

DollHouse & MINIATURE SCENE

TOP TIPS,
PROJECTS,
INSPIRATION
& MORE!

EVERYTHING AMAZING IN THE MINI WORLD!



A MINI WONDERLAND!

TINY CAKE CREATIONS



FAUX FUR DETAIL



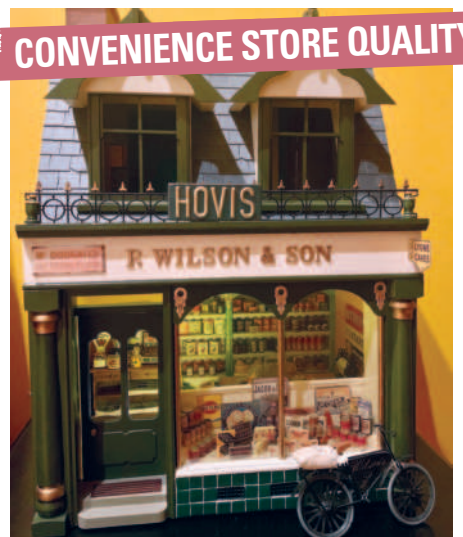
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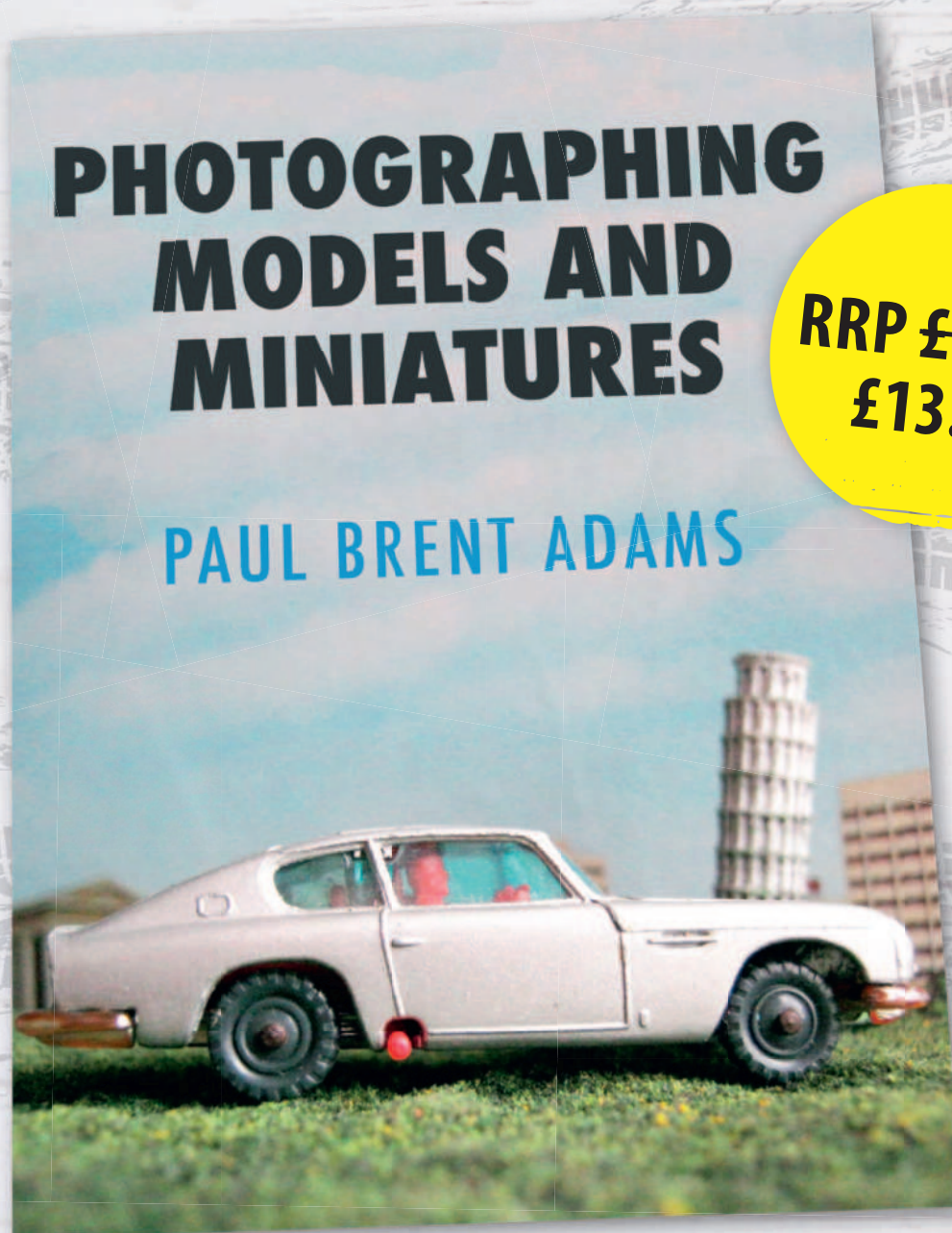
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WELCOME

to the May edition!

This issue is a wonderful abundance of projects, features and advice for you to enjoy! We kick things off with the regular Instagram Identities, which features Sae Nakamura (@pansbear131) and her adorable little bears – they are a sight to behold, so make sure you turn to page 6 to read all about Sae's journey. Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel is back with her second instalment of Ruth's Mini Tips, this issue offering her advice on cutting wood and transferring patterns – we hope you'll find her years of experience very useful! Another regular, It Takes Two, returns with Moi Ali looking at two very different versions of the same house, The Mountfield, with one of them being her own interpretation!

Not just our regulars, but lots of new and exclusive projects including a faux fur jumper, a Regency inspired table (who has been watching The Great Big Tiny Design Challenge?!) and Sadie Brown's Maypole themed cake, to help celebrate the tradition of dancing around the Maypole this month!

Make sure you keep in touch with us via social or email, we love to see what latest projects our readers have been creating – will you be featured as our next reader project?!

Happy crafting!

The DHMS team

A massive thank you to this month's contributors...

Sadie Brown, Moi Ali, Bea Broadwood, Beate Klotz & Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel



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DARLING LITTLE TEDDY



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With mini makes

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Learn from the experts



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The closing date for all entries is
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**TURN TO PAGE 32
TO FIND OUT MORE!**

DollsHouse & MINIATURE SCENE





Instagram Identities:

SAE NAKAMURA (@PANSBEAR131)



Moi Ali looks at the bear essentials this month!

Sae Nakamura is based in Yokohama in Japan, yet her miniatures have a very French (and sometimes British) flavour... adorable French hat boxes, French grocery cabinets, French sewing paraphernalia, English wallpapers, English books... all totally gorgeous and irresistible. I just drool over her beautiful bears, animals (lambs, rabbits, deer, dogs), plates and other ceramics, books, cabinets... her range is immense.

How did this amazing talent get into miniatures? She told me, using her daughter Ayano as a translator: "I had worked at the local toy museum, Toys Club, and I was so indebted to the owner that when I left the company for marriage, I made a miniature dolls house for the museum and gave it as a gift. Then I started making miniatures for myself."

Sae mainly makes miniatures as a hobby, just for the love of it. She explained: "I do it for me

to enjoy, but a few of them are also on sale. The owner of the toy museum where I used to work runs a shop called Christmas Toys, which sells Christmas goods all year round, including teddy bears from around the world and one-of-a-kind handmade teddy bears during the off-season. I sell my bears and miniature animals there. My larger pieces, such as dolls houses, merry-go-rounds and miniature furniture sets are sold on Japanese auction sites several times a year."



A cupboard full of bears



Big ted, little ted



▲ Ready for posting

“Instagram provides inspiration and I hope that I inspire others in return. I would like to continue making many teddy bears with the hope that the small world I make will heal as many people as possible.”



Darling little teddy



French kitchenalia



Teeny tiny teacups



Sweet little bunnies



Jammy bears

Sae specialises in adorable little bears. I asked why: "I have always liked teddy bears and used to collect them. I even attended a teddy bear making class. While working at the toy museum, surrounded by antique toys and vintage collections, I was particularly fascinated by miniature teddy bears and also dolls houses. At first, I made a small bear by imitating it with clay, and after trial and error, it became the shape of the current bear."

"I started making miniatures because I loved making them, but I was completely satisfied with doing it solely for my own pleasure. It didn't matter that my work was not seen by others. Instagram has been wonderful for putting the miniature community in contact. I am very happy to see many people from all over the world on Instagram, and to discuss miniatures and share ideas. There are things that I can't make, things I want to make and worldviews I want to create."

I was intrigued as to why so many of her items have a distinctive vintage/sewing and French/British theme. Sae explained: "When I was studying advertising design at fashion school, I went to England and France for painting training. I learned about antiques, vintage, and brocantes at flea markets and markets, and realised that this was my favourite view of the world. Christmas Toys, the shop at work, had a strong country taste, but the owner's home has a lot of nice antique furniture and miscellaneous goods

and I have come to admire it. In Japan, not only French, but also European antique furniture and miscellaneous goods are popular and fashionable. It's the same in the miniature world."

Sae collects the work of her favourite miniature artists: "I can't make miniature baskets and flowers so well, so I collect those made by other artists and display them in my dolls house. Other than that, I collect full-size antique teddy bears, lace, and Steiff stuffed dogs."

Although she once worked in a design office, Sae has no formal training in miniature-making: "I studied miniatures by myself without going to the classroom or learning. I look at miniature books and videos and make them by trial and error. The miniature-sized animals I make are not made in the conventional way a full-size piece would be, by sewing and stuffing fur fabric. Instead, I make a mould, and use wire and stick hair to the final piece. For reference I use pictures of animals and my favourite Steiff stuffed animals!"

Luckily Sae's family is supportive of her hobby: "Yes, they are both supportive and understanding. The lounge table is used like an atelier, and my materials are scattered about the place! But my family never complain." It seems to be a universal factor that miniaturists the world over, whether in Japan, Jakarta or Johannesburg, need a supportive and tolerant family behind them! 🧸



A study in miniature art

Throw open the doors to our dream home in miniature, before taking a trip to the mountains, with Karen Butler-Kennedy.



Home from home

Artisan designer, Karen Butler-Kennedy's tiny Dutch Baby House became a social media sensation in July last year, and at the time of our interview this stunning piece of miniature art had garnered in excess of ninety-seven and a half thousand likes on Instagram. Houses and interiors in 1/144th scale or thereabouts have become increasingly popular, but the level of eyewatering detail Karen has managed to achieve within her design is exquisite, each of the six rooms furnished to an incredibly high standard. It's also clearly a very musical household, with the piano and jukebox as fabulous additions!

The project took Karen around two months to complete, but just how different was it to



▲ Open house!

working in larger scales? "The Dutch Baby House creation was very similar to working on a larger build, with one huge difference, pardon the pun. I didn't have to build the cabinet. It came unfinished, so I painted it and lined the drawers in velveteen," she explains. "The next step was to wire each room. The house is on two switches. I did this because I liked the idea of having just the bathroom and kitchen lit sometimes, for a different night-time mood. From there, I put in flooring, ceilings, crown moulding and baseboard moulding. The study in the Dutch Baby House has a hammered copper ceiling, the rest of the rooms have textured ceilings."

It isn't only the interior décor which draws the eye. If you look carefully out of the top



Dining in style!



The Dutch Baby House in situ

▲ The Dutch Baby House features exceptional fine detail

floor bedroom window, you'll find yourself captivated by the glorious sunset view. It's these tiny details which really set the piece apart, and the contemporary kitchen is a miniature marvel, complete with island and copper pan sitting on the aga! "I used a few 1/144th scale kits from Little Miss Miniature which I altered to suit," says Karen, referencing the delightful guitar, the armoire and the selection of ferns. "The toilet bowl and tub are from Laser Shrink Ray, which I painted and altered to finish. I had to create the tiny tub plumbing, toilet tank, oak toilet seat and tank plumbing. I scratch built the rest."

Brick by Brick

Before becoming a miniature star in its own right, the Dutch Baby House was built as part of a wider project in 1/12th scale. The Kennedy House, a beautiful Tudor style home, started life as a kit but grew to become an exciting and unique build which would take on a life all of its own. "It was missing many parts and had to be scratch built to a large degree," Karen explains, discussing how she designed both the interior and exterior, adapting and tailoring many of the features. "I also added an entire back half to the house, front and back decking, porch, exterior stairs and a side street. This build was my prototype to demonstrate my work and took a little over three years to complete."

Karen had just launched her own company in the February of 2020, but as for so many of us, life and the pandemic had other ideas. "I had lined up four new clients and then, by late March, all four had cancelled due to the pandemic. It was time to pivot once again to making what was intended to be a side business, into my main business. Miniatures. I worked throughout the summer of 2020, completing The Kennedy House." 

However, Karen's love of all things small dates back much further, to her childhood in California, where her father's line of work proved to be a great influence. "I grew up in the San Francisco Bay area where my father was a Manufacturer's Representative for as many as thirty-two different collector toy lines." Karen reels off a roll call of famous names, including Corgi, Steiff and Merrithought. "We were always surrounded by people in the business and I grew up knowing a lot of very interesting people and was exposed to the finest in the toy industry. I was first introduced to miniatures through my father's business. The miniatures were always my favourite of the toys my father represented, whether they were furnishings for dolls houses, dolls house kits, or cars. I always was fascinated with tiny things."



▲ Mountain home study

◀ The study's vaulted ceiling



There's no doubt that Karen's skill and indeed The Kennedy House have their foundations in that early interest nurtured through her father's work, the project becoming a labour of love, and featuring some stunning, inspirational designs. Incorporating real materials wherever possible, it takes Karen's work to the next level. I'd also heard a rumour that the building's exterior involved hand laying an astonishing number of bricks. "Yes, there are over a thousand individual bricks laid one at a time and cut where necessary," Karen tells me, adding that this aspect of the build alone took three months. "The trim on the house is all individually cut, painted and even soaked to bend when needed. The exterior decking, front and back, stairs, and porch are all made using miniature lumber. The side street was made using miniature asphalt and the sidewalk is real concrete. The roof is flashed with real copper. The entire back of the house is built from miniature lumber. The wisteria tree is made from branches of a tree in my backyard."



Relax in the parlour at The Kennedy House

"I won't build a piece without using real materials, because it is important for people to know that if my name is on a build, it's the real deal."



▲ Live in the lap of luxury,
The Kennedy House bathroom

An eye for detail

Talking to Karen, it quickly becomes clear that her use of genuine materials such as brick, wood or even concrete is something she finds extremely important for authenticity. "Absolutely, yes," she agrees, adding that the use of these materials within her work is something she has gone on to become widely known for.

Karen doesn't use a laser cutter or a 3D printer in her work, two tools which are rapidly becoming go-to tech in the workshop of the modern miniaturist. This means her focus is exclusively on handcrafting. Karen pays equal attention to the finer elements of the interiors, some of the inclusions within The Kennedy House offering an insight into just how far she'll go to achieve those realistic elements. "There's miniature carpet padding under the wall-to-wall main bedroom carpet, so that the legs of the furniture sink in just enough to look true to life," she says, also pointing out a hidden closet within the bedroom wall. In addition to a floor laid using genuine marble, the bathroom includes a piece which is definitely one of a kind! "When I couldn't find a toilet that I thought was ▶

The Kennedy House looks
fantastic from every angle





◀ The Kennedy House, dining room

realistic and attractive enough, I built mine to be a replica of my favourite type in real life. The pillbox toilet. I believe it's the only miniature pillbox toilet to date."

Karen's avid online followers may have noticed the two gorgeous 1/12th scale canine characters who inhabit not only The Kennedy House, but many of Karen's photographs. Wonderfully described as her "mini spokesmodels", Mileena, the Brussels Griffon and Snoopy the beagle are miniature replicas of two much loved family members! "These two beautiful pieces were handmade for me by Anna Ryasnova, of Artanry," Karen explains. "Snoopy was older when these replicas were made, which is why she's so very blonde and white. She'd faded over the years and lost her dark saddle and markings. Mileena only has her left eye, so naturally, mini Mileena only has the one eye as well. I'm so very fortunate to have found Anna. She did an amazing job and I'm thrilled to have them live forever in The Kennedy House." Contributing to that lived in feel, this is one occasion we'd be delighted to find ourselves 'in the dog house'!

Studying a new idea

Another unique design which has enthralled Karen's ten thousand social media followers is the Mountain Home Study. Karen calls the scene a roombox, but in truth it is so much more. Beautifully lit, with rich wood finishes and oodles of character, Karen has furnished the scene to perfection. It is, though, the stunning hand-built fireplace which is, without doubt, the heart of this amazing room. "I had the design of the finished Mountain Home Study clearly in mind from the start," recalls Karen. "The interior of the fireplace had to be real brick and mortar, with the design work continuing all the way up inside to the mantel. It is very important to me that even with a dental mirror, a person cannot see where the bricks stop. I used tiny rock that looks like river rock with real mortar for the surround and hearth."

The fine detailing doesn't stop there, the vaulted ceiling and rest of the interior is finished to the same exceptionally high standard. "The ceiling is hand bullnosed pine to resemble tongue-in-groove, the walls are walnut with Thuya burl accents, and the floor is red oak, with a bit of inlay at the threshold under the double doors. There are knobs on the other side of the doors as



Making miniature art, brick by brick



◀ The importance of lighting is seen throughout Karen's work

well since they are visible in the reflection in the window." Karen tells me. "The built-in bookcases have canister lights in the top and are filled with pieces of art both by me and by other artisans. The furnishings and accessories are by me and by some fantastic artisans. The entire box is scratch-built and is as beautiful from the back and sides, as the front. No visible wiring, even under the rack in the fireplace."

Lighting the way

Lighting is an important element within all Karen's projects, the windows in the study one of the scenes' most intriguing elements. The windows themselves are made from real glass, but that isn't what makes them so fascinating. Rather than inserting a simple picture at the other side of the glass, which I'm sure would have looked excellent, Karen has gone the extra mile. Creating a three-dimensional view, the onlooker is treated to a glimpse into the world of forestry beyond the study walls, with brightly illuminated trees forming an additional focal point beyond the fireplace. It feels like this might be quite complex to achieve, so I was keen to find out more. "The 'trees' are cut from my own backyard, with dried cedar branches. I used miniature ivy and wildflowers for the ground-covering, and the scene goes all the way across the back of the roombox," Karen points out. "I did this so that the viewer cannot see where the forest ends, no matter how they view the scene. The lighting for the scene outside the windows is intended to look like outdoor lights and is on a separate switch. This is so that the 'outside' can be dark, with only the interior lit, or vice versa. The chandelier is controlled by the switch on the wall, so there are many ways to light the room and change the mood."

It isn't only those behind-the-scenes secrets which Karen is happy to share, her expansive skill set an exciting opportunity for potential clients seeking to create their own worlds in small scale. Karen sees this as a chance to design a family heirloom for clients, a piece which will tell not only your own story, but the story of miniature art, passed down through many generations. "Miniatures are so magical for people of all ages to admire," she adds. "I can't think of a better heirloom to cherish and bring lasting joy." 🏠



The Kennedy House kitchen



▲ Perfect pastels in The Kennedy House attic bedroom



INFO

For more information, please visit:

Website: www.kennedyminiatureconstruction.com

Instagram: [instagram.com/kennedyminiatureconstruction](https://www.instagram.com/kennedyminiatureconstruction)

Maypole cake

Dance your way to success around the maypole, celebrating all things springtime with this seasonal cake.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- White, yellow, pastel pink, pastel blue, pastel yellow, green and brown polymer clay
- Golden ochre, dark cadmium orange and brown pastels
- Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar
- Craft glue
- Old gift bows in white, lilac and two shades of pink
- Mother of pearl acrylic paint

TOOLS REQUIRED

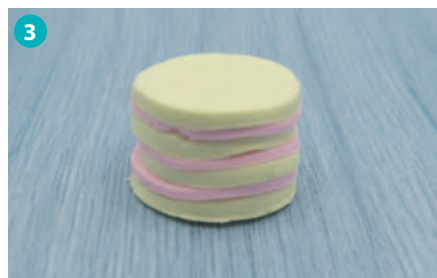
- Sturdy craft wire or similar
- 2cm and 3cm round sugar craft cutters
- Roller
- Craft knife
- Needle tool or sewing pin
- Scissors
- Small paintbrush



1 Mix white polymer clay with yellow to create cream, rolling the mixture out to roughly 2mm in thickness before using a 2cm round sugar craft cutter to press out four circles.



2 Take some pastel pink clay and, as this will form the buttercream layers of the cake, roll out as thinly as possible, preferably around 1mm in thickness. Again, use the 2cm round sugar craft cutter to create the shapes, this time pressing out three circles.



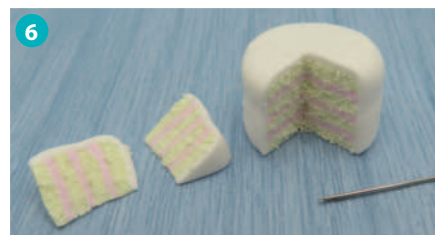
3 Put the cake together, starting with a cream sponge layer at the base, alternating with the pink buttercream.



4 Roll out some white polymer clay to around the same thickness as the pink buttercream layers of cake, making sure to keep an uncracked, smooth surface. Cover or 'ice' the cake with the rolled-out clay, cutting away any excess to create a neat finish.



5 Place the cake in the freezer for a few minutes, allowing the clay to harden up a little before carefully cutting three slices.



6 Use a needle tool or sewing pin to texture both the cake and the slices, being careful to avoid the pink buttercream layers. As always with this step, it's important to take your time to ensure the most realistic effect.



7 Make a hole in the centre of the top of the main cake using the needle tool or sewing pin. This needs to be large enough to fit some sturdy craft wire or similar later in the project.



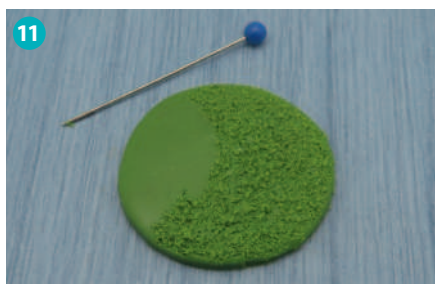
8 Mix grated golden ochre pastel with a little dark cadmium orange and brown. Add a very tiny amount of water to the mix and, after testing on a spare piece of cream polymer clay to ensure you're happy with the colour and consistency, brush over the base of the sponge cake and slices, taking care to avoid the white icing.



9 Roll lots of equal sized balls of white clay, each one around 1mm in diameter and carefully add them around the bottom of the cake and the slices, creating the impression of piped icing.



10 Mix green polymer clay with yellow and brown to create a mossy spring green. Roll the mixture out to around 2mm in thickness and cut out two circles using a 3cm round sugar craft cutter. These will form the cake boards.



11 Using the needle tool or sewing pin, texture the top of both green circles, this time to create the effect of grass rather than sponge cake.



12 Stick the cake to the centre of one of the green cake boards, adhering with Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar. Arrange the cake slices how you want them on the other board and stick into position.



13 To make the flowers for the cake, make five tiny carrots of pastel pink clay for each flower and flatten with a fingernail. Use a needle tool/sewing pin to lever the petals from your work surface, creating a natural curl. Make around seven sets of petals, some larger than others to create a variety of flower sizes.



14 Arrange each set of five petals, pressing together to form the individual flowers.



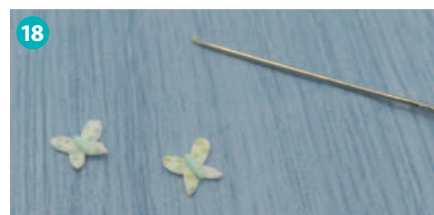
15 Roll tiny balls of white clay, placing one in the centre of each flower.



16 Add some white clay to the mossy green mixture to create a paler shade. Roll five tiny petal sized carrots, this time to a slightly finer point, and flatten with a fingernail to create leaf shapes. Score a central vein down each leaf.



17 Roll four more carrot shapes, this time in white, and flatten with a fingernail before putting together to form the shape of a butterfly. Repeat the process to create a second butterfly.



18 Roll two small balls of pastel blue clay into thin tubes and attach one to the centre of each butterfly. Add tiny balls of clay to each of the 'wings' to decorate, pastel blue for one butterfly, the other pastel yellow. 



19 Arrange the flowers, on the cake/cake slices/cake board, adhering with Bake & Bond.



20 Attach the leaves to the cake, slotting them just by or beneath the flowers and add the butterflies.



21 Roll four thin tubes of white, pastel pink, pastel blue and pastel yellow clay, twisting together into a rope.



22 Carefully smooth the rope by rolling it into a thin tube around 11/2mm in diameter. Cut two lengths of about 9mm and roll the rest of the tube to 1mm in diameter before cutting a further length.



23 Use Bake & Bond to attach the two larger tubes to the grassy area at the front of the cake and the smaller tube to the grass on the board featuring the cake slices. Bake the cakes and allow to cool thoroughly.



24 Cut a roughly 1.7cm length of sturdy craft wire or similar and use craft glue to fix into the hole made in the centre of the main cake in step 7.



25 Take some old gift bows in white, lilac and two shades of pink, carefully cutting several thin strips, each about 2.3cm in length. These will form the maypole ribbons.



26 Cut two lengths of pink ribbon in the palest shade to fit all the way around the base of the cake board and glue into place.



27 Bake a small ball of white polymer clay and once cooled, glue to the top of the maypole. Stick the maypole ribbons into place on top. Paint the ball on top of the maypole with mother of pearl acrylic paint.

Sadie says...

"Working with white clay reminds you just how easily it can attract 'bits'! In addition to always ensuring you have clean hands when using polymer clay, make sure you cover your work in progress with a 'dome' of foil or similar when leaving it unattended on your workspace"

Sadie

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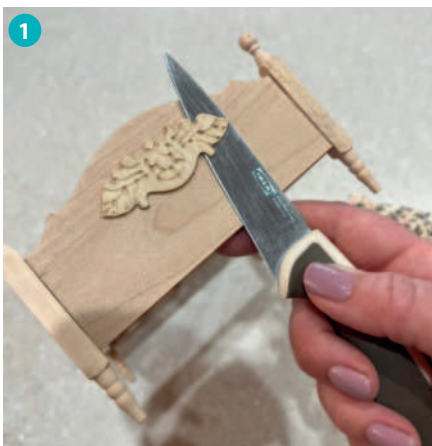


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info@minimumworld.com

Personalising barewood bedroom furniture

Barewood dolls house furniture is wonderfully simple, affordable and understated but its real beauty is the versatility it offers to be stained, painted or adapted according to your personal taste. Carrie Yeo is a miniaturist from Arizona who is active on Instagram and Tiktok and this month she has worked on a project with Minimum World to personalise some barewood bedroom furniture in a modern style for one of her dolls houses. Carrie has provided step by step instructions of her adaptation of the double bed which is available to purchase on the Minimum World website as product code BA040.



1 Firstly, remove the decal with a knife and then sand the area.



2 Remove the balustrades from the head of the bed with a junior hack saw.



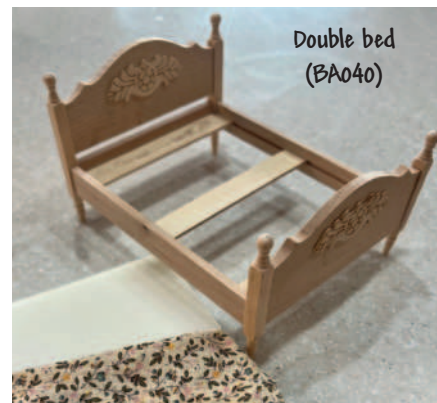
3 Make the new headboard from card and wadding with a swatch of grey velvet over it.



4 Use a needle and thread to pull a tight stitch through the layers every 1cm in four even rows to make it look tufted.



5 Remove the mattress and pillow and wrap in plain fabric. I added a scrap of muslin fabric that I frayed on the ends to make it look like a throw.



Double bed
(BA040)



INFO

To see more of Carrie's work, you can visit her:

[instagram.com/dollhouse_makeovers](https://www.instagram.com/dollhouse_makeovers)

The items featured are available at:

www.minimumworld.com

and inspiration from other customers' projects can be found on:

[instagram.com/minimum_world_miniatures](https://www.instagram.com/minimum_world_miniatures) or

[facebook.com/minimumworld](https://www.facebook.com/minimumworld)

TO COMPLETE THE ROOM, THE FURNITURE IS COMPLEMENTED BY A WONDERFUL SELECTION OF MODERN MINIATURES AVAILABLE FROM MINIMUM WORLD:



Barewood chest of drawers (BA025)



Two barewood nightstands (BA041)



Tan shoulder bag (D4216)

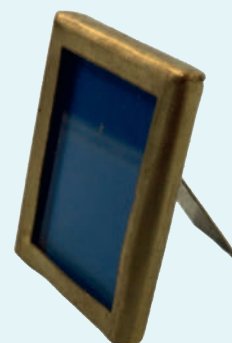
These pieces have had the wooden knobs replaced with modern handles and all the furniture has been painted in storm grey latex emulsion paint.



Houseplant (D4131)



Houseplant in coir basket (D7013)



Brass picture frame (MC3582)



Thermos flask (MC2842)



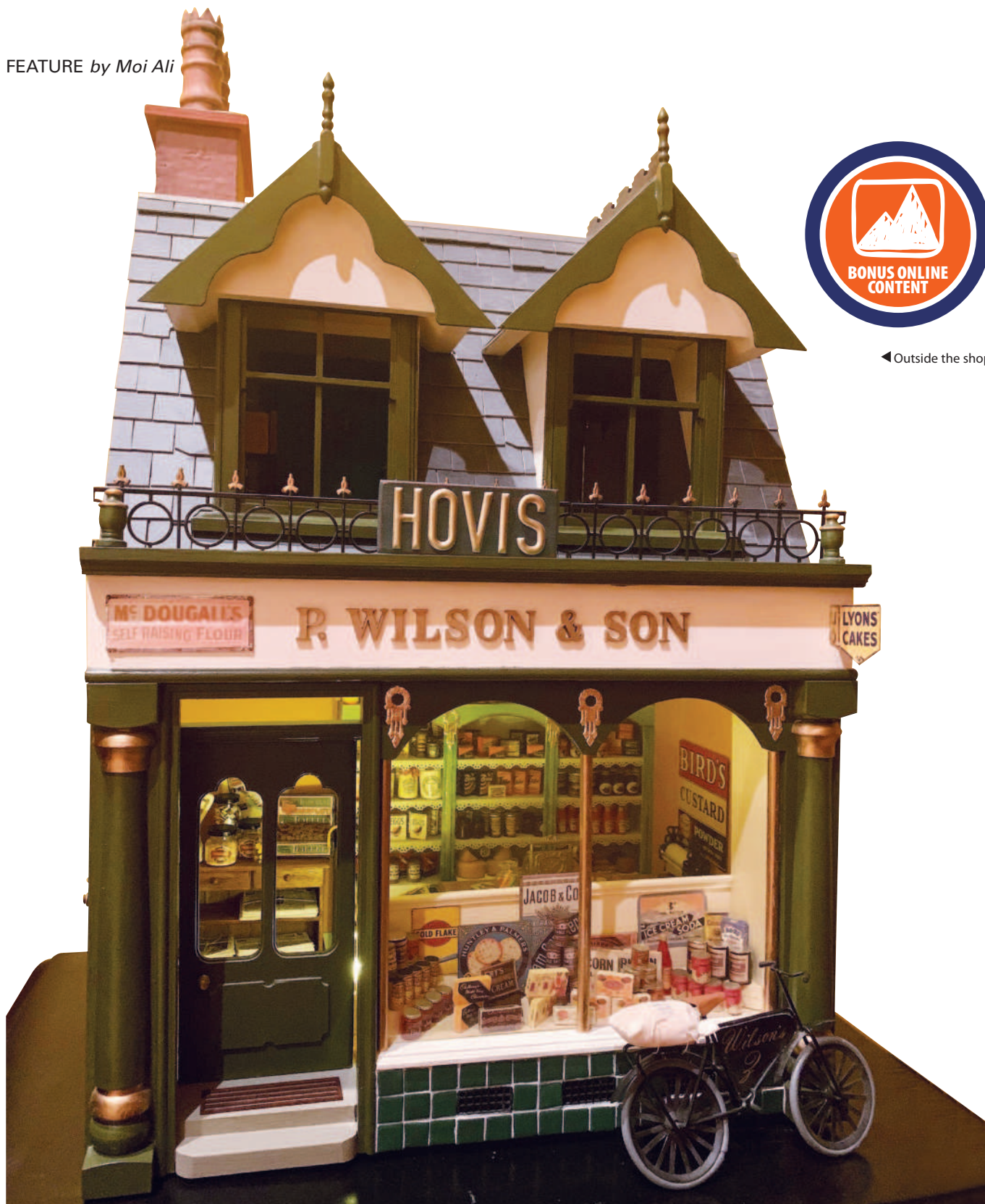
Cigar box (MC2063)



Folded shirts (MC5005)



◀ Outside the shop



Six of the Best:

Corner shop

Moi Ali continues with her mini-series showcasing her favourite properties.

So far in this mini-series, I've treated you to two rather impressive buildings that form part of my personal collection: a Gothic church and an elegant music room with grand piano. Now for something more ordinary: a corner shop.

P. Wilson and Son is so named because my husband is Paul Wilson and we have a son. Neither has ever worked in a corner shop, but I thought it would be fun to name the business after them. The building is actually two roomboxes, one sitting on top of the other. They were made by Anglesey some years ago and that company no longer exists as sadly, the owner passed away. I bought the bottom (shop part) first, many years ago, and later spotted the attic part at a fair.

Architectural detail to add



Enticing window display



Are you being served?



Phoenix paraffin heater



There is a middle floor too, but as these are no longer made, I am not sure how I would obtain one now. I keep an occasional eye on eBay in case I spot one, but have yet to strike lucky.

I bought the two rooms ready-made, built from birch plywood, but they were 'in the raw' and undecorated. An external green paint job

(using leftover paint from my real-life kitchen) left them looking a bit featureless, so I added some architectural details to make the building look more realistic. Slates were made by chopping a grey, self-adhesive vinyl floor tile. That's a tip I was given by the owner of a dolls house shop in Newcastle that, like so many, no longer exists. I made green 'ceramic'

tiles from polymer clay and inserted airbricks made from black-painted plastic needlework canvas. I painted plastic railing with Humbrol paint and attached that at the upper level, plus a couple of wooden urns, and a nice chimneypot. A few advertising signs from the period – the 1950s – completed the scene externally. [PH](#)



Shelves of stock



Moi made the stock



So much stock!



Pencil planked floor



► Feeling fruity

Internally, I varnished the floors and added pencil lines to simulate floorboards. It's a cheap and easy way to create a floorboard effect, but I was new to miniatures and would fit real planks if I were doing it again (I feel a refurb coming on!) I painted the downstairs area, and tried my hand (for the first time) at wallpapering and fitting cornice. The corner angles in the cornicing had me defeated! I also fitted a false door in the back wall upstairs, using balsawood, to give the impression of a room beyond and I even made a little toilet cubicle for the convenience of my convenience store owner! It contains a



Bucket of resin water

Chrysnbon loo made from a kit. I have a wash hand basin made by my friend Hazel Wyle (whose work readers may recall) but I have yet to fit that. I dirtied it up, as my shopkeeper is not a great one for cleaning.

I could see that the key to creating the right feel would be to cram in as much stock as possible. I bought a cheap triple wooden shelf, painted it and added advertising signs, then made as much stock as possible to fill the shelves. I realised that buying cans, bottles and other produce to fill the shelving would be hugely expensive, so I made items from wooden dowel. This was painted and printed labels added. There is some shop-bought stock, but 90% of the produce is home-made – including polymer clay cheeses, fruit and veg, and sweets.

Stock was also required for the window display, which is still under construction. I made some corner tiered shelves to display tins and jars. I intend to add further shelving

almost to the top of the window, but that will require a massive amount of produce to fill and will have to wait.

I created a story about the shopkeeper, Mr Wilson. He's a bit of a Jack the Lad! He appears to be a pillar of the community when in shopkeeper mode, but as soon as he gets into his private office above the shop, he kicks off his shoes and tucks into a bag of chips.

Although I have had Wilson's for years, it is still unfinished. Aside from some further touches both upstairs and downstairs, I eventually intend to create a setting – a bit of pavement at the front and a small yard at the back, with an entrance to the upstairs from there and a dustbin or two for atmosphere. The pavement will have a post box, a manhole cover and a Belisher beacon, but I confess, completion is not due anytime soon as I have the rest of my property empire to tend to. Talking of which... tune in next month to see my homage to Josiah Wedgwood roombox. 🏠



Delivery bike



Desk - and chips for lunch

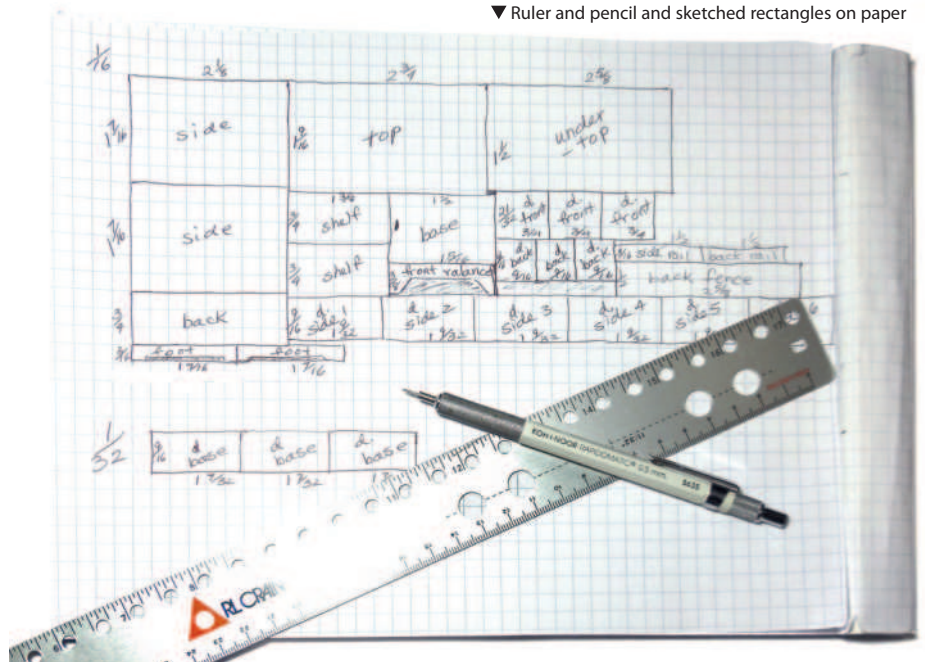


Toilet cubicle in the corner

Ruth's MINITIPS

Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel continues her top tips and advice for what she's found that has worked (or not worked!) throughout her years of experience.

▼ Ruler and pencil and sketched rectangles on paper



There are so many tips I'd like to put into a project each month, but there just isn't room and it would become repetitive from one project to the next. That's the motivation behind this series. Last month we looked at available wood species and sizes and which ones work best for different uses. This issue, I'd like to share some tips for transferring template patterns to wood, as well as cutting and sanding the pieces.

Transferring patterns

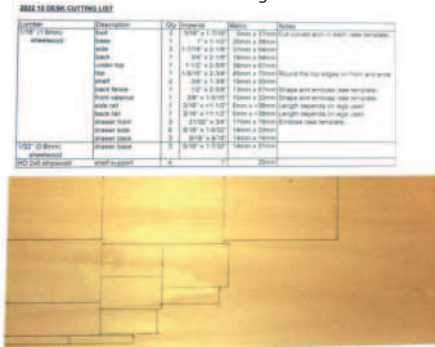
Square and rectangular pattern pieces are easy to transfer to wood: simply measure and mark the pieces with a very sharp pencil (mine is mechanical) and a steel or steel-edged ruler, to produce a good straight line. Plastic and wooden edged rulers get nicked over time. The old adage "measure twice, cut once" is always good to keep in mind too.

Regardless of the shape of a template piece, always make sure the longer dimension goes along the grain line. This makes a stronger piece than cross-grain would. For squares and rectangles, I like to sketch the layout of the pieces on scrap paper so all the ones of the same length and/or width are together on the wood. This maximizes the use of the wood, minimizes cuts and helps to ensure that the cut pieces are more exact.

Sometimes there are so many pieces that a cutting list is provided. Map the list onto paper first, by thickness of wood. I once marked an entire layout onto the wrong thickness of wood for a project. Ever the frugal miniaturist, I kept this piece of sheetwood for those times when both sides of the wood are not visible in a finished project, so I was able to reuse it by

marking the opposite side. Always double-check the instructions or cutting list against your paper map and the map against the marked wood before cutting.

▼ Cutting list and marked wood



For more complex shapes, either in a template or hand drawn, there are at least two methods of transferring them to wood. I often print or photocopy the template and then transfer the shapes, using a ball stylus and old-school carbon paper. The other method is to print or photocopy the template onto heavy scrapbook paper, cut out the shapes just inside the lines and outline each shape with a sharp pencil. These new pencil lines replace the lines cut from the pattern and should fit together well.

▼ Pattern transfer using carbon paper or outlining



For positioning add-on pieces, like shelf supports on side walls or supports for uprights, cut out the support within the paper pattern, lay the paper over the wood and glue the support directly to the wood through the pattern slot.

▼ Support strip and its pattern slots

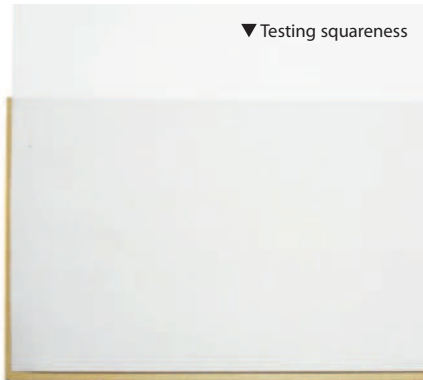


Cutting

Cutting and sanding are the most important and time-consuming tasks in miniature making. Patience really pays off in the results though and avoids frustrating mistakes. Power tools are quick but cutting by hand allows more control. When I first started furniture making in miniature, I didn't allow a little ease for drawers and doors to fit into their openings. I learned that cutting drawer fronts and doors just a shade smaller in length and height saved a lot of sanding time later.

Always check to ensure the corner of the

sheetwood is square, especially if it has been partially used before, by laying a piece of printer paper at the corner. If the edges don't align, re-cut the sheetwood before marking it for a new project.

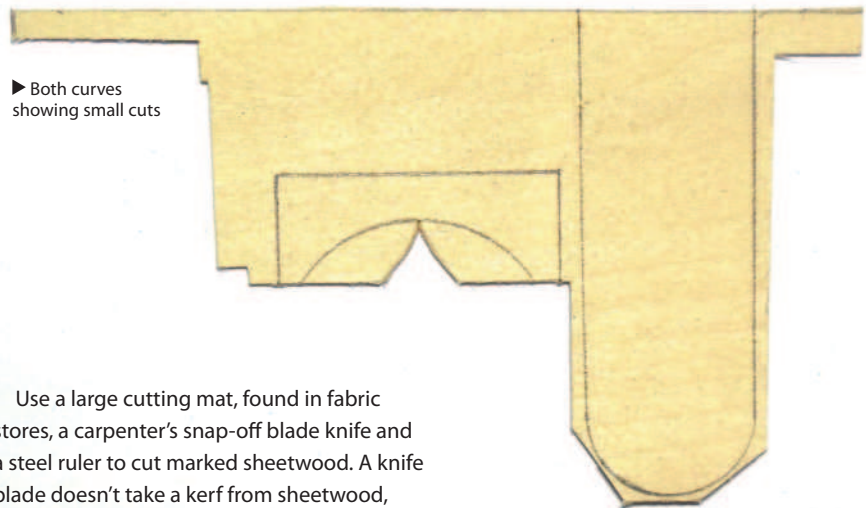
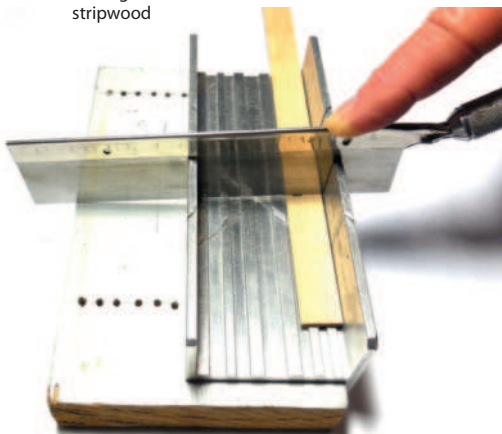


▼ Testing squareness

For cutting stripwood and miniature mouldings, raid a workshop for a scrap of 1x4in board about 6in long. Then invest in a small hand saw and mitre box from a model builder's or craft shop. Place the mitre box on the scrap board with the deeper side of the mitre box against the edge of the board. Support the blade with your index finger on top near the handle to avoid bending it. Saw lightly – too much pressure makes a less clean cut. I saw towards me, not back and forth, but that's personal preference.

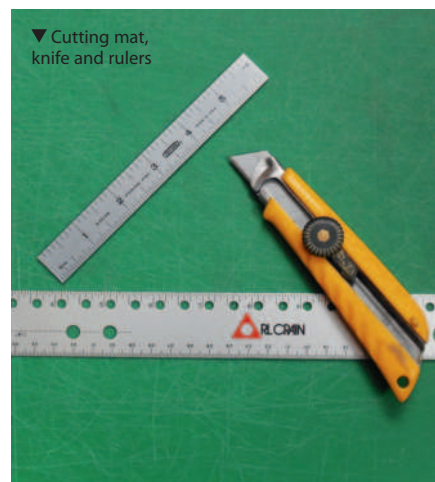
When several pieces of stripwood are needed, mark one length from each end and saw these two, sand the ends of the cut pieces square and the ends of the remaining strip, then mark and saw again as needed. Multiple pieces cannot be marked all at once on a strip since each saw cut takes a 'kerf' from the strip – this is where sawdust comes from! So, a 24in strip won't yield six 4in pieces. Cut in succession, there will be one piece left that is significantly less than 4in. For an accurate cut, place the strip in the mitre-box so that the saw comes down against the mark and on its far side, rather than sawing through the mark, which will be a bit too short.

Sawing marked stripwood



► Both curves showing small cuts

Use a large cutting mat, found in fabric stores, a carpenter's snap-off blade knife and a steel ruler to cut marked sheetwood. A knife blade doesn't take a kerf from sheetwood, so all the pieces can be marked at once. A sharp blade makes a clean cut. A cork-backed smaller ruler is really handy for small cuts. I added peel-and-stick cork to mine, so it doesn't slip. A sturdy work surface for the cutting mat, or the floor, a sharp blade and a good light source are musts for accurate cuts.



▼ Cutting mat, knife and rulers

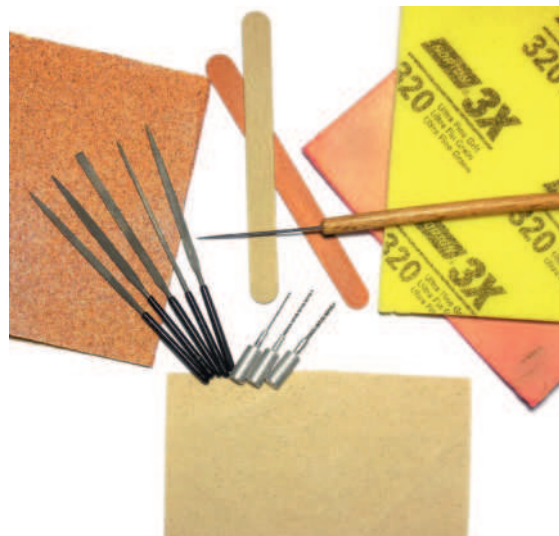
Mastering curves

Cutting curved lines requires several cuts to avoid splitting the wood. A good general approach is to cut well outside the lines and sand to them. For a convex curve, cut across the end of the curve, then slash off the top and bottom of that cut. For a concave curve, cut across the grain first to stop any splitting when you cut along it. Often cutting a 'V' to the deepest point of the area to be removed is the best approach. This stops any split and you can then cut along the curve. For all curves, reducing the wood outside the lines, leaves a doable filing and sanding job to get the final shape.

Sand, file and drill

This is where an extra few minutes pays dividends all the rest of the time that you own the finished piece! A set of needle files with different profiles, a few small hand-drills, emery boards and fine sanding sponges are all great tools. They not only smooth rough cuts, but round edges, make keyholes and knob locations, mortise hinges, refine niches and even create specially shaped furniture legs. Mark drill locations with a needle tool, either through the template pattern piece or by measuring, e. g. crossed diagonal lines from drawer front corners for a centre knob. Then drill the hole with successively larger drills to get to the size needed. This avoids splitting the wood. 🏠

▼ Sanding and drilling tools



NEXT MONTH

Ruth looks at finishing wood and achieving a few special effects!

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A summer feast

This article was published in June 1997 and although the web is now loaded with miniature food tutorials, this is a useful project if you are just starting out in polymer clay miniatures. Food is very forgiving to make as your ham can be as lumpy as you like and still looks delicious!

YOU WILL NEED

THE ROAST HAM:

- Polymer clay: small quantities of white, translucent, red, light brown, dark brown
- **Mixtures:**
 - Bone = translucent + trace of light brown
 - Pink = 1 part red + 8 parts white
 - Ham flesh = 1 part dark brown + 8 parts pink
 - Fat = 1 part white + 2 parts translucent
- Artist's soft pastel: burnt sienna or dark brown
- Quilt wadding

NEW POTATOES:

- Polymer clay: small quantities of white and light brown
- **Mixture:**
 - potato flesh = 1 part light brown + 2 parts white
- Miniature serving dish
- A little dried parsley or other fine herb
- Yellow acrylic paint

MIXED SALAD:

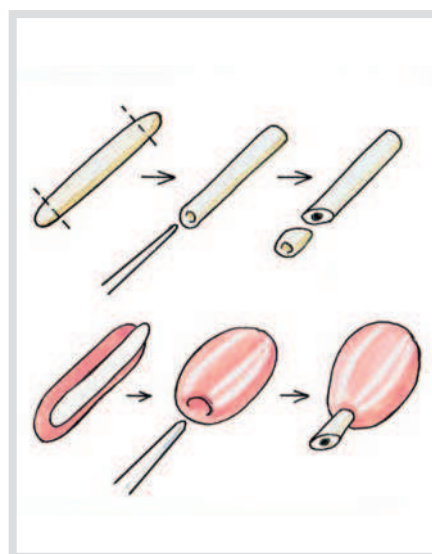
- Polymer clay: small quantities of leaf green, green, yellow, translucent, white
- **Mixtures:**
 - lettuce green = 1 part green + 1 part yellow + 4 parts translucent
 - radish flesh = 1 part white + 2 parts translucent
- Artist's soft pastel: crimson, green
- Miniature salad bowl

RASPBERRY MERINGUE DESSERT:

- Polymer clay: small quantities of white and crimson
- Artist's soft pastel: brown
- Small piece of fine lace or net
- Talcum powder and white acrylic paint
- Gloss acrylic varnish
- PVA glue
- Miniature plates for serving



THE ROAST HAM

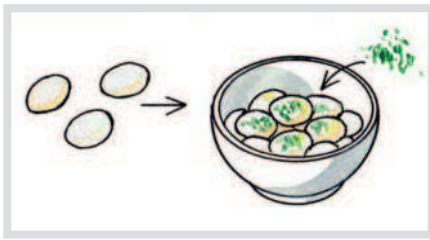


Ham bone: Roll the bone-coloured clay into a 3mm (1/8in) thick log and cut a 25mm (1in) length. Pierce one end with a wool needle. Bake the bone and when cool, cut a small piece off the pierced end.



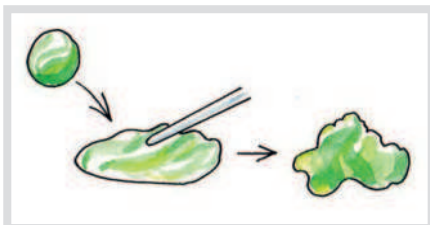
Ham flesh: Form a 25mm (1in) ball of the ham flesh, shape it into a log and apply a thin piece of translucent clay to one side. Now roll and fold it a few times to make streaks of translucent run through the clay. Reform into a ball. Pierce a hole in the ball and insert the unpierced end of the baked bone, pressing the pink clay back round it and shaping into an oval ham shape.

NEW POTATOES

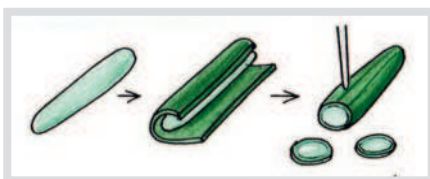


Form the potato mixture into small ovals, 1.5mm (1/16in) long. Bake and when cool, glue into a serving dish with PVA glue. Mix a little yellow paint into some PVA glue thinned with water. Brush this over the tops of the potatoes to suggest melted butter and sprinkle with some dried parsley crumbled into very tiny pieces. Roll out a sheet of fat-coloured clay, 1.5mm (1/16in) thick and wrap round the ham, trimming away excess clay to fit with the bone protruding. Mark a diamond pattern all over the top with the knife and brush on the brown pastel colours. Bake the ham and while it is still warm, cut slices, taking care not to cut into the bone too much. Varnish all over the top and sparingly over the slices and display on a miniature plate.

SALAD BOWL

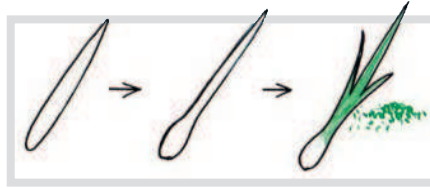


Lettuce: Marble the lettuce green mixture with translucent and a touch of yellow to make a mottled lettuce leaf colour. Form this into 3mm (1/8in) balls and roll out flat on your tile until they are really thin. Slice off the tile with a knife blade and frill the leaves by pressing the edges with the side of a wool needle, making them slightly ragged. Crumple each leaf a little. Bake and brush scantily with gloss varnish to make them look wet.

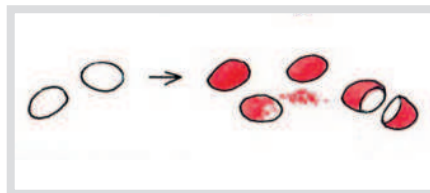


Cucumber: Mix a tiny piece of leaf green into translucent clay to make a pale green. Form this into a log 25mm (1in) long and 3mm (1/8in) thick with tapered ends. Roll out leaf green clay as thin as possible and wrap

round the log. Mark vertical lines with a wool needle. Bake and while still warm, cut thin slices. Varnish the slices so they look wet.

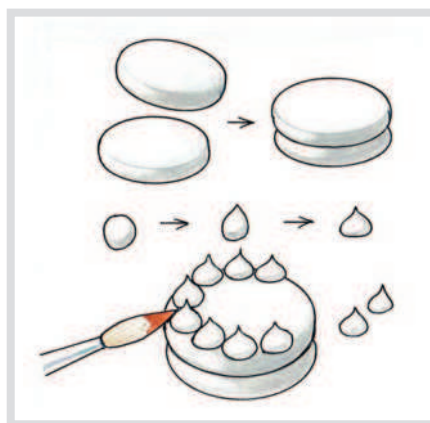


Spring onions: Form a few 3mm (1/8in) balls of white clay. Roll each into a log with a slight bulb at one end, tapering to a point at the other. Cut the tapered end as shown and brush green pastel all over the 'leaf' end but leave the bulb end white. Bake and varnish lightly.

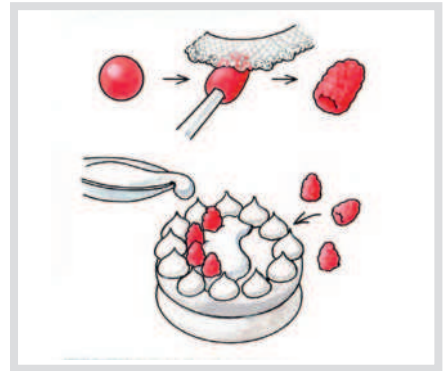


Radishes: Form 1.5mm (1/16in) balls of radish flesh mixture and brush liberally with crimson pastel. Bake and cut in half. Brush with gloss varnish. Place all the salad vegetables into a serving bowl, gluing in place with PVA glue if you wish.

RASPBERRY MERINGUE DESSERT



Meringue: Form a 13mm (1/2in) ball of white clay and press onto a tile to make a disc about 20mm (3/4in) diameter. Repeat and press the second disc lightly onto the first. Form balls of white clay, 5mm (3/16in) diameter and pinch the top of each into a point. Holding each by the point, press it down onto the tile to flatten the bottom to make a meringue shape. Press the meringues in a circle all round the edge of the top disc. Brush the tops with brown pastel very lightly to suggest browning.



Raspberries: Form tiny balls of crimson clay, press each onto the end of a wool needle, shaping it into an oval. Press the clay with the lace to suggest a raspberry's texture and remove from the needle. Bake the meringue on the tile with the raspberries. To assemble, mix together half a teaspoon of PVA glue, a pea-sized blob of white acrylic paint and enough talc to make a stiff mixture. Spread this into the centre of the meringue base and arrange on the raspberries. Leave to set.

Arrange your summer feast on a doll's house table. Stacked plates, cutlery and wine glasses will all add to the presentation. And perhaps a bottle of miniature wine? 🍷

DOLL'S HOUSE PROJECTS WITH POLYMER CLAY



SUE HEASER

This extract is from *Doll's House Projects with Polymer Clay* by Sue Heaser.

The book is a collection of articles that Sue wrote and illustrated in the 1990s for DHMS and other titles.



INFO

It is available from Amazon worldwide as both a print version and Kindle/ebook.

For more information visit

Website: www.sueheaser.com

At Home with THE BROADWOODS



THE KING OF ALL CASTLES...

This month, professional model maker Bea Broadwood explains why Petite Properties' latest (epic) 1/48th kit was inspired by a very special place close to her heart. She also lifts the lid on her design process and just why her new quarter scale castle took so long to finish.



▼ Introducing Turrin Castle, PP's latest quarter scale kit!



▲ Sadly the design process of Bea's new kit, did not go to plan...

Back in March 2020, a number of PP's eagle-eyed Instagram followers spotted something on my old workbench that intrigued them. The photo captured the beginning of the development of a grand quarter scale kit. Before I could properly get to grips with my initial design, lockdown struck and all new project development was quickly put on the back burner. With a member of staff down and with our online orders going through the roof, there was sadly no time to give this fledgling kit the attention that I felt it deserved. However, as a new year entered, I was at last able to refocus on the kit and the development process could begin again!



▲ The iconic Dorset ruins that inspired PP's latest design

Regular readers of 'At Home with the Broadwoods' will already know of my deep affection for the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset. The area's mellow limestone architecture has inspired more PP kit designs than anywhere else I have visited. So, if there was ever going to be a PP castle kit, inspiration for it was always going to start at the iconic ruins of Corfe Castle.

From the pages of a book...

◀ Even as a little girl, Corfe Castle captured Bea's imagination through one of her favourite childhood story books



Ever since I was a little girl, this majestic Dorset landmark has captivated

my imagination and inspired the course of my

life. As a child, one of my all-

time favourite books was Enid Blyton's Castle of Adventure. Unbeknown to me then, the castle ruins that I adore as an adult, was the central setting and featured at the very heart of the story and even on the cover of the book. Later, as an adult, it was on the slopes of the castle itself that a daydream became an idea and the concept behind Petite Properties sprang into life!

Architectural soup

Turrim Castle is certainly not a carbon copy of its inspiring full-scale counterpart, but its iconic stature and silhouette are very much embedded at the heart of my design. By its very name, Corfe's original iconic tower/keep certainly takes centre stage. But Corfe was not the sole inspiration behind the castle's design. PP's Turrim Castle is what I suppose you can call an 'architectural soup,' with many different locations contributing to its overall appearance.

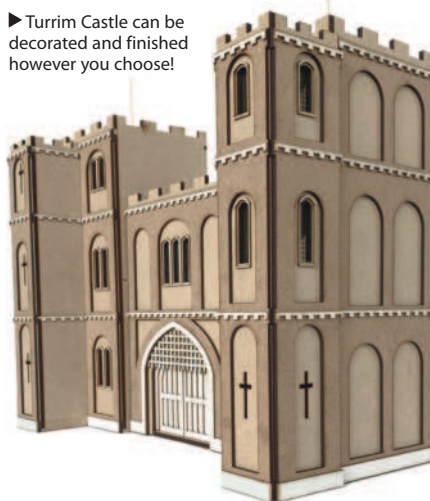
"Whether you are a keen Harry Potter fan, or simply a lover of all things medieval, Turrim Castle would make the perfect back drop for any miniature fantasy or historical setting!" Bea



▲ Inside the castle there are eight rooms that lead off of two turrets

With a symmetrical frontage, a central entrance leads inside where there are eight rooms, which lead to two turrets. The room layout is a blank canvas that can be adapted to suit any theme and the faux spiral staircase featured in one of the turrets can also be lit with concealed lighting to add extra atmosphere or an element of drama.

► Turrim Castle can be decorated and finished however you choose!



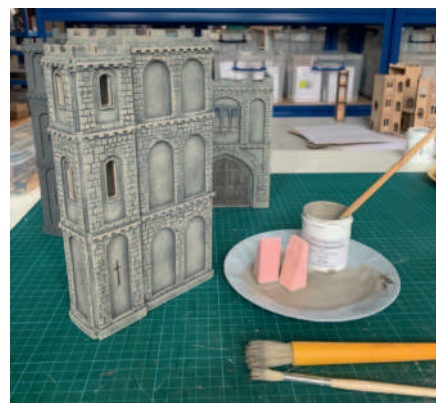
When decorating my master model of Turrim Castle, I wanted to make it appear ancient, solid and impenetrable. So, I used my tried and tested technique of engraved stonework, brought to life using a limited colour palette of PP paint, all weathered with a little bit of eye shadow!



▲ Bea used decorator's filler to create the external stone work

"Bea mixed a little interior decorator's filler into a stiff paste and then applied it to the raised exterior of her castle using a butter

knife. When dry, she used a pointed scribe tool to gently etch the stone work into the surface of the set filler."



▲ A little bit of sponge painting helped bring the exterior to life

Crossing the finish line

Turrim Castle may have started as an epic design, but after almost two years it also turned out to be an epic project too. Despite all the delays, it was such a fun kit to work on and I feel the finished design celebrates somewhere in the full-scale world that is so very special to my family and I.

So finally, after the longest design process in PP's history, we were super excited (and more than a little bit relieved) to finally cross the finish line and launch our 1/48th scale Turrim Castle kit at the spring Miniatura show in March this year. However, that isn't the end of the story. Next month we take a peek under the castle and

I will be sharing

not only the inspiration behind Turrim's 'Dungeon' base, but also my top tips for bringing it to life too! 🏰



► Next month we explore Turrim Castle's unique dungeon base...



INFO

Website: www.petite-properties.com

Online shop: www.petitepropertiesltd.com

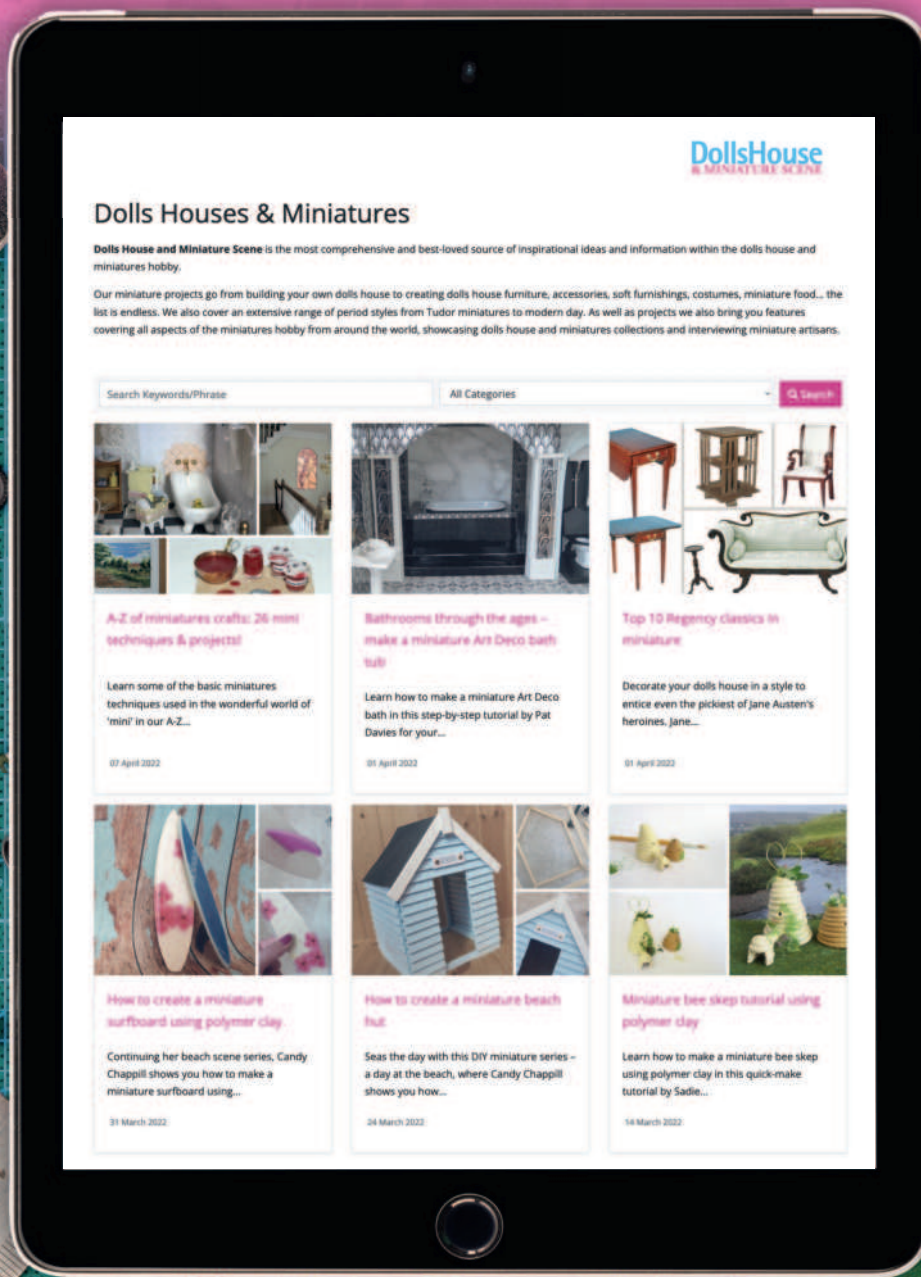
*PLEASE NOTE – we have a new phone number: **01526 320 958**

Petite Properties Modelling Community: facebook.com/groups/petiteproperties

Why not follow Petite Properties on Instagram and see what you can spot on Bea's work bench! instagram.com/petiteproperties

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Gem of an idea!



Moi Ali chats to a Tasmanian lady who inherited the mini-bug gene!



Jan Jones lives just south of Hobart, Tasmania, Australia: "Last stop before Antarctica!" she told me.

Amongst other minis, she is the creator of The Jonesonian, a 1/12th scale Gem, Mineral and Fossil Museum. The design of Jan's mini museum represents a cluster of quartz crystals, with three galleries and a roof top exhibition gallery, a crystal cave to one side and on the other side an entrance and shop with a gallery of Tabasco geodes above.

However, let's pause for a moment and understand Jan's journey into the marvellous world of miniatures. She explained: "My mum was always interested in tiny things and had the 1924 edition of the book on Queen Mary's dolls house and tiny German wooden dolls her mum had brought back from her tour of Europe. Mum would often tell me about Titania's Palace, which she had seen in Hobart as a 16-year-old in 1934. She also had a family early German Noah's Ark which I was allowed to play with on Sunday afternoons, lining up the animals in pairs around the dining room table."



▲ The Jonesonian finished

Jan's mum made her a dolls house when she was just three: "That kept me busy making things for it for years! I learned to knit at four, sewed curtains for the house at five and made cross stitch mats. I made furniture from matchboxes with paper clip handles and cut wooden pieces from thin plywood on the Hobbies treadle fret saw that Mum had. I had a sister seven years younger and I could make things for her dolls house. I was busy with things for the dolls house all through my childhood and teen years."

She never lost the mini-bug: "When I was at University, I remember stitching a family of tiny mice when I should have been studying! Then I married and had three little boys and I struggled to find excuses for a dolls house. Mum and I attended porcelain doll making classes with a friend who dabbled in miniatures. We did an 



▲ The fossil gallery

► Jan's mini gift shop

Adult Education class in making miniatures at a very basic level, using balsa wood and bottle tops. Mum asked my then brother-in-law to make her a dolls house and, a few months later in 1985, my husband and I and the three boys went to England on a teacher exchange. Sadly, mum passed away two months later, leaving me the bare dolls house. While in England, we visited the Pudsey Dollhouse fair 'for an hour' and that was it! I stayed at the fair until it closed, whilst the family went elsewhere. I haven't stopped making miniatures since! The short answer to this question is: I was born to do it! It must be hereditary!"

Jan's museum is a little unusual, so I enquired about the inspiration for it. Jan explained: "Since a child, fossils, minerals and gems have fascinated me. Being married to a rockhound, there have been many years of travelling the country attending the annual Australian 'Gemborees' (rock shows) where I started finding little treasures that would feature in my miniature scenes. Gradually the collection grew. On our local fossicking trips, I found amongst the gravels of Lune River in southern Tasmania, the tiniest agate spheres and geodes. Genuine miniature agate marbles to scale! Some of these are only a millimetre in diameter! I built a





“I couldn’t go past the play on the world-renowned Smithsonian, so with the surname of Jones, there was only one option!”



▲ The Jonesonian agates on right

1/12th scale rock shop as one of my earliest miniature projects and taught miniature classes in assembling and filling 1/12th scale display cases with fabulous collections, in both Australia and New Zealand.”

She continued: “Then we visited Tucson, Arizona, for its world-renowned gem, mineral and fossil shows. Day after day, for two weeks, we attended different shows. I found amazing tiny, tiny treasures, all real gems, minerals and fossils. Our ‘once-in-a-lifetime’ trip turned into an annual trip for several years and the collection of tiny

treasures increased. One year, with the company of our young grandson, we set out to find suitable spheres and/or beads to represent the planets for a miniature orrery. Each had to be the right size and colour. Young Hugo proved to have the sharpest eyes and spotted tiny treasures frequently.”

“Gradually, the idea of organising my treasures into a miniature museum took hold. It was the perfect excuse for buying more exotic pieces and a driving force behind my rock shopping! It also tweaked an interest in how museums displayed their

natural specimens and a ‘behind the scenes’ visit to our local Museum of Old and New Art with their chief display designer gave me clear directions for the interior design.”

Why call it The Jonesonian? “I couldn’t go past the play on the world-renowned Smithsonian, so with the surname of Jones, there was only one option!”

The structure (made from Tasmania’s endemic Huon Pine and dyed MDF Board) took six months to build, as Jan worked out how to do each stage as she went along. Completion took more than a year, [see more](#)



▲ Hand sanitiser from a toothbrush



▲ The Jonesonian gems base



▲ Tiny Pteradactyl

as setting up the display stands took months. Then there's the years of collecting!

There were many challenges along the way. Jan listed just a few: "Six galleries, separate but joined together. The need for detachable LED lighting. How to display some of the tiniest specimens. Creating the effect of the building representing a cluster of crystals and continuing that theme throughout the display. Having to cut timber to join at challenging angles."

Luckily Jan had access to a metal-cutting guillotine, which made small cuts in metal possible, but she struggled with tin snips to cut the longer pieces: "Finding the friendly folk at the local metal fabrication workshop was a godsend," said Jan. "They made cutting

and bending the metal seem easy and were only too happy to help. The 'skin' of the museum is galvanised iron sheets (they have their own natural crystal surface), salvaged from a scrap bin at a metalworkers' yard. This also made the lift doors and frames, the ceilings and edgings for displays. The roofs were expertly bent by a fellow at the local fabricating shop at no charge because he thought it was fun!"

Innovative materials have been incorporated throughout this build. The display boards are circuit boards, cut to fit and painted matt black. Jan patinaed the 'U' pins to darken them and cut each one to size to suit the stone. On the 'tables' the specimens sit on large thumb tacks, flat

topped and thicker than the usual ones. Jan told me: "I made a jig from flexible fly screen material tacked to a wooden frame. I fitted the tacks through the mesh to hold them for spray painting. The holes in the tables had to be cut at an angle as they slope, but the specimens sit flat."

Jan created 'metal' signs inside the galleries using metallic-look card costing just 65 cents and \$1 photocopying to create the lettering. She glued the card signs to microscope slides, made metal pieces to glue to the glass and hung them from the ceilings with blackened chain. Talking of signs, the first thing she made for the museum was a name plate for the front. She put it away safely and has never found it again!



▲ The Jonesonian gems left corner

"Hand sanitiser dispensers are a must these days," Jan said, "and mine are made from the cheapest plastic toothbrushes, cut short and the bristles pulled out with pliers! Framing the roof top exhibition are panels of copper-foiled stained glass, incorporating ammonites and slices of agate. Most of the Agate Gallery is stocked with tiny agates sliced and polished by my husband."

The entrance and shop feature specimens on polished rods of clear acrylic. Jan's display of 'Tinyosaurs' was made from kits. The Pterodactyl skeleton was a leftover plastic kit from her sons' younger days. Timber stain 'antiqued' the bones.

The ceiling of the shop is inspired by the glass flowers in the lobby of The Bellagio in Las Vegas. It was made with a bag of plastic flowers glued to stems which thread through the white transparent acrylic sheet. LED lights shine from above.

Stock for the shop includes various stone specimens, carved stone figures and vases from stone beads. Tiny 'gem trees' and books

on gems, fossils and minerals, card jigsaw boxes, games, kits and tiny cards of 'Gems from around the World' made using real specimens, all made by Jan.

The tile effect panel behind the Tinyosaurs uses stone samples taken from souvenir sheets. The shelving in the shop was made from shaped square wire, like bird wire, with wire coat hangers providing the supports and a recycled plastic stand cut into strips for the shelves. Black-sprayed metallic fly wire crates hold the specimens.

As a former teacher, unsurprisingly Jan has taken every opportunity to learn new skills – including learning from some of the grand masters. At the IGMA Guild school in 1992 she learnt metalworking and some woodworking skills. She received a Scholarship to the Guild School in 2002 and did silversmithing and lathe work with Pete Acquisto. For the last two decades she has attended the local lapidary club silversmithing group and greatly benefited from another small group with a retired tool maker and trade teacher. She has been to 'Miniatures in Tune' in Denmark three times,

each time doing silversmithing classes with Jens Torp, and also classes with Angie Scarr making plants, and Tine Krijnen's book making. She also did a three-day class in turning with Rob Tukham in Canada.

Friends persuaded Jan to run classes through Adult Education, she told me: "In the first term, I offered a different skill in miniatures each week for 12 weeks. That really kept me on my toes! I taught at Adult Ed. for 17 years, and also taught at the Australian and New Zealand miniature conventions and for 25 years through the miniatures club I founded."

I asked Jan what she will do with her time now that the museum is finished: "Hmmm.... I still need to write a book to accompany it, which will identify each specimen and give, where possible, the location where it was found. I need to find homes for much of the surplus. Perhaps a Cabinet of Curiosities, a Malachite Room, an Amethyst Room and a Rhodochrosite Room, plus even more display cases full of specimens..." Looks like Jan has much to keep her busy for years to come! 🏠

Scandi cupboard bed

A decorative piece of furniture with a Scandinavian influence.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 2x A3 sheets of white mount board
- A4 sheet of 5mm thick foam board
- Tracing paper
- Cocktail stick
- Wood glue
- Mod Podge gloss or mat
- Acrylic paints
- Masking tape
- 25mm wide microporous tape
- 2x staples
- 2x 3mm wide wooden knobs

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Craft knife and extra blades
- Metal ruler
- Sharp pencil
- 2mm ball stylus
- Paintbrushes
- Tiny strong magnet 3x1mm
- Wire cutters

Cutting list for mount board:

- Cut three rectangles 13.8x16cm, mark two as front and one as back
- Cut two rectangles 12.9x7cm, mark both as door
- Cut two rectangles 13.5x7cm, mark on as inside and one as end
- Cut two rectangles 15.7x7cm, mark as top and bottom
- Cut two strips 0.5x16.5cm, mark as bottom skirting
- Cut two strips 0.5x7.5cm, mark as bottom skirting
- Cut two strips 0.9x16.5 mark, as top moulding front
- Cut two strips 0.9x7.5cm, mark as top moulding side
- Repeat the above two steps with 0.6cm wide strips
- Lastly, cut two strips 0.3x18cm and two strips 0.3x8cm mark as top moulding and side
- The shelves and door support will be cut to fit later on.



1 As you can see, I used photocopies of the front and stuck them down with some spray mount and used that as my cutting guide. I removed the photocopy after cutting.

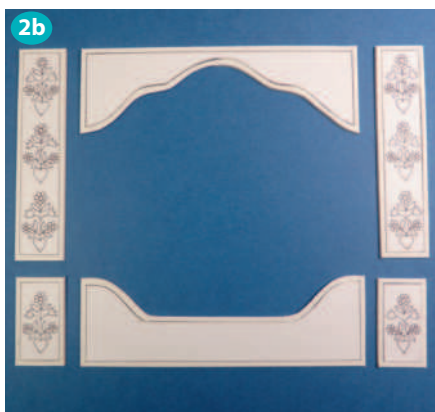
ALTERNATIVE METHOD:

See the drawing of the front of the bed. Trace over the middle opening and all the front moulding pieces, use a ruler for all straight lines, then mark lines for the sides and bottom for positioning. Turn over the tracing and place this on one of the pieces marked front.

Use a ruler to check that the tracing is in the correct position, it should be 2.5cm away from the sides and 3cm away from the bottom. You can tape down the mount board and the tracing so it does not move when you transfer the image of the middle opening only. If the cut out line is faint when transferred, just go over it with a pencil and then carefully cut out with a craft knife. Don't aim to go through the board with your first cut. More cuts are better and less likely for the craft knife to slip.



2 On the piece marked back we are going to create faux panelling. On one side of the piece, mark out 1cm wide gaps the whole width. Make the marks at the top and bottom, then using a metal ruler and a ball stylus join these marks. Go over it several times to create a nice groove. Do this gently so not to tear into the mount board. On the other side, start your spacing 2.5cm in from the left side. This is the space for the cupboard. This side is the inside of the bed.



Use a ruler on any straight cuts. On the second piece of mount board marked front, transfer all the moulding pieces and using a ruler and where possible cut these out. It is best to cut the inside lines first.



3 Either using a photocopy or the tracing paper method, repeat this method for the two pieces marked door. The door panels are simpler, you are basically cutting one piece in half lengthways. On the second piece you are cutting out the mouldings.

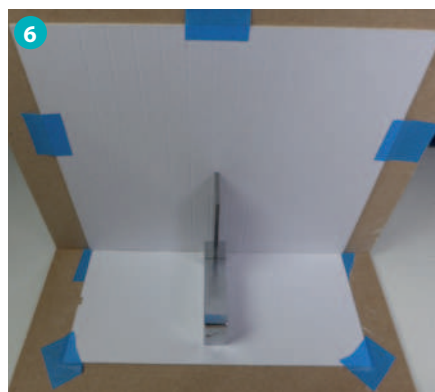


4 From the foam board, cut four pieces that measure 13.3x7cm. Glue together with wood glue, this will form the base of the bed. Using the microporous tape to seal all the raw edges.

ASSEMBLY



5 Start by gluing the moulding on the front piece, then the cupboard doors using wood glue and a cocktail stick to apply. See the photo and drawing for correct position. You can draw a line across the front 5mm from the bottom and 6mm from the top to help get everything straight. On the doors its 3mm from the top and bottom.



6 Take the back piece and the one marked bottom. On the bottom piece at the cupboard end I have cut a 4mm wide and 1.5mm deep notch in the middle, this is for the door post. I have a bookend jig to help keep everything square. You can use a sturdy cardboard box, just check it's square and flat. On the back piece at the bottom, mark in 1.5mm on both sides. The bottom piece is 3mm shorter. Tape the back piece down with the inside facing you - it's the one with less planks on.

Then apply glue to the bottom long edge and put this up to the back piece as shown. I also taped this down to hold in place while the glue dried. (Note that you can have the bottom piece with a notch either on the left or right depending on which side you would like the cupboard).



7 Apply glue to the bottom of your foam board stack and glue flush to the back and right side (if you have the cupboard on the right, stick the foam flush to the left). Make sure the foam stack is flush to the front. Leave to dry. Glue the piece marked inside up against the foam stack and the back piece and check it is square. Leave to dry once again. Apply glue to the bottom and side of the piece marked end and use masking tape to hold while drying. ▶

8a



8b



8 Now glue on the top which also has a notch cut into the middle of the short side 4mm wide and 1.5mm deep for the door post. Apply glue to the long side of the top and to the top of the middle and end piece. Tape down to hold in place until glue dries. Apply glue to all the edges of the constructed bed and attach the front. Use tape to hold in place.

ADDING THE DOORS USING A TAPE HINGE

9



9 Lie the cupboard bed on its front, then on the inside of the cupboard mark 5mm up from the bottom and 3mm at the top on both sides of the cupboard. Take one door and on the inside long edge apply the microporous tape half on the door and the other half to the inside of the cupboard. Use a flat tool to press the tape down, making sure the door is flush with the bed and 5mm from the bottom and 3mm from the top. Repeat this by lying the bed on its back and attaching the other door the same way.

10



10 Measure the depth of your cupboard and take away the 1.5mm for the notch. Then measure the width. Mine measured 2.35x7cm and cut out three shelves. I also cut two 3cm squares to help position the shelves inside the cupboard. Glue in shelves and leave to dry.

11



11 Next cut out a 4mm wide and 13.8cm tall strip from mount board, this is the door support. Measure 4.5cm from the bottom and cut a small groove in this strip to accommodate the tiny magnet. Glue in the magnet and cover with a small strip of the microporous tape. This will help to hold the magnet in place. Glue in the door support, place glue in the notches and on the edges of the shelves where this strip will attach.

On the outside edge of the doors, measure 4cm up from the bottom and 1mm from the edge. This will be the middle point for placing the staple. With wire cutters, cut off

the little pieces from each side so you are left with one longer flat piece. Turn the cupboard so that one of the doors lies flat on your work surface and press in the staple. Use a ball stylus to help press it in, then cover the staple with a small strip of the microporous tape to hold in place. Repeat this for the other door. Hold the door and from the outside and poke a hole in the middle of the gap of the two frame pieces. This is for your door knobs.

SKIRTING AND TOP MOULDINGS

12



12 Start with the skirting and glue the side pieces on first. Trim them flush to each edge. The front and back pieces extend past by 1.5mm at each side to cover the raw edges. Glue in place and use masking tape to secure. When dry, take the 0.9mmx7.5cm top moulding pieces and mark 0.3mm up on its width and draw a line across the length. Only apply glue to this space and glue to the end of the bed. When dry, trim flush to the bed. Take the 0.9mmx16.5cm, mark 3mm up on its width and draw a line across its length. Apply glue to this space and attach to the front making sure to cover the raw edges of the sides.

Repeat this step starting with the sides again for the 6mmx7.5cm and glue in place. Then glue the 6mmx16.5cm front pieces. You are making a step moulding that is 3mm wide when viewed from the front. The last 3mm strips get stuck onto the top of the 6mm piece and finishes this moulding.

Beate's Top Tip!

"If you would like to age your bed use a coarse piece of sand paper to scuff up the paint work."



13 Using Mod Podge, paint the entire bed inside and out. Leave to dry and repeat, as this will seal the bed and stop it from warping when you paint it. When dry, paint in an acrylic colour of your choice. A couple of coats are needed to get a good even coverage. I didn't paint the inside of the cupboard as I liked the contrast of the white.

Glue in your door knobs and paint them a contrasting colour.



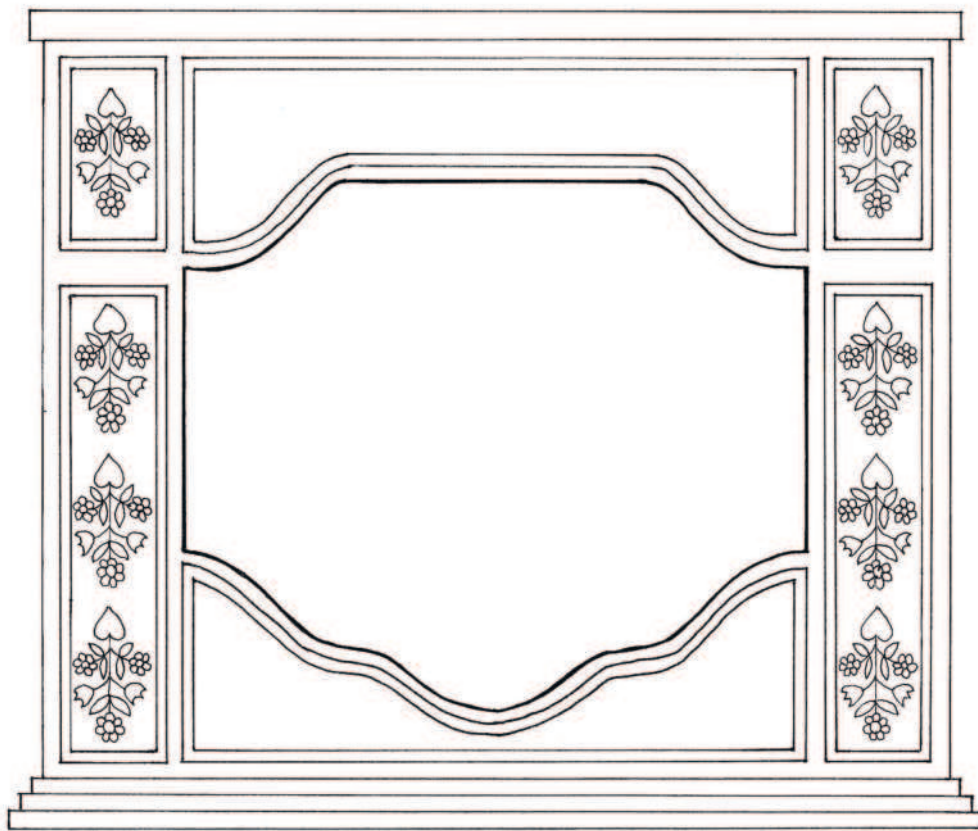
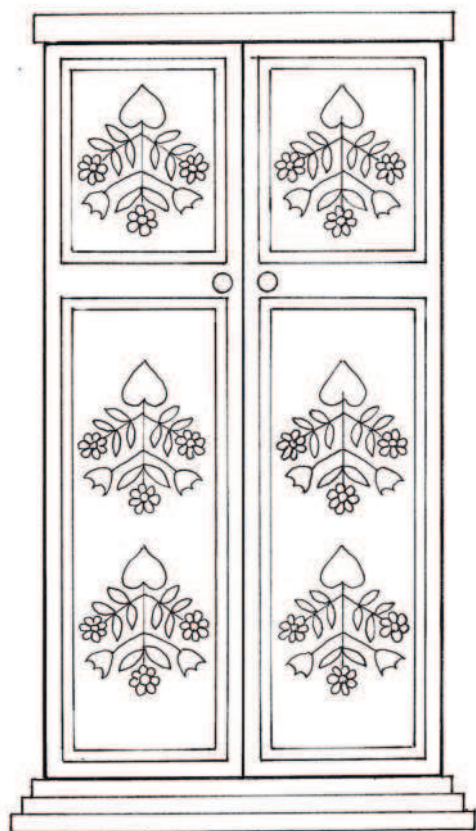
14 When dry, either trace the pattern I have included and transfer this to the inside of the panels on the front and the cupboard doors or draw your own. You can also use water slide decals or stickers to add decoration if painting is not your thing. Use acrylic paints to paint your transferred design.

Make bedding to fit the inside space. I used two 3mm foam pieces covered in fabric for the mattress. The pillows and blanket are stitched. 🏠

Scandi Bed template

Patterns at 75%

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Moi's before refurbishment



Anne's dormer window addition

TAKE TWO...

The Mountfield

Moi Ali's occasional series looks at two interpretations of the same kit...



Take two women, both aged 58, both living in West Lothian in Scotland, and both with dolls houses that couldn't be more different! Little did I know, when I took possession of my second-hand eBay purchase – a Dolls House Emporium Mountfield – that a lady down the road whom I'd never met, Anne McDermott, was working on the same house!

It has taken me a good deal of time to strip my ready-built Mountfield back to basics, undoing all the hard work of the previous owner. Longer, in fact, than if I had built it from scratch! During this time, I have amassed the perfect items to furnish it in my chosen era of the late 1940s/early 1950s. Many houses at that time would have contained furniture dating to an earlier epoch and would most likely have had Victorian furniture as well as items from the Edwardian era and the 1920s and '30s. ▶

◀ Moi's front door

▼ Moi's understairs





Moi's living room



Moi's dining room



Moi's artisan sideboard

Kits are always an affordable option and my go-to maker was Jane Harrop and her fabulous 1940s utility kits. I used many pieces from her range: dining table and chairs (which I have since put into a different house), kitchen cabinet, occasional table, carpet sweeper, radios... They were perfect. Phoenix was another favourite for authentic radios, my Ascot water heater, various kitchenalia items, Hilda Ogden-style flying ducks, tiled fireplaces...

I was lucky enough to acquire a mini house clearance job lot from a lady who was disposing of her own Mountfield as she needed to downsize. I got a lovely gas cooker, an Art Deco leather suite from Arlette's, and star of the show – a Henry Colbert Art Deco bathroom suite. Henry was an artisan maker in the 1980s, and I was delighted finally to own some of his pricier pieces at a very reasonable cost. I confess that the beautiful white kid leather settee and chair looked too swanky for my humble abode so I committed a terrible crime and coloured the pure white leather with burgundy ink to grunge it up a bit so it was a better fit. It broke my heart but needed to be done.

Some of my furniture has been made from scratch and my son (who has occasional access to a laser cutter at work) has been a great help. He laser cut my Art Deco bed, boy's bookcase and bathroom stool. It's the accessories that really bring a scene to life and I have acquired many during my Mountfield refurb. Stars of the show are my Muriel Hopwood Art Deco vases (Muriel set up the Miniatura fair), a couple of Sally Meakin Deco vases and Clarice Cliff-style tea set and lovely Deco needlepoint rugs purchased from eBay.

So much energy has gone into stripping the house and preparing it, that I have yet to do much decorating inside (though the outside is almost finished!). I have grand plans... a wood panelled hall with plate rail, 1930s closed balustrade on the stairs and landing, picture rails throughout, internal changes to the kitchen/dining room, with a false wall and tiled 'nook' for the cooker... There is much to do!

“I'm not sure which era it has turned out to be! I just love that it feels like a home”
Anne



◀ Moi's side bedroom

▼ Moi's bathroom awaiting tiles and flooring



Moi's Henry Colbert suite

By contrast, Anne has put me to shame and finished her Mountfield! She has gone for a contemporary interpretation and it's a great success, as many of these old 1930s homes in real life are cosy, modern family homes. Mine is set in aspic but Anne's is bang up to date.

Her husband David bought her Mountfield in 2016, as Anne was looking for something a bit different from the usual dolls houses available. Having made a start, unfortunately Anne became ill and had two lots of major surgery. She was in recovery when the pandemic hit and as she was in the highest risk category, Anne had to shield.

Anne takes up the story: "Before I became unwell, I was a professional bridal seamstress for over 30 years. My work was my passion. I stitched dresses that cost more than I care to imagine! I learned that preparation is 9/10ths of the work. Measure a hundred times because you can only cut once! 🧵👗"



▲ Anne's front door



◀ Anne's hallway

I was absolutely heartbroken when I was told I could no longer work as it would escalate my condition."

Anne has rheumatoid arthritis as well as osteoarthritis, scleritis and eosinophilic bronchitis. "My worst nightmare is losing the use of my hands," she told me. "My hands are my life! When I was told to shield in March 2020, my husband started shielding with me to keep me safe. He is now registered as my full-time carer. We decided to use the time to bring the Mountfield to life. I couldn't make up my mind on an era so I researched online to see what others had done to their Mountfields."

Anne continued: "I wanted mine to be full of children and to be a mix of up-to-date and older pieces. I'm not sure which era it has turned out to be! I just love that it feels like a home. I commissioned Lynne Campen from Essex to produce a family for me. She created the McNamaras! Ellen and Tom, and a whole host of children, dogs, guinea pigs and even a budgie. The couple are named after my dear friend Tom in New York, who lost his wife Ellen when they were in their 30s and before they had any family. My Mountfield is in memory of her. My Ellen and Tom dolls are foster carers and their home is always full of visitors. Granny Mabel, Grandpa Alfie and their pals are frequent callers. They were made by the late Andrea Lloyd Smith."

Unlike my Mountfield, Anne has electrified hers. Unusually for a dolls house, the Mountfield is two rooms deep and like me, Anne struggled to work out how the electrics would run. I gave up, but Anne persevered. "Some lights don't have a long enough cable to stretch through two rooms," she



◀ Anne's downstairs

▼▶ Anne's dining kitchen



► Anne's small front bedroom

explained. "My husband cut grooves through floors and walls and I worked out how to extend the cables." Anne's house is really brought alive with lighting (she has 43 in all!) and she has inspired me to give it a go.

Anne has been adventurous in making modifications. "When the kit arrived, one of the bay windows was broken. Dolls House Emporium sent a replacement. As we started to put the electrics in, I felt that the rooms were too dark. A friend suggested trying to repair the bay window and cutting another hole in the wall to bring in more light. This started a whole new adventure. It now has 11 extra windows. I added a large dormer in the attic and a smaller one beside it. Then we cut another window in the side of the roof that comes off. David screwed a chimney on this side to use as a handle to lift the section off. I also built a fake chimney at the rear to house the electrics."

Anne's hallway and staircase is a triumph. Her stair carpet has stair rods and she has even made a spiral staircase up to the attic conversion, as she explained: "The girls will be sleeping there and I felt a stepladder wasn't safe enough for children to go up and down. I made the coach-built pram from a kit by Teenytinythings. My husband painted it. It's an exact replica of the pram I had for my two children back in the '80s."

She continued: "The Mountfield is filled with personal treasures. Some of the pictures are original paintings by Lynne Campen and some of the contents are things I've had for over 20 years. I made most of the curtains (the nursery's lace curtains trimmed with crystals and diamanté are from an offcut of a Spanish wedding gown I worked on), bedding and soft furnishings, as well as the little tables made with piles of books. I have just tiled the roof with almost 3000 real brick tiles and I need to finish the edging tiles, then it's complete. My advice to anyone building this kit is really think about where you want electrics, sockets and lights before decorating it. Also, paint all windows and doors before putting them in place. It took me weeks to paint them all."

Mountfield isn't Anne's only miniature home: "I have Oakhurst and Marshall & Snelgrove still boxed and ready to build, and recently my husband bought me a Julie Bennet cottage, Jubilee House by Sid Cooke and a Triang Princess House. These are all second, or even third, hand! All will need attention!" ►

► Anne's side bedroom



▼ Anne's bathroom blues



▲ Anne's cosy attic conversion

Anne's parents bought her first dolls house in 1973: "It was an Edwardian-style house. I absolutely loved it and have wanted to build one as an adult – a lifelong dream I have finally accomplished! I've tried to make my Mountfield a home, not just a house. Full of children, visitors and most of all, full of love. My Mountfield has saved my mental health. I am still very scared about going out with the pandemic still around, but my husband and I have plenty to keep us busy, as we are about to start restoring the Jubilee!"

If readers have a Sid Cooke Jubilee or another Sid Cooke house, please get in touch! I'd love to do a Take 2 feature on this! [🏠](#)

Anne's left elevation and understair



▲ Anne's Sid Cooke Jubilee House



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Victoria Heredia Guerbos

Oval harp based table

This little marble-topped, harp-based oval table, with its gilded animal paw feet, is reminiscent of an English Regency piece. Its small size makes it versatile as a side table in many dolls house settings, a little lamp will complete the scene.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- 1/16in (1.6mm) thick sheetwood
- Matt board
- Marble patterned paper
- Beige scrapbook paper
- White, grey and gold acrylic paint
- Fine hemp twine
- Brass eye-pins
- Wood stain
- Satin varnish
- White glue
- Superglue
- Glue stick for paper

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Knife
- Steel ruler
- Small saw
- Mitre box
- Ball stylus
- Fine paintbrush
- Paper punches: flower, leaf, 1/16in (1.6mm) circle
- Wooden cocktail stick
- Wire cutters
- Small hand drills
- Needle files
- Emery board
- Fine sandpaper

MAKE THE 'MARBLE' TOP



1 Cut the ovals from matt board and sand the edges smooth. Glue the ovals together with equal overhang all around and weight this top until it is dry, to prevent warping. Paint the edges white. Cut marble paper the same size as the smaller top oval and glue stick it to the top. Lightly extend some of the marble's grey veins onto the edges with a fine paintbrush.

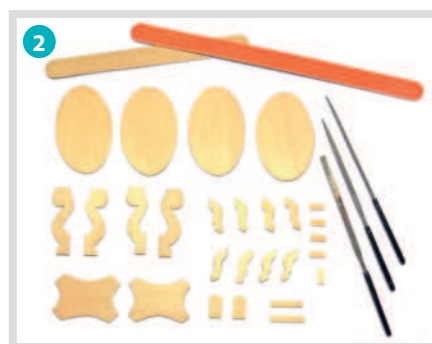


Photos by Stephen Lesbirel

Ruth's Top Tip!

"Paint white along the seam of the two pieces and smudge white over the grey for a more realistic look."

CUT AND SAND THE WOOD

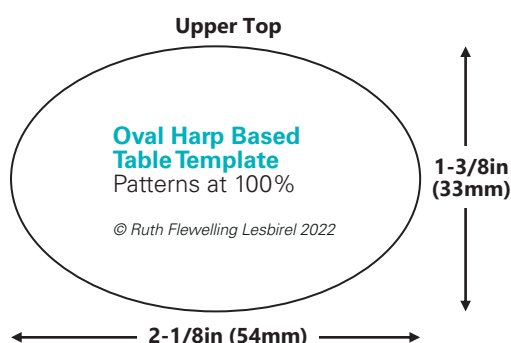


2 Cut four skirt ovals, four harp sides, two harp medallions, four upper and two lower harp stops, the two bases, eight legs and the string spacer from sheetwood. File and sand all the curves to match the template. Hold matching pieces together for a final sanding to ensure they are the same. Sand the top and bottom edges of two of the skirt ovals, rounded. Round the edges on one side only on the harp sides, bases and legs.

REFINE THE TRIM



3 Slowly drill the three holes in the string spacer to receive brass pins. File the centre top of the last 1/8in (3mm) of each leg, forming two 'toes' on each. Round the sharp edge so both toes look alike. Stain the wood, hemp twine and a small section of scrapbook paper. Punch four flowers, four leaves, and four tiny circles from the stained paper.



MAKE THE SKIRT

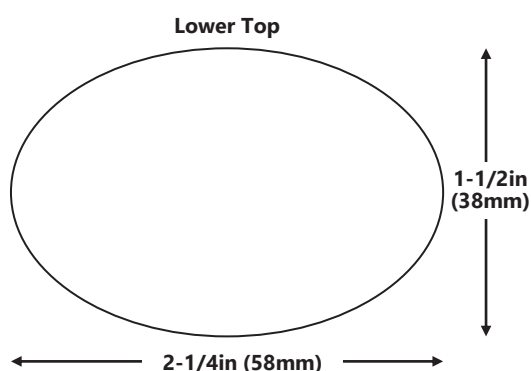


4 Glue the two straight skirt ovals together and a rounded oval above and below them. Again, weight this assembly until it is dry. Mark the centre of one long side of the oval on the side of the skirt. Curl the end of the twine tightly and glue the curl against the lower side of the skirt 1/8in (3mm) to one side of the centre mark. Glue this twine along the lower edge of the skirt until it is 1/4in (6mm) from the curl. Cut and curl the twine end to make a mirror-image matching curl and glue it to the side of the skirt as before, leaving a 1/4in (6mm) gap between the curls.

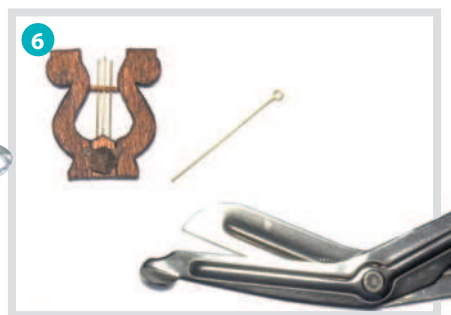
MAKE FLOWER TRIMS



5 Emboss veins in two paper flowers with the ball stylus, cup them and glue them together, offsetting the petals. Use the cocktail stick to apply a speck of glue to the centre of the flower. Moisten the opposite tip to pick up a tiny circle and place it on the glue speck. Add the second tiny circle. Glue this flower between the two curls on the edge of the skirt. Emboss veins and cup two leaves. Glue the leaves, tucked behind the flower, above the twine curls, on the side of the skirt. Make another similar flower for the medallion and set it aside.



MAKE THE HARP

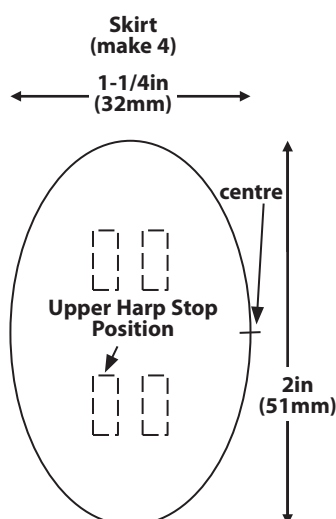


6 Glue the medallions and harp sections together in pairs with the rounded edges outwards, weighting them until dry. Drill three string holes in the medallion top where shown. Working over the template, glue the harp pairs together at the bottom, with the medallion between them. Glue the reserved flower to the front medallion. Sand the string spacer ends as needed and glue it between the harp sides. Cut three 7/8in (22mm)-long eye-pin pieces, slide them through the spacer and superglue them into the holes in the harp's medallion.

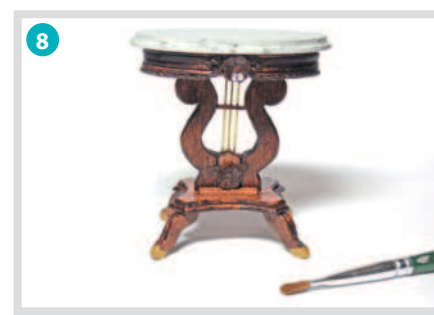
MAKE THE BASE AND LEGS



7 Glue the smaller base centred on the larger one, with the rounded edges facing upwards. Glue the leg pieces together in pairs. Weight all these pieces until dry. Glue the flat top of a leg pair diagonally onto each corner of the upturned base. Paint the foot portion of each leg with gold paint.



ASSEMBLE THE TABLE



8 Glue four harp stops to the underside of the skirt and the two longer stops to the top of the base, where shown. Glue the harp between the base's stops. Glue the 'marble' top centred on the skirt. Glue the top of the harp between the skirt's stops. Varnish the wood and 'marble' edges.

LAMP OPTIONS

A lamp can easily be wired by threading the tails of a grain of wheat bulb through the beads to a 12-volt power source.

YOU WILL NEED

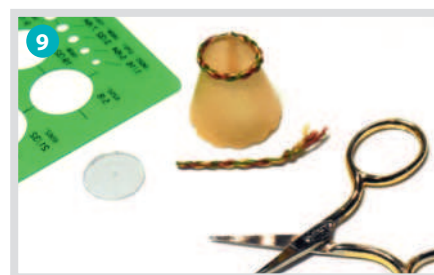
MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Large acrylic faceted bead or other bead choice(s)
- Tiny crystal bead
- Medium-sized bead/pearl or 12-volt bulb
- Translucent paper
- Brass jewellery findings: bead caps, filigree spacer beads, jump rings, eye-pins
- String or fine braid
- Clear styrene & clear straw
- 24-gauge brass wire

TOOLS REQUIRED

- Scallop-edged scissors
- Needle-nose pliers & needle tool
- Circles template (optional)

MAKE THE LAMPSHADE



9 Cut the scallop-edged lampshade from translucent paper. Glue the edge of the lampshade onto its side tab. Glue string or fine braid around the top of the shade. Cut a styrene disk just slightly larger than the top of the lampshade, using a small coin or circles template. ▶

MAKE THE BASE



10 Superglue the large bead into a cupped bead cap. I used a jump ring between them, for more contact, since my 'crystal' bead was pointed. Superglue a small bead cap to the top, a filigree spacer to it, and an eye-pin stub into the side of the spacer as a switch. I built the floral lamp on a corsage pin.

MAKE THE TOP



11 If making a working lamp, slide the wires through the spacer and bead base. Otherwise, superglue a bead to the spacer. For the double-globed option, superglue a second matching bead to the filigree spacer and a short section of clear straw to the top. For a working double-globed lamp, use translucent beads.

COMPLETE THE LAMPSHADE OPTION



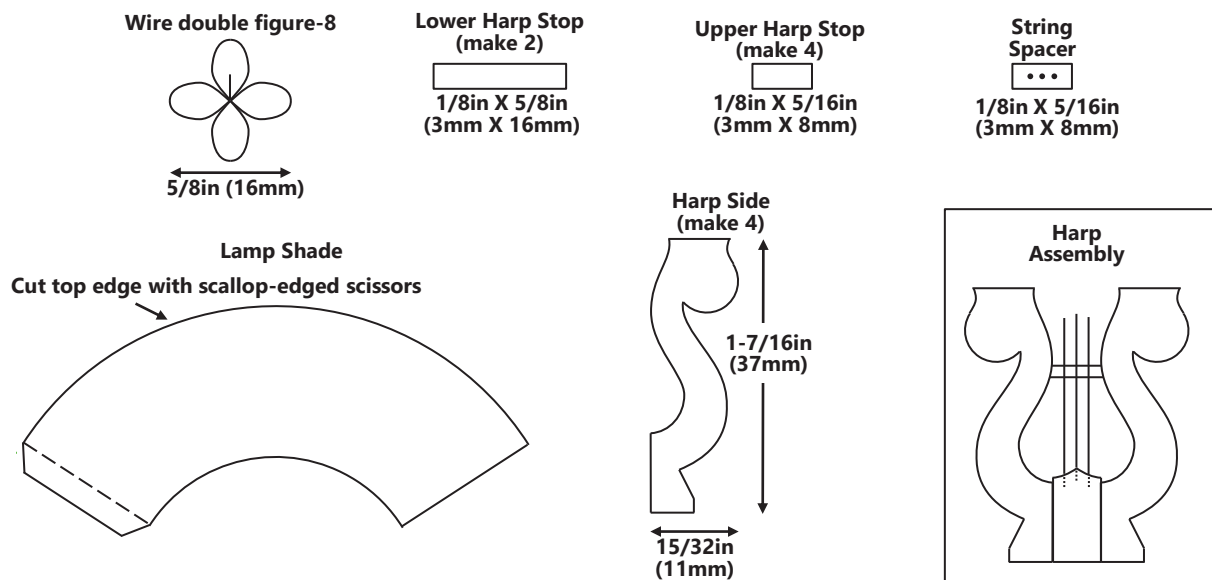
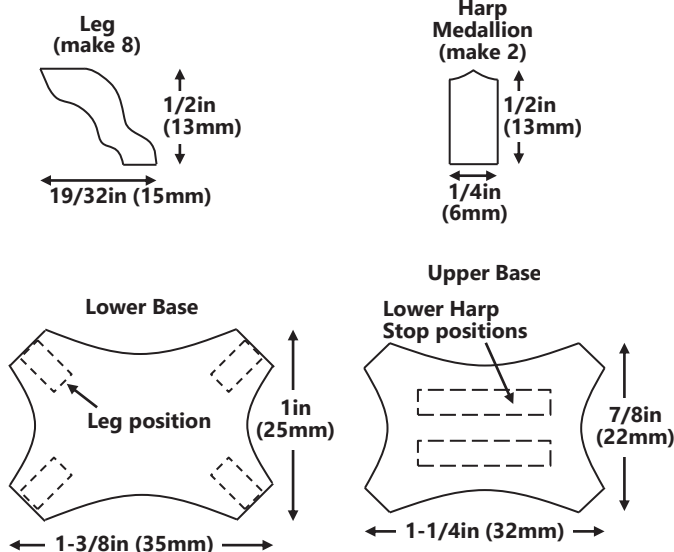
12 Form a wire double figure-8 with a centre prong (see the template). Bend the loops down so they fit snugly over the bulb or top bead. Press the loops securely against the bulb or bead. Pierce the centre of the styrene and superglue it onto the wire's centre prong. Superglue a tiny crystal bead over the prong. Set the lampshade onto the styrene disk.

MAKE DOMED DISPLAYS



13 Another popular accessory for a little table like this, especially in a Victorian setting, is a domed display, holding dried flowers, shells, butterflies, or even a tiny bonsai. I used small domes from my local craft store, set over slightly wider buttons. A short twig superglued into a wooden bead base made the perfect framework for a few special tiny shells or cut-out butterflies in my displays. 🏠

© Ruth Flewelling Lesbirel 2022

Oval Harp Based Table Template
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Fun faux fur

Make this vintage-style boxed jumper in no time at all.

YOU WILL NEED

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Wool
- Felt
- White card
- Tissue
- A vintage box label
- Glue
- Gold or silver (or pearlescent) metallic thin card or thick paper
- A flatback half pearl



1 Cut a rectangle of felt approximately 4x2.25cm.



2 Fold the felt so the left and the right sides meet in the middle at the back, then crease the folds with your finger.



3 Let the felt open, put glue on the left and right-hand sides, then fold so they meet in the middle again. Press down so the glue holds the felt in this folded position.



4 Cut a neck hole in the top of the felt, through both layers.



5 Measure round the front of the neck and cut the yarn 2cm longer than needed.



6 Glue the yarn to the front, around the neckline, but not to the back. Trim the wool to fit. Trim any stray hairs too!



7 Cut a piece of felt to make an arm for the jumper and glue it the same way as for the body.



8 Press down the glued felt to form an arm, with the seam running along the centre back.



9 Glue the arm at the back of the jumper, then fold it round to the front as shown, holding it in place with more glue.



10 Using a very small punch, punch 'buttons' from metallic paper/card. I used three but add as many or as few as you like.



11 Glue the buttons in place (if you prefer, use tiny diamantes for a more glamorous look).



12 Punch a brooch in the same way, using the same card but a larger punch (roughly the size of an office paper punch). A star or circle work well.



13 Glue the base of the brooch in place, then glue a flat back pearl (or small diamante if you prefer) to this.



14 Make a simple box base from white card. Cut a rectangle and fold up the sides, cutting and gluing tabs to hold it together.



15 Glue tissue to the box base and make sure it overlaps the box sides. Glue a label to the front of the box as a finishing touch.

Moi says...

"For this project you will need a chunky fur effect wool/yarn, or a chenille wool (which is less hairy but still works well). I used Sirdar Alpine wool, which comes in lots of nice colours."

NEXT MONTH

Moi shares another quick make project that uses the same yarn: a faux fur vintage-style stole, perfect for a 1920s-1950s scene.

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Judges Lodgings
Museum



Lancashire lass



Moi Ali discovered two must-sees on a trip to lovely Lancashire.



I love Lancashire, but was quite unaware of two of its major miniature attractions: a wonderful dolls house shop, and a museum with a superb historic dolls house collection. First for some retail therapy, at Miniature Real Estate in the lovely seaside town of Morecambe – famous for its magnificent Art Deco Midland Hotel... and comedian Eric Morecambe!

Shop owner Rebecca Hellewell told me: "When I opened the shop in 2018, I sold mostly antiques. One day I got a dolls house in that needed finishing off before I could sell it, so I got cracking. What can I say? I got totally hooked! Bit by bit the antiques got less and the dolls houses got more! Then with lockdown, I needed to move out of the shop. Luckily my mum has a fabulous big Victorian house in Morecambe, so I pinched a couple of rooms from her and here I am!"

I popped in to see Rebecca and treated myself to a few bits and pieces from her extensive range of new and pre-loved items. "I'm in awe of the artisan pieces," she told me, "But I have something for everyone and all budgets are catered for. I do have new, affordable stock, but I also have wonderful pre-loved houses and furniture. Some of it is just what might be termed 'second-hand', but other pieces are highly collectible items made by top artisans such as Stokesay Ware. I buy from people who are downsizing their collections and also from those who want to upgrade to something bigger and better." 

◀ Inside a lovely Victorian villa



A model of the museum ©Lancashire County Museum



Enjoying the exhibits ©Lancashire County Museum



1920s, currently in store ©Lancashire County Museum



The Burley, based on a Wimpey home ©Lancashire County Museum



Part of the Barry Elder collection
©Lancashire County Museum



Early 20th century house ©Lancashire County Museum

Rebecca is hoping to run workshops and classes in the future to cater for the large number of miniaturists within driving distance of Morecambe. Customers are not just local, though, as Rebecca explained: "They come not only from all over the UK, but I also have a lot from across the pond. One day I would love to open a shop in California."

Many of Rebecca's customers would come and browse, but worried that they just didn't have the space to have a large dolls house. Rebecca had a cunning plan: "I can completely understand, living in a very small house myself, that it can be hard to find space for a dolls house, so I started to make scenes in lanterns, bread bins, first aid boxes, cabinets... anything and everything that could take a little diorama. I love the idea of miniatures fitting into a home hidden in plain sight. I've made all sorts of dioramas, from a Tyson Fury's gym to a Christian Dior shop. But more than anything, I love to do old, abandoned and distressed looking



A bargain in need of renovation



Creepy noose in Rebecca's shop

miniatures. I was lucky enough to be asked to do a full abandoned dolls house for YouTuber and urban explorer David Cripps, whose video explorations of the grime-covered and barren mansions in London are an internet sensation. That was a fantastic project. He wanted some of his favourite horror movies and serial killers incorporated in the house. One of my other favourites was a Sweeney Todd scene, complete with Mrs Lovett's pie shop. The creepier and older the better. My dream would be to make miniatures for the movies."

Moving further north now, to the lovely city of Lancaster, and a museum collection that is definitely worth a visit. Close to Lancaster Castle, inside the city's oldest town house (which dates back to around 1625) you will find the Judges' Lodgings Museum. The top floor is home to the Museum of Childhood and an important collection of toys – amongst them, many vintage and antique dolls houses. The collection includes the Barry Elder Toy and Doll Collection, comprising a diverse range of dolls houses as well as other childhood items. Like many museums, there are more dolls houses than there is space to display them and some are in storage – such as The Burley Dolls House, built by Norman Porter in 1994 from plans published in Practical Woodworking Magazine in 1991. The design was based on the Burghley Tudor Render Homes built by Wimpey Homes at Tadworth Park.

There's more than enough on display, though, to satisfy any visitor. ➡



Library room box



Derelict home



Fully lit book nook



Abandoned bedroom



Inside museum 1958 house



Country kitchen for sale



Saddle up



Pretty bathroom



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Pre-loved houses galore

You will find a 1/12th scale model of the Judges' Lodgings in the full-size Judges' Lodgings! This spectacular dolls house was built by Christopher Cole from Bainbridge in North Yorkshire. There are some lovely Victorian dolls houses, as well as ones that some readers may recall from their own childhoods in the 1950s and 1960s. Along with the toys, this offers a great opportunity for a trip down memory lane.

As well as dolls houses, you will find vintage dolls house furniture with a link to Morecambe. Bought in 1938 at a shop in Morecambe (not Rebecca's, obviously!) the old furniture was donated to the Lancaster museum and looks just perfect alongside the dolls houses of that era.

So, if you're staycationing this Easter, pay a visit to lovely Lancashire – you're in for a miniature treat! 🏠



INFO

You can find Rebecca on Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, YouTube and on her website:

www.miniaturerealestate.co.uk

Miniature Real Estate

112 Thornton Road

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Lancs

LA4 5PJ

Open 10am to 4pm, Tuesday to Saturday

You can find out more about Judges' Lodgings Museum, including their opening times and access information on their website page

Judges' Lodgings Museum - Lancashire County Council

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Make miniatures and help a good cause, says Moi Ali...



▲ Make all of these

POP UP was started back in 2012 to raise funds to support children in some of the world's poorest places through the charity Compassion UK, one of the UK's top 10 charities. Since then, they've given away tens of thousands of pounds to good causes in Tanzania, Guatemala, Kenya and elsewhere.

As a Scottish-based business, it's unsurprising that many of POP UP's kits have a distinctively Scottish flavour. I opted for the Charles Rennie Mackintosh furniture to review and was delighted with the quality of design and materials, the ease of construction and the good results. Laser-cut from top grade poplar ply, the kit pieces simply pop out and slot together. Some kits come ready-coloured, others are raw ply (allowing you to add your own colour choices to match your room).

The kits are great 'as is' but you can super-duper them by adding colour to the uncoloured backs of any pre-coloured pieces, and perhaps even adding fabric seat cushions to some of the chairs. I'd also recommend a light sanding to soften the edges of the cut pieces (I do this with all kits as it gives them a more authentic appearance).

The Rennie Mackintosh pieces come in a vast range, which includes his iconic Ladderback, Argyll, Ingram, Butterfly, Hill House and China chairs, Domino and China tea tables and a charming cupboard. Priced at just £4.50 for a 1/12th scale piece, these are highly affordable too. 🏠

If you're looking for kits that require no skill, no painting, no glue, yet produce great results and help a charitable cause to boot, POP UP products are for you!

THE FACTS

Buy from:

www.popupdesigns.co.uk/product-category/charles-rennie-mackintosh/

Cost: £4.50 each

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Experience: Complete beginner

Top tip: Lightly sand edges

READER GIVEAWAY!

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For more information regarding competitions visit www.warnersgroup.co.uk/competition-terms/

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Competitions in issue 336 are open 1st May – 31st May 2022.

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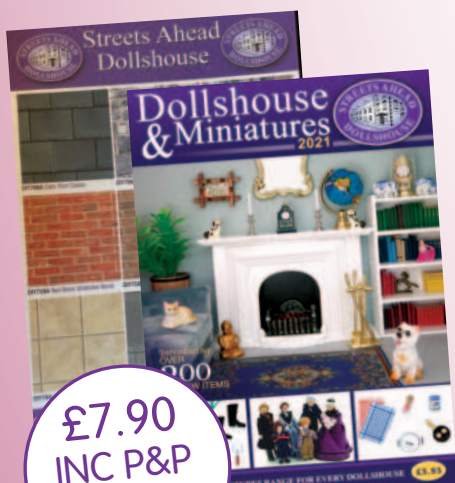
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