Just add a grinding wheel, honing wheel, the right jigs and your own creativity. The Tormek T-8 Custom is ideal if you either have specific grinding wheel and honing wheel needs, or if you already own a number of accessories and want to add another machine to your collection.

Why the Tormek T-8 Custom?

- Choose the **grinding and honing wheels** that **best suit your needs** and create a Tormek water-cooled sharpening system that's completely bespoke.

- Sharpen all edge tools by adding your choice of jigs;
- Water-cooled sharpening with **no risk of overheating the steel**;
- **Exact repeatability** – sharpen your tools with unbeatable precision;

- **Solid zinc frame with integrated mounts** – for controllable and accurate sharpening;
- **Powerful industrial AC motor** allows for continuous use;
- **Eight year warranty** – five + three years – when registering your new machine online at www.tormek.com

SPECIFICATION & DETAILS

Motor: 200W
Nett weight: 9.3kg
Overall dimensions: 270 × 270 × 286mm
Rating: Trade/Professional
Shaft diameter: 12mm
Voltage: 230V



SELECTED FEATURES

Ezylock



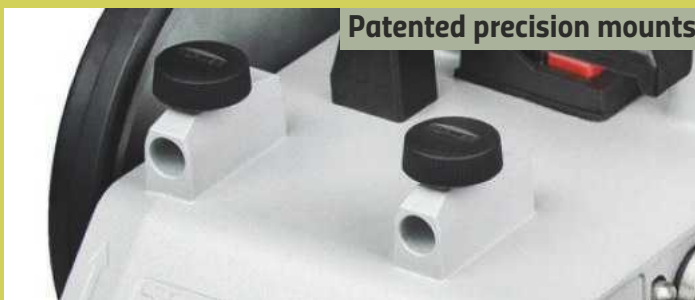
Convenient, tool-free locking and unlocking of the grinding wheel

MicroAdjust



With ACME thread and scale for precise angle setting

Patented precision mounts



Guarantees controllable and accurate sharpening

Universal Support



The base and support for all jigs. Gives unbeatable precision when sharpening

CREATE YOUR OWN TORMEK T-8 WATER-COOLED SHARPENING SYSTEM

The Tormek T-8 Custom includes a stripped back Tormek T-8 sharpening machine without grinding or honing wheels. The box includes the basic Tormek accessories: HB-10 Tormek Sharpening Handbook; WM-200 AngleMaster for measuring the bevel angle; and US-105 Universal Support for the jigs. The rest you decide for yourself by adding other accessories separately.

Choose your grinding wheel

Every tool is unique. Add the grinding wheel that suits your needs – perhaps the versatile SG-250 Original Grindstone with adjustable sharpening properties equivalent to 220-1,000 grit, or one of the durable and extremely hard diamond grinding wheels? The SB-250 Blackstone Silicon special grindstone for quickly shaping and sharpening HSS steel, or why not try the 4,000 grit SJ-250 Japanese Waterstone for a mirror finish? The choice is yours!

DC-250 Diamond Wheel Coarse

The fastest cutting diamond wheel. The coarse 360 grit rapidly repairs a dull or damaged edge

DF-250 Diamond Wheel Fine

Provides a fine surface finish on all types of edge tools. This 600 grit wheel combines efficient steel removal with smooth surface finish

DE-250 Diamond Wheel Extra Fine

The 1,200 grit wheel leaves an extra-fine finish and is especially suitable for sharpening carving tools and knives when steel removal is minimal



TECHNICAL Tormek machine models in detail: T-8 Custom

SG-250 Original Grindstone

If this is your preferred choice of grinding wheel, the Tormek T-8 Original is probably best suited to you

SB-250 Blackstone Silicone Stone

This harder stone has been developed for shaping and sharpening HSS and other exotic alloyed steels. Delivers fast steel removal

SJ-250 Japanese Waterstone

This stone offers the finest finish on knives and hand tools. It provides an excellent surface finish where a minimum of steel removal is required



CHOOSE YOUR HONING WHEEL

A honing wheel is essential to remove the burr and achieve maximum sharpness. Your edge tool is polished to razor sharpness when using the LA-220 Leather Honing Wheel together with Tormek's Honing Compound. The CW-220 Composite Honing Wheel with integrated polish easily removes the burr without honing compound. Pick your favourite!

CW-220 Composite Honing Wheel

The clean way to remove a burr and put a final polish on your bevels and knife edges. The composite has polish amalgamated with its compound so there's no need to use any additional honing compounds or pastes

LA-220 Leather Honing Wheel

This leather-tyred honing wheel gently removes the burr that develops during grinding. When used with a dab of Tormek Honing Compound PA-70, it brings the edge to a mirror finish and razor sharpness

LA-120 Profiled Leather Honing Wheel

For the honing and polishing of the inside of turning and carving gouges and V-parting tools, Tormek has developed a profiled leather honing wheel made of solid tanned leather



CHOOSE YOUR JIGS



The SVD-186 R Gouge Jig in use

With a wide selection of jigs available, you can sharpen most tools from carving knives and woodturning tools, to scissors and axes.

Tormek T-8 – a powerful & versatile sharpening system

As shown last month, the Tormek T-8 is a powerful and versatile water-cooled sharpening system. The machine has a maintenance-free industrial AC motor, which is designed to run the grinding wheel during continuous use. The powerful motor is tested for 25,000 hours' service life. The efficient system manages to maintain a constant speed, even under full load, thanks to its unique drive wheel. The motor and characteristic Tormek drive system guarantee you many years of silent and reliable operation.

Smart features, such as the Tormek EzyLock nut, which enables tool-free locking and unlocking of the grinding wheel, and the advanced water trough equipped with screw lift and magnetic scraper, complete the Tormek T-8, which is internationally renowned as the ultimate sharpening system for all kinds of edge tools.

Please note that a grinding wheel, honing wheel and jigs aren't included with the Tormek T-8 Custom; buy these separately to complete your system.

THE TORMEK T-8 CUSTOM IS SUPPLIED WITH:

- **HB-10 Tormek Handbook for sharpening** – available in different language versions depending on the market;
- **WM-200 AngleMaster** – to measure the sharpening angle;
- **US-105 Universal Support** – for precision sharpening;
- **Metal plate mount** – for the WM-200 AngleMaster. ✂



FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on Tormek, see www.tormek.com
To find your nearest reseller, visit www.tormek.com/uk/en/resellers



LETTERS

★ LETTER OF THE MONTH

PALLET WOOD CHRISTMAS TREES FOR CHARITY

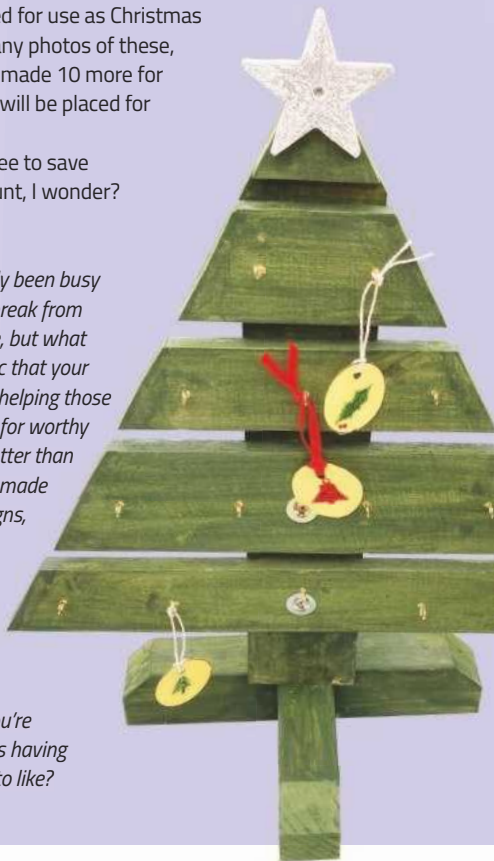
Hi Tegan,

I had a few quiet months, so decided to copy an idea for making Christmas trees from old pallets. I acquired a few of these from a friend and made a tree around 600mm tall. I added some hooks and labels, and donated it to a local preschool. The children cut out pictures from old Christmas cards and hung them on the tree. I enjoyed making this project, so much so that I then made another for a different preschool. On a roll, I approached a friend who works for a local hospice and was asked to make two more similar to the first, and another around the 1,000mm mark. I donated these to the hospice, and they now grace their two shop windows. Did I mention I was on a roll...? Three more followed; this time around 150mm high and intended for use as Christmas ornaments. I don't have any photos of these, however, but still going, I made 10 more for the same hospice, which will be placed for sale in their shop.

We're told to plant a tree to save the planet – do these count, I wonder?

Ron Davis

Hi Ron, well you've certainly been busy and I imagine you need a break from Christmas trees for a while, but what amazing work! It's fantastic that your wonderful efforts are also helping those in need and raising money for worthy causes – what could be better than that? I love the fact you've made a number of different designs, too, all in various sizes. I'm sure the children will love these and enjoy adding their own personal touches to them. I think your pallet Christmas trees definitely count as you're reusing, recycling as well as having fun doing so – what's not to like?
Best wishes, Tegan



Ron's pallet wood Christmas trees, which he donated to a local preschool



These versions, following a different design, were donated to a local hospice

WOODWORKING POETRY

Dear Tegan,

Here's an odd one! I'm the country's longest serving trade union leader, a published writer and hobby woodworker. Over the last few years, I've written a little sequence of poems on the subject of working wood. There's 11 in total; about 2,300 words in all. They celebrate the skills of woodworking and woods in a way I've not seen before. I wondered if you might be interested in these for any form of 'different' article/publication in your excellent magazine? I know it's a bit unusual, but think it could possibly work. All the best, Doug Nicholls

Hi Doug, thanks for your email. This is certainly something different as you say, and we're always interested to hear about ideas that are a bit 'outside the box'. In fact, how about a poetry mini series where a different one from your collection is published each month? Jokes, poetry – where do we go from here? We'll feature the first, 'Our Bowl', in the March issue. Many thanks again for reaching out.
Best wishes, Tegan

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- Alternatively a standard cutter can be used when guided with a guide bush.
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DISPLAY CABINETS OF CURIOSITY

Hi Tegan,

I've been in correspondence with you previously, in late 2019, when I sent an email regarding the talk I'd given to the Southern Fellowship of Woodworkers (SFWW) on Charles Hayward. In the email, I mentioned that my father had been a time-served cabinetmaker and subscriber to this very magazine. You kindly published my 'star' letter in the February 2020 edition.

My father constructed many items of furniture for our house in South Africa, among which is a matching set of cabinets in imbuia. I've long wondered if these might have been taken from examples published in *The Woodworker*, as they're very English in appearance, and the radiogram electronics are very definitely English – a Garrard record changer and Bush radio – both updated by myself in 1959, having chosen an electronics path.

The cabinets were constructed between 1946 and 1955 and are still in existence, now residing with a nephew of mine in South Africa. They're in remarkable condition, but situated in a very narrow passageway, so have been difficult to photograph.

Photo 1 shows two glass-fronted display areas to the left and right, each with three toughened glass shelves holding glassware. To the bottom centre is a narrow drawer, which holds bottle openers, drinks coasters, etc.

In the centre is a solid door with lock, which hides, at the top, a slide-out wooden tray with glass top for pouring out drinks. Midway down is a wooden



1 Imbuia display cabinet with carved ball and claw feet, featuring two glass-fronted display areas to the left and right

shelf; this provides space for the storage of liquor bottles, decanters and water jugs. To the base are carved ball and claw feet.

The second matching imbuia unit is a radiogram (**photo 2**), and behind the left-hand drop-down door is a Garrard 301 record transcription deck, which slides out on rails to provide access to place the records.

To the right, the original drop-down door was removed when I fitted an updated Bush radio in 1959. Below these units, to the left and right, are cupboards with doors for storing records.



2 The second matching imbuia unit is a radiogram, and behind the left-hand drop-down door, a Garrard 301 record transcription deck slides out on rails to provide access for placing records

In the centre behind the tambour door is a large 10in bass loudspeaker; below are two shallow drawers for storing manuals, tools and cables for the units. As before, carved ball and claw feet are added to the base.

I find Robin Gates' articles interesting with extracts from earlier issues of the magazine and wondered if it might be possible for him, if he has the time and access to back issues, for the period that I set out above, to see if they are in fact from *The Woodworker*. Certainly, some of the techniques my father used will have come from there.

Very best regards, **Arn Huddy**

Hi Arn, it's good to hear from you again and thanks for getting in touch. Yes, I do remember publishing your letter, which seems like a very long time ago now! I passed your request on to Robin Gates, but unfortunately he was unable to find any issues from this period showing similar pieces. By including your photos here along with the descriptions kindly supplied, hopefully someone reading this may be able to shed further light or offer guidance on the matter. If anyone is able to help, please email me – tegan.foley@dhpublish.co.uk – and any relevant information can be passed onwards. Best wishes, Tegan

READERS' HINTS & TIPS

For the next 11 issues, in conjunction with Veritas and Axminster Tools, we're giving one lucky reader per month the chance to get their hands on a fantastic Veritas apron plane with PM-V11 blade. Ideal for trim carpentry and featuring a ductile cast-iron body, its unique side wings allow for a comfortable, firm grip. To be in with a chance of winning this great piece of kit, just send your top workshop hints, tips or pointers – indeed anything that other readers may find useful in their woodworking journeys – to tegan.foley@dhpublish.co.uk, along with a photo(s) illustrating your tip in action. To find out more about Veritas tools, see www.axminstertools.com

veritas



To limit tear-out when cutting out small shapes in plywood, try covering the entire work surface with masking tape



HANDY HINT: TEAR-OUT SAVING TAPE

Cutting with a jigsaw causes nasty tear-out in plywood. To limit this when cutting out small shapes, I cover the whole work surface with masking tape and draw the shape onto this before cutting. Nothing eliminates tear-out altogether, but this does greatly reduce it.

Reg Barnaby

WOODWORKING JOKE OF THE MONTH

Do you have a workshop-based or woodworking-related funny you'd like to share? A comical offering that'll give us all a much-deserved laugh? If so, please email yours to tegan.foley@dhpublish.co.uk with 'Woodworking Joke of the Month' as the subject title. This month's joke has been sent in courtesy of **Sam Bryden**:

Anyone who doesn't think money grows on trees...
... clearly hasn't bought any timber lately!

Thanks to Sam for sending in this little gem and remember to keep emailing yours in – who knows, it may even appear in the next issue!

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 30-piece Router Cutter Set, worth over £100.

Simply email tegan.foley@dhpublish.co.uk for a chance to get your hands on this fantastic prize – good luck!



LOTS OF VENEER IN 'ERE

Gavin, Callum and Harry
know veneers inside out



Having paid a visit to Freed Veneers, we discover that there's a lot more to veneer than meets the eye

Despite the fact that creating items of furniture from solid hardwood is a commendable feat, when purchasing such pieces, this doesn't necessarily guarantee you top quality workmanship or even the best timber. The implication that veneer is somehow inferior is a misnomer and veneers have long been used as a means of getting the best from a tree, either in revealing beautiful grain patterns or gaining maximum yield. It's definitely a very valid part of woodworking and while sheet stock is readily available from specialist suppliers, it can be limited to common species.

Multiple uses

Look towards the high end of the market and spectacular timbers, grains and burrs

are typically used; top of the range cars, boats, aeroplanes, office boardrooms, high class stores, and of course furniture, are all areas where quality veneer is commonplace, but the actual species may not be. This is where specialist veneer suppliers Freed Veneers – also trading as The Wood Veneer Hub – have made their mark. You may not have heard of them, but chances are you've seen their veneers in the flesh or in a TV show that involves one or more of the many areas outlined above. And if you're anything like me, you just have to run your hand over a stunning piece of timber when you see it, which in all likelihood, would've been a veneer supplied by Freed.

I visited their warehouse, situated on the outskirts of Leighton Buzzard, to meet up with founder and owner Laurence Freed, to get the lowdown on the company and its background.

Building a business

Laurence started out in the wood business back in 1977 and began his apprenticeship with a company called William Mallinson & Sons, based in East London. From there he learnt all about the various wood species and grading of



Freed HQ, the place where beautiful, rare and more commonplace veneers abound!

different logs being shipped in from all over the world. Being an ambitious guy, Laurence pointed out that he loved introducing new veneers into the various sectors that he covered and was quite dynamic in his approach to work. This dynamism has led to an extensive travel itinerary, meaning that Laurence has worked for, and with, a multitude of wood veneer companies all over the world.

By clocking up the air miles, Laurence was keen to state that doing so allowed him to visit a wide range of mills and warehouses, meaning he could snap up the gems and special veneers before they'd been shown to anyone else.

In 2000 Laurence started up Freed (Veneers) Ltd in Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, with his main focus being the automotive industry. This is still a very large part of the business today and he's proud to have Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, Bentley Motors and Jaguar Land Rover on his client list. Laurence has also since been able to expand his operations, which now include supplying bespoke furniture, aircraft and marine industries on an international level.

Apart from the highly figured burls and sliced veneers, Laurence has built a partnership with a supplier, which means he's now able to offer coloured, smoked and engineered veneers.

Web development

With the business expanding, Laurence made the decision to employ Gavin Campbell in 2001. Coming from a retail background, Gavin is very customer service focused and having him on board gives Laurence more flexibility in terms of travelling around and sourcing veneers for various customers.

In 2012, Laurence's son Callum also joined



One of the many racks of veneers, each loaded with stunning examples

the family business having returned from studying civil engineering at Brighton University. His main focus was to work alongside Gavin and learn about the various veneers, while at the same time building and developing The Wood Veneer Hub website. Laurence commented: "We wanted to create an easy to use website, which was uncomplicated to navigate and would appeal to a whole range of sectors, from DIY to manufacturers."

Within three months, Callum, with the help of Harry Conquest, had built the first website. With a background in web development, Harry and Callum worked together to get the site up and running, and importantly, taking orders.

Always striving to achieve the best and yet at the same time trying to see the website from a customer's point of view, The Wood Veneer Hub was initially launched in 2013 although has since undergone numerous redevelopments.

Laurence pointed out his desire to utilise the internet and make the website very easy



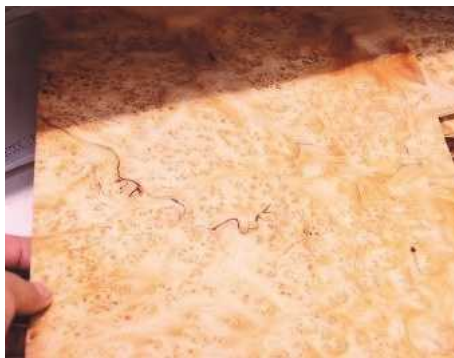
A whole range of matching edgebandings are also available

for visitors and customers to navigate, going on to comment that "the feedback we've received certainly gives us the impression that it's doing so. We have to ensure we cater for all age groups owing to the diversity of products offered – we never know if the next phone call or online order will be for a skateboard kit or veneer pack; that's the best thing about this job. We love the interaction with customers whether that's over the phone or a visit in person. On many occasions, customers have called us and booked a visit because they're after a certain look or colour and we always try our best to help them; we'll even email photos beforehand if required, and on one occasion, veneer was even purchased using Facetime!"

Laurence goes on to explain that they also encourage customers to send in photos of where and how the veneers have been used and add these to the website's blog area: "It always gives us a buzz to see what our products have been transformed into." ▶



Contemporary colours and natural timbers are all part of the range



If you prefer a traditional look, burl veneer is stocked in all manner of species...



... while the more adventurous can opt for one of many composite designs



The Peel & Stick range is currently very popular and available in a decent range of species



To use, you simply pull the backing paper away, ready for application...



... and once on the substrate, apply pressure with a 'J' roller to ensure a good bond



Starter packs are also available for those wishing to have a go at a smaller project

Peel & Stick range

From my own point of view, it's always nice to speak to people who're so passionate and enthusiastic about their business, and in Laurence and his team, you get that in spades. I was also given the lowdown on the wide range of veneers and products they stock, in addition to the tools required to do the job. So, you can get top quality advice on timbers, as well as expert knowledge on how to prepare and lay the veneers.

Although traditional veneers will always tend to muster the best workmanship and high-end use, Laurence pointed out: "We have a huge range of natural veneers, but our current bestseller is the Peel & Stick range. These are real wood veneers, which have had an adhesive back applied; they can be used for a multitude of purposes but the main selling point is ease of use."

I had a quick go myself to test these claims, and it seems pretty foolproof! It's easily cut to size with scissors and as long as the substrate is clean and free of dust, peeling the backer partly off to establish initial alignment, then peeling the remainder and flattening into place delivers first class results. A quick run over with a 'J' roller to ensure any air is pushed out and the bond achieved appears to be superb.



Alternatively, how about this fabulous Hawaiian koa at £250 per sq.m...

Highly prized veneers

But of course, outside of the more traditional veneers – from decorative thinner ones to the more durable and thicker construction veneers for higher traffic areas – it's the exotics that have the 'wow' factor. The warehouse is racked out with thousands of leaves of veneer, and while some can be purchased at a snip, highly prized examples carry a much heftier price tag. Gavin showed me some white ebony; a contradiction if ever there was one if you accept that ebony is predominantly black. This is a pale creamy timber with highly streaked black contours, and in terms of value, I was informed that it costs around £90 per sq.m!

Thinking that was enough to make me faint, he then went on to tell me they'd just received a pallet delivery of valuable koa veneer. This was a commissioned purchase and the Hawaiian tree it came from is sought after owing to its beautiful grain patterns and finish once polished. If you thought the white ebony was expensive, this one costs around £250 per sq.m! A quick calculation revealed

that the pallet was holding around £200,000 worth of veneers...

Something for everyone

Despite the obvious areas where such exquisite veneers are used, Freed Veneers have their feet firmly on the ground and will sell the smallest of veneers to the hobbyist looking to make a trinket box, to customers working for multi-millionaire clients and buying vast amounts. Simply put, no customer is too big or too small.

Best of all, if you don't want traditional burls, quartersawn or other fancy natural veneer, there's a whole range of contemporary coloured varieties, engineered boards with composite construction, and much more beyond. Chances are, if you have something in your mind's eye that you'd like to make but are struggling to source a particular veneer or material to achieve a unique look, Freed will likely stock it, or if not, be able to get hold of it.

Looking at the stunning images showing these veneers in use, and taking into account the company's impressive client portfolio, this is definitely testament to the use of veneers in both traditional and contemporary settings. ✂

FURTHER INFORMATION

Address: Unit 8 Ouzel Industrial Estate
Grovebury Road, Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire, LU7 4ER
Web: www.freedveneers.co.uk;
www.thewoodveneerhub.co.uk



Freed Veneers are used on the interior dash and panels of this Rolls-Royce



High class marine work is all part of Freed Veneers' client base



Gavin was keen to point out that it's not just sliced or peeled veneers that are available!

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I used to paint a bit – not masterpieces by any stretch of the imagination – but then for some reason, I stopped. It may've been due to moving and no longer having the space, or possibly some other issue, but of late I've noticed a spate of appealing exhibitions at Tate Modern. As a result, the urge to make an awful mess with paints came upon me again, so I decided to buy a student set of acrylics, a tub of gesso, along with some painting knives.

When I painted in the past, I used to lay the canvas on the kitchen table, but this time round I fancied an easel, so I started by looking online. The type I had in mind was a large studio easel, and having trawled around various websites looking for ideas, I eventually settled on two basic versions: an H-shaped one



1 The starting point for my artist's easel was an old futon bed frame

with a central post on which the shelves sat; and a single upright, which only supported the shelves and canvas' middle. I decided to go for the H-frame owing to its sturdiness, as it'd support the large panels I intend to use.

The problem I had was the cost, being anywhere from a couple of hundred pounds to over a thousand. Considering that there couldn't be more than £30 to £40 worth of timber involved, I went off to the woodpile to see what was available.

Timber supply

My woodpile is increasingly well stocked, but I didn't really want to build the thing out of black walnut, maple or elm. It's going to get abused, covered in paint and all sorts of unpleasantness, so furniture-grade wood would therefore be a complete waste. On the other hand, I didn't want to build a plywood and MDF monstrosity. Time for a cuppa and a think...

... Then I had a light bulb moment. Almost 20 years ago when we moved into our one-bedroom flat in London, we bought a futon-type sofa bed for the occasional guest who might pass through. The mattress has long since fallen apart but the wooden frame has been sat in the attic for the past six years. Thinking that there must surely be enough timber in a sofa bed to build an easel with, I pulled it all out and set to work recycling it.

It was surprisingly easy to dismantle, a few well-aimed mallet swings and the battle was over – at least, I thought it was. In reality the enemy had simply slipped from the battle-field leaving nasty

SOFA SO GOOD



CHISEL
RATING



Itching to paint again, Mike Riley reuses the frame from an old futon sofa bed to make himself an easel



2 The timber, which looks like engineered beech, cleaned up nicely

surprises in the shape of a million nails embedded in the wood behind. It took the best part of an afternoon, armed with a pair of pliers, to remove the nails and even then I didn't manage to get them all. Some, the pliers simply cut the heads off leaving the shank embedded, while a couple just refused to be moved altogether. As most of the metal work had been inserted in a uniform fashion, I was able to plan my cuts around them, and so pieces with the recalcitrant nails became waste.

Eventually I had a pile of stock timber. On closer examination, it appears to be a kind of engineered beech, engineered in as much as sections of it are made from smaller boards, which have been machined together with very fine finger joints. The boards, as they were now, also showed



5 Red dust from the mystery timber



3 Marking one piece from another

signs of their previous life; some had rebates formed on the end, some sections had various holes in, etc. I wasn't concerned with the holes – there was nothing that'd get in the way of what I laughingly refer to as my design.

Four steps

I broke the build down into four sections, choosing and preparing the material from the pile as I went – these consisted of H-frame, base, shelves and the support.

The base was simple: four pieces joined by lap joints at each end gave me a basic footprint for the easel. I drilled the sides with a Forstner bit so that I could later fit a large dowel through as a hinge between the frame and base. Once the square base was constructed, I fitted a foot



6 The shelves are held by my bolt and block assembly, the dome nut held captive by lots of CA adhesive

at each corner. The H-frame was next. The rebates on what had been the slats in the sofa back slotted into rebates in what had been the sides, to give me the basic frame shape I was after. I glued them in place and then nailed them in for extra security.

The centre post was formed from one long section of sofa, which I ripped along its length on the bandsaw to provide a channel through which to pass the shelf locking mechanism. I could also set a block into it to hold the shelves at 90°.

The easel shelves were fairly simple constructions. The lower shelf is slightly different in as much as it has an L-shaped profile to provide a slightly deeper surface



4 Detail – end of the centre post

for a panel to sit on. I'm not sure what the wood used for the lower shelf is, but it gave off a fine unpleasant reddish dust when put through the bandsaw. It planed well, though and took an attractive finish from the iron.

The shelves are moved by means of releasing a bolt, which runs through the shelf and guide-block assembly, through the centre post and into a threaded insert set in a clamp block located on the easel's reverse. I made the bolts from 8mm threaded rod, which have a knob on the end, by means of a threaded insert and dome nut. I liberally coated their inside surfaces with CA adhesive, which seems quite strong.

Finishing up

All that remained was the rear support, which is simply two legs, one on either side, that swing out and rest against the inside of the base to hold up the front. Once the supports were in place, I could move on to the assembly phase.

The finished easel is quite stable and sturdy and I'm pleased that the sofa bed has been given a new lease of life rather than ending its days in a landfill. Having never had an easel before I'm looking forward to trying it out, though I have to win it back first from the boy who's decided that it's better than the easel I made him a few years ago. His has a blackboard surface, however, so perhaps I should just give him my oils and take up the chalks instead! ✂

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AROUND THE HOUSE WITH PHIL DAVY



Living in workshop limbo – all part of my ongoing house move across the country – has thrown up some unexpected challenges. All my timber, sheet materials, cramps and other equipment is currently stored in a shipping container, so for extra security, I'd added a second padlock to the door handles. All well and good, until I needed my router bits stored inside. There'd been a heavy frost, and with no spray lubricant I couldn't release the lock, the key almost shearing off in my hand. I thought of cutting through the boron carbide shackle, but my cordless angle grinder was in a garage 70 miles away...

Thankfully, a local shoe repairer came to the rescue. He managed to cut a new key, copying the remains of the old one, and hey presto! With several squirts of newly-acquired WD40, the lock was opened. I've since discovered that boron carbide is used in tank armour and bulletproof vests, so I'm not sure an angle grinder would've made much of an impression anyway!

Q&A BRUSHES FOR VARNISHES

Q Could you give me some tips on what type of brush is best for finishing, please? I'm building some hardwood furniture and would like to use a clear acrylic varnish, probably satin, rather than polyurethane, but could do with a few pointers.

P Bates, Ascot

A Acrylic varnishes are certainly convenient as you can apply several coats in a day. They don't discolour pale timbers as polyurethanes do, but the downside is that you're likely to end up with brush marks in the finish. Even with meticulous preparation this is difficult to avoid, meaning you'll end up having to sand the surface, rather than just denib between coats. You should use a brush with synthetic rather than natural bristles for water-based finishes, though using a foam pad will give better results, particularly on wide, flat areas. For profiled edges you'll need a narrow brush, but don't skimp on quality. As with tools, buy the best brushes you can afford. Although much cheaper, foam pads deteriorate fairly rapidly, so it's worth buying several at a time

When it comes to applying finishes, don't skimp on quality as far as brushes are concerned. As with tools, buy the best you can afford



Q&A FLATBIT OR FORSTNER?

Q As I have various hardwood offcuts in the workshop, I'd like to use them to make tealight and candle holders. These are likely to be about 45mm thick, but I'm not sure what sort of drill bit is best for boring the holes, which need to be as neat as possible.

C Clements, Norwich

A For tealights you'll need a bit about 40mm in diameter, though for safety it's best to use a glass or metal surround that's recessed into the timber. Buy these first and check the size before obtaining a bit. The cheapest option is to use a flatbit, though its point is likely to poke through the base of the wood, depending on hole depth. You could get round this by filling each hole underneath with a suitable two-part filler before sanding flush and finishing the timber. Cheap flatbits tend to wobble slightly, resulting in slightly oversize holes.

The tidiest hole will be produced by a Forstner bit, which creates a flat bottom. More expensive than flatbits, these shouldn't be used in a power drill held freehand. Ideally the bit should be fitted in a bench drill, or electric drill mounted in a drillstand. Avoid using any type of auger bit with threaded tip. This will wrench the workpiece upwards as you lower it into the wood.



The tidiest hole will be produced by a Forstner bit, which creates a flat bottom

Ensure to cramp your timber to the drillstand base, moving it for each hole. Check hole diameter on scrap softwood first, and always feed the bit into the wood slowly to avoid burning. If it starts smoking, stop boring and allow the bit to cool. Scrape off any resin deposits and resume boring

SPRING PROJECT:
NEST BOXES

TWO FOR THE BIRDS

Takes:
Half a day

Tools you'll need:
Hand tools, jigsaw,
sander, cordless drill,
drillstand. Optional:
router, mitre saw



Phil Davy's simple tit and sparrow boxes are a win-win all round: the birds will love them and they're very easy to construct

With several species of our native bird population in decline, most of us will want to do what we can to help reverse the situation. A simple nesting box is probably the most basic woodworking project, but will be appreciated by anyone who has a soft spot for our feathered friends. It's a good way to use up softwood offcuts, but do avoid using pressure-treated timber. Alternatively you could use exterior plywood, though obviously not MDF or any material intended for interior use.

This is a real hammer and nails job, with a spot of PVA here and there. You don't really need any power tools, apart from a drill. A jigsaw is handy

for shaping the corners and if you plan to make several nest boxes, then a mitre saw will save you loads of time. Although it may be tempting, don't add a perch; birds don't actually need them. For easier access you could hinge the lid, though you should only need to remove this once a year to clean out the box. A couple of narrow strips of wood glued inside will help young to reach the entrance/exit hole on their first expedition into the new world.

Terraced housing

Sparrows are a lot more sociable than most garden birds and like to nest in colonies. Terraced boxes with space for several residents are popular and easy to make, with internal dividers creating individual nest spaces with separate entrance holes. Don't worry too much about grain direction on adjacent pieces here, though if this were furniture it'd be a different matter. Nest boxes will be at the mercy of the elements, so occasional splits are inevitable.

This sparrow box measures 520mm long and 245mm high at the back – before adding the roof – which is angled at 70°. Like the blue tit box, all softwood is 20mm thick.

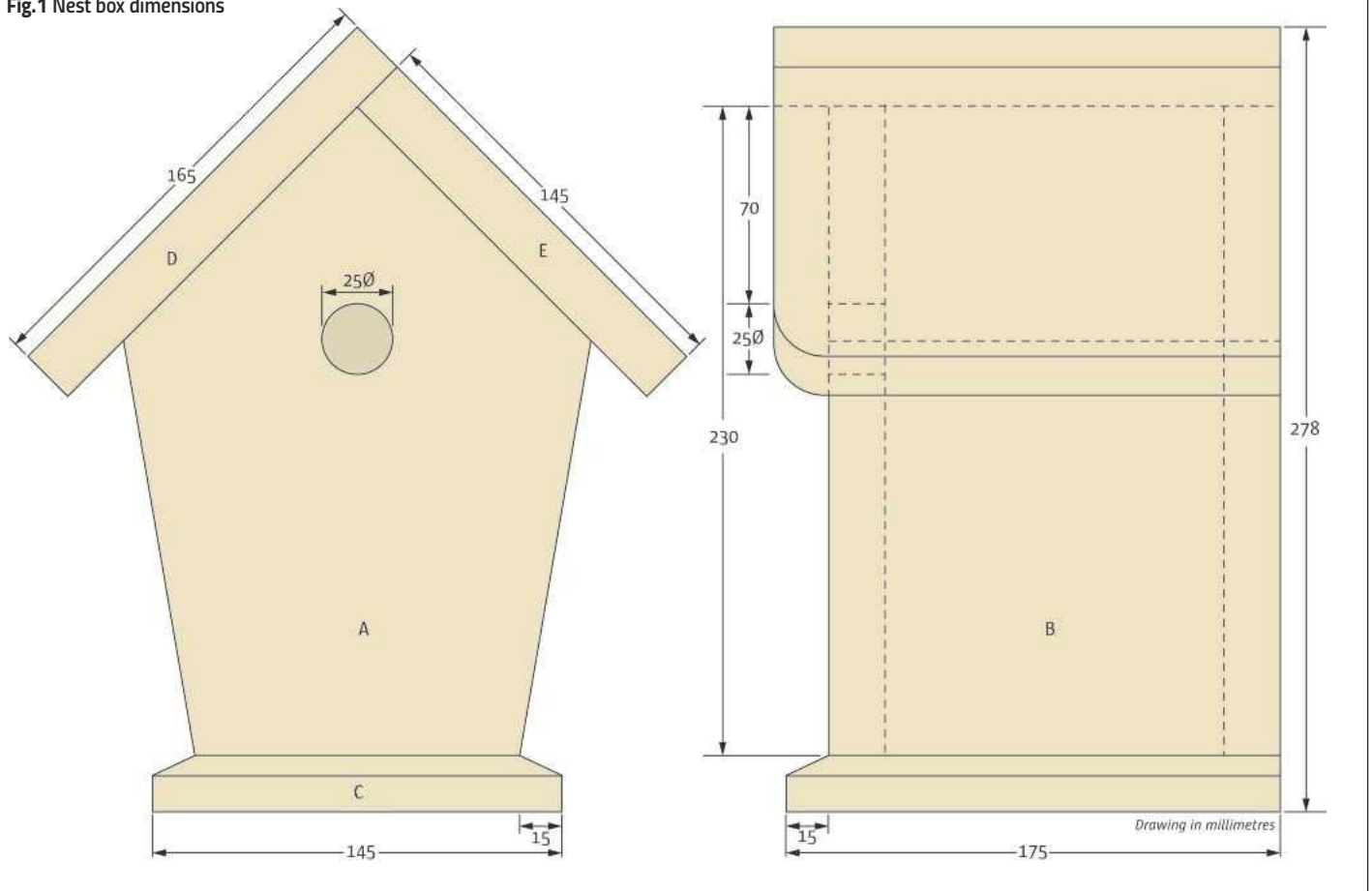
Box positioning

With the seasons becoming less predictable than ever, it's hard to know exactly when's the best time to position a nest box, although the RSPB suggests autumn. Birds tend to check out potential homes in autumn and winter, while blue tits choose February or even March for raising their young. It's unlikely potential visitors will take to a new box immediately, so fixing one in place now will give birds a chance to get used to it. Don't expect it to have residents in the first few months, or even a year, however. The nest box I originally built remained empty for nine months or more and had its first tentative visitors in early January.

For more information on nest box hole sizes and positioning, visit www.rspb.org.



Fig.1 Nest box dimensions



NEST BOX



1 Mark out the front and back sections using a combination square; the roof is pitched at 45°



2 Cut front, rear and side pieces to size with a fine-toothed hand saw or mitre saw



3 Front and back are tapered towards the bottom; mark and cut with a jigsaw, then clean up with a plane



4 Cramp front and back together and trim upper edges with a bench plane, checking for square



5 The blue tit box entrance hole should be 25mm diameter; mark the centre and drill with a flatbit



6 Glue and pin the front to the sides, followed by the back; pre-drill nail holes to prevent wood splitting



7 Trim lower edges flush with a plane, working in from the ends towards the middle to avoid breakout



8 Draw around a coin to form curved corners on the roof sections; carefully cut with a jigsaw



9 Clean up curves with a sanding drum in a drillstand or abrasive block. Repeat for front corners of the base



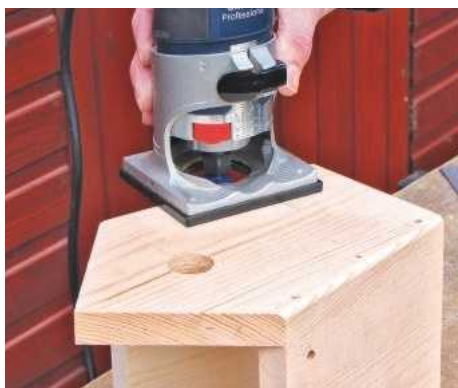
10 Glue and pin roof sections together at 90°; make the joint slightly proud and plane flush when dry



11 The base's upper edges are chamfered at 30°; mark with a gauge and plane to the lines



12 Form a keyhole slot for the screw in the back by drilling 10mm and 5mm holes, 10mm apart; join up with a jigsaw



13 Profile the box's front vertical edges with a router fitted with a bearing-guided rounding-over cutter



14 Punch all nail holes below the surface and apply exterior filler; drill a couple of drainage holes in the base



15 Glue and nail the box base in place, checking that the overhang on each side is identical; rear edges should be flush



16 Sand the box and roof section, then remove arisises; add internal strips before fixing the roof



17 Drill roof holes and fix to the box with 40mm screws; the rear edge is flush with the box's reverse



18 Brush on two coats of suitable exterior water-based finish, but leave the inside surfaces bare



SPARROW BOX



1 Cut the ends and internal dividers to length using a mitre saw; top edges are angled at 70°



2 Saw front and rear panels to size, then, using a bench plane, bevel the top edge of both pieces to match the ends



3 Glue front, rear and end sections together and clamp; add nails, pre-drilling the holes to stop splits



4 Check internal dividers slide into the box; these can be glued and pinned at any stage



5 Cut the bottom to size for a snug fit inside the box; glue and pin, punching nails below the surface



6 Mark centres and bore 32mm holes with a flatbit, remembering to clamp the offcut underneath



7 When the glue has dried, trim ends flush with a plane; note one entry hole is at the end of the box



8 To soften edges, rout with a rounding-over or chamfer bit; fill nail holes and sand the box



9 Drill holes in the back and saw to form keyhole slots; you'll need 5mm screws for this due to the box's weight



10 Check top edges are flush, trimming with a finely-set plane if necessary; tidy up internal arrises



11 Cut the top to size and round front corners; drill and screw to the box, checking the overhang is equal



12 Choose your location and fix the sparrow box high up on a wall, preferably under the eaves ✂

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Wheel size	Ø250 x 50mm
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CHISEL
RATING

JESSICA'S BED

Tasked with building a 'grown up' bed for his young granddaughter, **David Long** had to maximise available space as well as incorporating integrated storage boxes that would fit neatly underneath

Having recently celebrated her fourth birthday, it was time for my granddaughter, Jessica, to move up from her cot bed to a 'big girl's' bed. In order to maximise the remaining floorspace/toy area, it needed to fit into an alcove that was just 870mm wide between skirting boards. This was too narrow for all identified UK bed frames – including 2ft 6in mattress ones – and the IKEA continental ones – 800mm wide mattresses. Up went the familiar cry of "Granddad can build one" and shown in this article is the making of that bed. This project also gave me a great opportunity to use my new Festool Domino jointer.

Design & dimension constraints

Width was the overriding factor for this project, along with the requirement to maximise space under the bed with movable storage bins. To give a bit of allowance for out-of-square walls,

the head and footboard width were set at 860mm. We decided to use an IKEA 800 × 2,000mm MALFORS mattress and LURÖY slatted bed base, which after allowing 5mm all round gave me just 50mm maximum remaining width for the side rails! Ultimately, each side rail finished at approximately 23mm thick.

Other main target dimensions included a headboard height of 840mm and footboard height of approximately 600mm, with both tops shaped similar to the previous cot bed. The top of the mattress height from the floor was set to 530mm and needed to be 40mm above the top of the side rail. The side rail bottoms needed to be between 300-350mm from the floor. Finally, three identical storage bins, on wheels and as deep as possible, also had to be accommodated – these ended up being 800mm deep × 650mm wide × 260mm internal height.

TIME TAKEN & COST

- Ignoring the initial sizing and acclimatising of timber, the actual construction time was over two weekends, plus a few evenings for sanding and varnishing
- Approximate cost of materials – £240
- Whitewood and sheet of 12mm ply – £120 – mainly because I asked for it to be planed to 25mm, which came from ex 32mm stock
- IKEA mattress and slats – £95
- Three packs of Screwfix 40mm castor wheels – £7.50
- Dowel nuts and bolts – approximately £4 from eBay
- Varnish from B&Q in light oak satin – £15
- Festool Domino jointer – best not mention that in case my wife reads this!

CUTTING LIST

Sort	Quantity	Description	Length (L)	Width (W)	Thickness (T)	Material	Notes
1	2	Head leg	780	94	20	Softwood	
2	1	Headboard fill	672	430	20	Softwood	
3	2	Foot leg	530	94	20	Softwood	
4	1	Footboard fill	672	515	20	Softwood	
5	2	Head/tailboard top shape	860	59	20	Softwood	Longer as these top the legs as well as the infill
6	2	Frame side	2,000	180	20	Softwood	
7	2	Slat support	2,000	40	30	Softwood	
8	3	Drawer front	650	310	12	12mm ply	
9	3	Storage back	526	263	12	12mm ply	
10	3	Storage base	800	550	12	12mm ply	
11	6	Storage side	800	263	12	12mm ply	
12	6	Castor holder	800	40	20	Softwood	
	3	Wheel packs				Screwfix 65240	£7.50
	1	IKEA MALFORS mattress	2,000	800	120		£80
	1	Slat rail	2,000	800	40		£15

Please note that all dimensions are in millimetres





Fig.1 SketchUp diagram of bed frame and storage – front...

Design

As is my usual approach, I created a 3D design in SketchUp (**Figs.1 & 2**), using separate layers for the main topics – headboard, footboard, frame, drawers, etc. With design constraints sorted and the mattress/slat combination chosen – as this influenced the side rail widths and positioning – the design was fairly straightforward as it uses rectangles.

I imported the 40mm wheel design as a model from the 3D warehouse. In order to create the curves for the head/footboard,

I referenced a photo of the cot bed and adjusted the sketchUp arc and circle tools until I got somewhere close. I then overlaid a 50mm grid on this section and printed it full-size, so it could be used as a template.

Materials

To keep costs down, the bed was constructed from local – independent – timber yard whitewood, planed to 25mm, at a standard 94mm width, except for the side rails at 180mm and 12mm ply for the storage unit.

I use the 'Optimik' sheet material program to get the best component layout on a sheet and the timber yard accepts this and cuts the components at no extra cost. Once home, I converted the whitewood cutting list into lengths of 2.4m, then marked and cut the component parts so that the best wood was used in the most visible parts – top of the headboard and tailboard. All the timber was then left in a bedroom for a few weeks to stabilise (**photo 1**), before being lightly planed back to flat and a finished thickness of 23mm. The only hardware needed were 4 × M6 × 20mm dowel nuts and 75mm bolts – to fit the side rails to the ends – and four sets of 40mm castors for the storage units.

Headboard & tailboard

Both the headboard and tailboard follow the same process (**photo 2**). I chose to use my new Festool Domino joiner for all construction, but dowels or biscuits will also do the job.

One of the Domino's benefits that I began to appreciate quite quickly is that it has tight, loose and looser mortise width settings. Using the tight one on both joint halves,



1 Head and footboard timbers ready to stick



2 Building up the headboard panel



3 Marking Domino positions for the leg



4 Tight Domino mortises in the panel



5 Draw dowel fitting the breadboard legs

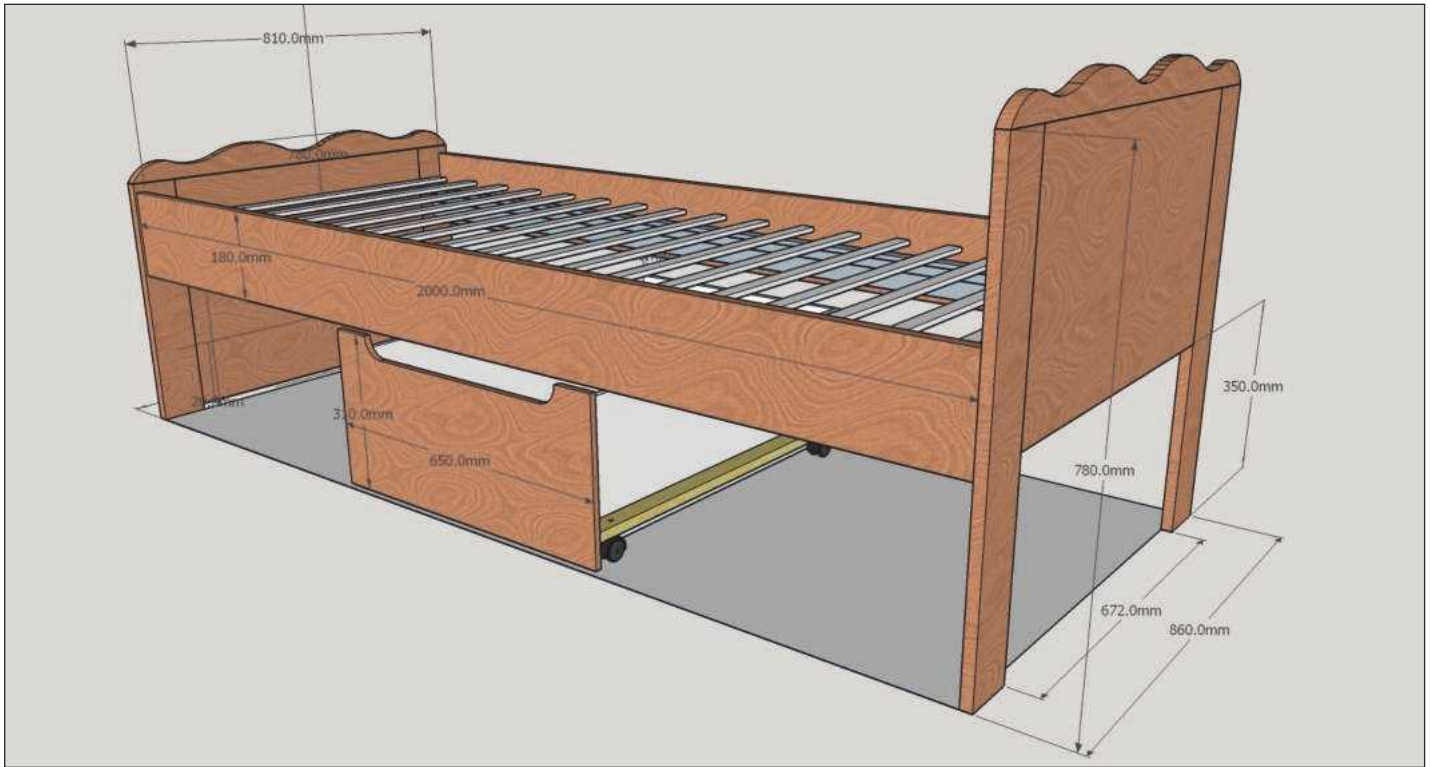


Fig.2 ... and back

with the Domino pin registered gives an exact alignment, unlike biscuits. When joining the panel boards, subsequent mortises could utilise the loose setting to make assembly easier as the alignment stays registered by the first tight joint.

With the headboard panel glued and trimmed to size, the legs needed to be fitted. I was concerned that the solid wood panel would move, so attached the legs using the breadboard technique normally employed on dining tables – I found the Domino method on a YouTube video. First, the Domino positions were marked and cut in the panel using the 'tight' setting (**photo 3**). The top Domino in the leg was also cut tight (**photo 4**) – referenced from the top of the leg, which is flush with the top of the panel at this point; this formed the 'lock' and was ultimately glued. The next two leg mortises were cut on the loose setting and the final lower one on the widest setting. The Dominos were glued into the panel but not the leg, then dry assembled. Blind draw dowel holes were then drilled (**photo 5**), the leg removed and dowel holes in the Dominos elongated

(**photo 6**). Once done, the top Domino and top of the leg were glued, with dowels, then fitted and glued into the panel to retain the leg, but allowing the panel to move as needed (**photo 7**). The remaining three Dominos weren't glued into the leg.

The final headboard top was then Dominoed to the top of the legs and panel (**photo 8**) and the shape marked from the template (**photo 9**), cut with a jigsaw and trimmed with a router bearing-guided cutter. I only just got away with positioning the Domino above the leg, as the curve came very close to exposing it.

The final work on the ends is to drill a

7mm bolt hole (**photo 10**) and two Domino slots (**photo 11**). The bottom slot is tight to tight – the reference one – and the top slot tight to loose – to allow easier assembly while still preventing twist. This is a straightforward task once clearly marked and the reference defined – position for the bottom of the side rail.

Side rail fittings

The side rails are just straight pieces of timber that require a 10mm diameter hole to be drilled for the dowel nut, a 7mm hole for the bolt from the end that accurately meets this, and Domino slots aligned to those in the legs. For the nut and



6 Dowel holes enlarged for movement



7 Leg mortises cut wider for movement



8 Top board fitted to headboard



9 Top shape template from 1:1 printout



10 Drilling template for the leg bolt hole



11 Side rail Domino locations in leg



12 Jig for the side rail, dowel nut fitting



13 Dry fit of frame – it fitted first time!



14 Dominos for the storage box front



15 Glue-up of box frame



16 View of wheels from base box underside

bolt holes, I created a simple jig from scrap 63 × 38mm CLS timber and a piece of ply with a 90° angle (**photo 12**). Using a pillar drill and 7mm bit, an accurate hole was drilled, which was centred so that it was exactly half the side rail's thickness. This was then screwed to the ply such that the ply edge could reference the bottom of the rail. For the other end, in order to keep the same face reference, I just unscrewed the jig and reversed it.

Due to the CLS' thickness, this gives the accuracy required to guide the drill bit – I used a Colt 7mm pen drill, which was the length required.

The hole for the dowel nut is 10mm diameter and needs to be deep enough so that the centre is aligned with the bolt centre. In my case, the timber thickness was 23mm and the dowel nut 20mm, so the centre needed to be at 11.5mm with a hole drilled to a depth of 21.5mm. Don't buy a 25mm dowel nut for 25mm timber unless you want to drill right through and have it exposed. Finally, the timber support for the slats is screwed on – its position such that the mattress, when placed on the slats, ends up 40mm higher than the side rail.

on side rails. I opted for 40mm wheels with a threaded fitting into 'T' nuts (**photo 17**), as I thought this gave more scope for height adjustment. I did make an error in the SketchUp design – the side rails are 50mm wide, but the wheel swivel isn't centred, so the actual centre of the 'T' nut is 40mm from the edge, not 25mm.

With the drawers assembled, it was then just a case of sanding, varnishing and delivering the bed to one very happy four-year-old who still, two months later, has to show it to visitors, telling them how she doesn't like it, she loves it! ✂



17 Close-up of wheel fitted to the support

The storage units

Another discovered benefit of the Domino is that the 4mm Dominos can be used in 12mm ply; this made assembly straightforward once the offsets had been determined to Domino the front (**photo 14**), which overhangs the sides and hides the wheel rails – I just practised on scrap first.

I designed the storage units based on a project featured on the Axminster Tools website, entitled 'how to make multi-purpose storage units'. Using this method allows you to keep maximum storage depth by having the wheels



18 Several views of the fitted storage



19 In situ with slats in place...



20 ... and with mattress fitted



21 Headboard detail

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GETTING BACK TO (SPINDLE) BASICS

New to turning or need a bit of a refresher in terms of spindle turning tools and their uses? Great news if so as **Les Thorne** gets back to basics and covers each tool in detail

I once heard a woodturning club member commenting on why some demonstrators feel the need to take an audience back to basics, remarking that beads and coves just didn't interest him. That's a thought-provoking statement as there's very little woodturning that doesn't contain convex and concave shapes.

Practice makes perfect is a saying that's often bandied about and obviously this is true, but when it comes to turning, good practice is what's important. I like my students to produce projects while perfecting their tooling techniques rather than just creating endless shapes.

There's simple projects, such as dibbers, foot massagers and bud

vases that aren't particularly taxing, but do contain all elements of the simple shapes, and also importantly, a margin for error. I see a lot of work both here and abroad which is turned very well, and I'm sure that the method to produce them varies hugely. I can remember seeing some fantastic work from a turner over a period of years and I always admired his form and finish. I jumped at the chance to see him demonstrate and was absolutely amazed at how he turned; it was the polar opposite to the way in which I would've done it! I may have been able to produce the items more quickly, but they weren't necessarily better. Overleaf we'll take a look at each of the commonly-used spindle turning tools. ▶

THE SPINDLE ROUGHING GOUGE



1 Like most tools, they come in many sizes with the majority being forged versions, which can be expensive. Ideally, this tool shouldn't be used on faceplate work, such as bowls



2 The tool is best sharpened using a platform to set the angle. Placing marker pen on the bevel will show whether or not you're grinding the correct angle



3 The angle is around 40° although the majority of spindle roughing gouges have an angle higher than that; this diminishes its cutting effectiveness



4 The tool is presented to the wood with the right hand down and the handle tucked into the body



5 I like to present the tool at right angles and use the centre to turn away the timber's square corners



6 Using the centre for initial cutting allows the tool's wings to remain sharp. You can now utilise these for the finishing cuts



7 The tool can be used for shaping curves but ensure the bevel remains in contact with the timber, as the tool has a tendency to run back if you go onto the edge



THE SKEW CHISEL

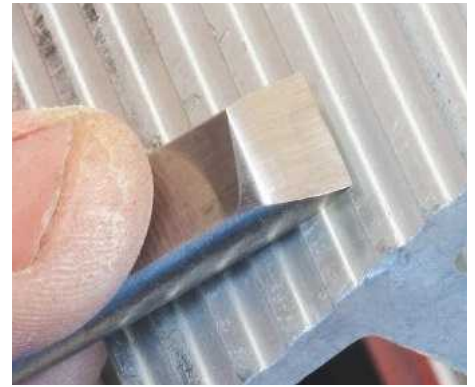
1 The skew is often seen as the bad boy of turning because it's difficult to master but well worth persevering with. There's many different types available, as shown above



2 My preferred skew is a 13mm version with rolled edge; this stops it sticking on the toolrest. Sharpening it on a jig gives consistent results every time



3 If you need to sharpen on a platform, try to get your hands in a position that allows you to slide the tool sideways



4 Here I've ground off the skew's heel; it negates the fact that the tool is hollow ground, otherwise it could mark the wood. The angle across the top is around 15°



5 The tool is ground to an angle of around 20°; this will allow it to easily slice through the timber's fibres



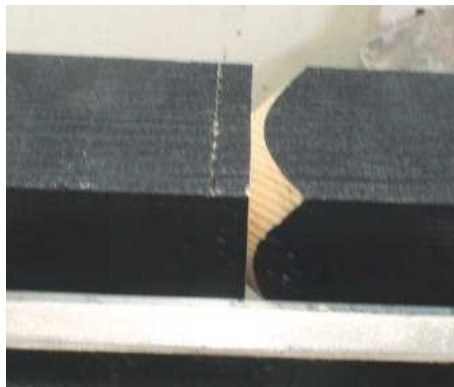
6 I've sprayed a piece of pine black to make it easier to see the cuts made. I've marked the area that'll be cut in from square to round



7 The stance used is normal for most of the tools. The left hand is generally over the tool, which creates a tunnel for it to be rotated in



8 The tool is presented with the left-hand bevel at right angles to the work and the longer point downwards. Lift the handle to slice into the wood



9 If you repeat the process, working the tool slightly to the right each time, you should create a square pommel on the left



10 You can see that I'm now shaping the left-hand side into a curve with a slicing cut through the timber's end-grain



11 If used correctly, you'll only cut using the tool's point. If you start to see dust appear on the skew's bevel, you're very close to having a catch



12 A perfect pommel – the curve will need very little sanding as the finish off the skew is so good. The stock to the right is removed down to round using the spindle roughing gouge



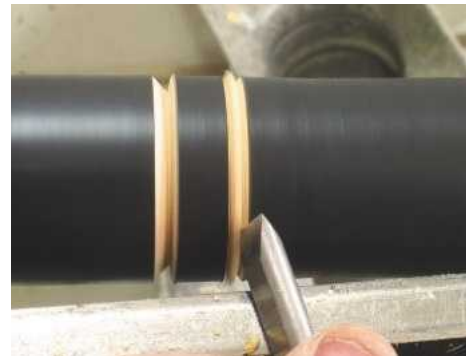
13 The spindle roughing gouge won't leave a great finish, especially on pine. The skew is now presented with its centre cutting and bevel rubbing



14 Here you can see the quality of cut achieved using the skew compared to the spindle roughing gouge. The only time this cut won't work is on really hard, dense woods



15 One little tip when carrying out a planing cut is to control the tool by sliding your little finger along the toolrest; this controls the depth and direction of cut



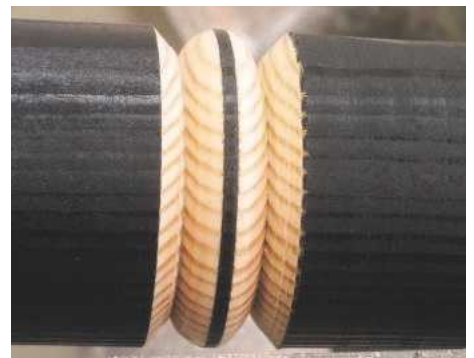
16 The skew chisel is most famously regarded as a shaping tool, especially when it comes to turning beads. Here I've cut a one-sided 'V' to mark out the bead's position



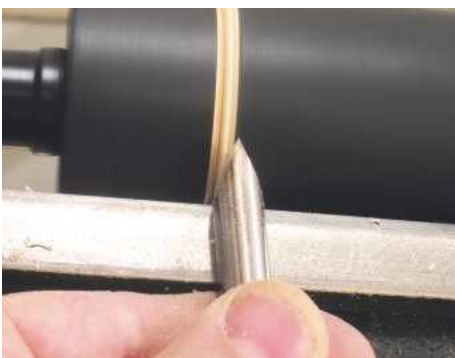
17 I like to remove a little off the bead's edge before shaping it. I position the skew more to one side and using the long point, just slice off the edge



18 I like to turn the main shape in one pass; this'll generally give you the best opportunity for a good shape. Moving your body round as the tool advances helps to avoid catches



19 The perfect bead. The black line at the top shows that I haven't changed the diameter. A bead should look as if the wood's been parted and the bead simply inserted



20 The round skew has a few advantages: it'll make a 'V' just as you can with the ordinary version, although I also find it easier to sharpen



21 The other benefit of the 10mm skew is that you can cut spigots and tenons much quicker in comparison to a parting tool



THE SPINDLE GOUGE

1 Spindle gouges are available in all manner of sizes: the far one is a forged version whereas most modern ones are manufactured from round bar with a flute milled out



2 Set the grinder platform so that the tool's bevel is a perfect match onto the wheel. On my grinder, I've cut the platform away; this allows me to better position my hands



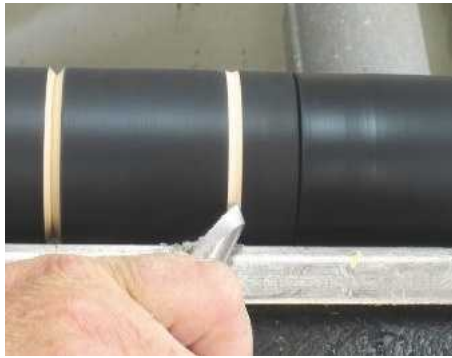
3 Rotate the tool against the grindstone. As you near the side, slide the tool up the wheel, as shown here; this will put the required fingernail profile on the tool



4 If you find sharpening difficult to master and believe it's not easy to learn, then one of the many available grinding jigs will provide you with a good repeatable shape and sharpness



5 A good working angle on the spindle gouge is around 40°. Going to 35° would be better for shaping and 45° is better suited to hollowing



6 The gouge is presented to the timber with the bevel at right angles to the wood. A small forwards movement makes a cut



7 Now that the tool is cutting on the other side, only take small amounts of material from each side until the cove gets wider



8 You must keep your right hand low throughout the cut; this will allow the bevel to rub. If you're not achieving a good finish, it's often because the tool is held too horizontal



9 Cutting a bead with the gouge is very similar to cutting one with a skew, but due to the bevel angle, this won't give you a narrow cut to the side



10 To round over the spindle's end, start with the bevel on the wood in a position where the tool will start cutting, with the minimum required movement



11 As the tool makes its way through the shape, you'll need to lift the handle as the wood gets smaller in diameter; this ensures the bevel is kept in contact with the wood



12 The spindle gouge excels at cleaning across end-grain. As you can see, the bevel is positioned according to the cutting angle I want to achieve



13 Hollowing egg cups, boxes, etc. is best carried out using the spindle gouge. The pencil shows the 11 o'clock position of the tool's flute



14 Once the gouge has drilled a small hole in the centre, it's pivoted out by moving the handle away from the body



15 As the hole gets deeper, you'll need to close the flute off slightly as you come up the hollowed area's side. The pencil is now telling me it's at 10 o'clock



16 If you decrease the depth of cut as you near the finished shape, a pretty good finish can be achieved. The denser the wood, the better the results you can expect to achieve ✂

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1 The cabinet – originally twice this width and with no interior fittings...

ALL CHANGE

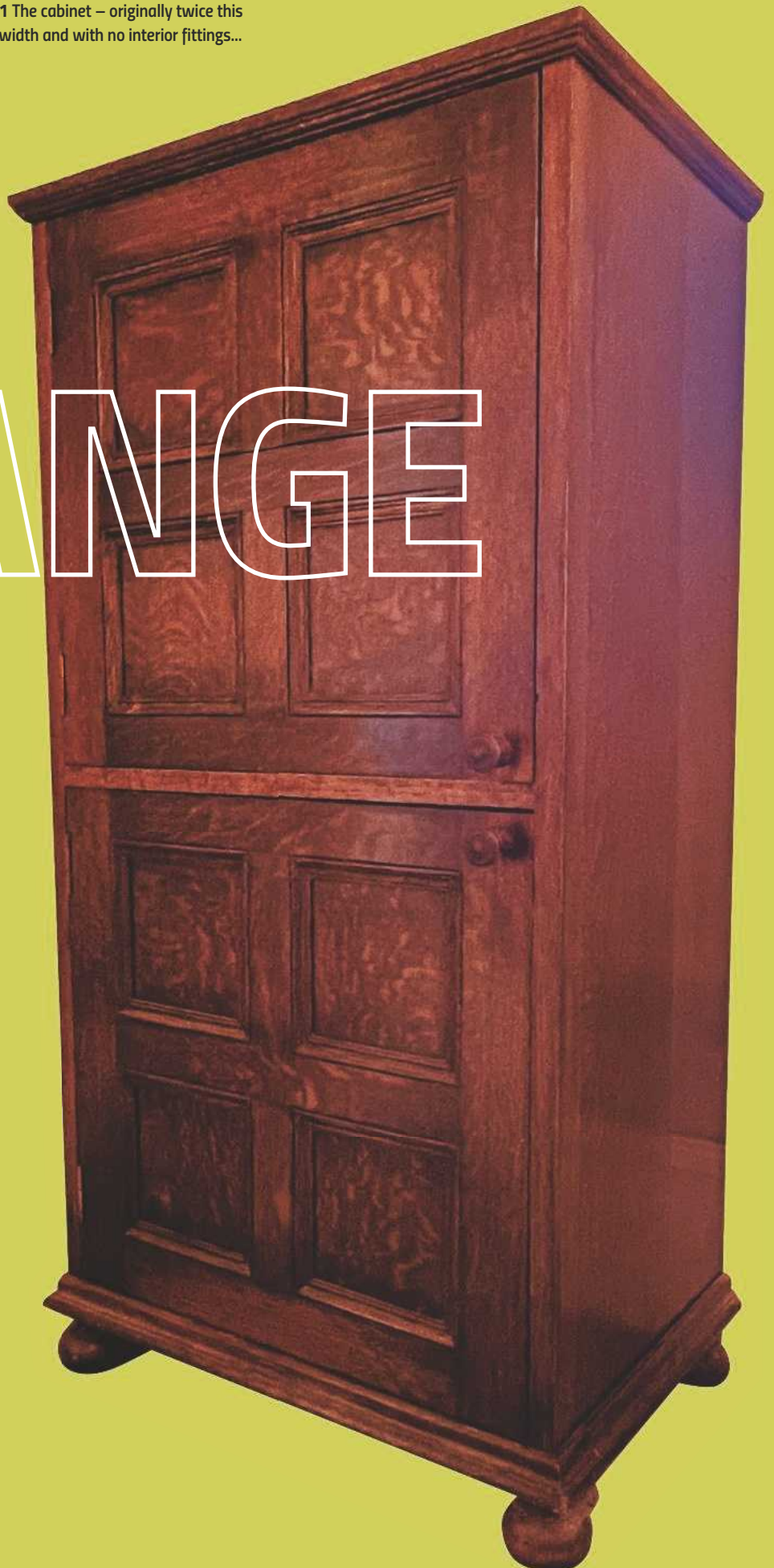
Peter Scaife gives his advice on making the best of what you've got

I'm not a magician: no top hat, no rabbit. I don't do tricks. But I have cut a cupboard in half, added drawers to a bookcase, made a desk smaller and a table bigger. To put it another way, many pieces of furniture can be altered to suit if they're not quite what you want.

Let's look at some examples. There's not much point in my giving you any measurements for the obvious reason that these are all one-offs. Nothing that I'd like to explain requires anything very special in the way of tools or techniques, just a little common sense and if you read to the end, I'll tell you of one silly mistake. ▶



2 ... but now, there's plenty of storage room inside





3 The bookcase – really useful now it's shorter and not just for books

From cathedral to cabinet

Let's start with the cabinet shown on the previous page (photo 1), in solid English oak, except for the panels, which are oak-faced

three-ply. I inherited this piece from my grandmother who bought it at auction. I believe it started life as a vestment cupboard in Exeter Cathedral. When it came to me,

however, it was twice this width, another 18in higher, and empty of any interior fittings except for a metal hanging rail; very heavy and far too big for a small modern house. And the two panelled doors, which you can see, were originally side-by-side, forming the top parts of two long doors.

With a soft-headed mallet, I knocked it apart, cut some joints and glued it back together. Some of the left-over ply from the lower part of the doors was used to make shelves (photo 2). Honestly, it's not that difficult.

The long & the short of it

Now, if you'd please look at the bookcase pictured above (photo 3) and imagine it nearly three times as long and without the drawers or backboard. That was its original layout.

I'd made one for a friend, and then made this for myself, from parana pine, which was fashionable at the time. So to start with, there was the middle section you see here and similar extensions at either end. On moving house, it was far too long, so I sawed off the two outer parts and made good the exterior faces. At this point, I decided it was looking rather chunky and cut stopped chamfers on the front edges, then painted it.

It stood in the hall by the front door until I decided that a couple of drawers would be useful, so set to work with some MDF and



4 The desk – in this instance, smaller is more convenient for the space



5 Yes, I'll admit it, you can see the join in the walnut cross-banding

scrap mahogany – never throw those odds and ends away – for the drawer surrounds and fronts. And the backboard – let's be a bit classy and call it a pediment – is American cherry – from Thorogood's in Arleigh, Essex – and it's a beautiful timber to work.

Smaller is better

I helped a friend to move house, the desk shown in **photo 4** was left over, and he gave it to me. It was just too long for where I wanted it to be placed, so there was only one solution: after removing the fake leather top and checking the grain direction, I made two saw cuts across the middle, about 380mm apart, closing the gap by bringing the two sawn edges together and reusing the timber, screwing it to the underside. Yes, you can see the join in the walnut cross-banding (**photo 5**), but it's nothing to worry about.

Bigger is better

The kitchen table in **photo 6** has a black-and-white check plastic top, which, with a growing family, was proving a little on the small side. So, with some beech-faced ply and four battens screwed to the underside, we gained about another 3sq.ft (**photo 7**). Useful and worth it.

A whatnot warning

So far, so good, but I did make one serious mistake and, in my defence, I claim teenage ignorance. My mother had a Victorian mahogany whatnot: four shelves above each other, about



6 The kitchen table features an enlarged top...

15in square, supported on turned spindle legs, beautifully polished and very elegant.

If you'd saw it up, she said, we'd have three nice little coffee tables. I did. And we didn't.

Sadly, it obviously fell apart. I can't remember for certain what happened to the various bits, but let's just say that, in those days, we had open fires. ✕



7 ... which provided more space for a growing family

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10 STEPS TO HEAVEN

As Bob Chapman demonstrates, hollow forms are enclosed turnings where the internal material has been removed through a relatively small hole. They're the woodworking equivalent of eating a boiled egg while leaving as much of the shell intact as possible



WIPE THE SLATE CLEAN

Peter Dunsmore's small coffee table design combines two natural materials that not only present a practical solution, but also complement one another well in terms of colour and texture

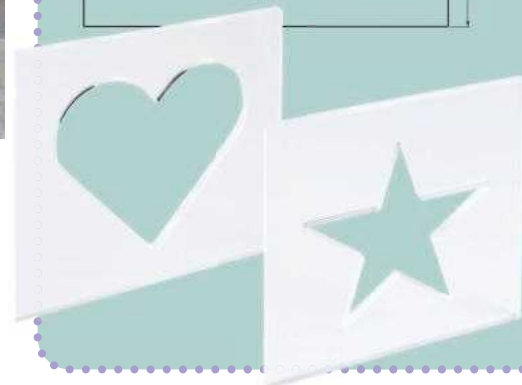
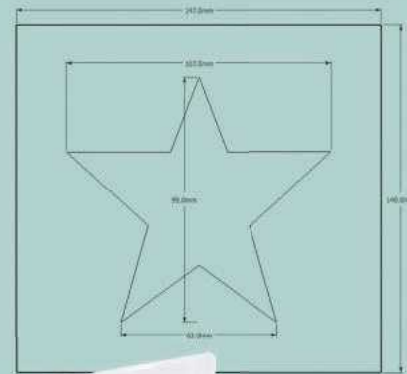
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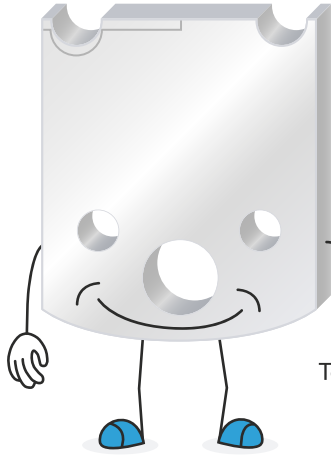
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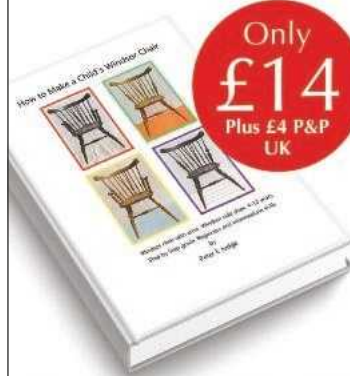
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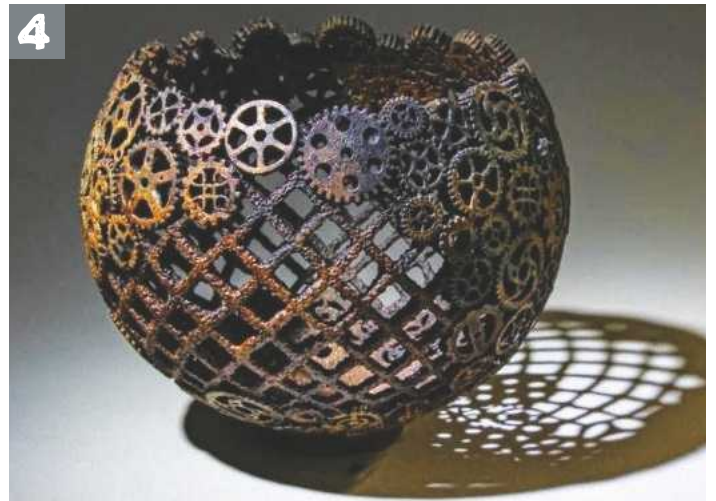
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2 Slim custom briefcase, by [@jmlmodern](#) – made for a gemsmith to house and show off gemstones. Note the four-way bookmatch on the lace redwood burl, which happens to be one of the maker's favourite design aspects

3 A pair of side tables in Swiss pear and oak, by Tong Cabinetmakers – [@tongcabinetmakers](#)

4 'Hiisi', 2022, by Kustaa Saksi – [@kustaaasaksi](#) – in collaboration with Gallery FUMI – [@gallery_fumi](#) – a unique cabinet combining oak with woven fabric made of Japanese paper developed at TextielMuseum – [@textielmuseum](#) – in The Netherlands. Exhibited at PAD – [@padesignart](#) – London. "The project takes its inspiration from cabinets of curiosities, hiding a myth of Hiisi, a mythological creature or locality, best known for appearing in Finnish mythology. It's a sequel to my earlier cabinet 'Iku-Turso' (2021) developed together with Nikari from Finland" Photograph courtesy of [@penguineggphoto](#)

5 'Time in Decay', 2021, by Pat Carroll – [@patcarroll_woodturning](#) – sycamore and metal cogs. Posted by Wood Symphony Gallery – [@woodsymphony](#) – visit the website to view more pieces – [www.woodsymphony.com](#)



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VIDEO

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