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Welcome

Our Andy King seems to know everyone, and not just on the woodworking circuit either. Send him to Silverstone and he's in the pit lane saying hi to *Top Gear*'s The Stig who lives in the same neck of the woods as Andy – the lengths manufacturers will go to get our attention! Well, the lure of some super-fast cars got Andy's pulses racing, but it says something for the quality of DeWalt kit that he was equally excited to get a preview of the machines to be launched in the next few months, **p58**. He is equally lavish in praise of the new Bosch router, **p16**, and two Metabo combis, **p26**, giving them the full five stars. The mathematicians among you will rail at Mark Griffiths' neo-Fibonacci approach to his spiral table, **p36**, Jeff Segal makes a curved oak desk, **p42**, Phil Davy solves a baffling TV problem, **p74**, and Les Thorne turns a pair of balls, **p80**. I also visit Les in his Hampshire workshop and find out what fires his passion, **p46**. Meanwhile, for all of you who fancy earning a bob or two from your skills, Michael Forster starts a mini series on craft fairs, **p52**, starting with preparation for setup.

Andrea Hargreaves, Editor



Andrea Hargreaves
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Andy King
Technical Editor



Dave Roberts
Consultant Editor



Phil Davy
Consultant Editor

We endeavour to ensure all techniques shown in Good Woodworking *are safe, but take no responsibility for readers' actions. Take care when woodworking and always use guards, goggles, masks, hold-down devices and ear protection, and above all, plenty of common sense. Do remember to enjoy yourself, though.*

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Good Woodworking

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Cover photograph by Richard Walsh



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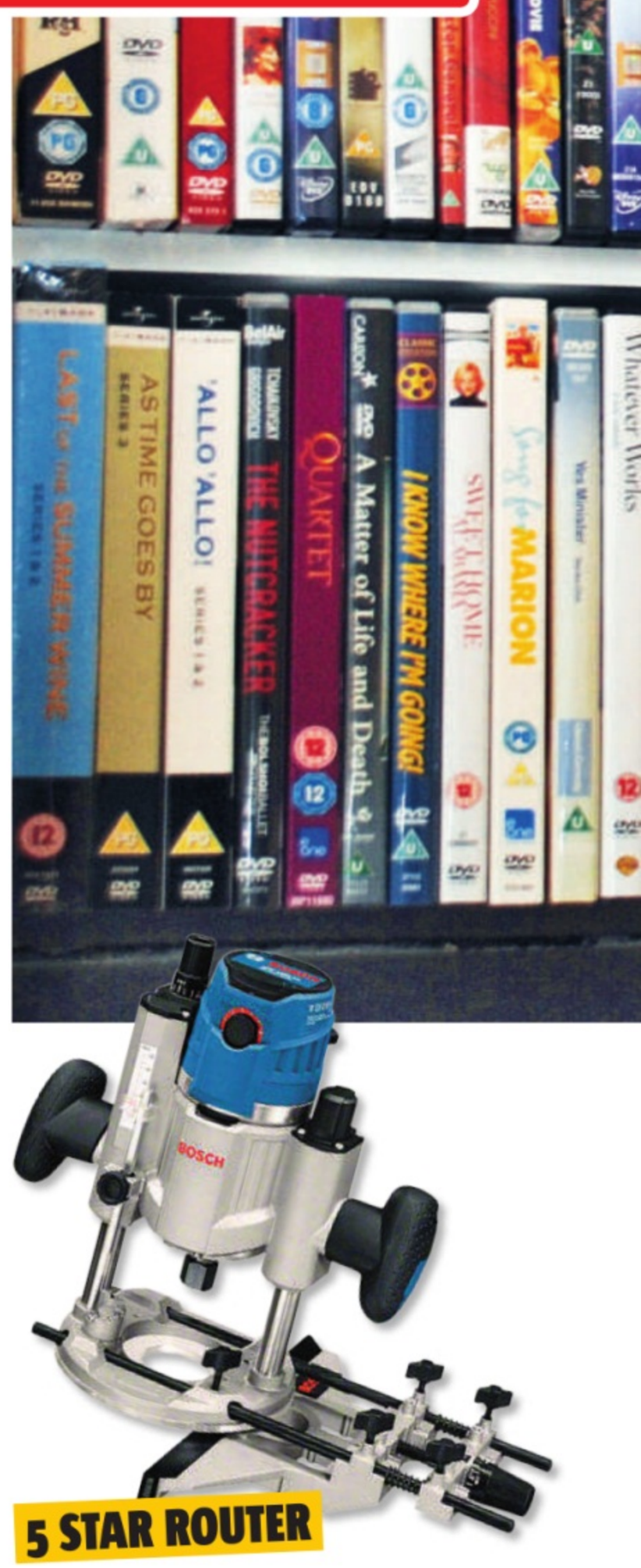
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Tiger 11/250 ‡	2.5Hp	9.5	24ltr	£119.98	£143.98
Tiger 8/510	2Hp	7.5	50ltr	£139.98	£167.98
Panther 10/500†	2.5Hp	9.5	50ltr	£159.98	£191.98
Tiger 11/510 #	2.5Hp	9.5	50ltr	£149.98	£179.98
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‡ was £155.98 inc.VAT † was £203.98 inc.VAT # was £191.98 inc.VAT

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Fury 3	210/25.4	60/200mm	£119.98	£143.98
Clarke CMS10S2	254/30	78/ 340mm	£129.98	£155.98
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Makita LS1040	260/30	95/130mm	£199.98	£239.98

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News *from the bench*

Comment, insight, views and news of woodworkers from around the globe



Summer school students will be making this chest with hand tools...

...to take kit like this



NEW summer school

The New English Workshop (NEW) is holding a summer school that is designed to draw attention to the many skills that are dwindling from college curriculums and promote the craft of furniture making in the best way possible, by building an entire tool chest using only hand tools.

The New English Workshop is a partnership of professionals and enthusiasts passionate about preserving the craft. As well as seeking to promote and encourage the use of traditional methods of working its member are focused on providing training and education to the highest standard for likeminded people.

So in July it will be bringing the renowned woodworker, hand tool user and writer Christopher Schwarz to the UK to head up an intensive 5-day course to build from scratch the Anarchist's Tool Chest from his book of the same name.

Warwickshire College

The summer school will be held at Warwickshire College in Royal Leamington Spa. The course has room for 18 students of whom some may be students already attending the college, who may be given a place on the course for nothing. On completion of the course Chris has kindly agreed to donate the tool chest he will be building to raise money for the college.

For those who don't have a whole week to spare there is also a 2-day workshop to make the equally attractive Dutch Travelling Tool Chest that Chris has made equally well known through his research. This course will have room for a further 18 students.

Of course a tool chest is of no use without tools to fill it! So NEW is making sure Chris's completed chest will be filled with quality items from makers and vendors. The chest and its contents are to be sold at auction with the entire proceeds donated to the college to make a contribution towards the work it is doing with some of the upcoming young woodworkers in the UK.

Signing up

For those interested in signing up, NEW can be contacted via its website at: http://newenglishworkshop.co.uk,
via email at info@newenglishworkshop.co.uk,
or by telephone on the following numbers: Paul on 07588 774999, Derek on 07768 715991 or on 01453 883207.



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The traditional double bow goes contemporary...



...as does this armchair



James' settee can be made from plans...

Windsor chair plans online

Professional Windsor chair maker and teacher James Mursell is selling plans at www.windsorchairplans.com. James, who made his first Windsor chair in 1996, says that often new chair makers leave the craft because they do not know what to make next. He hopes that the growing number of chairs on the new site will inspire aspiring makers to make an increasing number of Windsors.

Plans are available in two forms: PDF digital downloads and as full-size hard-copy prints mailed to your address. The PDFs come in two forms: either as scale drawings for printing at home (A4 size), or as full-size plans for printing at A0 size. He says: "Printers that work at this size are to be found in most locations and are usually used for printing architectural plans. The file can be emailed to the printer and collected when ready.

"Each set of plans contains photographs of the chair from different angles, a detailed data sheet with measurements and angles, and drawings of the seat, turnings and bending formers. In addition there are cross-sections through the seat to aid shaping."

The site is launched with nine chairs of both historical and James' contemporary designs. His intention is to add designs steadily over time. A limited number of tables made using the Windsor method will also be added in due course.

At present, all the chairs have been made by James and he is available to answer queries from those making chairs from his plans. If existing chair makers are interested in selling plans of their chairs through this site then they should contact James directly.

The copyrighted plans are for the use by amateur/part-time chair makers. There is no restriction on making these chairs for sale as part of their hobby. The plans are not to be used in the teaching of chair making, nor for commercial production.

For more info call him on 01798 815 925 or go to www.thewindsorworkshop.co.uk



...like this

Former fruit grower

James Mursell made his first Windsor chair on a course with Jack Hill at West Dean College. He also took a course with Mike Dunbar in 1998. At the time James was a commercial fruit grower, but in 2001 he closed down his farm to concentrate full-time on making Windsor chairs.

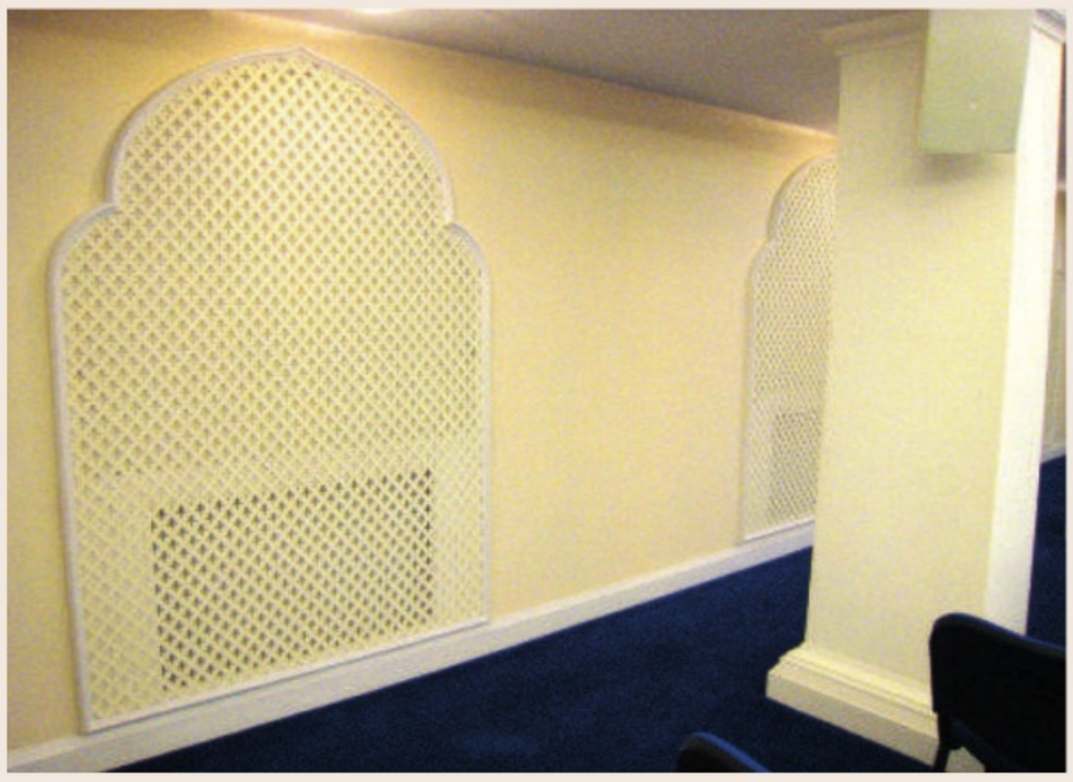
He made chairs to commission for several years, selling through shows and galleries until West Dean College asked him to run a chair-making course, following the retirement of Jack Hill. He enjoyed the teaching so much that he adapted his small workshop so that he could run courses from home, this becoming The Windsor Workshop.

In 2006, with greater demand for courses than he could satisfy, he converted a barn into a purpose-built teaching workshop capable of taking six students with ease. Courses are run throughout the year, both as 5-day courses to make a chair and 2-day courses to make a stool.

In 2009 James wrote *Windsor Chairmaking* (published by Crowood Press). This well-illustrated hardback book has chapters on history, tools and materials, techniques, lessons from an old chair, and design.

James has developed a range of chair-making tools, including his uniquely shaped travisher and wooden spokeshaves. These are sold to chair makers all around the world from his other website, www.travisher.com

He continues to make chairs to order although teaching occupies the majority of his time.



Winning joinery at the Self-Realization Project by Oakwrights Bath

Top awards for Oakwright baths

The UK joinery industry's highest awards were announced at the annual dinner of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) in London last month.

Oakwrights Bath Ltd of Corsham, Wiltshire has scooped the British Woodworking Federation award for technical excellence and innovation in joinery manufacture, and for the apprentice/trainee of the year – the first time that one company has won both awards together. The achievement was particularly notable given that in 2013 the BWF received a record number of award entries in both categories.

The joinery prize was for its transformation of a building in central London into a spiritual centre for the Self-Realization Fellowship. Peter Love, director of Oakwrights Bath Ltd, says: "It was full of very fine working, all bespoke shaped work, ogee arch details and curves on curves."

Two other companies were also shortlisted for the technical award: Houghtons of York for its beautiful hand carving of the Diana, Princess of Wales coat of arms at the Worshipful Company of Merchant Taylors, and J3 Projects Ltd for a stunning railway station waiting room and platform shelter at Northern Rail's Oxford Road station in Manchester.

Apprentice award

Luke Parry, 26, an estimator at Oakwrights Bath, won the apprentice/trainee award. Now in his seventh year of study since starting as an apprentice, Luke is currently working towards an HNC in construction at Swindon College, sponsored by his employer.

Luke says: "Many young people do not realise that fantastic careers can be built in joinery, and in construction generally. There are so many more avenues to pursue than there appear to be at first glance. With the experience I'm gaining I feel that the future is really open to me, and I have many options and certainly equal opportunities compared to my friends who did go on to get degrees. Do what you really enjoy and there is always a rewarding career at the end of it." Also shortlisted were Michaella Mason, working at Boyland Joinery Ltd, and Skillbuild runner-up Darius Krzywiecki, working at West Port Timber Windows and Doors.





COURSE**DIARY**

In our book February is the dreariest month of the year, so why not cheer it up by treating yourself to a woodworking course.

February
3-4 & 27-28 Intro to small lathe
3-4, 20-21 (Axminster) & **5-6, 27-28** (Sittingbourne) **Beginners routing**
6-7, 27-28 (Axminster) & **12-13** (Sittingbourne) **Beginners woodturning**
21-11 Bowls & platters
24 Intro to Leigh jigs
Axminster Tool Centre
Unit 10 Weycroft Avenue
Axminster
Devon EX13 5PH
Tel: 0800 975 1905

8 & 15 French polishing and refinishing
Peter Sefton Furniture School
The Threshing Barn
Welland Road
Upton Upon Severn
Worcestershire
WR8 0SN

10-14 Double-bow
24-28 Continuous arm
The Windsor Workshop
Churchfield Farm
West Chiltington
Pulborough
West Sussex RH20 2JW
Tel: 01798 815925

28 Feb-3 Mar Recycle & remake contemporary furniture
West Dean College
West Dean
Nr Chichester
West Sussex PO18 0QZ
Tel: 01243 811301

March

3-4, 10-11 (Axminster), **27-28** (Sittingbourne) **Beginner routing**
3-4, 10-14, 24-25 (Axminster) **12-13** (Sittingbourne) **Beginner woodturning**
5-6 Woodcarving
11-12, 24-25 Intro to small lathe
27-28 Bowls & platters
Axminster Tool Centre
Unit 10 Weycroft Avenue
Axminster
Devon EX13 5PH
Tel: 0800 975 1905

10-15 Double-bow
22-23 Stool
The Windsor Workshop
Churchfield Farm
West Chiltington
Pulborough
West Sussex RH20 2JW
Tel: 01798 815925

13-16 Furniture making, apprentice stool
21-23 Basic woodworking, hinged case
West Dean College
West Dean
Nr Chichester
West Sussex PO18 0QZ
Tel: 01243 811301

What a record

There can't be many people in this day and age who have spent pretty much their entire career with one company, but at the North of England Woodworking Show in Harrogate a presentation to mark such an event took place, *writes Andy King*.

Many of you who attend the shows will know Tony Rhodes on the Record Power stand who is always on hand to demonstrate or talk you through any machine. A crowd of his fellow exhibitors gathered on stand when, to mark his 65th birthday, he was presented with a large turned platter by world-renowned turner Stuart Mortimer that had been signed by many of the people who have worked the shows with him over the years.

Tony has been part of the fixtures and fittings of Record Power from the start, and previously worked for Record at the foundry in Sheffield prior to the management buy-out that evolved into the current company.

He started work at Record's warehouse in September 1969 before moving through the ranks into the workshops and technical department, repairing and building machines and then running the training school.



Tony Rhodes with the platter made for him by Stuart Mortimer

Since the management buyout Tony's main role has been in the technical department, and of course, the show circuit where he is regarded by many of us as a very knowledgeable, affable and helpful bloke.

Record Power MD Andrew Greensted informs me that Tony will continue working, but down to two days a week, plus of course, the shows where we all know him so well.

Happy semi-retirement Tony!

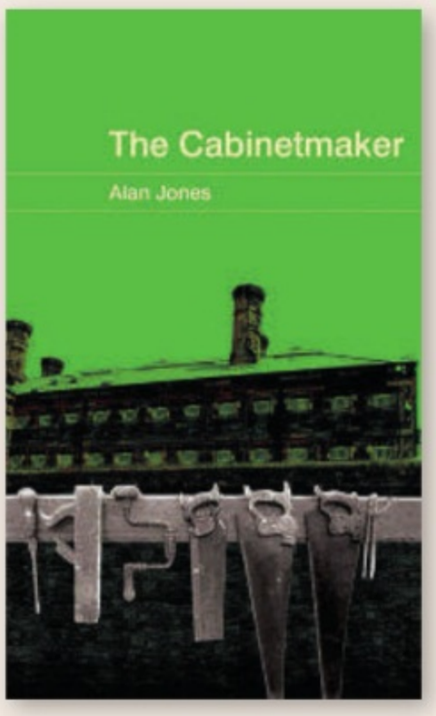
Woodworking theme to novel

Keen amateur woodworker Alan Jones has just published his first novel on Amazon Kindle. Called *The Cabinetmaker* after one of its main characters, it tells the story of a man who is forced to fight for justice for his murdered son when the thugs who kill him walk free. It is a gritty crime story based in Glasgow, says Alan, who warns that some of the content is a bit racy.

He says: "I'm promoting the book myself and I wondered if it would be of interest to those woodworkers who also like to read fiction, as one of the main strands that holds the book together is the two main characters' love of making fine furniture. The book also features quite a bit of cabinetry. In keeping with the book's setting involving corrupt police and Glasgow gang culture, there is a fair bit of strong language, some adult content and a smattering of Glasgow vernacular. It is the contrast between this and the world of fine furniture that gives the book its unique feel." The extra content provides a glossary of cabinetry terms.

There are four free sample chapters.

For more info go to www.thecabinetmaker.info



Employers advised to invest in apprentices

Investment in apprentices will reap rewards, says joinery training body the British Woodworking Federation (BWF). Dave Campbell, manager of the BWF's training arm, the Woodworking Industry Training Forum (WITForum) said:

"Research from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills reminds us that eight out of ten people do not work as hard if they feel they are underpaid. It is important to ensure that you get the balance right.



Apprentice Ryan Cassidy honing his woodworking skills

This is more than the weekly or monthly pay packet – apprentices are an investment. Whilst daily housekeeping duties are a part of the job, the bulk of an apprentice's time should be spent gaining and honing their specialist skills. This investment of time and resource will nurture a well-rounded, motivated, competent and hardworking employee and valued member of your team who will support future growth in your business." He advises managers to meet with apprentices regularly to keep up to date on how they are progressing with their course, and to identify any areas of best practice being taught by training providers that could be incorporated into the business. For more info go to www.bwf.org.uk/training/apprenticeships

Rocket 'best in the world'

At any time of the year Gavin Randall will be riding the waves off Sennen Cove in Cornwall testing his latest design of belly board as the surf drives him in towards the beach. Gavin has been improving the speed and performance of belly boards since he founded the Traditional Surfing Company in 2011 to manufacture these traditional boards for the world market.

With designs unchanged for 50 years Gavin has substantially improved performance of the boards to the point where he claims that the Rocket, his latest design, "is the best-performing board in the world." The shape of these traditional belly boards had remained largely unchanged for 50 years and the method of manufacture is a closely guarded secret. High-quality marine ply is the core material but the secret to performance is the shapes embodied in the board. Using Makita power tools Gavin has achieved the radical shapes and high-quality finishes that are vital to increase speed and stability. "Since using the Makita tools I have been able to achieve advanced designs that use some of the innovations on advanced racing cats. The fine details of these hulls are to generate speed through the water and that's what I have been building into the Rocket. He uses the Li-ion battery-powered 18V jigsaw and planer to cut and shape the overall design and the BKP180 ½in mains router to refine the intricate shapes and contours.



Gavin Randall cuts a board with his Makita jigsaw

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Alan, East Sussex ✆ 01435 872222

Trend T30AF wet & dry vacuum extractor, used once but in new condition, £130, buyer collects, **Trend DC400 dovetail centre**, **Trend waste collection kit DC400/01**, both new and unused, £230 for both, buyer collects
Neil Sprott, Midlothian ✆ 01968 673412

Workshop machinery including miniature **Carbatec lathe**, **Kity 613 bandsaw** , **Creusen widewheel grinder** and reversible grinder (felt wheels) , chop saw , **Abac compressor** (with brad gun), workbench, cramps, prices negotiable
Dean, Essex ✆ 07882 793359

PMZ0 Multico mortiser, 240V, good condition, chisels, manual, £200
M Kollmer, Essex ✆ 0790 464 2122

Hand tools

Veritas bronze edge plane, hardly used, offers. **Lie-Nielsen No.85** cabinetmaker's scraper plane, boxed, used once, £130
Glenn, Herts ✆ 01992 620996

Turning

Shopsmith MKV with all original accessories, plus 11in bandsaw with blades, 4in jointer, and lathe chisels, £550, buyer collects
Mr M Clements, Herts ✆ 01438 714663

Timber

Ash, oak, mahogany, American black walnut, suitable for small-scale turning, box making, clock cases, dolls' house furniture
K Mason, Lancashire ✆ 0161 339 5161

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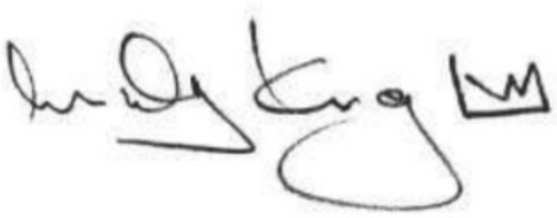
Kit & Tools

February '14

New products, tools and tests



Although as woodies we wouldn't wish to be in A&E, if you watched the *Casualty* Christmas special you may well have seen a bunch of carollers in Dickensian garb singing in various scenes. I'm proud to say they are from my village, known as the Pill Owls who perform throughout December and have raised tens of thousands of pounds over the years for various charities since they were formed way back in 1919. Here's to a prosperous and splinter- free New Year!



Andy King, Technical Editor
andy.king@mytimemedia.com

Lynx mini scraper set

Gadget of the Month

Aimed at anyone working with finer mouldings and smaller projects such as instrument and boxmakers, this set of four profiled scrapers covers the bases most will encounter and at a price that is highly affordable.

The standard card-type rectangular one is complemented by a traditional gooseneck scraper as well as an elliptical and internal and externally profiled one.

The card scraper also has two small-radius notches for finer detail work on cock beads and the like.

Despite the ultra-thin spring steel used, there's enough resistance to allow you to flex them to gain a cutting action without digging; definitely worth adding to the tool kit even if you don't work smaller stuff regularly as they will serve well for cleaning up finer moulded areas of any new project or restoration.

Price: £9.75
Web: www.flinn-garick-saw.co.uk







Prices

Our product prices reflect typical values as we go to press. We cannot guarantee these prices, though, and thoroughly recommend that you shop around.

Our awards

Best Buy ✓
Awarded to an excellent performer that offers great value for money

Recommends ✓
Awarded to an item that stands out as a top performer in its field

How we rate...

★	Don't get your hopes up or your wallet out!
★★	Well, it works but really needs improvement
★★★	Performs well, but you will find better
★★★★	Great performance and value for money
★★★★★	So good, even Andy would get his wallet out!



5-star cracker

Andy is pushed to find fault with Bosch's new blue dual-base router



The plunge lever is excellent; you push against the tension to release it

I was a great fan of Bosch's GMF1400 model but here we are around seven years later and to say the company has moved on in leaps and bounds with this latest model would be an understatement; it's an absolute cracker of a machine.

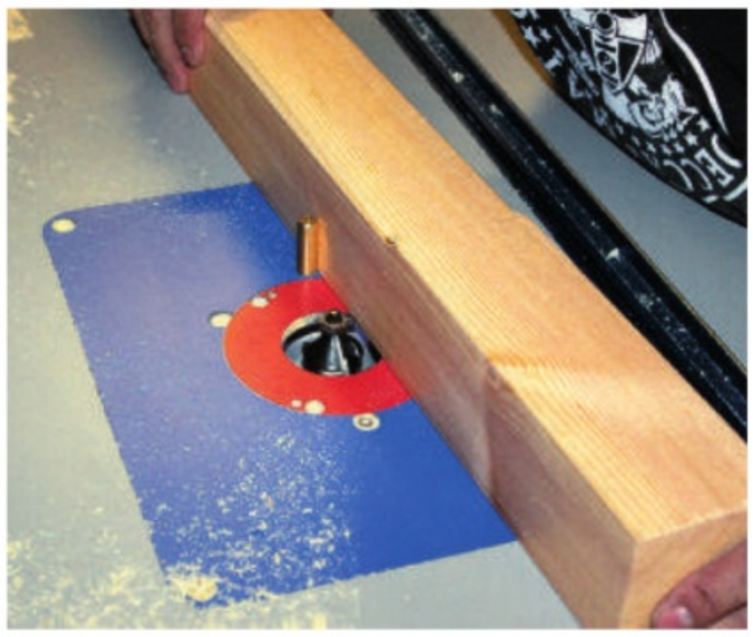
The biggest change is that both bases now have integral trigger-operated power switches with lock- on buttons, even though the body is still completely removable. This allows control of both the power and the plunge – in plunge-base mode – without having to take your hand away from one of the grips. This is the result of integral contact points that link with the motor housing once it is fitted in place.

The motor body has an aluminium lower part that slides into each base, with a plastic top shell that houses the speed control dial. This has a range of 10,000-25,000rpm to cover the usual different types of material and bit diameters, although a chart within the router manual indicates a 40mm optimum diameter, which with a 1600W motor is probably prudent, so bigger-diameter panel raisers may be outside its remit unless you take it in smaller steps than you might on a bigger motored model – something to consider if you do tend to work heavier cuts, in the router table especially.

It's certainly man enough for the hardcore bench work of the ½in router in general, and I've used it for rebating the bottom of a door to take the weather bar.

This is a thoroughly powerful beast that, unlike it's predecessor, comes with a fence as standard.

Bit swaps are as you would expect, and the router comes with a ¼in and ½in collet and nut assembly as standard.



▲ The dual base allows the fixed base to remain in a table

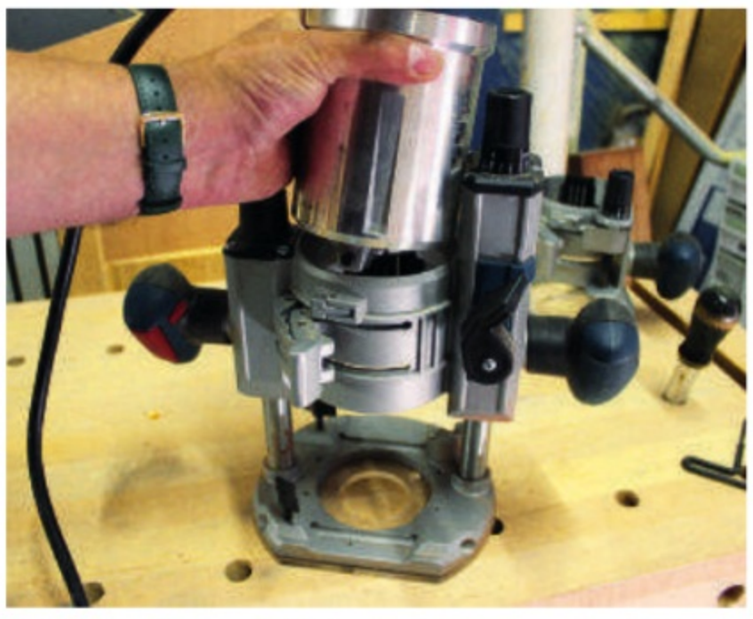


▲ There's a through-the-base adjustment for inverted work



▲ You can also fine tune the cutting depth from above with this knob

Bosch GMF 1600 CE Pro dual-base router



▲ The motor slots into each base very quickly



▲ Bit swaps are done with the usual single spanner/spindle-lock configuration



▲ The guide-bush system allows bushes to be swapped in and out without tools



▲ You can fine-adjust the setting even after the plunge is locked



▲ Freehand work is good; although quite big the router is very controllable



▲ The 1400W motor is man enough for heavy-duty applications such as worktop joints

Bases basis

So the bases are what it's all about, and aside from the aforementioned trigger-operated power switching, there's a full gamut of adjustments with which to tweak the settings.

Both bases have basic height adjustment; the plunge base has the standard plunge lever to allow fast adjustment, self-tightened by pushing against a spring so it locks itself once released – an excellent feature.

The fixed base has a 3-step adjustment with notches in the motor housing locking into the base to give a rough position before fine-adjusting to the desired protrusion.

The finer adjustments on both bases are the same when adjusted from above with a large knob, with micro adjustments to make precise settings. A hex recess in both adjusters can be used with the adjustment knob to gain more control and alter the settings with ease.

For table work the fixed base comes into its own as it has a further option to adjust the height through the base, allowing any alterations to height to be made via a large key from above the table when it's inverted.

Both bases use identical toggle clamps so base switching is quick and smooth. The big advantage is that the fixed one can live in the table ready for use.

Also in the kit

Alongside the fast base swap, Bosch has included its equally quick and useful tool-free guide-bush system, with each bush locked in by a rotating collar on the base. This collar is independent of the bases so can be fitted to either as needed and while the bushes are specialised to the Bosch system, they are really quick and of great benefit if you do template and jig work especially.

Each base also has its own dust kit fitting directly to the base with small thumb screws.

These, along with the scratch bases themselves are clear to help give good views to the working area, although static can still cause occasional dust build-ups.

An additional and very useful function is the LED lights around the collet that illuminate directly to the base area once the trigger is engaged.

Completing the kit is the fine-adjusting fence, lacking in the predecessor, so you now have an all-encompassing router that has power enough for heavier work and can easily be put into table mode in seconds while retaining the same ease of adjustment as the plunge base in hand-held mode.

It's certainly a winning combination in my book, and while the wattage is low in comparison to many workhorse routers out there, take a pass or two more than usual on bigger work and you have a router that does the biz with ease.

Conclusion

Bosch has certainly come up trumps with this particular router; it's exceptionally well thought out and covers pretty much every area of hand-held and inverted heavy-duty routing, and with the usual Bosch attention to detail, it's a great machine to use.



▲ The fine-adjusting fence is great for rebating work

The Woodworking Verdict — Good

+ Interchangeable bases; fast-swap bushes: LEDs; excellent plunge lock
– May lose out to others because of lower-powered motor

Rating ★★★★★

Typical price: £442.80
Made in Mexico
Motor: 1600W
Speeds: 10,000-25,000rpm
Collets supplied: ¼in & ½in
Plunge: 76mm
Weight with plunge base: 5.8kg
Weight with fixed base: 4.3kg
Web: www.bosch.co.uk


No, Andy's not running away, but he has packed his gear in a jobchest

Site box solution

Need a secure place to store your tools on site? This chest could be the answer

This toolchest seems to hit the spot for secure storage as well as being easy to wheel from A to B. It's certainly a cavernous container which could be used as a site box, with a smaller carry bag to keep things that bit more orderly.

It contains a lift-out tool tote for smaller handtools along with a panel at the end that has slots for a few chisels, a tape measure and a hammer. Alongside this the lid also has two clips to retain a handsaw and a level up to 600mm long.

It's certainly a stout box, and with the V-notch in the top of the lid it doubles up as a useful saw horse as well as a stool to sit on when you stop for a cup of tea. There is also a watertight seal.

It is transported on sturdy wheels and there's a pull-out handle that can disrupt organisation within, plus you need additional muscle to lift it in and out of your vehicle. That ease of transportation could make it a target for anyone wanting to steal it though.

The inclusion of a decent lock is welcome, and with multiple points on the lid and catches for additional padlocks, or to secure it to a fixture within a building it should be deterrent enough to put people off from attempting to make off with it.


▲ As well as multiple padlocking points the box is fitted with a sturdy lock


▲ Storage areas include a set of slots for chisels



▲ The lid has a sprung catch to retain a 600mm level



▲ There's provision for a full-sized handsaw


▲ Further storage points keep your hammer and tape easily accessible

▶ A full-Length V-notch in the lid acts as a saw horse



The Woodworking Verdict

Good

+ Loads of room for a comprehensive toolkit; easy to move around; multiple locking points
– Heavy once loaded; easy to chuck everything in only to have to turf it all out to find what you need!

Rating ★★★★½

Typical price: £100
Size: 910 x 516 x 431mm
Capacity: 113l
Web: www.stanleytools.co.uk

Conclusionh

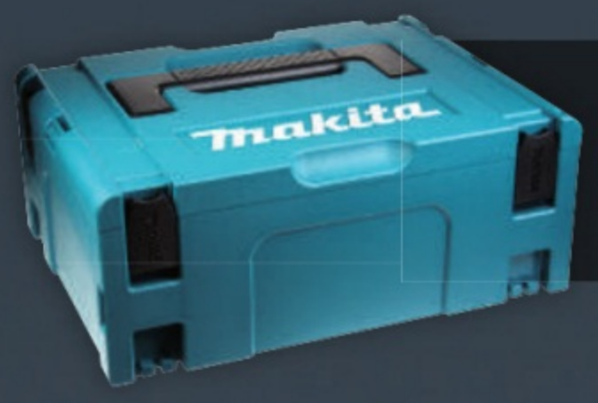
All in all, this is a cracking toolbox that will hold pretty much all the kit you need on a daily basis.

Keeping things organised is the main problem in such a voluminous box though, but I'd certainly be inclined to fit a few little bulkheads, partitions and lift-out sections to organise it to work for me – Hmm... I feel a project coming on!

TWIN 18v = 36v POWER

Twin 18v Battery LXT
190mm Circular Saw
DHS710

Blade size	190mm
Bore size	20mm
No load speed	4,600rpm
Net weight	4.7kg



The DHS710 comes with a plastic MAKPAC connector case.

Rear dust exhaust
A dust nozzle can be attached for connection to a dust extractor.



Soft grip
Non-slip elastomer for more control and comfort.

Powered by two 18V Li-ion batteries in series. Two 18V Li-ion batteries can be directly installed on the machine to power the 36v DC motor.



Circular Saw
DHS710

Blade size: 190mm

Max. cut @ 0°	66mm
Max. cut @ 45°	49mm
Max. cut @ 50°	44mm

Other twin 18v battery tools:
LXT Rotary Hammer
DHR263 / DHR264

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EZy does it

Its fast-swap system makes this machine stand out from other multitools



Dremel must be one of the most prolific manufacturers out there for coming up with new products for the hobbyist, model maker or anyone needing to work on more intricate or delicate pieces.

There is, however, a tendency for 'same old, same old' in some of it, especially the multitool end of the market with the odd tweak here or there to redesign the grip or increase the power but essentially you are talking the same tool whether you opt for battery or mains.

This time around, though, Dremel has come up with a feature that I'm surprised it hasn't had before considering its link with Bosch and the world-renowned SDS fast-change system incorporated on many of the Bosch products.

Aside from the Speed Clic system for fast swaps of different cutting, polishing or sanding applications – and there is a Speed Clic arbor included among the rest of the 75 cutting, sanding and drilling accessories within the kit – it's the new EZ Change that stands out. This is a fast-swap system for the shanks themselves – essentially a self-tightening chuck that automatically grips the shanks of any accessory you fit. All you have to do is pull back on the front blue sliders on the Dremel itself which releases the tension on the jaws within, allowing the accessory to pull out easily and be replaced.

It does make for very quick changes of most accessories and if you use your Dremel as a mini router, even more so, although to insert a collet you do need to remove the internal sleeve that retains the standard shanked bits.

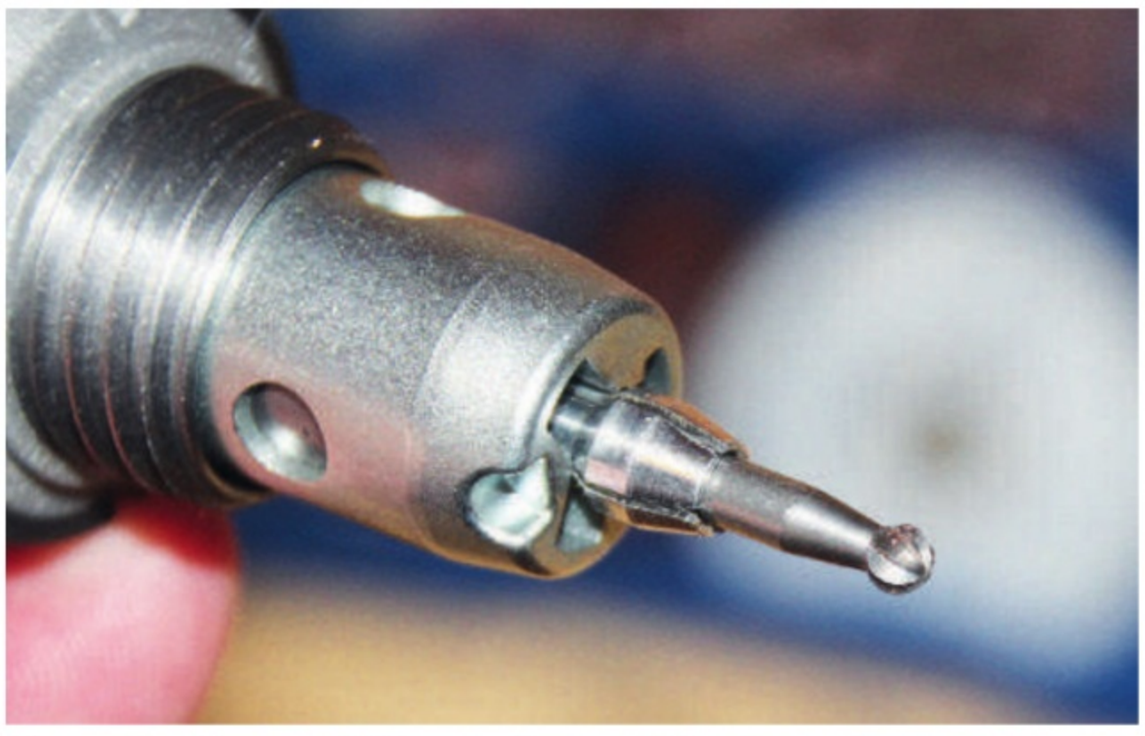
Looking through the instructions this is a bit confusing, with diagrams showing how to remove the internal sleeve with a pair of needle nose pliers while, further on, another diagram shows the traditional screw-on collet nut along with other accessories being retained with



▲ The standard internal sleeve musr be removed to fit other collets



▲ The collets simply slide into the top of the chuck...



▲ ...making it very quick to swap for any drill, cutter or burr



▲ A Speed Clic arbor is supplied with the kit



▲ Any Speed Clic accessory can be quickly swapped with this arbor



▲ A spark guard is a very useful inclusion among the supplied accessories



▲ Swap a bit by sliding back the blue levers to release the shank



▲ There's a good speed range for all cutting and polishing applications

methods that don't seem compatible with this particular model so you do need to familiarise yourself a little with the tool initially and disregard some of the diagrams in the manual which seem generic to other models rather than this one.

Accessories

While not quite as comprehensive as some kits, there's still a good range of accessories within the blow-moulded case, each screwing directly to the nose cone of the Dremel. Included are circle -cutting and hole-cutting attachments along with a sanding one for accurately working 45° and 90° faces.

If you use a Dremel for metal cutting and grinding then the spark guard will be especially welcome.

There is also a conversion rod and nose cone for a flexible shaft although there's no shaft included, and for me the omission of the useful pen-grip attachment that the other models seem to ship with is a bit of an oversight as it allows more flexibility and control for finer-detailed engraving work and such like.

The new tool-free chuck system does make for a much better experience in mini-tool working, especially if you use a variety of materials involving multiple accessory swaps, but if you already own a Dremel you have to consider whether this upgrade is essential to aid the way you work.

If you don't already own one and are on the hunt, it's certainly a worthy update to an established favourite.

Conclusion

At last Dremel has achieved a fast-change bit swap that will prove invaluable for those who use a range of different bits on their projects.

The Woodworking Verdict — Good

+ Quick-change chuck; supplied with plenty of accessories

– No pen-grip accessory; needs pliers to remove sleeve to fit collet options

Rating ★★★★☆

Typical price: £139.99
Motor: 175W
Speeds: 5000-33,000rpm
Collet capacity: 0.8, 1.8, 2.4 and 3.2mm
Web: www.dremeleurope.com



The basic starter kit has a couple of Magswitches and a featherboard suitable for basic holding against fences

Andy is prepared to be spellbound by this workpiece aid

Magnets work like magic

Homemade timber featherboards are a long-established method of applying uniform pressure to stock to keep it tight to a fence or table, and are still valid, but keeping them in place where you need them can involve ingenuity and adaptability.

Machines with T-slots in the beds help, as does a wooden fence facing, but what could be easier than holding the featherboard with a magnet or two? Well, a switchable magnet would certainly be an improvement as the power needed to hold them in place has to be substantial or they'll slip and move as the pressure is applied from the workpiece.

The Magswitch range of workshop accessories has just that, and with various jigs based around the starter kit, once you have bitten the bullet and splashed out on that, the add-ons can be purchased as needed, utilising the two Magswitches the starter kit supplies.

Starter kit

The starter kit consists of two 150lb clamping force rare earth Magswitches, the Universal base and a reversible feather board, with the base and Magswitches the consistent components across the accessory range allowing additional methods of work to be achieved.

The initial start-up cost sounds a tad pricy until you consider the time-saving as well as the additional safety offered. Being able to place the board exactly where you wish, infinitely adjust the pressure in seconds simply by twisting the knob on top the Magswitches to release the hold, nudge to adjust the pressure or relocate it, and then reactivate the magnets, soon pays dividends.

The featherboards connect to the universal base with locating lugs and bolts to keep things secure, with slots through the base for additional accessories.

Featherboards don't need to apply a massive amount of pressure to do the job, they simply hold the work to the desired fence or bed and prevent any undesirable movement or kickback and the Magswitches are more than strong enough to do the job.



▲ The rip post has a set of jacking screws to get it square to the table for accurate ripping



▲ You feed the timber through, adjusting as you go to counteract drift

Magswitch starter kit & add-ons



▲ The work only addresses the centre roller; the fence cants back to allow the cut to be tweaked



▲ The riser post kit allows you to either stack a second set of feathers above the other, or as in this image, gain a vertical pressure option



▲ The thin rip fence has three sides for holding work securely. The stepped one is for sheet stock, with a wedge profile on the other side for timber



The wheel option is used to set repeat cuts from stock

Riser Post kit

For vertical pressure there's a Riser Post kit comprising interlocking blocks to alter the overall height as required along with a second featherboard and angled connector brackets to put the board into a vertical plane. This allows the horizontal and vertical boards to be worked as with a set of Shaw guards.

The riser blocks also allow the stacking of two horizontal feathers one above the other for deeper stock.

You need to initially feed correctly to ensure they stay put; while you will struggle to move them by hand pressure directly against them, a long length of stock can cantilever them if you don't feed in a straight plane to the fence. Slight deflections are absorbed by the feathers, but a big movement away from the correct feed plane could move them if you have a long length to feed through; but once the cut is engaged it would need a pretty poor feed control to do so as the blade would bind in the cut.

Resaw Guide

The feathers work exceptionally well on a suitable table saw, but for bandsaw work there's always the problem of drift on deeper cuts when relying on the standard fence, even with a featherboard.

The Resaw Guide works in the same way as a resaw post, so using the universal base with the guide fitted to it, the bearings are positioned alongside the blade and set to the desired ripping width, allowing fractional adjustments against the rollers to make uniform rip cuts.

A simple wedge and wingnut adjustment ensures the guide can be set perfectly square to the table. There's a similar roller setup on the dual roller guide which can be used in place of the featherboards on the tablesaw for a friction-free transfer while cutting.

Unlike the feathers which will allow for minor discrepancies in stock and work with rough-sawn timber as well as planed, there's no give in the rollers so it's best suited to planed straight stock to ensure constant uniform pressure rather than loosening off or pinching from working sawn irregular stock.

Ultimate Thin Stock Jig

The final addition to the range is the Ultimate Thin Stock Jig, again fitting to the Starter Kit Universal Base. This offers three options based on working with thin stock where a featherboard isn't always suitable. The two angled edges have different edge contours; one has a stepped rebate profile set at 3mm, 6mm and 9mm to allow sheet stock to pass under the rebates and help eliminate chatter and flapping.

The opposing edge has a wedge profile. This works in a similar way, but without the restrictions of a set thickness and will allow work up to 25mm to pass under it, again preventing it from lifting and flapping as you progress.

Roller Guide

The final option is the Roller Guide; the sliding adjuster allows the assembly to be quickly set for thin repeat rips.

Conclusion

Fast, efficient feeding of work through machinery is always easier when you have a method of applying consistent pressure and helping prevent feedback to keep things that bit safer. The range of Magswitch products certainly does that part of the job and with additional guides and attachments, it becomes a pretty adaptable and valued part of the workshop.

The Woodworking Verdict: Good

+ Very adaptable; increases safety at machines
– Only suitable for cast iron/steel surfaces

Rating ★★★★☆

Typical prices: Starter Kit: **£79.95**
Vertical Featherboard Attachment **£19.95**
Ultimate Thin Stock Jig **£24.95**
Resaw Guide **£25.95**
Dual Roller Guide **£28.95**
Clamp force: 150lb force per Magswitch
Web: www.toolstream.com

Another miniature marvel

This spokeshave may be weeny but it is no toy just to be looked at and admired

I think if Snow White and the Seven Dwarves were real, the dwarves would have likely given up mining and taken up woodworking full time, such is the quality of the ever-expanding range of Veritas miniature tools.

This time around we have a spokeshave, and as with the others in the range, a completely functional model along the lines of its full-sized counterpart. There's no adjuster for blade projection; the blade is advanced by pushing or pulling to set the cutting depth, and locked with the lever cap.

To hone the blade you have to remove the lever cap by unscrewing it from the cast stainless-steel body, and with only 4mm of projection in total, honing is best kept to the grind bevel rather than a secondary one to avoid prematurely going past the point of no return.

Despite its diminutive stature this spokeshave is actually very easy to use once set, and on very fine work it proves its worth; for the model maker or miniaturist it is certainly valid.

Although flat bottomed it does cope with concave work well because there is little bearing surface. In summary, with a solid stainless-steel cast body and bubinga handles, backed up with the A2 iron, it's a tool that's built to work, and work it does!



Conclusion

While this, as well as the other mini tools from Veritas can be seen as quirky talking points, they are nonetheless built to high standards and are made to work properly. It may well be that you only want to display them, but they can and do work well in the environs they are built for.

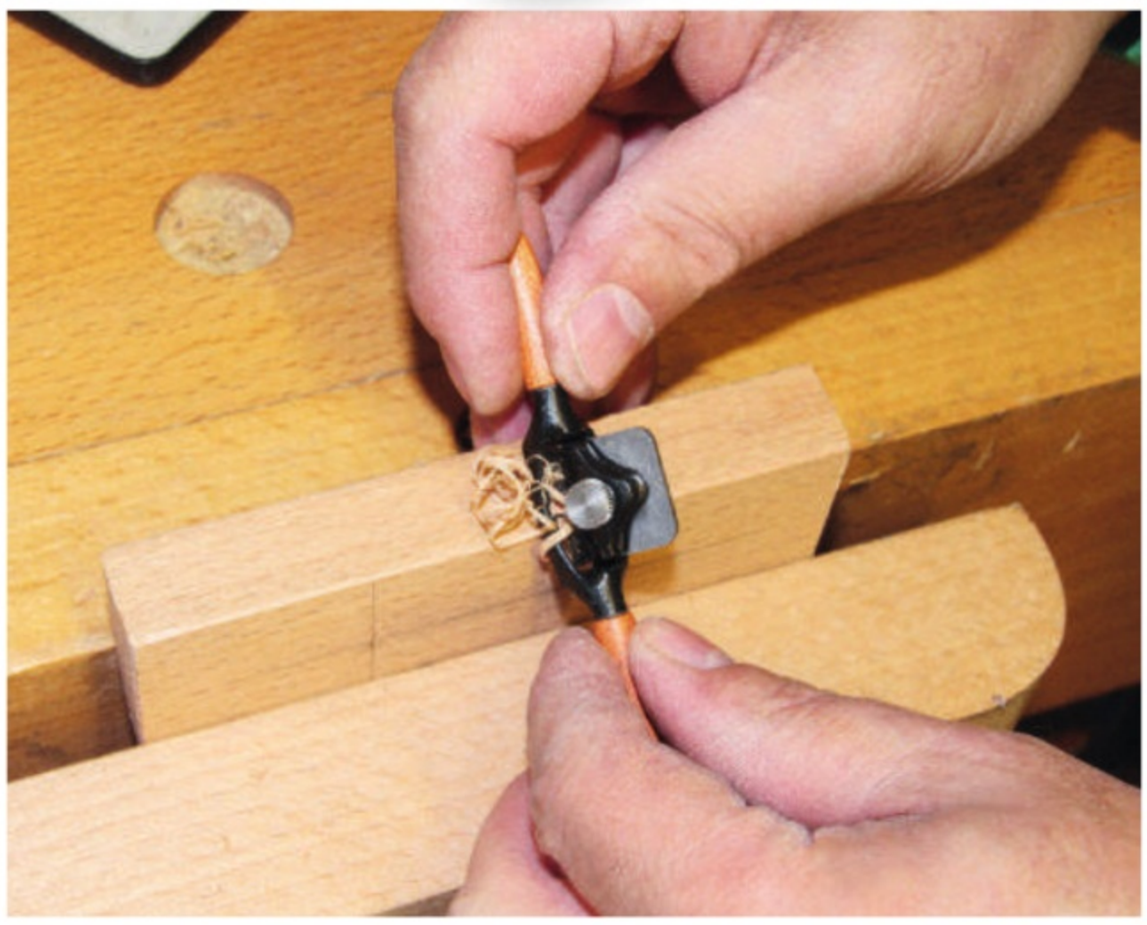
The Woodworking Verdict

Good

+ Great for fine work, arrising, rounding and tapering
– Usable cutting length is minimal

Rating ★★★★½

Typical price: **$34.50** (US price)
Blade: A2
Body: Cast stainless steel
Handles: bubinga
Web: www.leevalley.com



▲ Arrising and small chamfers are easily worked



▲ Equally easy is rounding of stock for small dowels and suchlike

Mark Raby



Mick Hanbury



Nic Westermann



Reg Slack



Michael Painter



Mark Baker



Bob Neill



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Simply the best

Andy has no hesitation in awarding a faultless five to these two drills from Metabo despite longer charge times



Just opening up the Quick's carry case is enough to see that this kit is top drawer. With it was a second drill, 'naked' so no batteries and in a cardboard box with plastic insert if you opt to buy a separate storage box. This model, called the Impuls, is of equal quality. Both look very similar so I guess it makes sense to look at the Quick and refer to the differences from the Impuls as I go along.

If you are on the hunt for a compact but robust and solidly built drill, either will do a sterling job, but you have the choice of brushed or brushless, with the Quick falling into the latter category.

It is12mm shorter than the brushed model and offers better power transfer through the machine as well as increased longevity.

Starting with impact, both drills are identical in this area, but unlike most drills, there's no rotating collar for switching functions; a simple sliding switch on the top of the front alloy housing swaps from drill to hammer mode.

Likewise, an identical function on both drills is used for the torque settings, but not via a rotating collar; both have a dial at the bottom of the handle that alters the amount of power through the tool for screwdriving.

Both machines also have the Impuls setting on the dial which is a sort of hybrid impact driving function where the drill is switched on and off in a series of pulsing actions to help drive and unscrew fixings without camming or increasing wrist strain excessively, a unique option that works very well.

The Impuls model has to have the dial reset to the drill position to override the torque setting, which is a downside for me as I like the faster option offered by a separate collar. On the Quick a red button on top overrides the torque to set the drill into full power mode when needed, and it illuminates brightly when in the override position, either a constant light for torque setting or flashing if the Impuls position is engaged so you know where you are at any given stage – very useful.

Gearboxes & LEDs

The standard 2-speed gearbox function is the normal top slider on both machines but with variations in the speed ratios; 0-500 and 0-1700rpm on the Impuls with 0-600 and 0-2050rpm on the Quick.

Both machines are full all-metal gearboxes for durability.

There is also a difference in drilling capacities; identical in steel and masonry, but if



▲ The chuck is easily removed by pulling the red collar



▲ A ¼in hex chuck is supplied for suitable hex-shanked accessories



▲ An auxiliary handle is supplied and on bigger holes it's wise to use it!



▲ This button toggles through the Impuls and torque functions

Metabo SB 18 LTX Quick & Impuls combis

you need increased diameter in timber, the Impuls wins with a 65mm capacity over the 51mm of the Quick.

Both machines have twin LEDs in the base to illuminate the chuck area. Initially I thought there was a fault in the first one as it kept on coming on for no reason. Swapping to the other had the same effect, and delving deeper, both have motion sensors within them that light the LEDs without pulling the trigger – useful for initial alignment of fixings and so forth but a tad annoying if you don't need it.

Further Quick tricks

Both drills boast high-quality all-metal 13mm capacities, but the Quick is removable to reveal a ¼in hex shank for fitting screwdriver bits or suitable hex shank accessories and takes the overall length from 230mm down to 170mm without a bit fitted. It does mean the bit needs to be removed each time you want to re-fit the chuck, but if you go for the full kit with batteries there's a nifty little hex chuck supplied that fits in the same way as the standard chuck, allowing each to clip on and off easily to gain fast drilling and driving options.

Alongside the extra chuck there are additional accessories available including a chuck that increases the torque ratio three-fold as well as an angled head for tight spaces.

Battery power

The race is currently on among the manufacturers in the 'my battery is more powerful than yours' race, and Metabo has beaten the pack with a phenomenal 5.2Ah offering. New technology allows high amphour units to be made with no increase in size or weight so this model has power coming out of its ears with no weight increase while retaining the same 18V platform everyone builds around and with claims of up to 75% more runtime than a 3.0Ah battery.

Trying to run down a battery of such stamina is no mean feat though. I drilled a raft of 32mm holes but didn't put a dent in it, so unless you are drilling big diameters on a regular basis it's highly likely that one battery will last all day.

The increase in amphour does mean an increase in charge times though, and with the supplied charger that means a 100-minute charge cycle to achieve full power.

Conclusion

Metabo may have been away from the spotlight for a while, but it has certainly done plenty of work in the background and deserves to be back with a bang with either of these drills, but the additional features of the Quick are worth investigating if you are on the hunt for a great all-rounder with unique features, and with a 3-year warranty on both the tools and the batteries you can be pretty sure these are designed with durability and longevity in mind.



▲ A simple slider alters the tool between drill and hammer function



▲ Torque settings are altered via this dial above the battery housing



▲ Batteries can be checked for power reserves with this button



▲ The hex chuck is quickly fitted to the drill with a suitable bit for pilot work...



▲ ...and can be easily removed and a bit fitted directly to the drill for driving work



▲ Multi-bit swap jobs like door hanging suit the drill well; here Andy is drilling the latch

The Woodworking Verdict — Good

+ Removable chuck for additional drilling options (Quick model); Impuls action for driving; fantastic build quality; massive battery capacity
– Longer charge times than lower-amp batteries

Rating ★★★★★

Typical price: £398.99 (Quick model, 2 x 5.2Ah batteries)
Quick spec:-
Batteries: 2 x 18V 5.2Ah Li-Ion
Capacities: wood 50mm, steel 13mm, concrete 16mm
Speeds: 0-600 0-2050rpm
Impacts: 38,950bpm
Chuck: all-metal 13mm sleeveless
Weight: 2.0kg with battery fitted
Impuls spec:-
Capacities: wood 65mm, steel 13mm, concrete 16mm
Speeds: 0-500 0-1700rpm
Web: www.metabo.co.uk

Setting the rules

This little tool replicates and checks angles for setting up tools and setting out projects



With a metric and imperial scale this device doubles up as a ruler, opening out to 400mm in length once extended. Turning the centre boss locks the position,whether for measuring or to hold an angle, although I did find it a little stiff locking a setting and it doesn't hold overly rigidly.

It shouldn't be too problematic if it is used as a setting tool, for its primary purpose of checking an existing angle or to set to a desired angle, but for sliding bevel-type work where you need a solidly locked blade it may be too slack to do repeat marks without constantly checking to ensure that it remains at the chosen angle.

Despite this, however, the rule is very useful; anyone with a mitre saw would find it handy for checking an angle such as a stair pitch for spindles and then simply set up the saw from the angle indicated by the rule.

Compound bevel cuts can be worked in the same way if you need to replicate an existing piece, taking the two angles with the rule and setting the saw to the angles indicated.

Likewise, the rule can be used on the table saw to set the blade or mitre fence to a desired angle by pre-setting the rule and adjusting to the setting.

The rule operates to 0.1 of a degree with an accuracy of 0.3° across its 360° range so it should be good enough for most things.

As a further string to its bow, as there's no stock but only the thickness of the rule's blade to register against, it could prove useful for anyone working inlays, the veneer butting to the blade and the opposing blade used as the cutting face at the angle required.

Conclusion

It's certainly a well-made tool that has plenty of applications where it will prove useful and, at the price, would be an investment that won't break the bank.

▲ **Altering the angle to complement the previous setting results in crisp uniform pieces ready for gluing**

The Woodworking Verdict — Good

+ Great for checking and replicating angles, setting up tools, measuring and cutting work
– Doesn't lock too securely

Rating ★★★★½

Typical price: £19.20
Angle range: 0-360°
Measuring scales: metric in 1mm increments; imperial in 1/32nd increments
Blade length: 200mm
Web: www.trend-uk.com



▲ **The battery is easily replaceable when required**



▲ **The lock could do with being slightly tighter**



▲ **You can zero the setting at any angle if needed**



▲ **The stainless-steel blades have clear metric and imperial etchings**



▲ **Compound angles can be checked and replicated by taking one angle...**



▲ **...and then the other to set the saw accordingly**



▲ **Inlay and suchlike work well with the ruler**

Basa 7.0 / 5.0 / 4.0 - Professional Bandsaws

Designed in Germany - Manufactured in Germany - Proven in Germany

When the first Basato 5 (now Basa 5.0) bandsaw was introduced it achieved the ***"Best Machine of the Year"*** award in Germany. On test in the UK, Good Woodworking magazine stated ***"So is the Basato 5 the ultimate bandsaw? It's not far off. This is a serious professional machine."*** With the introduction of the new Basa 4.0 there is now a professional Scheppach Basa bandsaw to suit every serious woodworker. With optional micro fence adjustment to within 1/10th mm, precision cutting is guaranteed if and when required. If economy is the overriding factor in your choice of bandsaw, choose the Basa 3.0v Workshop Series machine with variable cutting speed or Basa 1.0 (not illustrated): A benchtop replica for the small workshop.



Basa 7.0
Professional Series



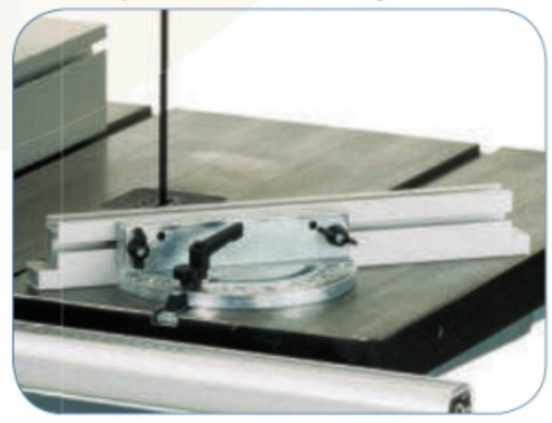
Basa 5.0
Professional Series



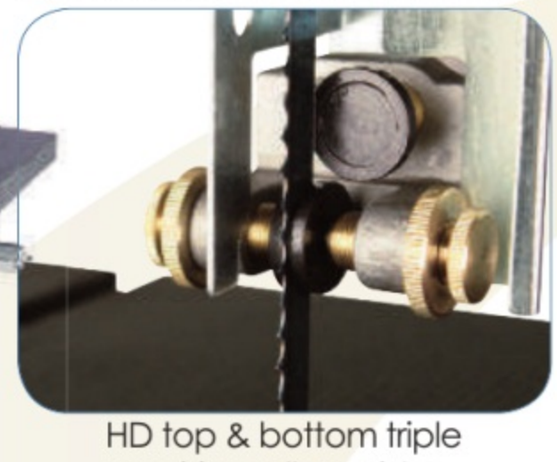
Basa 4.0
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Exceptional +/- tilt adjustment



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HD top & bottom triple
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Basa 3.0v
Workshop Series

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Model	Product Group Series	Format Cutting capacity width / height	Table Tilt Range	Horse Power 240v / 415v	Price Exc VAT Plus Carriage	Price Inc VAT Plus Carriage
Basa 1.0	Classic	195mm / 100mm	0° to +45°	0.41 / N/A	£157.50	£189.00
Basa 3.0v	Workshop	306mm / 250mm	-8° to +45°	1.0 / 1.0	£415.83	£499.00
Basa 4.0	Professional	375mm / 250mm	-22.5° to +45°	2.04 / 2.04	£1,125.00	£1,350.00
Basa 5.0	Professional	457mm / 305mm	-20° to +47°	3.8 / 4.9	£1,662.50	£1,995.00
Basa 7.0	Professional	600mm / 400mm	-15° to +47°	3.8 / 5.2	£2,850.00	£3,420.00

Basa 1.0 & Basa 3.0 are designed by scheppach in Germany but made in China where scheppach resident engineers oversee manufacturing quality control. All scheppach bandsaws carry the same warranty and have been sold and serviced in the UK by NMA since 1972. Go to nmatools.co.uk and see what users say about NMA unprecedented service.

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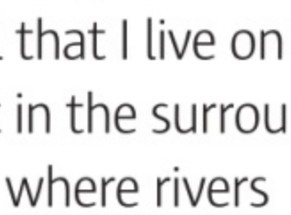
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Blow winds, blow



January, and the wind is bringing rain out of the south and blowing it under the door of my workshop whose north-facing window admits a light so flat and lifeless that it’s easy to understand why so many new year resolutions fail in this, the dreariest month. Still, I should be grateful that I live on a hill and not in the surrounding valleys, where rivers overtopped their bridges and made unwilling Venices of the villages before sweeping out to sea, leaving behind a high-tide mark littered with the flotsam of ruined furniture...

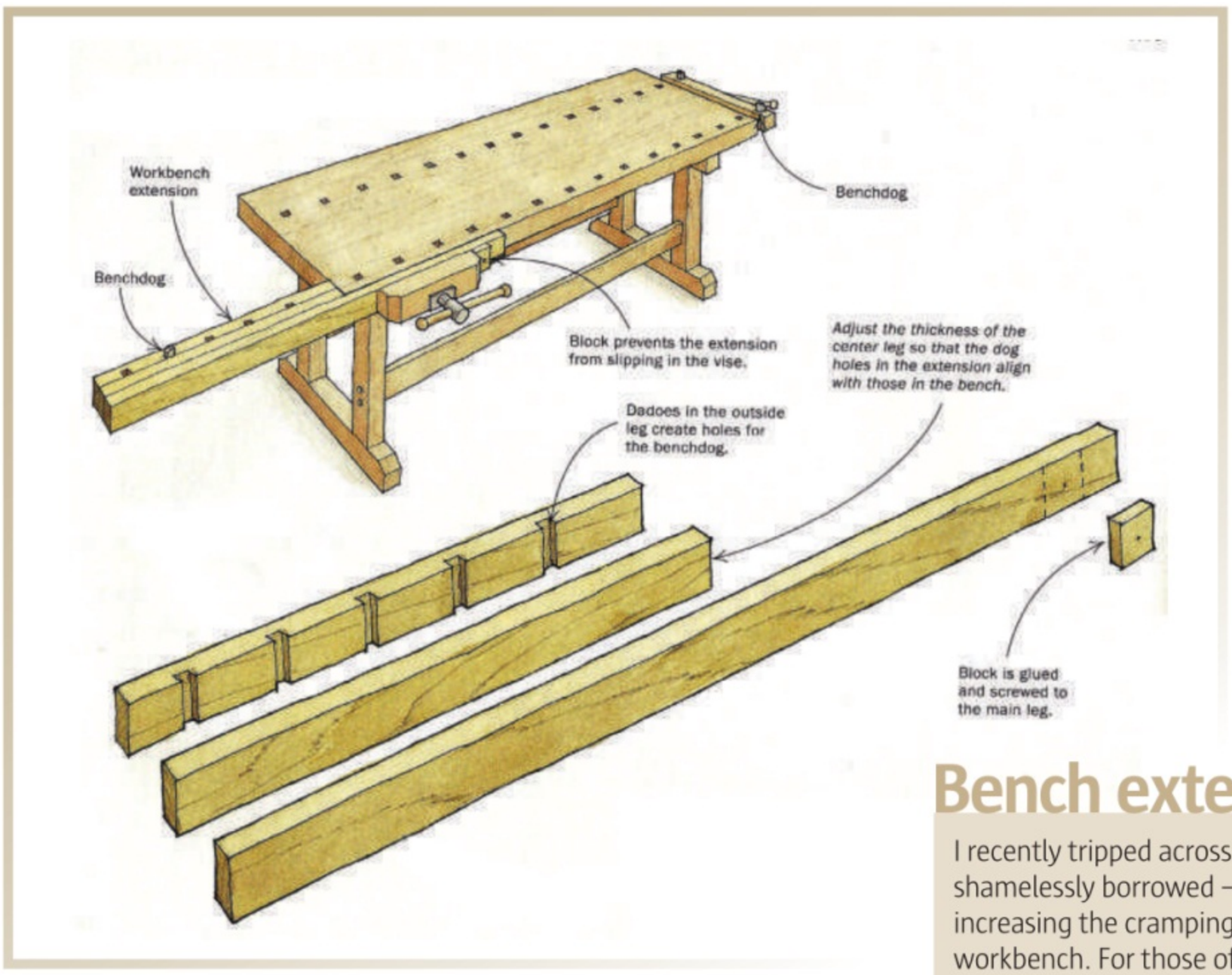


Dave Roberts, Consultant Editor

...and drenched Christmas decorations. Not that our little spot escaped all the bad weather, you understand: the storm in the early hours of Christmas Eve brought down trees around about, including this oak. There are 20 feet of trunk, which is 8ft in circumference, or about 2½ft in diameter, so it’s a biggish bit of timber – big enough for the landowner to be thinking of butchering it for his woodburner, and for me to put in a quick call to the local Woodmizer man. As luck would have it, the tree dropped parallel to a track, so it’s very accessible, and is just about small enough to fit on his mobile sawmill, which he offered to bring along for £300 a day. Even allowing for the fact that I’d have to compensate the landowner for his lost firewood, the opportunity to harvest some home-grown oak makes this tempting, but, sadly, probably unrealistic. After milling, there’d be the matter of storing the planks and then resawing them before use. It pains me, though, to think of all that oak going up in smoke. As Mike Taffinder said the other month (*GW*274), “I enjoy looking at a piece of wood and thinking, ‘with just a little bit of care I can do something with it that will make it last 200 years’, whereas if you threw it on a woodburner it would be ash in five minutes. That gives me huge satisfaction.”

Shelf life

Compared to the damage around the foot of our hill, it seems churlish to grumble about the wastefulness of the part-used finishes thrown out in my new-year sweep of the workshop. Unfortunately, I have a habit of forgetting what I’ve bought and used, so a periodic check of the shelves often turns up a thickly skinned can of something or other, or a water-based paint in a quietly rusting tin. Even so, I was astounded to come across a reference to something called Bloxygen (www.bloxygen.com) which is essentially argon in an aerosol. I may be the last person in the workshop to know this, but apparently the intended use for this inert, heavier-than-air gas is to displace the air from part-full containers and so preserve the contents from the effects of oxidation. For



Bench extensions

I recently tripped across – and shamelessly borrowed – this idea for increasing the cramping capacity of a workbench. For those of us who work in a compact style on modestly sized benches, this extension could come in very handy – particularly when combined with a tail vice – for those occasions when you need to work with big components, or perhaps glue up and hold a large assembly.

The drawing says it all, really: construction is simple, the only trick being to ensure that the rebates or holes that you make in the extension line up with the bench dog holes on the main bench. The small block at the vice end of the assembly, meanwhile, is added to prevent the extension being pulled through the jaws as you cramp a workpiece in place. It's just too good an idea not to share.

woodie types, then, putting a squirt of argon into your tin of varnish or paint will form a protective barrier and prevent the finish from skinning over or hardening. There may be some specialist application that justifies the expense of all this, but for the rest of us isn't it cheaper and, overall, less wasteful in terms of resources either to decant finishes into smaller containers (glass or plastic as appropriate) as they're used or, when solvents allow, into flexible ones from which the air can be squeezed? In my case, it would probably pay to have a more realistic appreciation of a product's shelf life, and to buy – or, if I was to make up a finish, mix – it in smaller quantities. After all, it may be cheaper to buy larger amounts, but only if I use them in a timely fashion; leaving the contents to oxidise and then throwing them away is no saving at all.

Better grit

Workshop clear-out or not, I haven't been able to bring myself to bin a sheaf of horrible, orangey sandpaper that for some unfathomable reason I bought despite knowing that it's poor-quality stuff, the sort of paper that goes dull in no time flat. There's some consolation in the fact that the sheets are a coarse grit and won't, therefore, compromise any final finish, but persisting in using them only compounds the false economy of buying them in the first place because they make an already tedious task even more laborious.

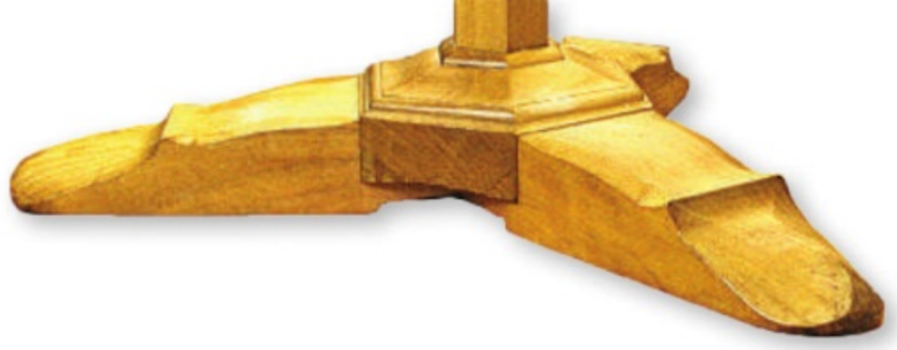
As with conventionally edged tools, abrasives need to be sharp, and it pays to buy quality papers. A garnet paper, for example – which has that distinctive reddish-brown colour – is suitable for use with both soft and hardwoods, and is fairly durable because the crushed garnet with which it's coated tends to fracture further as it's worked, exposing fresh cutting edges and providing a relatively consistent cut throughout the life of the paper.

These days, however, aluminium oxide is probably the most common abrasive medium: it's equally effective for either hand or power sanding of soft or hardwoods, and comes in a variety of forms. Mirka's yellow Mirox paper, for instance, is a good all-round abrasive for most types of wood, but when you're working on painted surfaces or oily woods such as rosewood and teak you might want to try a carat paper, whose combination of aluminium oxide and a zinc stearate lubricant improves the abrasive's resistance to clogging (See www.mirka.com for more gen on Mirka's abrasives).

> "As with conventionally edged tools, abrasives need to be sharp"

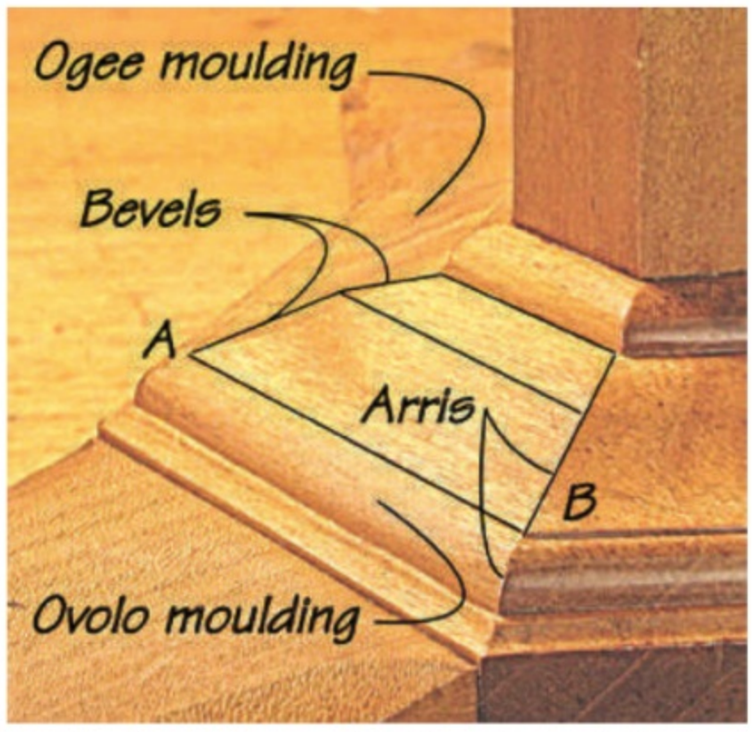
As well as the composition of its abrasive medium, the construction of a paper also helps to determine its 'clog-resistance': unlike closed-coated papers, in which the whole sheet is covered with abrasive, open-coated papers only have abrasive on about 70% of the sheet; the spaces in between the grit provide room for the sanding residue, which helps to prevent clogging and makes these papers ideal for soft or resinous materials.

The type of backing makes a difference, too, and is identified by the letter code printed on the back of the abrasive material. The variety of paper backings is covered by the range A to F, with A being the lightest and most flexible, best suited to hand-sanding of mouldings and other intricacies, and F being the thickest and most durable of papers, and therefore fitted to the rigours of power-sanding.



Out of mothballs

Shaping the base of his standard lamp, **Jeff Gorman** gladly turns to rarely used tools



▲ Pic.1 **This is the moulded boss into which the feet were to be tenoned**



▲ Pic.2 **Jeff's rebate gauge helped him to scribe into the sloping surface**

TIP If you make a gauge, finish it with a couple of coats of boiled linseed oil.

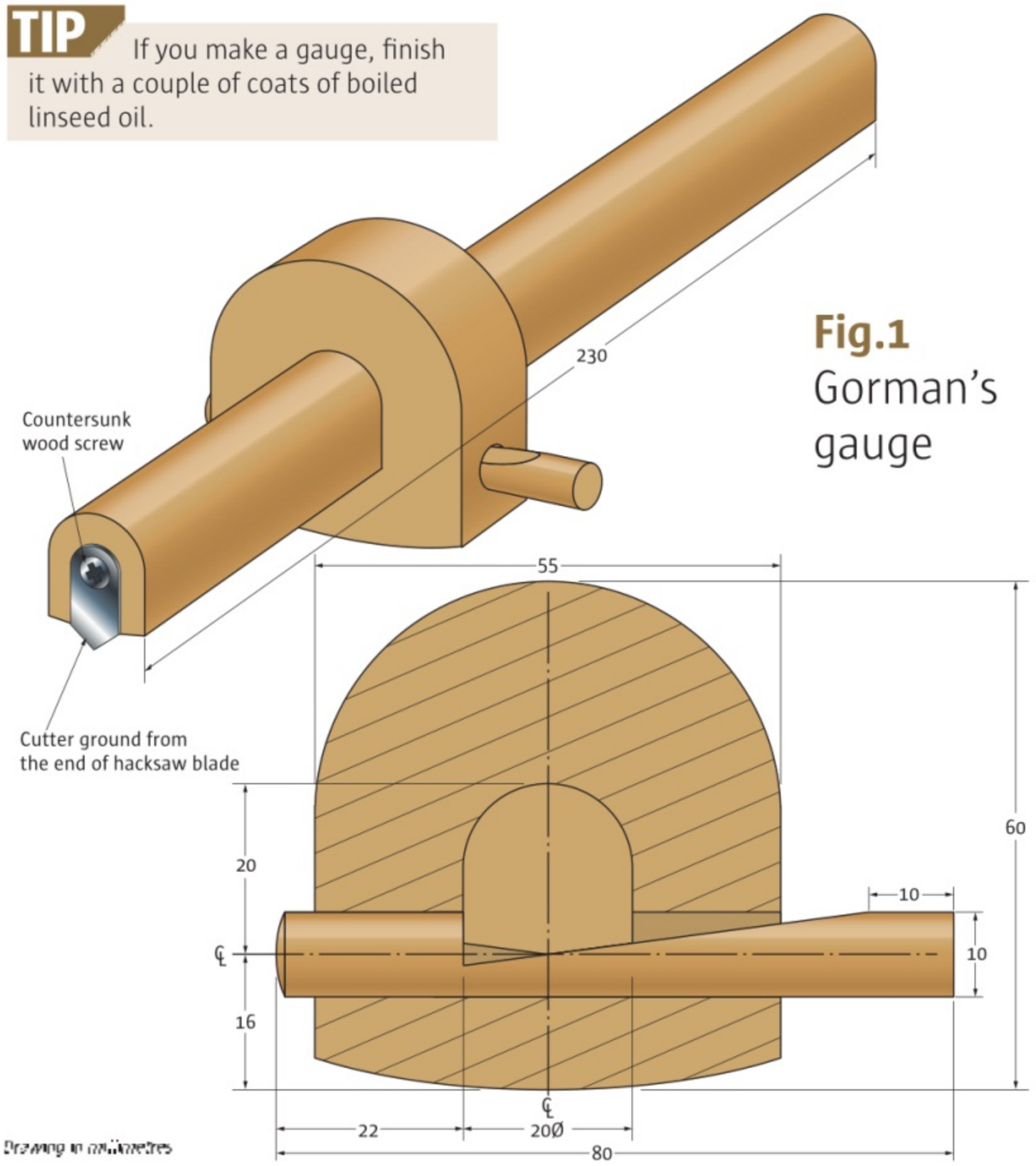


Fig.1 Gorman's gauge

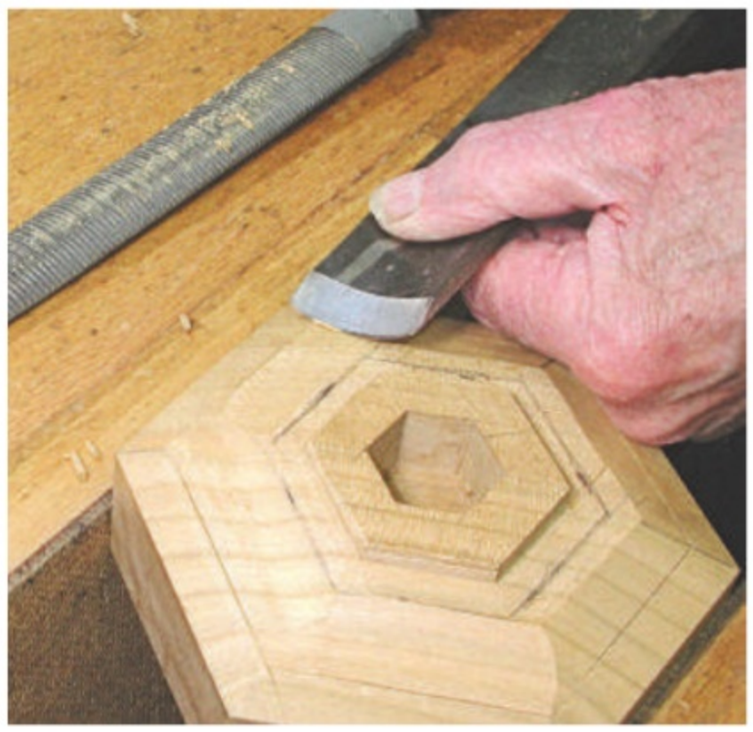
There are some tools in every woodworker's workshop that are used so infrequently we forget how invaluable they are. The stage I've reached in the remaking of my Gimson-inspired standard lamp has reminded me of this, as I've reached for rarely used tool after rarely used tool.

An unfamiliar gauge was the first example. I'd planed a pair of bevels in preparation for the mouldings, but before launching into the actual shaping I decided to cut a line that would form the very narrow listel at the start of the ovolo moulding, AB **Pic.1**. I ran into a problem here, as the cutter of my usual cutting gauge is set some 15mm (19/32in) from its end, so I knew that the end would rub against the bevel and prevent the cutter from making contact with the surface. I was therefore grateful for the time I'd previously invested in making my rebate gauge (**Fig.1**), which I duly dug out and dusted.

My rebate gauge is named such because it was originally made for marking a feature on the face of a narrow rebate. Its stock is actually made from a branch from our ancient hawthorn hedge, the stem is of European beech, and for a bit of swank, the wedge is made from rosewood – although almost any fine-grained hardwood would have served for all the gauge's parts. I make fine adjustments by using firm thumb pressure against the wedge's nearest end to lightly lock the stem, and then tap the head or the tail of the stem against the bench-top. To lock the stock and secure the setting, I tap the same wedge end against the end of the bench. Thinking back some 60 years to the making of the original job, I recall paring the moulding by making a series of shallow cuts with a 1½in (38mm) paring gouge (**Pic.2**) and smoothed out the inevitable ripples with the intensive use of some fairly coarse abrasive paper wrapped round a specially shaped cork block (**Pic.6**). This meant a lot of work in painstakingly removing cross-grain scratches, but another old treasure helped to significantly reduce my workload: a half-round and half flat dreadnought file (**Pic.4**). Because these cut with teeth shaped to act almost as an array of plane blades (**Pic.5**), simply filing with the grain of the English cherry produced a smooth finish – far better than I could've achieved with my wood rasp or even a bastard-cut metalworker's file. Just so you know, a plane maker would call one of these files a 'float'. Tool dealers tend to refer to them as 'milled tooth files'.

Put a cork in it

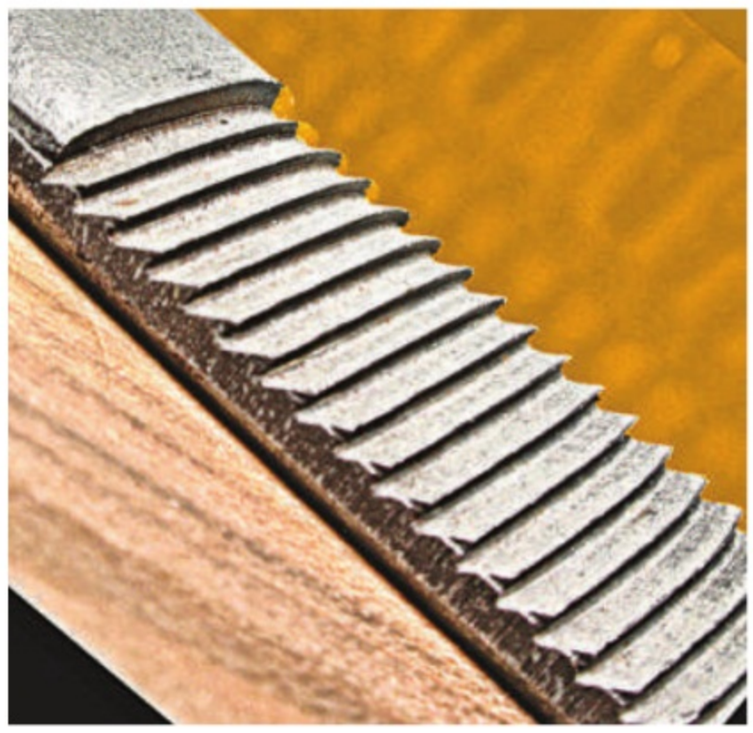
Abrasive paper can be expensive stuff. I'm often surprised to find how many folk tear their sheets without realising that the commonly sold 115 x 63 x 32mm cork block is made to accept one-sixth of a standard-sized abrasive sheet. Paper of this size folds over the wide



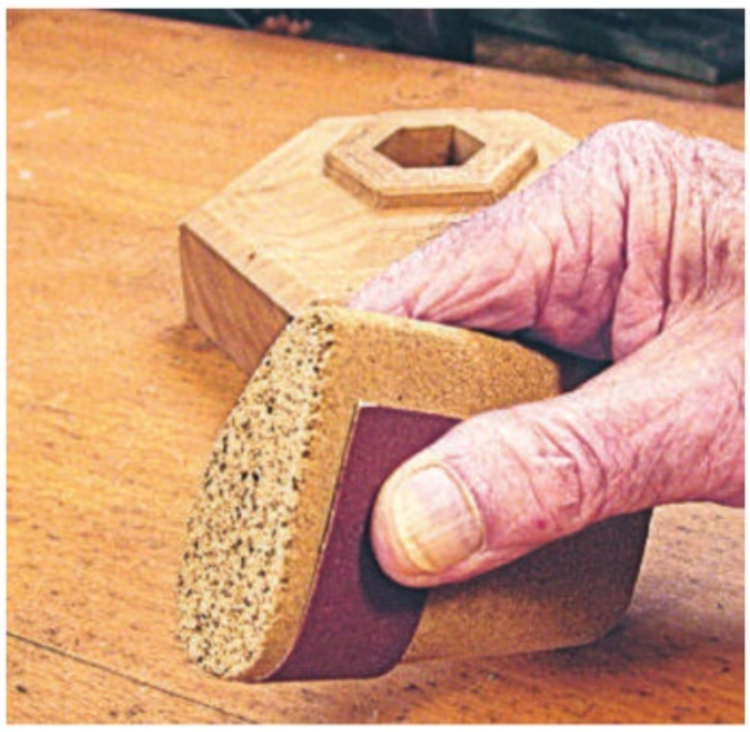
▲ Pic.3 **He started the concave part of the ogee moulding with a paring gouge...**



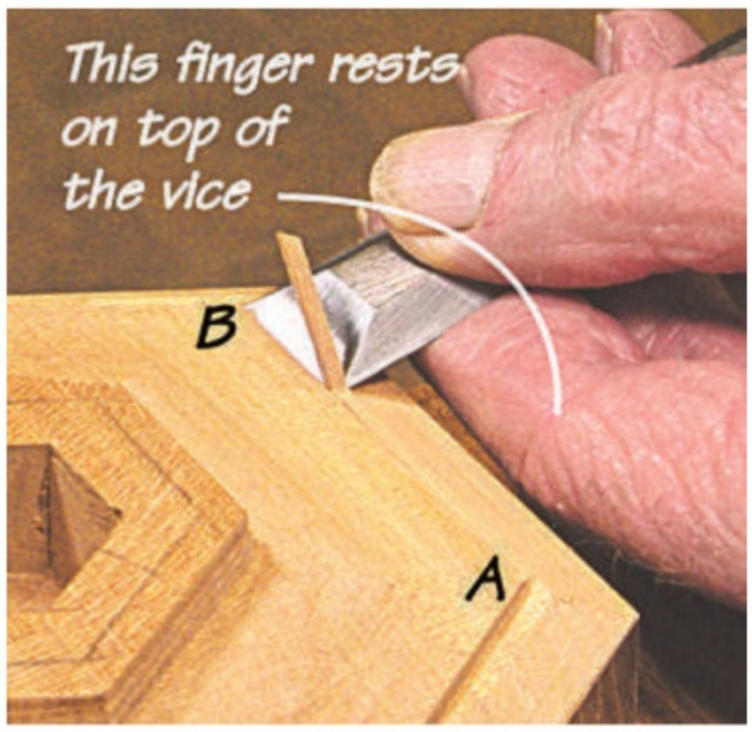
▲ Pic.4 **...and smoothed the surface with the ominous-sounding dreadnought file**



▲ Pic.5 **The teeth of this milled tooth file work like tiny plane blades**



▲ Pic.6 **A narrow strip of abrasive helped to avoid dubbing over the arrises**



▲ Pic.7 **Cutting into the start of the lower ovolo required a delicate touch**



▲ Pic.8 **A few strokes of the shoulder plane levelled the pared surface...**



▲ Pic.9 **...and a quick check made sure that the surface was parallel to the boss's underside**

surface in a way that means that the paper overlap will offer a comfortable grip. I made my universal sanding block by grinding a standard block against a fairly coarse sanding belt (a disc, or even a rasp, would have served just as well). I started by forming a wedge shape, keeping one surface flat as I rounded one end to as small a section as the cork would stand, with a radius of around 5mm (13/64in), and then shaped the thick end to a curve that starts at a radius of about 15mm, which gradually tapers into a flattening curve. I reckon that you can usually judge a woodworker by the character of their arrises, and in this case, the obtuse angles between the curved surfaces made achieving the requisite sharpness particularly challenging. When using my sanding block I was wary of the possible cushioning effect if I allowed a 'full' one-sixth sheet to hang over the adjacent surfaces, so I localised the work to each of the hexagon's segments by using a narrow strip from a broken sanding belt (**Pic.6**).

TIP Before putting files away, clean them with a 'file card', as some wood can corrode the teeth.

Fenceless rebating

Up until this point, the gauge cut had served its purpose as a marker of the mouldings limit. I now deepened it to make it ready for the formation of the shallow rebate (AB) that was to be the start of the ovolo moulding (**Pics.1 & 7**). Needing a sure grip for the nerve-racking task of cutting into the gauge cut, I settled the boss in the vice so that my index finger was supported by the vice top, and reduced the chance of an overrun by inclining the freshly sharpened chisel slightly downwards, working with a sideways shimmy of its handle. When I no longer felt resistance as its edge approached the gauge cut, I released the forward pressure, and (for photographic effect) gently lifted a splinter with a twist of the chisel (**Pic.7**). This succeeded in cutting a rebate whose listel offered enough support to the shoulder plane's flank to let me gingerly level out any unevenness, readying it for checking with an outside calliper (**Pic.9**) – a tool which is possibly more familiar to turners, but like the other unfamiliar tools, certainly proves its worth from time to time.

Having used up my space for this month, I'll skip the fairly straightforward task of using the shoulder plane for rounding the upper and lower ovolo mouldings. Next month, I'll be sharpening the blade of a moulding plane, which I'll use for cutting the cavetto moulding before tackling the bridle-cum-tenon.

Jargon Busting

Arris: An edge formed at the meeting of two surfaces.
Bastard-cut file: A file with coarser teeth than a rough-cut file
Listel: An architectural term for a narrow band between mouldings
Sandpaper: We should really say 'coated abrasive paper', but old habits die hard so I seem to stick to saying 'sandpaper' – which you can't really get any more.

Symptoms & diagnosis

A restoration project demands a thorough condition check rather than a swift once over. **Stephen Simmons** performs life-saving surgery



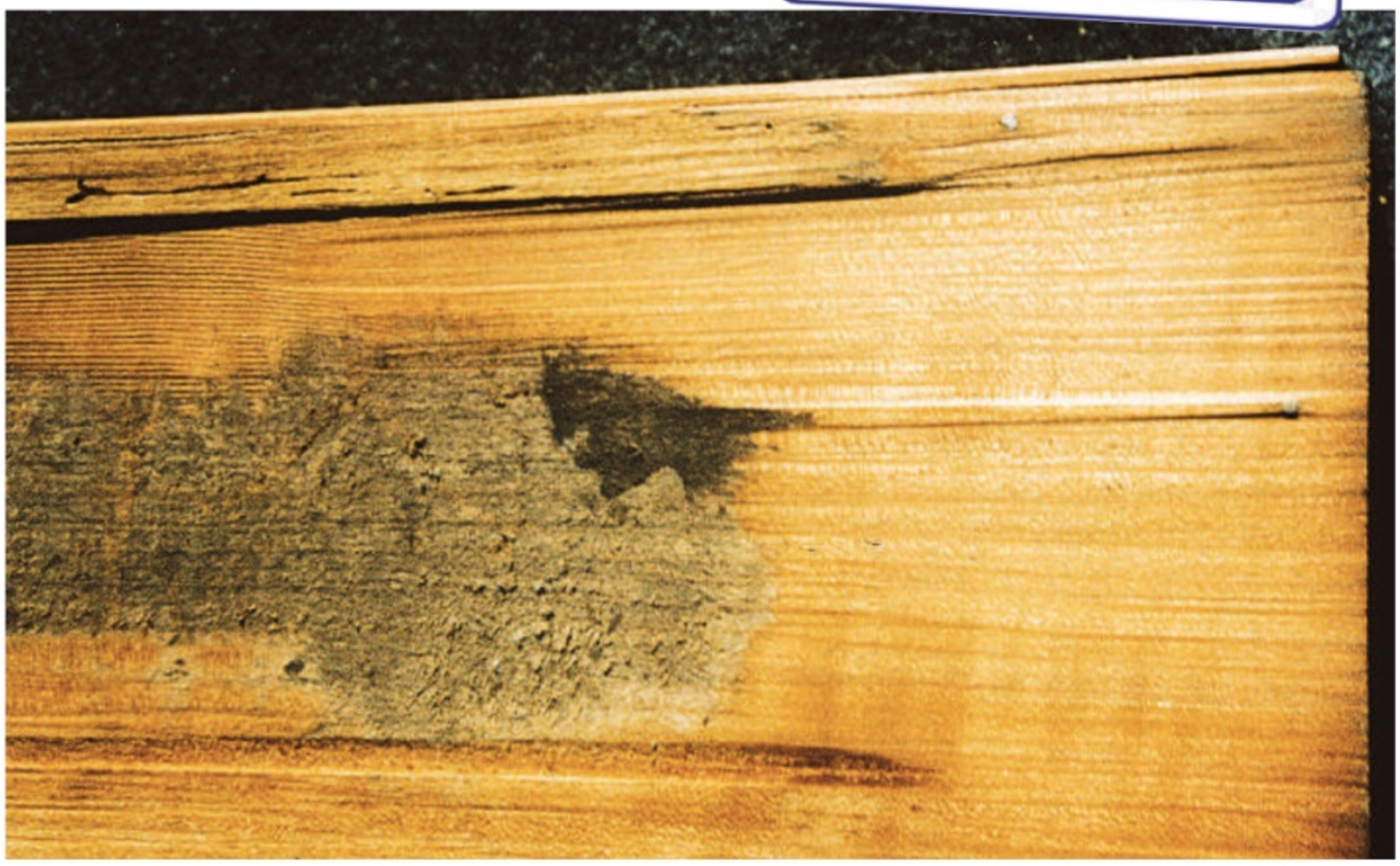
An analogy seemed as good a place to start as any this month, so here it is: you don't concentrate on treating someone for a grazed knee when they have a broken leg. When faced with a new project, what might seem to be the problem might only be a symptom of something else. Never jump straight in and deal with the most simple or obvious thing without giving the whole piece a good once-over – upside down and inside out – and understanding how everything fits together. If you don't, you risk creating extra work for yourself, wasting time or – either through frustration or ignorance – botching the whole job.

Frustration is occasionally unavoidable, but there is no place for wilful ignorance in restoration. If you're hazy about the construction of something it is imperative to read up about it before starting work. For example, if you come across a lopsided long-case clock you might be surprised at how flimsy it seems around the waist. But rub-jointed glue blocks and little else were the order of the day – the absence of any other fixings is neither an oversight nor a problem. All you need to do is get the case on its back, square things up and replace missing or sprung blocks. The last thing it needs is the addition of modern screws.

The doctor is in

So, on to the business of diagnosing symptoms. At one end of the scale, a symptom may be far easier to fix than you might think; a good example is a binding door. Don't start planing the frame or the muntin down before you've checked the hinges, lock and catch-plate. The three most common causes I've come across are displaced pins in the hinges, bent catch-plates and loose screws generally. It takes a matter of minutes to tap the pin home, flatten a plate and tighten a few screws. And that may well be that.

In other cases one thing going wrong leads to other problems. Things are slightly more complex in these situations, but for the most part the issue will still be manageable. A prime example of this is a chair that has become wobbly thanks to the joints of the seat rail steadily loosening after one joint has sprung, usually because people have leaned back in the chair. In this case, the original problem is irrelevant in terms of restoration; you'll have to re-glue and clamp all of the joints in the most logical way, after you've checked for loose stretchers, back splats and crest rails as well. Oh, and in future, ban chair-swinging!



▲ Pic.1 **Symptom: the nail on the right is digging into the cabinet. Cause: worn runners in this case**



▲ Pic.2 **Make sure that you read the signs: there has been woodworm here, but this dust is the result of wearing splitters**

Scratch the surface

On other occasions the symptom and the basic cause become separate problems with their own solutions. Take broken drawer handles, for instance. They break not of their own accord but because of unnatural strain created by too much friction from the drawer itself, usually due to worn runners (**Pic.1**). It's easy enough to replace the handles but there's no point unless you also deal with the runners. As with any working part – including that broken leg – you can't hobble on forever.

The trouble is that worn runners are not immediately visible – out of sight is out of mind, after all. So, rather than the problem being caught early, when treatment would be relatively easy, things continue to deteriorate. The drawer starts to run on its bottom and rests on the stops whose pins can begin to wear deep grooves in the drawer bottoms (**Pic.4**). The problem is then compounded as the runners inside the cabinet wear too. The result is that the drawer becomes harder and harder to open... and then snap goes the handle. And very often, off pops a section of the lower cock-beading, too.

The moral of this instructive tale is to check unseen parts as thoroughly as the visible – but don't misinterpret the evidence. Dust under and round the runners is not necessarily a symptom of woodworm, but just a gentle warning that the runners are wearing naturally (**Pic.2**). And worn runners are not always responsible for sluggish drawers. Simple overloading is a common and easily remedied problem. A warped dust panel from the tier above can easily jam things too, or the drawer

sides may need a little waxing. Perhaps the guide that keeps the drawer sliding square inside is missing or has come adrift.

Leave it alone!

Mechanical friction is one big problem, shrinkage is another. Sometimes there's very little you can do about it. The Regency sofa table (**Pic.5**) is a case in point. The leaves are designed to hang vertical, but the rule joint is set so close to the side of the frame that even the smallest shrinkage in the top will prevent it doing so. Here the shrinkage was marked, the result being that neither leaf would hang at more than 60°, making the table somewhat resemble a bird with two broken wings. The strain had broken several of the brass hinges. Rule joints seldom offer much scope for re-setting the hinges further out, and in this case none at all. So it was just a question of treating the symptom by replacing the hinges and accepting that the leaves must remain horizontal; major, risky and intrusive surgery may've worked, but I advised against it.

One good thing was that the shrinkage hadn't caused a split. Sometimes it does and you get a whole new set of problems. Among the most common are pins and other oddments falling through split drawer bottoms and getting wedged under the runners. The simple solution is to patch the split – underneath as well as inside the drawer – with hessian and animal glue (**Pic.3**).

The biggest opportunity for tackling the wrong problem is far more mundane: dirt. The gunge from years of over-waxing, handling, open fires and tobacco smoke will make any piece look seedy, and a common, immediate reaction is to strip the surface and re-polish... don't do it! Very often, there's nothing wrong with the original polish which is sitting quite unscathed under the dirt. All you need do is a bit of gentle cleaning, which should only take about 10% of the time.



▲ Pic.3 **It may look a bit rudimentary, but hessian and glue really can provide a very handy solution**



▲ Pic.4 **Worn runners also have to answer for this damage**

TIP If your project has been in a damp environment, let it dry out naturally (no central heating!) before jumping to conclusions. It's surprising what how often a problem will fix itself.

▼ Pic.5 **Even if there aren't splits, the slightest shrinkage can prevent precision cabinetwork from working properly**





Project

ALL AT SEA

Fibonacci may be the aesthete's golden boy but **Mark Griffiths** believes the eye can do a better job

Spiral table

Inspiration can strike at the most unexpected of times. The idea for these shell tables came to me during a visit to the boat show at the NEC in Birmingham. I had just been invited to show some examples of my work at the annual Celebration of Craftsmanship show in Cheltenham and had been racking my brains to come up with a new design idea. Standing awestruck in front of a vast Sunseeker 'gin palace' my mind started to wonder about the challenges of fitting out such a beast. Having met a maker whose very job this was I knew of the high level of skill, creativity and money that goes into making one of these boats. As I thought about furniture with a nautical theme, the design came into my head. I immediately sketched out a rough plan on the back of the show program so as not to lose the thread of my thoughts and when back in my office carried on building on the idea at the drawing board.

The final concept was quite simple. The piece was to be a coffee table with a top shaped like the Nautilus shell, and sides that plunged straight down from the top's edge and only stopping 20mm ($2\frac{5}{32}$in) from the floor. The top itself would have the pattern of a cross-section of the shell's interior, formed of sections of veneer. I decided to make one table with a birch veneer top and Macassar ebony-veneered sides and a second with a combination of birch and birdseye maple and, again, Macassar ebony sides. Birch veneer has an amazing watered silk quality when highly polished which I felt would emulate a shell interior and I wanted to experiment with the birdseye maple to see how the combination would work on my pattern. The Macassar ebony's rich dark tones would help to create the effect of framing the table's top.



In the end, the two tables looked as if they had been sliced from a stick of rock with the pattern running through them; I was born a pebble's throw from Brighton beach so it's not hard to see where that one came from.

Perfect curves

After making numerous sketches based on a cross section of the Nautilus sea shell, I developed a spiral with a constant expansion factor, known as an equiangular or logarithmic spiral, for which I used a Fibonacci rectangle. For those of you that were not paying attention at school, this is the mathematical model using Fibonacci's number sequence to build a rectangle, with each new square having a side which is as long as the sum of its latest two square's sides.

Although my design was mathematically accurate, it just didn't fit with the shape I wanted the table to have, so I threw the abacus out of the window and went with a shape that fitted the size of table I wanted, using a curving sequence that felt pleasing to the eye. I strongly believe when it comes to curves that you have to train your eye to 'see' a true curve (sketching helps in this process) and once the eye is trained, you must trust it. Apart from some rough working sketches the final design was drawn out straight onto a piece of 6mm ($\frac{15}{64}$in) MDF board. It helped to see things full size, and would save time and effort trying to transfer any drawing from paper to a rod. Having spent a good deal of time getting each internal curve's flow to match its neighbour, I was left with a design I felt happy with. This was then inked over with a fibre-tipped pen, which would aid the next operation. After laying on and securing with masking tape a large piece of good quality tracing paper the finished pattern was copied with a fine 0.5 pen. Each section was given its own identification number that corresponded with the sections on the rod.

The tracing paper was then spread out onto another oversize piece of 18mm ($\frac{45}{64}$in) MDF and again fixed down with masking tape. Each section was cut out using a scalpel. When carrying out tasks like this I tend to work at it for about half an hour, then take a break to carry out some other task or have a cup of tea and come back to it. Maybe it's just me, but on critical hand-to-eye work such as this, if you try to stay focused for too long there is a danger you grow complacent and start to rush the task, which inevitably leads to mistakes and an unsatisfactory standard of work.

Creating the veneers

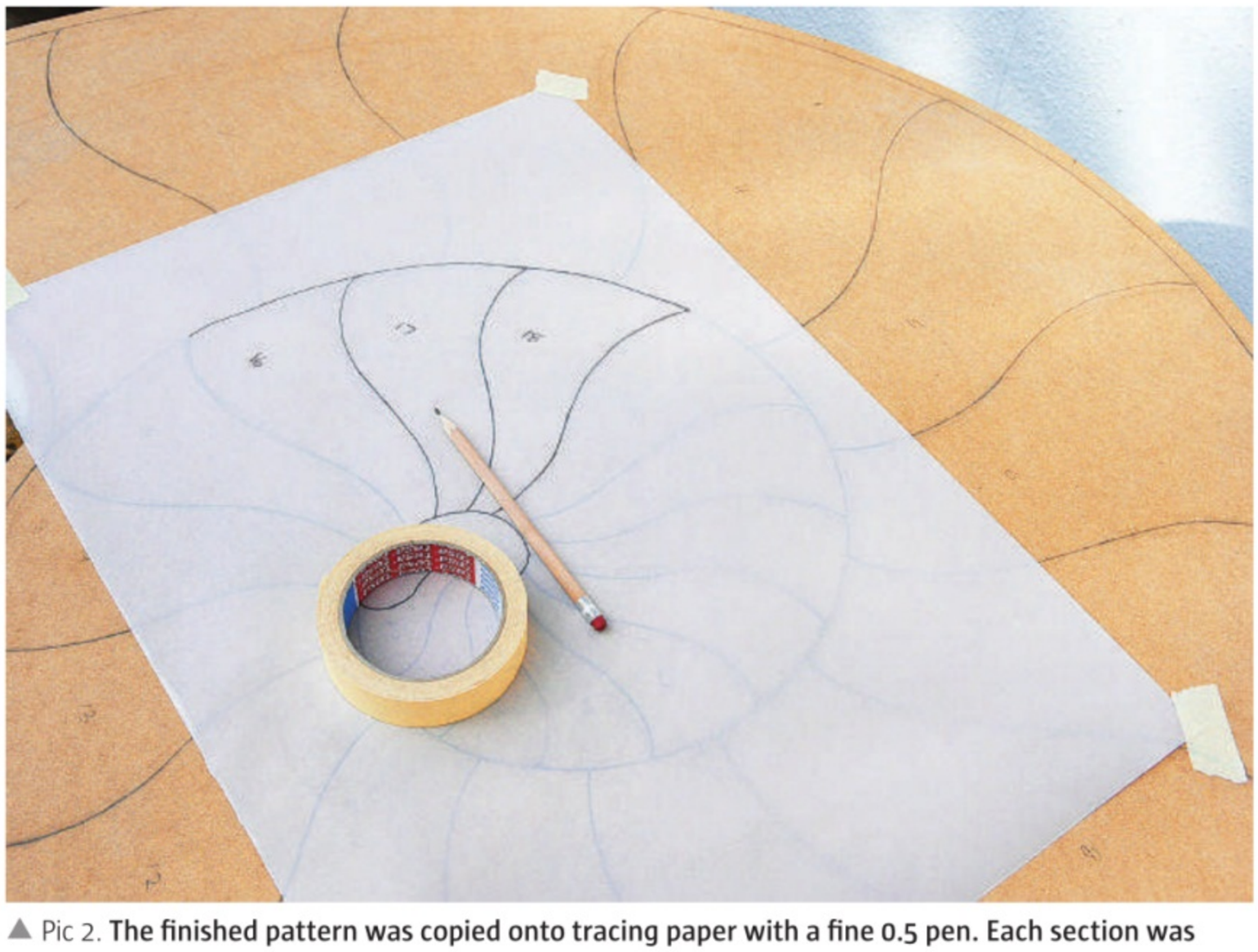
Now the project started to get challenging. Each of my jigsaw pieces of trace had to be turned into veneer. It's one thing working matching curves onto tracing paper; it's quite another working in unpredictably-grained veneers. I'm sure there are a few different methods around but this is the one that worked for me in the past, and certainly with

Pic.1 **The design was drawn out onto a piece of 6mm MDF board. It helped to see things full size, and would save time and effort trying to transfer any drawing from paper to a rod**

this particular project.

After selecting the veneers I wished to use I evenly sprayed both sides with water from an atomiser spray gun as seen in your local garden centre. The veneers were then placed between two 18mm boards – melamine-faced is best if you have some – and a weight was placed on top. This gave the veneers a more rubbery nature that is easier to cut, and also flattened them out so that they'd be easier to join. It's important not to totally soak the veneers and not to keep them in the boards for more than, say, a day, because a mould can form which may leave a stain.

The largest outside section was cut out first. Checking the grain direction, the trace template was secured in place with veneer tape and placed on a cutting mat. It was then a



▲ Pic 2. **The finished pattern was copied onto tracing paper with a fine 0.5 pen. Each section was given its own identification number that corresponded with the sections on the rod**

VENEERING TIPS

- Before cutting the veneers, try evenly spraying both sides with water from an atomiser spray gun, as Mark did. This makes them easier to cut and flattens them out, so they'll be easier to join.
- Mark converts old hacksaw blades into instruments for cutting veneers rather than use scalpel blades, which can be too flexible. You can also put a bevel-cutting edge on just one face of the blade, giving a clean flat edge on the other.
- Controversially, Mark uses contact adhesive to adhere the Macassar ebony-veneer sides to the table's frame. As you'll remember from our Special Issue, *GW*222, we usually advise against contact adhesive, as it's pretty unforgivable. Mark's rationale is that the veneers he was using were very oily in nature, which would take a lot of work to deal with if using his preferred scotch glue.

simple case of following the template with a knife to cut out the veneer copy. For this kind of task I will keep several different knives to hand, from a straightforward Stanley to various shapes of scalpel. However, the knives I use the most for cutting veneers are ones that I have made myself from old hacksaw blades; they tend not to be as flexible as scalpel blades and you can put a bevel-cutting edge on just one face giving a clean flat edge on the other.

As each section of pattern was cut they were placed between two weighted 18mm MDF boards which would both dry them out and keep them flat. With all the pieces cut out, the corresponding code number transferred in pencil onto the top face, and an arrow pointing to the outside of the final pattern, I thought I could start the assembly process, but...



▶ Pic.3 **For cutting the veneers, Mark used several different knives. His favourite is one he makes himself from old hacksaw blades (second from the right), which are less flexible then scalpel blades**

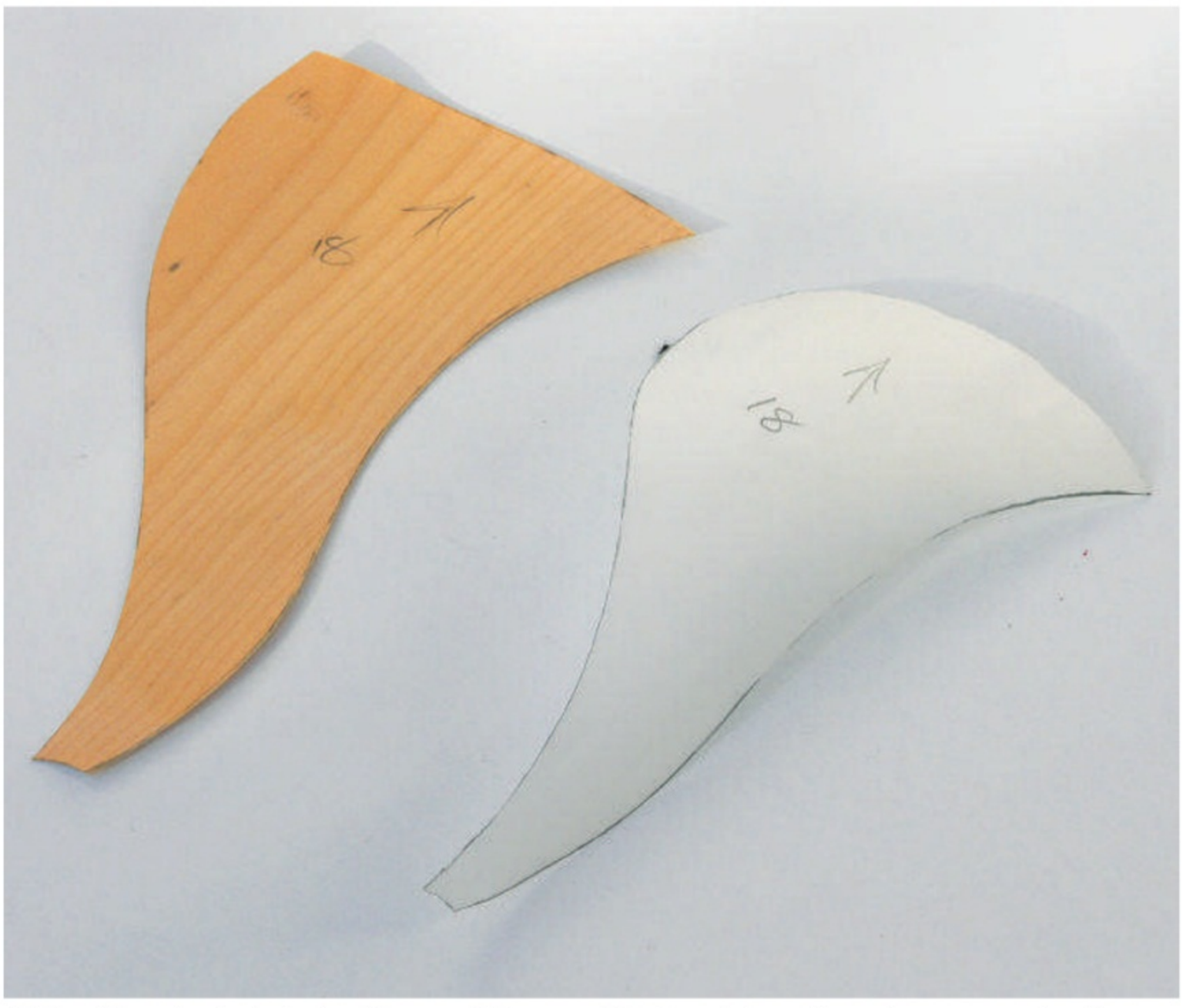
Hot sand

... as the pattern came together I was disappointed to find that each section, even though from different areas of the veneer leaf, did not stand out from one another enough. Even the top that had the alternate birdseye maple and birch only gave slight contrast between the sections. I was hoping the curving shape along with the veneer's natural watery pattern would give the top its character, but it simply wasn't happening.

Going back to the illustrations I had been using to inform my design I was struck by a beautiful 18th-century rendition of a Nautilus shell. The thing that gave it life was the shading of each curve. This, I realised, was what was needed in my design.

I had used the old technique of shading veneers with hot sand before when restoring and creating reproductions with inlay work, but had never attempted anything on this size or scale. The process is relatively straightforward: first, fine silver sand is heated in a container, the piece of veneer dipped in with tweezers and left for a few seconds; when removed, the dipped edge is scorched and when placed alongside its unshaded neighbour the effect of a 3D concave shape is created. This process is fine on, say, small straight-edge sections of a fan, but some of my sections were over 300mm (12in) long.

After much trial and error and a big old wok full of sand I started to get the results I was after, the contrast between each segment in the pattern becoming more defined. The trick was to have the sand deep and slowly move the edge through the sand to give an even shade ending with the sharp point of the segments' shape, as this would burn and char if left submerged for too long.



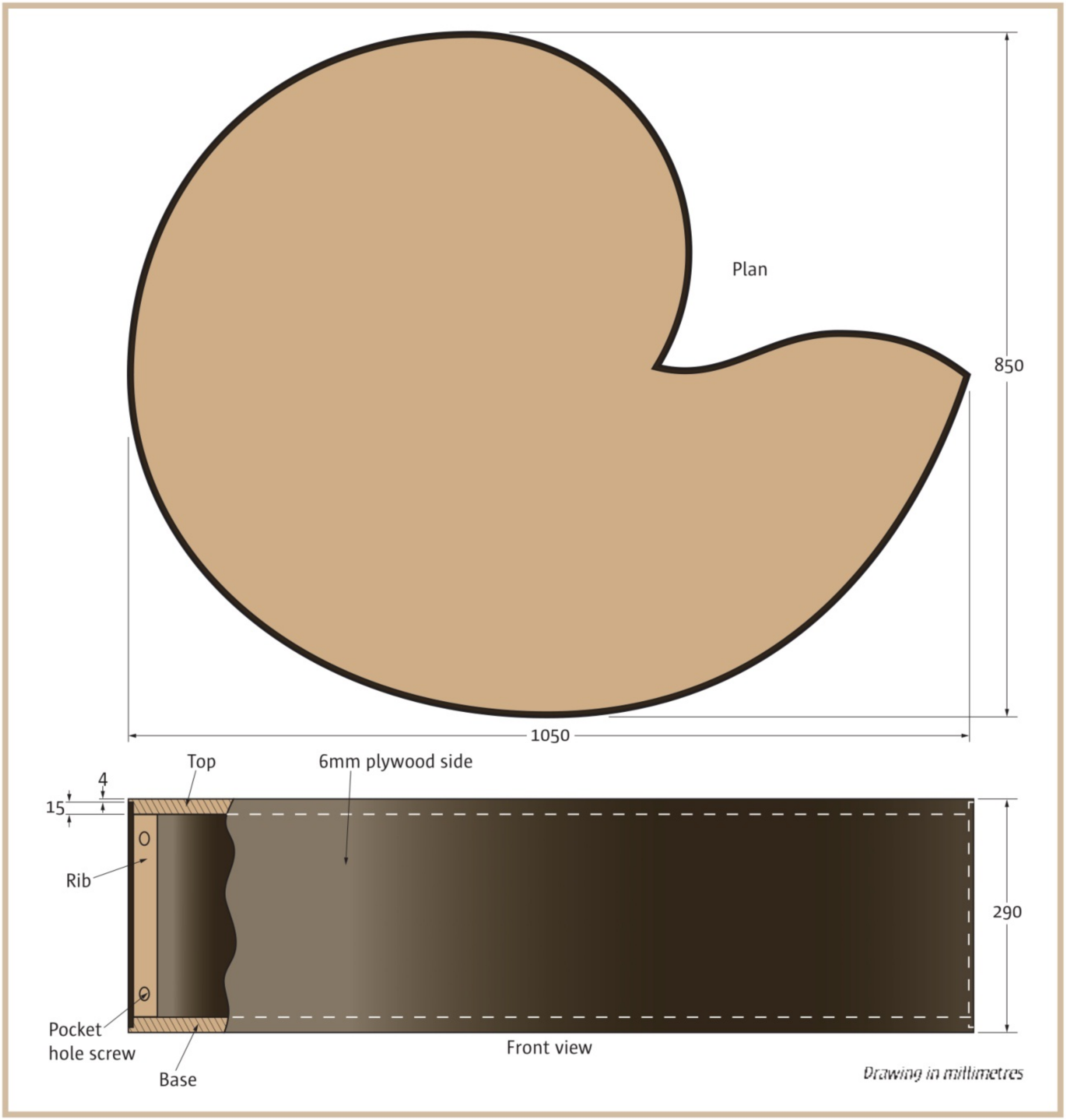
▲ Pic 4. **It's a simple task of cutting carefully around the template until you have an exact replica, though the varied grain of the veneer is obviously a challenge**

Assembling the shell

Now shaded, each segment could be joined to its puzzle partner with veneer tape. Any joint that wasn't tight would be gently sanded on its edge with a piece of 240-grit paper until it was perfect. As the pattern was built up, not only the sides but the ends of each section had to be fitted together with the help of the 240-grit paper and sometimes a bit of extra trimming from a sharp scalpel. Each time I broke from the work I would place a board over the top to keep it flat.

With the pattern finished I glued it to a board of 18mm MDF with a counter-balancing veneer the other side and left it overnight in the cold press. When dry, I belt-sanded the veneer tape of the board taking great care not to rub through something that had cost me a fair few man-hours to produce, although if not well-sanded, veneer tape will leave you with a ghost mark on your work that may only show when applying a finish! The outside shape of the top was first bandsawn and then spokeshaved, again trusting the eye to see the curve, and fingers to find any unevenness.

The top was used as a template for the table's 18mm ply base. Having rough-cut this oversize with a jigsaw, it was pinned to the underside of the top, after which I ran a router template cutter around it. The template cutter was then changed for a 7mm (9/32in) deep



rebate cutter set to give a 15mm (19/32in) high cut. This was run around the underside of the top and the top side of the base, leaving the channel onto which my flexible plywood would be fixed. A central X construction column made of 18mm plywood and cut to the size of the inner table height was biscuited into place. As well as aligning and joining the top and base this would also give the table the strength to take the weight of any unappreciative individual who decided to sit on it.

Twenty strips of 20 x 30mm (25/32 x 1¼in) tulipwood were machined and cut to the internal length of my table and, using a very shallow old concave moulding plane, I ran two curves onto one of the 20mm edges, facing outwards; aligned with the top and bottom rebated edges these would provide both a strengthening rib to the sides and a fixing point.

Before gluing the central column into place I had marked corresponding location marks on the undersides of the top and base to show the positions of the tulipwood ribs. They were fixed into place with glue and screws located in the sides using the ever-versatile Kreg pocket-hole jig system. Time and time again this seemingly simple tool has allowed me to make a good strong fixing into an area where before only a fiddly dowel joint and clamps would work.

Skin and bones

My table's naked framework was now ready for its skin – some 6mm flexible ply. With plenty of slow-setting PVA glue spread on the rebates and ribs, the ply was applied in one section. A dry pre-assembly run had given me the exact finished size required to create a clean butt joint in the only corner detail in my design. A helping hand for this type of operation is always much appreciated but it's also worth practising with a dry run just so that you know you can do the job alone if needed. As the ply was wrapped around starting from the corner, 15mm headed pins were fired into the rebate and into the ribs using their location markings



▶ Pic.5 **The veneers were shaded with hot sand to give definition between each one. The sand was heated in a wok and the veneers dipped in with tweezers for a few seconds**

▼ Pic.6 **Now shaded, each segment could be joined to its puzzle partner with veneer tape. Any joint that wasn't tight would be gently sanded on its edge until perfect**

as reference. Once dry, the small holes left by the nails were filled and the side was sanded with a 120-grit pad on a random orbital sander, leaving an even surface.

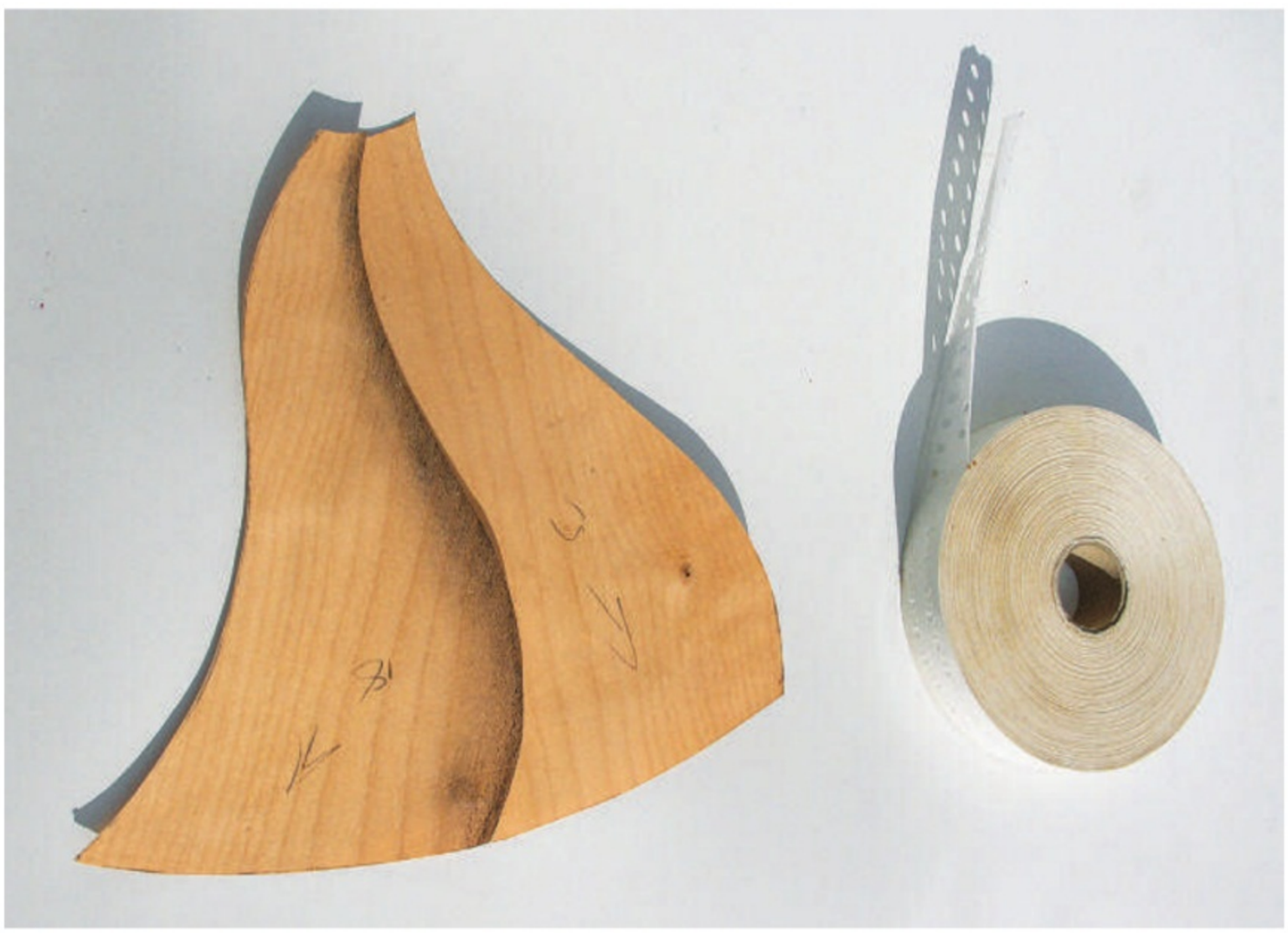
I had the choice of two different techniques when it came to veneering the sides – scotch glue or a contact adhesive. They both have their pros and cons: scotch is messy but you do have more time and flexibility when working with it, whereas contact is clean and quick but you only have one chance to get it right.

On this occasion I went with the contact adhesive mainly because the veneer I was using, like all rosewoods, ebonies and teaks, has an oily nature, which takes a lot of extra work to deal with if using scotch. If I had used it, I would have had to wash each veneer leaf with a rag soaked in water and washing-up liquid to help neutralise the oil, before applying it to the frame. I'd then have to attack any blisters that may come up overnight with an iron.

By comparison, using contact is relatively straightforward. Firstly the surface of the sides was scored up using an old saw blade, then one coat of contact was applied just to the plywood, which is quite porous. Once this first coat is dry to the touch, another coat was applied over the top of this one and also onto the veneer leaf – I like to leave them both until just slightly tacky – and then the veneer was laid in place. Working from one edge first, push out any air pockets as you go.

Any stray glue was removed with a cabinet scraper to avoid the temptation to try and sand it off which, because of the persistence of contact, can result in a veneer rub-through. Then, with great care, the whole job was sanded through 120, 240 and 360-grit random orbital discs; any rub-throughs at this stage would be very upsetting to say the least.

To finish, both tables were sprayed in high gloss two-part cellulose-based polish, really setting off the veneer patterns and colours.







Project



Pippy and practical

A desk designed with a gentle curve puts everything within reach. **Jeff Segal** shows you how



▲ Pic.1 The timber for this project came from a village in Staffordshire



▲ Pic.2 The cat's paw markings in pippy oak are produced by small knots in the timber

Curved oak desk



▲ Pic.3 **The complex curves are drawn on the plywood template with the help of a trammel**



▲ Pic.4 **Foamboard templates are then cut to achieve the desired fan shape**



▲ Pic.5 **Little tiles of oak are placed between each segment to form loose tenons**



▲ Pic.6 **Formers were built to give the curved shape of the underframe**



▲ Pic.7 **The underframe was made from thick veneers sliced off the bandsaw**



▲ Pic.8 **The final curved rails of the underframe for the desk's front and back**

The client for this large desk wanted a simple, practical but unique piece of furniture for his home office. It was to be the only free-standing item in the entire room – apart from a single chair – so it had to be striking but not overbearing. We decided that solid pippy oak would give it a charming, rustic look, full of character but easy on the eye, gently contrasting with the room's prime oak doors, skirting and windows.
The user wanted to be able to place it in different areas of the study, depending on the task in hand or the light coming into the room at different seasons. The shape I came up with meant that it could be used with either the long or short end against a wall. The gentle curve puts everything on the large desktop within reach and avoids redundant workspace, without being enclosing and isolating like many commercial workstations that wrap around the user and jut out sharply into the room. The front and back rails were laminated into an arc from thin sheets of pippy oak, sawn from the solid. The desk surface was made big enough to take a monitor and keyboard at either end plus papers for reading or writing. Two shallow drawers built into the rails on the concave side were added for stationery.

Pippy oak

The oak for the project came from a wood just outside the village of Perton, Staffordshire, only a mile from Wightwick Manor, an Arts & Crafts house with Morris interiors. In **Pic.2** you can see the 'cat's paw' markings typical of pippy oak, produced by small knots in the timber. Pippy is much more a wild hedgerow tree than a straight, clean, commercially grown oak. The outside of the log has the most pip; closer to the heart of the tree the wood is plainer.

From the 10ft boards of 1½in oak purchased, I selected boards for the desktop – there needed to be enough pip to add character, but not so much as to distract the user. Some of the markings are subtle; others can be deep, wide and very rugged.

Template

To get the curved shape of the desktop, I needed to build a full-size template. Working with sheets of plywood positioned carefully on the floor, I made a 10ft 'trammel', a kind of giant compass, from a softwood beam to draw the complex curves accurately. A complete plywood desktop was then tested for size, shape and comfort.

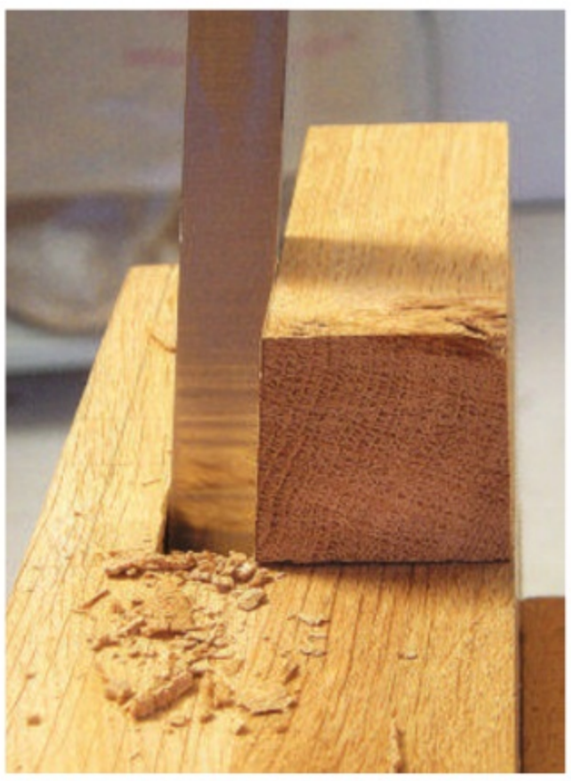
Using an artist's display material called foamboard, I then cut precise individual templates for each of the eight segments that would go to make up the fan-shaped top. The geometry of every segment is quite different from its neighbour.

Dealing with end-grain

The curved edges are end-grain and hard to work. The only hand tools that will remove a lot of material are spokeshaves or rasps. My left-handed cabinetmakers' rasps are by Michel Auriou. To finish the edges with a perfect curve needs a really sharp, old-fashioned compass plane. You can adjust the sole to run concave or convex to the radius you choose.

Mortises for loose tenons

The desktop segments were all hand-planed along their edges, with a slight hollow lengthways and widthways to give a tighter fit when they're eventually glued up. These were jointed together with loose tenons – little tiles of oak glued in between each segment. This is a traditional method designed to give the completed desktop extra strength and stability across its length and to stop it flexing. A modern



▲ Pic.9 **This mortise had to be cut at a precise angle using a guide block**



▲ Pic.10 **The double tenon on the rear rail slides after fine-tuning**



▲ Pic.11 **At the front of the desk is this particularly challenging joint**



▲ Pic.12 **Another complex joint connected the bearer rail to the legs**

cabinetmaker might instead use an electric biscuit jointer to cut elliptical slots and insert manufactured biscuits in place of the loose tenons. But this wouldn't give the same strength.

Underframe

The underframe was in many ways much more complicated than the top. Making the curved rails at the front and back of the desk needed two different formers. Mine were made from plywood and I used them to laminate thin veneers of solid wood into the required profile.

The oak veneers were made from quarter-sawn board, which gave the characteristic silver ray effect to contrast with the pips. They were produced on a bandsaw. They're known as veneers, but of course they're much thicker than the 0.5mm commercial veneers used to face MDF in conventional veneered work; having been planed and thicknessed they came down to 3.6mm thick – about the maximum you can use for laminating. It's tricky: the very character of the oak means there are vulnerable points that can easily shatter in the machine. [See *GW*225:52 for more info' on sawcut veneering – DL]



▲ Pic.13 **This joint ensures a seamless arc across the desk front**

Jointing

The joints to pull all of this geometry together were pretty complex. Tying the big curved, laminated rail at the back into the two rear legs needed deep, accurate mortises cut at precise angles. I used a block of oak secured to the leg to guide the chisel in at the right pitch.

In **Pic.10** you can see the double tenon on the rear rail sliding into the matching mortise in the leg – after a bit of fine-tuning. At the front of the desk there's another equally challenging joint. The lower of the two arched rails — known as the drawer rail – had to be tenoned into the leg and into the recessed side rail behind it. That would keep it horizontal, stop it twisting and pull the front legs in tight.

Pic.11 shows the twin tenon fitting into leg, which is how the two parts of the joint slot together. Measuring, marking up, making and testing these kinds of joints is complicated. Without the benefit of computer-aided design, getting the angles right depends largely on tracing them from a full-scale drawing.

Another complex joint (**Pic.12**) was needed to connect the bearer rail to the legs – a double lap dovetail, designed so the whole piece could be dropped on to the legs and the ribs from above. It's hard to measure and mark up these joints where a curved component meets a straight one

Fingerhold in drawer

The final detail on the drawers is a fingerhold carved into the underside of the desk, just big enough for a fingertip or two to pull the drawer out gently. That means I can dispense with knobs or handles, which would have interrupted the flow of the front rail.



▲ Pic.14 **The lap dovetails of the drawer provide beauty and strength**



▲ Pic.15 **The drawers, which are hidden in the desk's front, are opened with these fingerholds**



▲ Pic.16 **Before the top was fixed, the fit of the drawers needed checking**

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Les Thorne
www.noturningback.co.uk



Les takes great care to ensure that the backs of his bowls look as good as the fronts



Turn the page for a profile of *GW*'s resident woodturner





Les assesses the suitability of this piece of burr; he does most of his own work on his Oneway 2436 giant lathe Photographs by Richard Walsh

Turning a profit

Like most professional woodworkers, turner Les Thorne has to juggle several balls – he makes some in this issue – in order to make a living. He talks to **Andrea Hargreaves**



Les and his lathe make short work of this wet blank

My meeting with Les Thorne, with whose work you will be familiar over many issues of *GW*, reminds me of turning a piece of wood from blank to finished item. The start is rough, literally, as he calls 'Give it a shove' from the office where he is on the phone, grinning the Cheshire Cat smile that is familiar to those who flock to his demonstrations as the door gives and I fall up the step.

Any dignity I might once have had in tatters, I go in for the kill: why does he do it? For the money of course, he replies, and for the next hour or so tries very hard to give the impression that he cares only for the technique of turning, not for its aesthetics. A couple of coffees later, however, and he begins revealing another side to his character... passion.

A keen golfer and angler he is soon swapping handicaps with photographer Richard Walsh, then the phone rings and he is heard animatedly chatting... about golf. It turns out that the call is from the lady's captain of his golf club...

Now can we talk about turning? No, Les and Richard are chatting earnestly about the importance of hand/eye coordination when hitting a small white ball with a long stick and having a discussion about intuition v study of technique. I seize my moment: is that relevant to turning too? I ask. Bingo! I'm in.

"I couldn't draw a straight line or a circle when I started," says Les. "Now I can. I learnt hand/eye coordination. Woodturning is something you learn by doing it. Some do it parrot fashion like me and others just do it. Some are naturally better at it. I was a reasonable sportsman. That helps."

Turning lessons

Les gives one-to-one and small group lessons in his farm workshop in Old Alresford, Hampshire, near where he has lived man and boy. He is also a production turner and goes out and about giving demonstrations.

"I've had men and women who have been shaking with nerves out of their comfort zone,"



As a production turner Les has made a huge quantity of staircase spindles in his time



This array of chisels may look impressive but Les says he only uses about six of them

he recalls. "Some students want to know how and why. The whys will be better because generally they'll analyse things and understand how they work. The difference between [other forms of] woodwork and turning is that the tool must be rested in the right place on moving wood. The school of hard knocks is the other way of learning. That's probably how I learnt."

Les comes from a family of woodworkers. Three of his four brothers are woodworkers and one, Stephen, works next door as a cabinetmaker. Les and a brother used to own a sawmill and he trained as a saw doctor, then he drifted into woodturning and was a stay-at-home dad while he learnt the skills. "My dad owned a woodturning supply shop. I had a brilliant father. He had a thousand customers who all gave me advice. It was something I could do with kids. I taught at Dad's shop for a while, then at night school with 11 lathes."

At this point he realised he would prefer to teach smaller groups on five lathes. "I teach small groups who know each other. I prefer one-to-one. I want perfect students because they make my life easier. I want them to enjoy it. Nine out of ten don't continue. They like buying the equipment and will spend £3,000 or £4,000 kitting out their workshop, then not use it." He, however, was lucky enough to be largely kitted out by Brimarc. "I teach nearly every aspect of turning, though not thread chasing because there's no call for it anymore."

I look at the huge number of tools hanging up and ask him how many he uses. "Everybody has a hundred tools and only uses six of them. I'm a woodturning prostitute. I turn for money, workwise 60% production, 30% teaching and 10% demonstrating. I'm an applicator of colour and texture, not an artist," he says, citing the work of Nick Agar: "He's the best art turner. Creation is the thing for him, he makes something then he moves on. If I made something like that I would make 100 of them."

His favourite wood is burr oak because it is "proper English wood." It is, he says, the most saleable timber apart from spalted beech. "I'm not a tree hugger. I like nice bits of wood."

Production work

His work is well-known and he reckons to get most of the production work locally, anything from cribbage pegs in alternative ivory to huge pillars and metre-diameter mirror frames. He works to a minimum price of £30 for a one-off piece and would charge probably £40 for a newel post and between £7 and £20 for a stair spindle. He works on a gigantic Oneway 2436 which can turn 9ft between centres and 4ft diameter, and uses a Oneway 2416 with vacuum chuck for teaching.

He does 40 demos or so a year and while he will travel abroad prefers to stay at home. "I'm a homeboy. Why go abroad when I can teach here? I'm going to be here in five years' time, doing exactly the same. I'm not going to get bigger. I'm not money orientated. I don't want a flash car or to die as a millionaire, but I do see the point of having time off now. I get a buzz out of production work and I love bundling up stair spindles. But I'd never do woodturning as a hobby." Why not? I ask. "I'm deeply passionate about woodturning but I don't want to be seen as an anorak," he says. "I love people who are passionate. That's all I ever ask of anybody." Ah, I say, what if you were a professional golfer? He breaks into a grin: "Then I might be a woodturner!"

Signature gouge

Followers of Les Thorne will often see his own Signature gouge featured. "It came about from the need for an existing tool to be made stronger and is a combination of traditional spindle gouge and continental spindle gouge. Ashley Iles makes it for me."



Biggest influences

Les names three turners who have particularly influenced him:

Nick Agar *"because he is the best woodturning artist I have ever met, an innovator"*

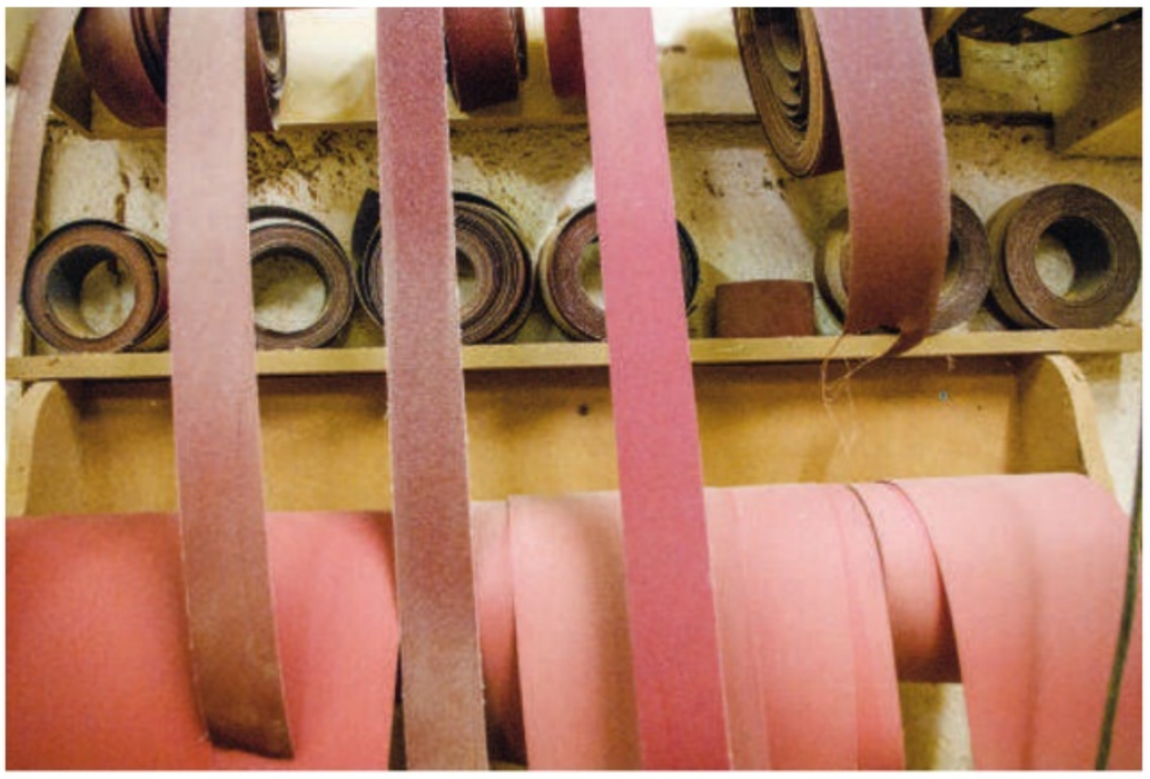
Gary Rance "because he knows how to make money from being fast and accurate; he's the best there is teaching wise"

Stuart Mortimer *"because of what he does for juniors; he's a compulsive woodturner who still inspires me"*

Turn to page 80 to see how Les turns and embellishes a couple of balls



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Mini series PART 1

Craft fair rookie

Michael Forster passes on what he has learned during a year on the craft fair circuit

Saturday morning and can't get through the hall for boxes – must be another craft fair...

...but over the year Michael wised up – his wheeled holiday luggage is much more convenient as well as gentler on his back





It's now a year since, as a fresh-faced rookie, I ventured onto the local craft fair circuit. I found that there's a bit more to it than just making a few things, stacking them on a table and waiting for the punters to pay up. I'll tell you more about the fairs themselves next month, but it's probably helpful to start at the beginning, with some of the stuff – there'll be more next month – that I had to think about in advance, from finding where the fairs were and dealing with the organisers, to making sure I was ready for that heady moment when I made my first sale – not to mention the little detail of how I'd get my assorted goodies and all the display paraphernalia to the venue.

The first question, though, before all of that – and it's a very important one as it will determine whether you get past these first paragraphs or not – is "Why?" Why would anyone want to be a craft fair exhibitor?

The answer might seem obvious – to make some money from a craft. As so often, though, it's not that simple. Most of the other exhibitors I talk to seem to be doing it for a range of other reasons. It's a chance to spend a day interacting with the public and other crafters, perhaps get some nice, warming, positive feedback on skills and form the occasional friendship. It might also be an opportunity to promote a business, do a bit of networking and maybe – if Lady Luck got out the right side of her bed – take a commission or two. After all, when better to commission a piece of bespoke work from a craftsperson than when you've actually seen and handled their work up close?

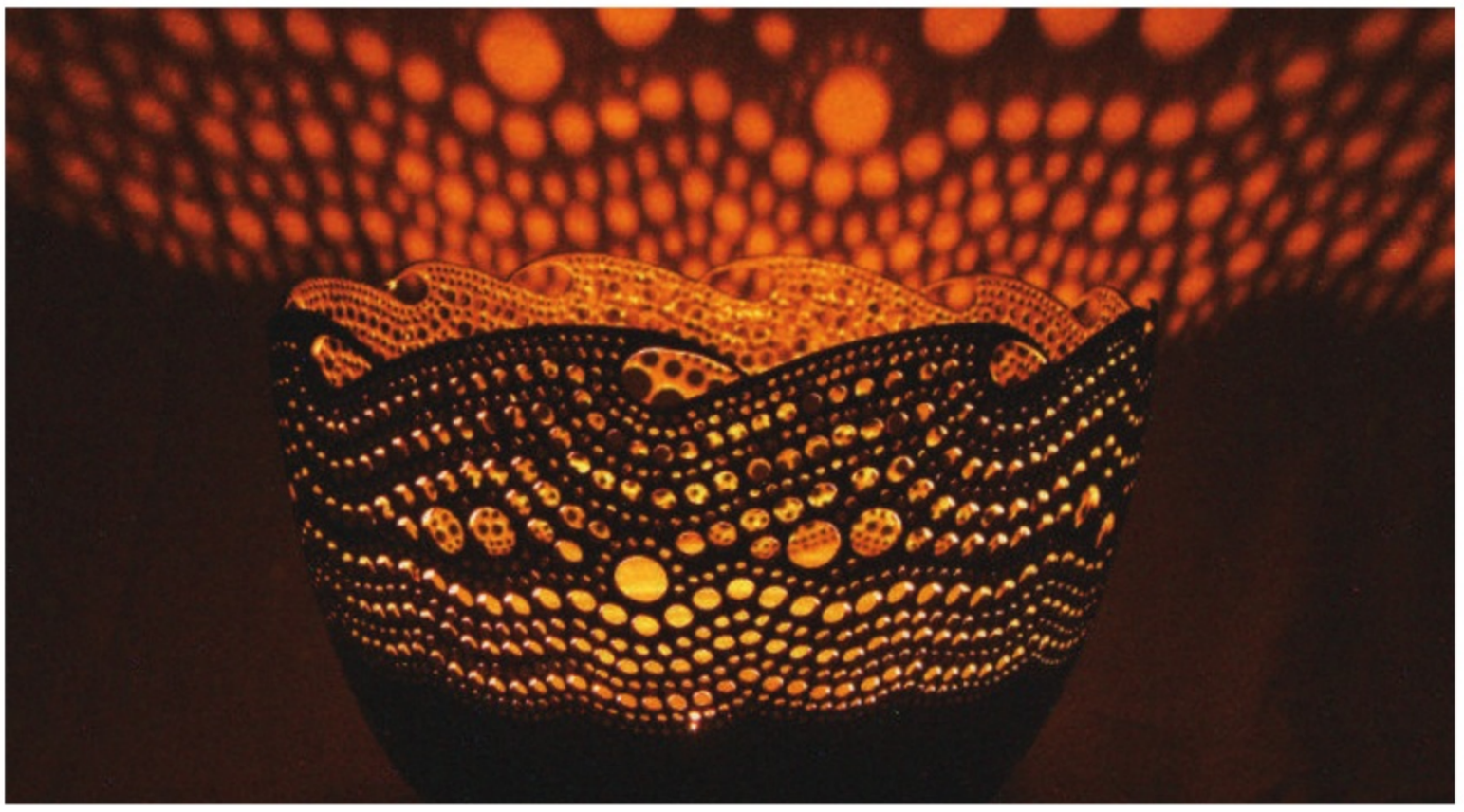
Time-consuming joint-cutting makes Michael's products expensive for craft fairs – especially when competing against cheap imports

No quick profit

What it is least likely to be, in my experience – certainly for a cabinetmaker or similar – is a way of turning a quick profit. Turners, from what I gather, generally fare better because they don't have to cut time-consuming joints and can produce small but desirable items relatively quickly. Start cutting joints, though, and it gets terribly labour-intensive – and therefore expensive – and that reflects in sales. Being retired and therefore not dependent on this for a living, I can keep my prices down to a



Many people go to craft fairs more to look than to buy, so don't rely on fast sales but enjoy the social contact



reasonable level, but even then the items hardly fly off the stall. There's usually a lot of interest, though, and I always have on display some examples of my bespoke boxes along with free leaflets and cards that visitors are encouraged to take away. One good commission could make a sales-barren fair well worthwhile, but that won't happen too often.

Other, more experienced, stallholders related very similar experiences: as in the rest of the economy, things are very quiet just now on the craft fair front. Even in good times many people – including me, I readily confess – attend fairs more to look than to buy. A common theme I hear from organisers and fellow exhibitors – and now realise from my own experience – is the sheer unpredictability of it all; the same display, with the same products and prices, at the same venue can be a huge success one weekend and a total flop on another.

So what this amounts to is that – at least on the local level that I've experienced so far – it's definitely not something to consider as an alternative to the day job, but it may offer a great many other, less tangible, benefits. Now, let's look at some of the practicalities.

Finding the right fairs

It's worth giving some thought and time to finding the right fairs if you want to have the best chance of selling. Craft fairs vary enormously, from a £10 pitch at a market run at a local pub to 3-figure fees for a stall at a high-profile national event. I haven't done the latter yet so I only know them either as a visitor or from perusing their websites. In between those two extremes there are some very high-quality local events where a stall might cost perhaps £25-£50 per day, with the organisers spending time and money promoting their fair to a discerning sector of the market. These are good places for a rookie exhibitor to learn the ropes.

In deciding where to exhibit your fine work, there are some things to look out for.

Does the organiser have any terms and conditions? Do they want to see your work

Some organisers will only accept high-quality genuine craft work; this stunning example is from Lincolnshire potters Snail Pottery
Photo courtesy of Snail Pottery



Craft fair visitors love to see something a little unusual such as this paper-crafter's use of newsprint as a background...

...or Michael's little band-sawn boxes that they can't resist stroking!



Learning curve



Michael's trifold leaflets promote the bespoke side of his work



A supply of business cards is vital if you're hoping to get some follow-up commissions


Ask whether power is available. Lighting can really set off a stall

before accepting your booking? If the answer to both those is "No," then you'll probably be able to get a pitch for a tenner – but you could be in competition with a lot of very cheap, bought-in and possibly imported stuff. The best advice is simply to talk to the organiser and get a sense of their approach.

The best organisers will require that all items are hand-made by the person behind the stall, specifically excluding imports and items assembled from kits, such as die-cut greetings cards. That's a good sign. Not only will the competition be fairer but it'll be a much more interesting day as you will meet other fine craft-workers, make friends and get inspired.

The organisers will probably make a real effort to create a sense of occasion at their fairs, and will ask stallholders' cooperation in this. One that I use, for example, always holds indoor events with power supplies available and asks vendors to bring lighting for their stall – with on-site PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) available for a small charge. This is useful as getting it done there covers us for any other fairs we attend. Ask what is provided. Many organisers will provide a table and a couple of chairs but some, especially the cheaper ones, may expect you to bring your own.

A good one will promote the event well, from newspaper adverts to flyers in local cafés and coffee shops, but a bit of help from stallholders also goes a long way, so tell your Facebook friends! Thirty stallholders between them can easily generate a footfall of 100 or so to add to whatever the organisers attract.

One way to find organisers is to register on Stallfinder.com – a useful website where organisers search for exhibitors and vice versa. Search by locality and event type to find what's on near you and gauge the serious organisers.

Anxiety management

This is going to sound like a load of red tape, but please bear with me. There's not too much of it, and the few minutes it takes to tie it up will repay itself with incalculable interest in peace of mind.



You should get lights and extensions PAT tested; Michael pays £2 per year for each item

At the kind of events I attend, and in the nature of my stall, the risks are minimal, but some degree of insurance cover is still necessary – at the least, Public Liability Cover, and I also have Product Liability in case anyone might claim to have been harmed by my products. I don't think that's at all likely, but these days that doesn't mean someone won't make a frivolous claim and fighting it could be a nightmare without insurance. There are companies specialising in insurance for crafters



Even battery-powered LED fairy lights can make a big difference

How to do fairs



Insurance is advisable to say the least and some organisers want to see evidence of it



Good organisers invest in publicity, including posters, newspaper adverts and flyers like this



Some traders have special cash boxes but Michael likes this simple bag which can be carried around when away from the stall

and their rates offer cheap peace of mind. Check the terms and conditions, especially the territorial aspect: will your products still be insured if bought as gifts for customers' friends overseas?

Will the product liability cover extend to website sales or only to craft fairs? Officially, my insurers set limits but have proved very flexible in practice as long as I keep them informed.

Insurers will also offer optional cover against the loss of stock, whether in storage or thefts from the stall itself. In my experience, shoplifting is not prevalent at craft fairs but it has happened and it's worth being alert, especially if your display involves the use of expensive digital devices.

For a simple stall selling small craft items, very basic insurance cover is likely to be more than adequate. If of course you are demonstrating your craft and have tools and machinery around then that is a whole different ballgame. Then, the fair organisers and your insurers need to be informed in advance as well, and they or the show organisers might require a simple risk assessment.

I did a farm and country show with heavy agricultural machinery being demonstrated, and their risk assessment form seemed completely over the top for my little stall but I could see why they needed it. However, I took the opportunity of using it as a model to produce my own – much simpler and more appropriate – which I now keep on file, review occasionally, and could if need be produce as evidence of good practice should an insurance claim arise.

The paper trail

In the nature of craft fairs, you naturally want to keep things simple and minimise paperwork – apart from anything else you don't have a lot of space behind the stall. But it is helpful to have a note of what sells, not only for accounting – and the dreaded income tax self-assessment – but in order to know where to concentrate in the future. I take to every fair a simple list of the different products I have, and tick them off as they sell. The more ticks a particular item accumulates the more likely that I'll make more for next time. It also means that with a quick bit of mental arithmetic I can tot up how the day's going.

Most customers don't expect receipts for cash payments, simply paying and moving on – but I always go prepared with some simple paper receipts just in case. For card payments, my card reader – more on which next month – will send a receipt if I enter the customer's email address, and again I have a few simple prepared forms on which I can scribble the essential information for any who prefer a receipt in their hand. My experience is that there's a lot of trust and goodwill around at these fairs – but these kinds of provision are good to have there just in case.



Michael finds it simplifies paperwork to track sales as he makes them

What I've tried to do this month is get some of the 'heavier' stuff out of the way so that next month we can look at the actual fair itself and at ways of making that as enjoyable – hopefully profitable, but at least let's enjoy it – as it can be.



When he thought he'd covered all the angles, he did a trial set-up at home – and found he hadn't

Additional online info

www.stallfinder.com
Search here for local fairs and organisers, and register with them for a small fee if you want the organisers to be able to find you

www.craftinsurance.co.uk
Ian W Wallace are my own insurers whose terms and business approach I've found excellent thus far. There are others of course, but this is where I finished my search

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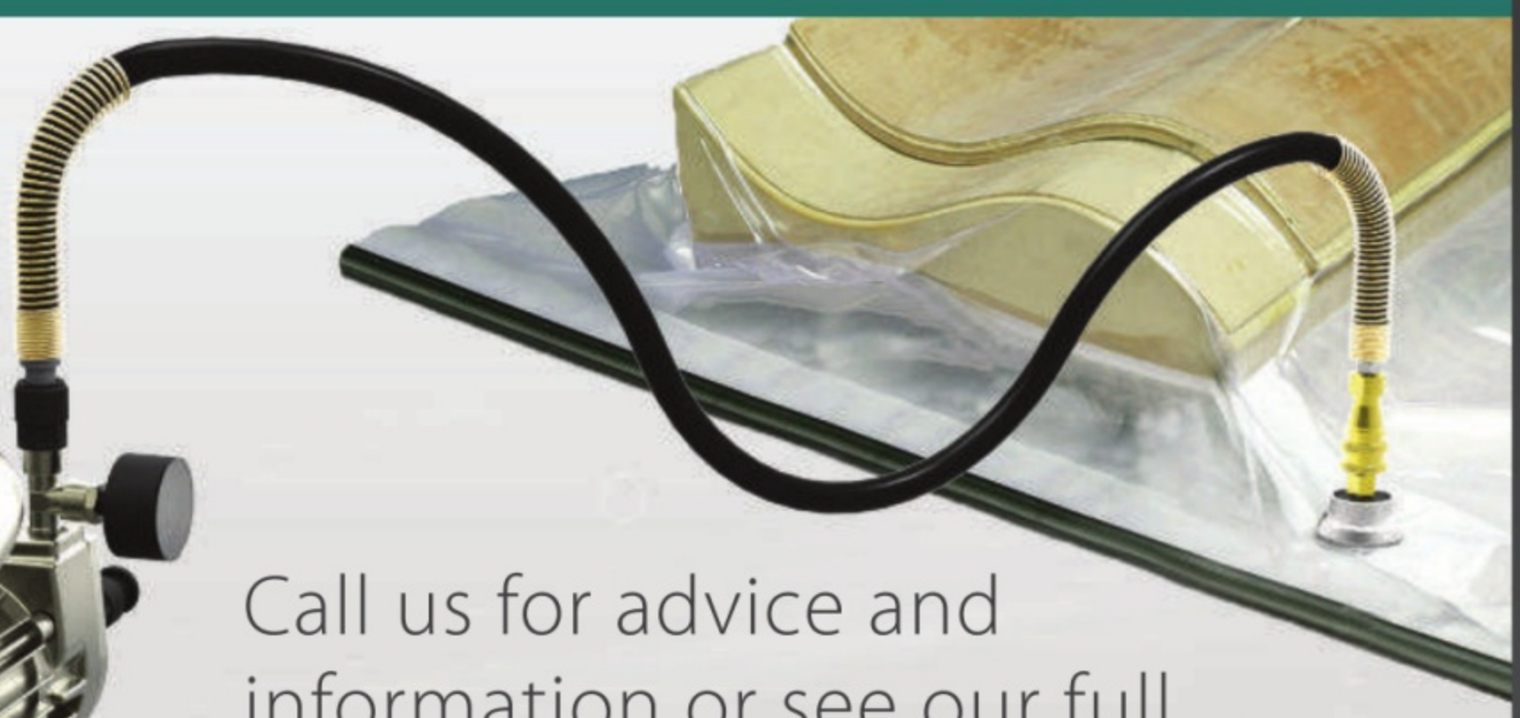
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DeWalt on track

Andy King hitches a ride in a Ferrari and goes under the bonnet to look at brushless motors

Three speeds, brushless, and heavy-duty build: what's not to like about the new combi!

DeWalt certainly doesn't scrimp when trying to impress its dealers with new products and I was in the enviable position of being invited along to Silverstone once again to see the products due for launch over the coming months, with some very interesting ones pencilled in for spring.

This time around there were no motorbikes or Bradley Smith to entertain us; we had to make do with a bloke called Ben Collins from round my neck of the woods.

Who? You may well ask... but fans of *Top Gear* know him better as The Stig and he was on hand to break up a day of looking at new product to give some of the lucky dealers a spin around the circuit with him at the wheel.

I didn't get that chance sadly, I had to make do with piloting an Aston Martin as well as being driven by an instructor in a Ferrari and then later on at terrifyingly breakneck speed in a Nissan GTR, hitting more than 160mph on a short straight.

Mind you, I did hear later on that The Stig had melted the gearbox in a GTR so who knows what speeds he was hitting!

Battery tools

After all that excitement I guess I'd best report on the real reason I was there. As with other manufacturers, now that lithium Ion is firmly established, there's an occasional upgrade to a higher amphour rating although DeWalt has stuck with its 4Ah 18V system, but there will be an upgrade to the 10.8V range to 2.0Ah batteries, due around April.

However, it's brushless motors where the manufacturers' battle is now raging and DeWalt is looking along these lines in the next months with a new 18V 3-speed combi drill as well as a hugely powerful impact wrench.

Also on the way are a couple of other new battery products including a further first-fix nailgun that has a 2-speed function for increased productivity.

The Multitool market is an expanding area and DeWalt has already entered the arena with a mains model, but once again it's the battery version that really impresses. This was on display



Although the new saw is shown folded with the fence, riving knife and mitre fence in place...

against the rival battery machines and the speed and ease with which any tool can be swapped in and out as well as innovative dust control for sanding makes this one very high on my list of review products once it becomes available.

This is a brushless motor model, which gives a dual benefit of increased runtime as well as the slimmest grip on a multi-tool in the market; it really is a very ergonomic tool.

But if like me you like quirky things, the clever little 2-port USB charger will take any of the DeWalt slide-on Li-Ion packs to charge any device; no more flat batteries on the old mobile now!

There's also a compact DAB radio in the pipeline with even better DAB signal reception, again a release for some time later this year.

Mains machines

Moving along to the mains machines, a nifty little laminate trimmer joins the range of routers and while it is designed for laminate work, it is also a cracking little palm router in its own right and there will be a selection of accessories such as guide bushes available once the product hits the shelves.

Of course, I always keep the best until last, and in the portable tablesaw market DeWalt has kept the same rack-and-pinion fence that has a proven track record but introduced a saw that is so user friendly it should take the market by storm when it is released next year.

It's built for transportation with every part such as fence, riving knife and mitre fence all having their own storage onboard to keep them safe, but it's the unique way in which you get going in seconds from storage to working that will make it a winner.

Coupled with an increase in cutting capacity while retaining a small footprint as well as a built-in wheel base, it looks to be well worth the wait for production models to become available, although that isn't going to be until well into the year.

Useful innovations

It certainly looks like DeWalt is kicking on with not only plenty of new products, but packing in innovation that is truly useful, not just a gimmick or two to try and suck you in, so it looks like this year will be a great one for new product reviews.

So at the end of what was a pretty long day, it was back in the van for the journey home, although travelling at a sedate 70mph seemed like a snail's pace compared to the thrills I had experienced earlier in the day.



This little laminate trimmer is also a cracking little router in its own right...



...making it ideal for work such as hinge jigs fitted on the door lining



The new DAB radio is more compact and takes all current slide-on battery packs



A nifty little USB charger will keep your phone fully charged throughout the day



This is likely to be the multitool that the rivals will be fighting hard against; it has some brilliant features

...the storage of all the accessories is brilliant, taking seconds to remove and re-fit



MYTHICAL BEAST

This month **Peter Berry** goes into high relief with this more complex carving of a gryphon



The mixture of mythology and wood has a very long history. So for this month's relief-carving project I will show you how to carve my version of the gryphon. This creature is a dynamic mix of lion and eagle.

In my last two projects most of the cutting of the lines was done with a V tool. This tool is appropriate for long sweeping cuts, such as around the leaf or body of the dolphin in previous projects.

Sharper more accurate and consistent lines can be achieved by incised cutting with a suitable-size gouge. I will use a combination of the two techniques in this project.

Incised cutting can be a little tricky so I would advise that you try some practice cuts on a spare piece of timber before you attempt the project. Put simply, the technique is to stab down on the line vertically, then use the same chisel at a low angle to cut up to the line.

Incising can require a few more chisels to enable you to follow different line shapes, so my chisel range reflects this.

The gryphon will be completed in slightly higher relief than before. High relief creates a deeper background resulting in a more dynamic carving, which particularly suits the subject.

Take your time with this work as the detail needs to be clean and sharp.

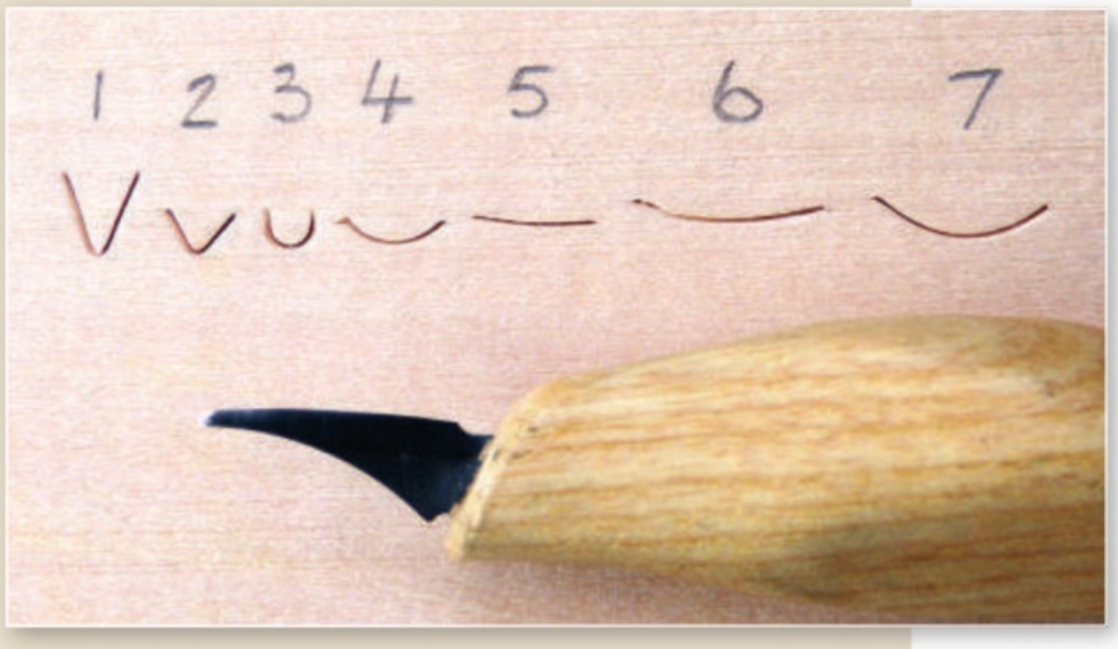


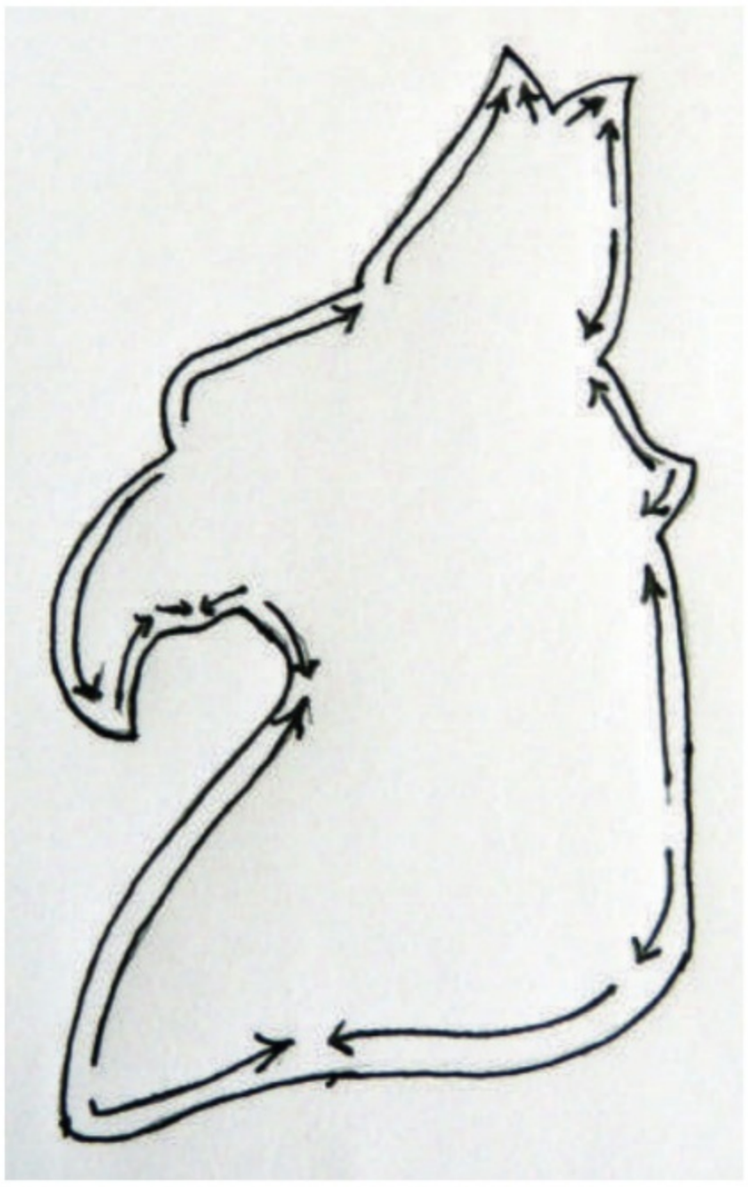
Plan

The plan is cut out and used as a template to draw the outline on to the wood. I ignore the detail at this stage. The project block is 150mm high by 95mm wide by 15mm deep. From blade tip to tip the length of the picture is 80mm.

These are the tools

I use the tools shown. For your guidance their numbers are repeated in brackets in the step-by-step photo sequence instructions.





▲ Pic.1 To avoid cutting into the grain Peter follows the arrows when outlining with a V tool (2)



▲ Pic.2 Note the two-handed grip of the chisel which is both safe and controlled



▲ Pic.3 Peter incise-cuts the short tight lines, and since he is stabbing down he can to some extent ignore the direction line



▲ Pic.4 See how the shape of the blades' cutting edge has been used to stab in the short lengths (4 & 5)



▲ Pic.5 The outline of the gryphon is fully cut out



▲ Pic.6 Peter now carves the background across the grain to 'raise' the subject; he is also looking to create a pleasing texture (4).



▲ Pic.7 **He rounds off the edges noting the direction of cut carefully, see Pic.1, and lightly skims the surface following the grain (5)**



▲ Pic.8 **He now draws in the detail of the face**



▲ Pic.9 **Note the chisels he has used to cut in the detail, clockwise (5), (7) & (6)**



▲ Pic.10 **He incises the shape of the eye and the wrinkles with the bottom chisel (4) and rounds the eyeball with the corner of the top chisel (5)**



▲ Pic.11 **The result is some nice clean shapes. Practice and more practice is the key**



▲ Pic.12 **Now Peter adds and cuts additional lines on the neck with the V tool (2) and uses the incise technique on the cheek (4)**



▲ Pic.13 **Lastly come 'feathers' stabbed in with a V tool (2). He has also cut the outline a little lower with a V tool (1), and added finer texturing around the outline with a gouge (3)**

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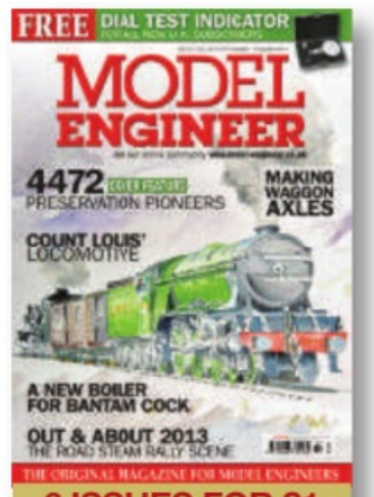
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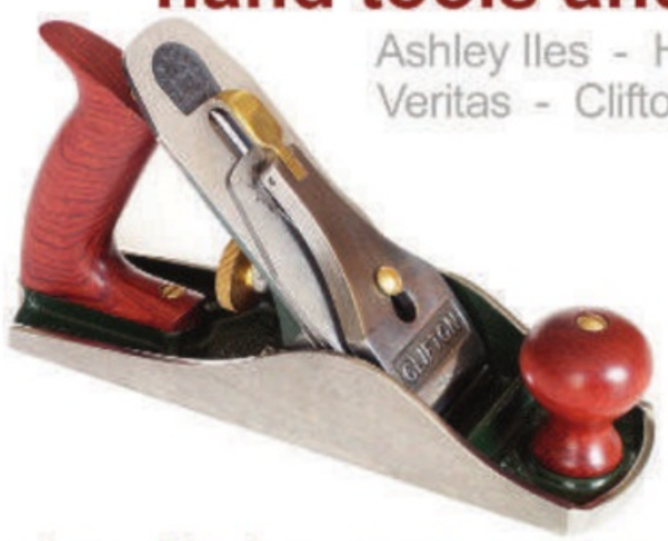
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Woods for food

I have a large amount of teak, iroko and beech and want to cut them up to make chopping boards. Do you know if these woods are 'food safe' and won't taint or poison the food?
Kevin Nairn, by email

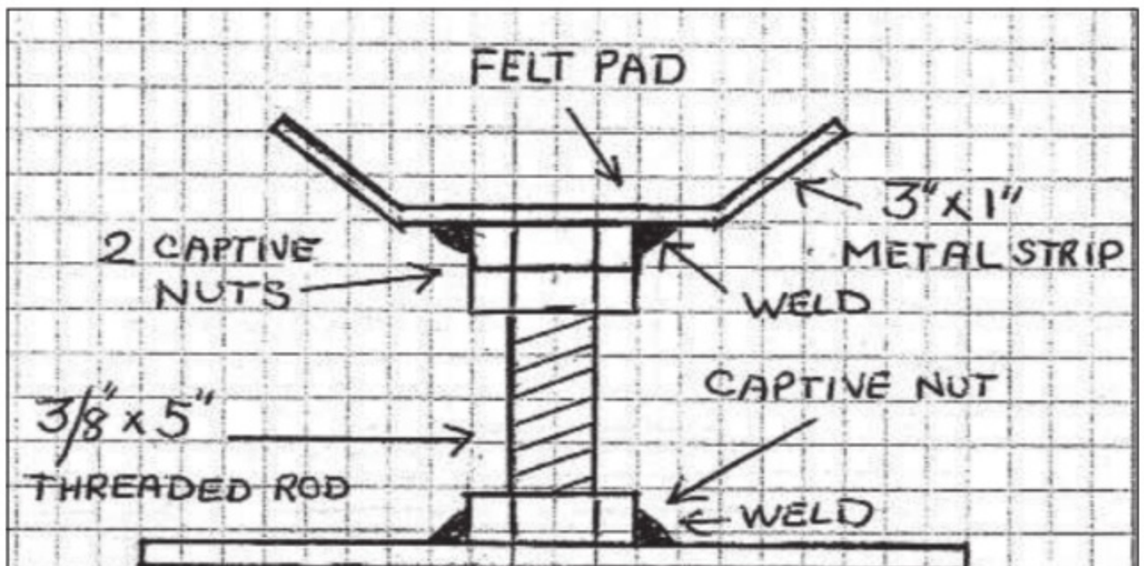
According to my wood species bible, Wood Identification and Use, by Terry Porter, Tectona grandis, or Burma teak, can cause dermatitis, conjunctivitis, irritation to the nose and throat, swelling of the scrotum, nausea and oversensitivity to the light, while Rhodesian teak (Baikiaea plurijuga) could cause only respiratory irritation. Iroko's list of possible health risks comprises dermatitis, furunculosis, asthma, nettle rash, oedema of the eyelids, respiratory problems, sneezing and giddiness. Beech, which is commonly used for chopping boards, still could give dermatitis, eye irritation, decrease in lung function, or, rarely, nasal cancer.



But before you think no timber is safe for chopping boards, remember that It is of course the dust from working these timbers that can cause the harm rather than the made object so providing you mask up and have good workshop extraction you should be OK. In any case any culinary utensil should be finished with a food-safe product such as those from Chestnut.

A quick Google showed me boards on sale in teak and beech (John Lewis) and iroko (several other sources).

Good luck with the boards and let me have a photo when they are made. The picture above is from a board project in the next issue of GW.
Andrea Hargreaves



Bottle jack solution

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I am now in my 80s and have very stiff fingers, giving me problems with adjusting the height of my router in the table, which is fixed to a ½in MDF base, which sits on my Workmate in use.
I designed this device (based on a car bottle jack) and made it from bits in my scrap box. It has been in use for nearly two years and I am now able to make accurate adjustments using just a finger and thumb. It is freestanding and fits between the router and the MDF base. The dimensions are very flexible – those given suit my router table. I welded the fixed parts, but a good epoxy would do.
Bernard A Neale, Manchester
PS I am still using a Hobbies treadle fret machine bought for me in 1940, and my Myford screw-cutting metal lathe – made in 1939 – is in regular use.

Here at GW Towers we always applaud ingenuity and I think many readers will see the benefits of this device. Thank you for sharing it, Bernard.
Andrea Hargreaves





WRITE & WIN!

We always love hearing about your projects, ideas, hints and tips, and/or to receive feedback about *GW*'s features, so do drop us a line. You never know, you might win our great Letter of the Month prize, currently two 36in Trend Varijig Clamps. Write to the address on the left for a chance to enhance your clamping capability with these versatile workshop aids.



Royal tray puzzle

What a coup for Katie Walker winning the design commission for the new Royal high chair (*GW*274). But I am puzzled. One assumes Prince George will use the chair for some of his meals; but where would his food actually be placed? Unless the food tray is an optional extra and not an integral part of the design.
David Askham, by email

I thought the same David, until I visited my year-old granddaughter and saw that her non-bespoke wooden chair pulls right up to the table, allowing a tray with plastic suckers that stick to the dining table to be placed in front of her and removed for cleaning down. Neat eh!
Andrea Hargreaves

Contains adult content

I usually buy my copy of *GW* at WH Smiths. When I try to put it through the quick checkout it always stops and requires staff confirmation that I'm over 18. When I asked the manager why this is, she said it's the publisher who decides. I eagerly search every month looking for pornographic fretwork but am always disappointed. I wonder if you can tell me why you think that it is unsuitable for children.
Norman Billingham, by email

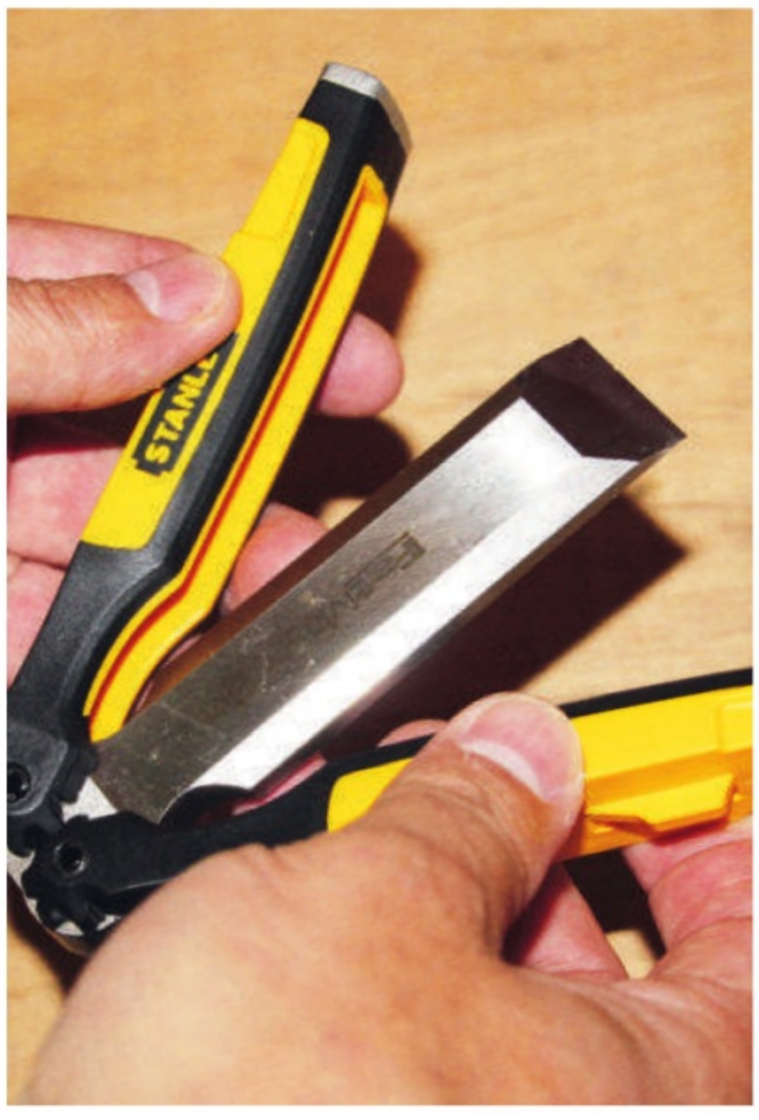
it is of course down to caution on our parts, woodworking being potentially dangerous in the wrong, unskilled hands. It certainly can't be any of our covers, though some in the office have been heard to mutter "more;s the pity". I suggest you buy a subscription, so avoiding a wait. **Andrea Hargreaves**

Knife concern

I read with interest the article concerning the Stanley folding chisel on page 15 of your issue GW274. Yes, OK, it's clever and could well be a handy tool, but I would never keep one in my pocket just in case I forgot it was there and carted it home on the bus. Imagine what would be the outcome if, for any reason, you were stopped by the police!

I would not be tempted to strike one with a hammer because of the 'rollpin construction' and would certainly not, because of the metal caps, strike one with one of my precious beech mallets.
Mick Bradley (one-time carpenter at Bressingham Steam Museum), Diss, Norfolk

Phil Davy was intrigued by this tool too and tested it in GW275. Like you he had concerns about the roll-pin construction's longevity, but would be happy to use a hammer on the metal caps. He concluded that it was a clever tool for the minimalist tool box – not pocket – where space is limited.
Andrea Hargreaves





Dowelmax... Simply the best

"Highly recommended" ***Without sounding like a kid on Christmas morning, the Dowelmax is perhaps one of the best jigs I have ever used, for any task.***

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I can certainly recommend this system with my highest praise. It is solid, it has proven to do what it says it will do, and it is great fun to use. **Dean Bielanowski,** *OnlineToolReviews*



Based in Holywell, North Wales, Dowelmax UK now carries stocks of the product and a full range of accessories and customers can see the Dowelmax in action in the work-shop and try it out for themselves.

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On all courses there will only be a maximum of 4 at a time, this will mean that I will be available when you need help and advice.

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This is a continuation of course 1 (tools and things) with the emphases on timber, what are acceptable defects in timber and what isn't, how do you write out a cutting list that means something to your supplier, what to look for when buying wood and what to avoid.

You will ideally have done course 1 (tools and things) or have a good working knowledge of how to use hand tools and have used hand held power tools.

The projects for you to pick from will be more complicated and will involve the use of the more sophisticated hand tools and hand held power tools and will include using some of the static power tools in the workshop. We will also be looking at buying timber, making cutting lists and drawing plans.

Woodwork Course 3
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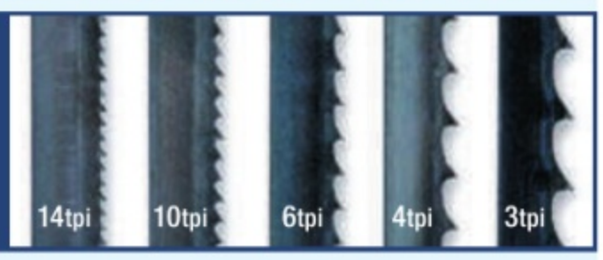
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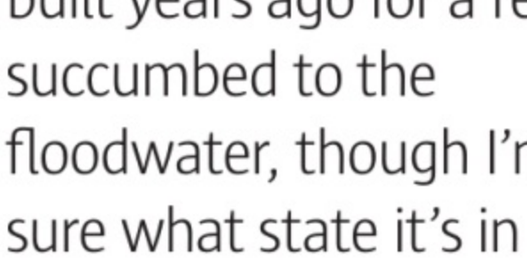
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Around the House with Phil Davy

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With so much flooding over the Christmas period, some of us may have had to rescue items from vulnerable workshops or garages. With typically small, cramped workspaces it's virtually impossible to get everything safely above floor level, with machinery an obvious target. A teak-veneered bookshelf unit I built years ago for a relative succumbed to the floodwater, though I'm not sure what state it's in now. There's a lot to be said for using solid timber sometimes! If you were a victim of the weather, let's hope you're back at the bench soon. Above all, don't let it get you down!

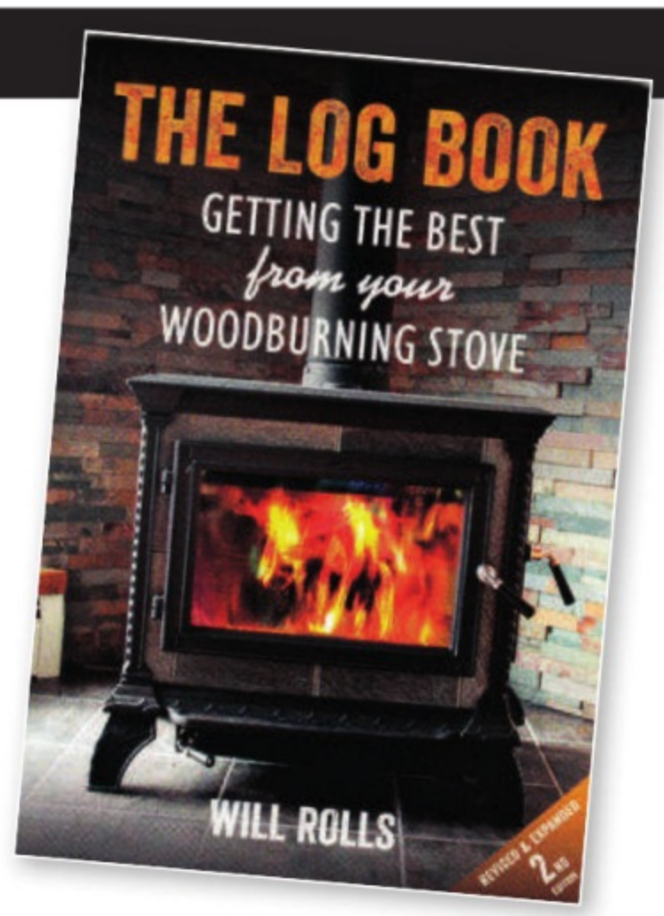


Phil Davy, Consultant Editor

Book review

The Log Book

By Will Rolls



With energy prices rising and winter power cuts common in remoter areas, an increasing number of people are installing woodburning stoves to supplement their heating systems. As woodworkers, many of us will have a steady supply of offcuts anyway, so using wood for fuel is almost second nature. If you already burn logs, though, a book on how to use them may seem rather pointless. But taking a closer look at the process may help you to understand some of the science involved to get the most from your fuel.

Rolls deals specifically with fuel for woodburners, so if you're contemplating entering this cosy world it's worth a read. There's advice on choosing a stove, including flue and chimney considerations, Building Regs and so on, although the author stresses that installation is best left to a pro. A comprehensive section (Combustion and Science of Burning) deals with timber moisture content, its calorific value and density, hardwoods versus softwoods, log size, plus optimum heat and air requirements. Perhaps more importantly, how safe is it to burn contaminated material such as driftwood, or timber treated with paint or preservatives? You'll find the answers here, without the text becoming too in-depth or tedious. Chapters on stove operation, maintenance, fuel management, buying logs – as well as producing your own – add up to what is a handy little guide for both seasoned firewood foragers or for those about to take the plunge.

★★★★☆

Published by Permanent Publications
Price: £7.95
Web: www.thegmcgroup.com

Useful product

Briwax spray



Ask most woodworkers to name a wax polish and Briwax is likely to be the first brand that springs to mind. The manufacturer may be regarded as a producer of traditional finishes, so the introduction of a wax polish in aerosol form could raise a few eyebrows. That's probably because furniture polishes often contain silicones and are not a good idea on bare timber. If you need to refinish the wood at a later date, any silicone deposit is bad news.

This new clear spray can be used on both bare wood and previously polished surfaces and is much quicker to apply than traditional paste wax. You just wipe it off with a soft cloth after a few minutes when dry. Although I'm not sure I'd rely solely on this product for surfaces subjected to a lot of wear, it's handy for small projects and repairs. Aerosol size is 400ml and its slightly citrus smell makes it pleasant to use.

★★★★☆

Price: £7.20
Briwax
Web: www.briwax.co.uk



Winter project

Takes: One weekend

TV STORAGE



Baffling build



Phil Davy makes a baffle to limit unwanted sound from a TV and builds in storage while he's at it

Creating alcove storage is a common request for woodworkers, though this recent project was slightly unusual. This opening extended through a deep dividing wall, accessed from rooms either side. A flatscreen TV in the living room occupied the alcove at the front, while the rear of the TV faced into the dining area. The problem was that sound from the TV's speakers projected backwards into the dining room, not just forward into the living area. As a result, conversations could sometimes be disturbed by unwanted noise when someone was watching TV in the other room. The



solution was to make a baffle that would reflect sound back towards the viewer, essentially shutting off the alcove from the other room. It made sense to create storage for DVDs and CDs at the same time.

The baffle itself was made from 18mm MDF, while shelving was 12mm-thick material.

Vertical dividers

A row of CDs or DVDs is quite weighty, so to prevent sagging I added vertical dividers to support the shelves. Had the alcove been higher all shelving would have been made from 18mm-thick MDF. As it was, reducing shelf thickness to 12mm meant there was just enough height for two rows of DVDs and a single row of CDs. A biscuit jointer is the obvious tool for a project like this, so I used No.0 biscuits for all joints. Alternatively you could house shelves and dividers into adjacent components, using a router for the grooves.

TIP When painting MDF it's always advisable to use a sealer. I brushed on a coat of Rustins MDF Sealer before applying white primer, undercoat and satin paint.

Whatever jointing method you choose, it's best to make a template from 6mm MDF first, trimming this to fit into the alcove. A Surform or rasp is handy for shaping sheet materials, though it's easy to break out edges if you're not careful. With the template fitted I simply drew around it on to the 18mm MDF for the baffle itself. Overall alcove size was 925 x 570mm.

With the baffle cut accurately it was straightforward to make the shelf structure in front. This needed to be glued together in stages, then was fitted to the rear baffle with biscuits. If you're cutting smaller pieces like this from sheet material it's a good idea to cut a few spare while the saw or guide rail is set up. Trying to match pieces exactly for size later can be frustrating.

All shelf sections were cut to 200mm deep so that DVDs would overhang the front edge slightly, making them easier to access.



1 Measure alcove and check for square; brickwork is rarely dead straight or plumb, so make template to fit



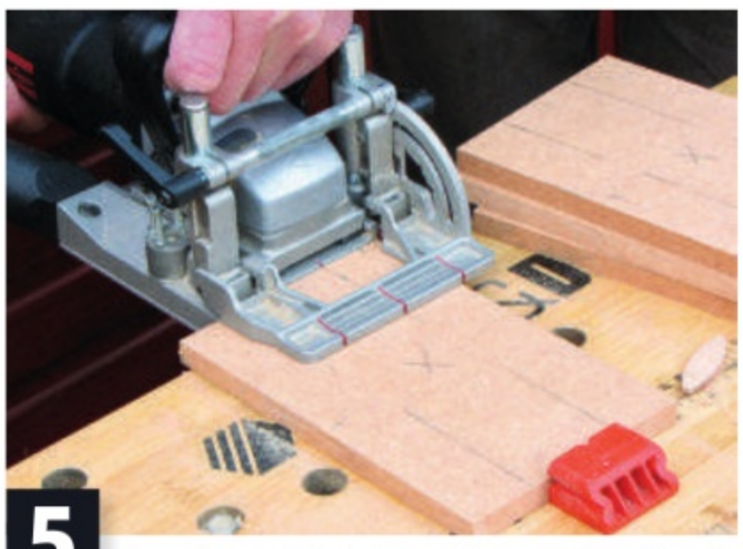
2 Cut MDF on table saw or with circular saw and guide rail; use dust extraction when cutting indoors



3 If necessary, trim shelf components to length with bench plane, cramping together for consistent results



4 Mark ends of shelves and dividers for No.0 biscuits; rear edges of shelving are also biscuit-jointed to baffle



5 Cut slots with jointer, first testing biscuit setting on MDF offcut; don't cut slots in back until shelves are assembled



6 Dry assemble inner shelving and check gluing sequence; if short of cramps you may need to improvise



7 Cutouts to accommodate 13A sockets look better if shaped. Draw around container of suitable radius



8 Cut with jigsaw, using guide rail for perfectly straight edges; clean up curve if necessary with abrasives or file



Winter project

Takes: One weekend

TV STORAGE



9 Glue together inner dividers and shelves first; make sure lower edges are flush by assembling on flat surface



10 Mark and cut remaining slots for dividers and side panels and check components are aligned



11 Glue remaining shelf and sides and cramp together; use MDF offcuts to prevent marks from cramp heads



12 Always check for square as you cramp each section, adjusting cramps if necessary; clean off surplus glue



13 Trim any proud edges with bench plane when glue has dried, taking care not to split MDF near joints



14 Check where TV cables need to pass through rear panel; drill hole with 55mm-diameter Forstner bit



15 Lay shelving on rear panel and mark slots; cut these with jointer tight against the guide rail



16 Check you have enough cramps then glue shelving to rear baffle, removing squeeze-out where possible



17 Clean up inner surfaces with detail sander or abrasive block; remove arrises around front edges



18 If completed unit is too tight in alcove, a belt sander is an effective method of removing high spots



19 Brush on MDF sealer, followed by several coats of primer undercoat and satin paint



20 Fit unit into alcove and drill brickwork for wall fixings; insert plugs and screw shelving into place



Head-turner



Multi-tools are almost ten a penny these days, with most power tool manufacturers producing models in cordless or mains-powered formats. This 18V version from Ryobi is certainly one of the most innovative, sharing technology with sister company AEG. You may remember Andy's test of the superb AEG 12V multi-tool back in *GW*258, which has several interchangeable heads, making it the most versatile tool currently available.

Although the Ryobi only comes with one head, you can rotate this into any one of four positions, making life easier when sanding, scraping or cutting in confined spaces. You simply depress a pair of retaining buttons, slide off the head and reposition it. The head itself appears to be identical to the AEG and is particularly sturdy, made from alloy with rubber sheathing. Actually, most of the tool is covered in soft-grip rubber, so it's pretty comfortable to hold. On the downside, accessories are fitted with a hex key though there's nowhere to store this. At least with a mains tool you can tape a key to the cable...



The sole head can be rotated into any one of four positions



Repositioning is via a pair of retaining buttons; the head slides off



There's nowhere to store the hex key that is used to fit the accessories



Semi-circular flush-cutting and straight-toothed blades, sanding plate and six abrasive sheets are supplied

It comes with...

Supplied as standard are semi-circular flush-cutting and straight-toothed blades, sanding plate and six abrasive sheets. A universal adaptor is also provided, so you should be able to fit any brand of accessory.

The big, variable-speed trigger is user-friendly whichever way you grip the tool, with a forward/reverse button underneath. This makes me wonder if Ryobi plans to introduce extra heads (as with AEG), as there's no need to alter operating direction with a multi-tool; this feature is reserved for drilling or screwdriving. In fact, there's a magnetic plate above the battery housing, ideal for storing a hex screwdriver bit – though stowing the hex key here is unwieldy. Speed range is from zero to 20,000rpm, while a white LED worklight below the head activates when you squeeze the trigger.

Conclusion

This tool comes bare (without a battery or charger), so unless you've already bought into Ryobi's excellent One Plus system you'll need to shell out for a power pack as well. Fitted with the new 4.0Ah battery, the RMT1801M is a pretty impressive power tool, though it's quite weighty compared with smaller 10.8V multi-tools. Easily as powerful as a 240V equivalent, it's more flexible than most similar products with its multi-position head. Let's hope Ryobi decides to launch those extra accessories to match the AEG model!

★★★★½

Price: £89.99 (bare)
Ryobi
Made in: China
Web: www.ryobitools.eu



The big, variable-speed trigger is user-friendly whichever way you grip the tool, with a forward/reverse button underneath



Useful kit

Li-ion update

As cordless tools become more compact, battery power and efficiency tend to increase. While 4.0Ah – and bigger – power packs have been available on professional tools for some time, Ryobi was the first to introduce this capacity across its 18V One Plus consumer (DIY) range.

Replacing the previous 2.4Ah Li-ion battery, the updated version is exactly the same size and weight and is backwards compatible with earlier blue Ryobi tools. A built-in fuel gauge takes the guesswork out of estimating remaining juice. Depress a button and a four-segment green LED indicates how much is left in the tank. In bright sunlight this is hard to read and not as clear as the older, coloured traffic light system (red/amber/green). That said, at least Ryobi provides this handy feature, which is more than some manufacturers do. If you can stretch to a second battery, checking remaining capacity is less of a problem of course.



It's difficult to assess results accurately, though Ryobi claims up to 95% extra run time over the previous size battery, plus 10% improved tool performance. Individual cells are monitored via their IntelliCell technology, so a unit should always be working at peak efficiency, maximising lifespan.

So what about charge time? Ideally you'll need Ryobi's Super Charger, which will get a flat 4.0Ah pack fully charged in about 85 minutes. Not surprisingly, this new lithium battery is pretty pricey, so it pays to shop around.



The new battery is backwards compatible with the old blue Ryobi tools



★★★★☆

Price: £89.99
Ryobi
Made in: China
Web: www.ryobitools.eu



Available power is indicated on a 4-segment green LED



A chalk line is highly visible

Stanley Mini chalk line

While perhaps not the most obvious must-have tool for woodworkers, a chalk line can be very handy if you work with sawn boards. Unlike most imported timber, native hardwoods tend to be sold as they come off the saw, often with waney edges. When converting such boards with a bandsaw, jigsaw or handheld circular saw you usually need a reference line to work to.

Marking with chalk is a quick and easy method, the line showing up far better than pencil. One of the traditional roles for a chalk line is marking across a floor for studwork or similar. It's cheaper than a laser device.

For marking timber you don't need a large-capacity chalk line, so this sturdy little tool from Stanley could be just what you're looking for. String length is 9m, plenty long enough for marking most planks. Its rigid plastic body has a rubberised grip and belt clip on the back, while the front features a fold-out metal winder. Pressing a button in the centre overrides the winder mechanism, enabling you to withdraw the string and place the metal hook over an edge.

To fill with chalk, you slide open a small plastic window at one side and pour it in. Chalk is not included, so you'll need to buy a refill.

This device is small enough to keep in the toolbox for that odd marking job.



The device features a rubberised grip and belt clip on the back

★★★½☆

Price: £7.99
Stanley
Web: www.stanleytools.co.uk



The front incorporates a fold-out winder



The chalk is poured in through a window

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Ball park games



Les Thorne relies on hand/eye coordination and a couple of jigs to turn these balls round

Making spheres or balls is something that woodturners have been doing for hundreds of years. Games such as bar skittles, bowls and croquet rely on the ability of the turner to make a good round shape. In this article I am going to go through a fairly simple way of making a good sphere.

Before we start to actually make the ball we need to make a couple of jigs so that it can be remounted between centres. Some really good jigs can be bought but they do rely on a scraper-type cutter that will not always give you good finish on some of the more fibrous timbers, plus it's much more satisfying to do it with hand/eye coordination. Ball making can become addictive, and dry and wet wood can be used.

Once you have turned your balls you will need to decide what you want to do with them. I have a student who puts a small watch-type clock in them and sands a small flat on the bottom; they make great gifts as desk clocks. I like to use them as sculptures so I have decorated them in a couple of different ways; these can be attached together in some way or just put in a bowl where they become tactile play things.

My ball-making method doesn't always result in a perfect sphere but they do end up pretty well so enjoy the process and get making.

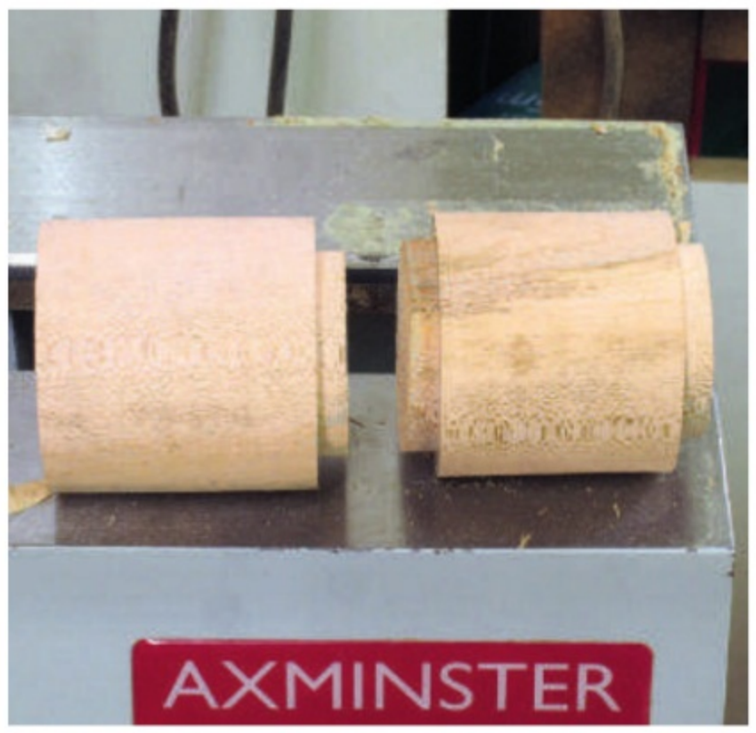
Making balls



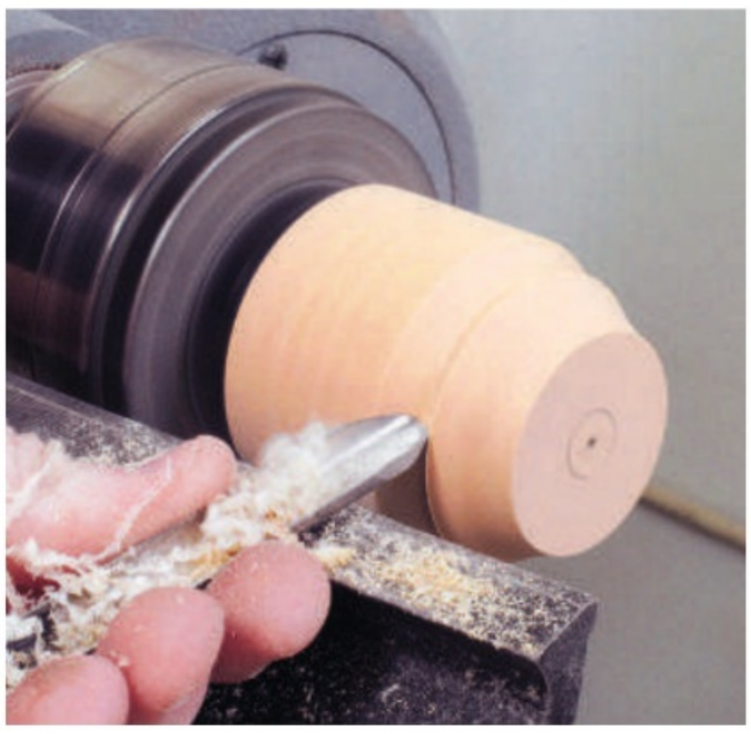
▲ Pic.1 Les has selected some sycamore to make the remounting jigs for the balls; these are 50mm long and 50mm square – ideal for balls up to 100mm in diameter



▲ Pic.2 Mount each piece between centres and make it round – the spindle roughing gouge makes short work of this task; once parallel cut a chucking spigot with a parting tool



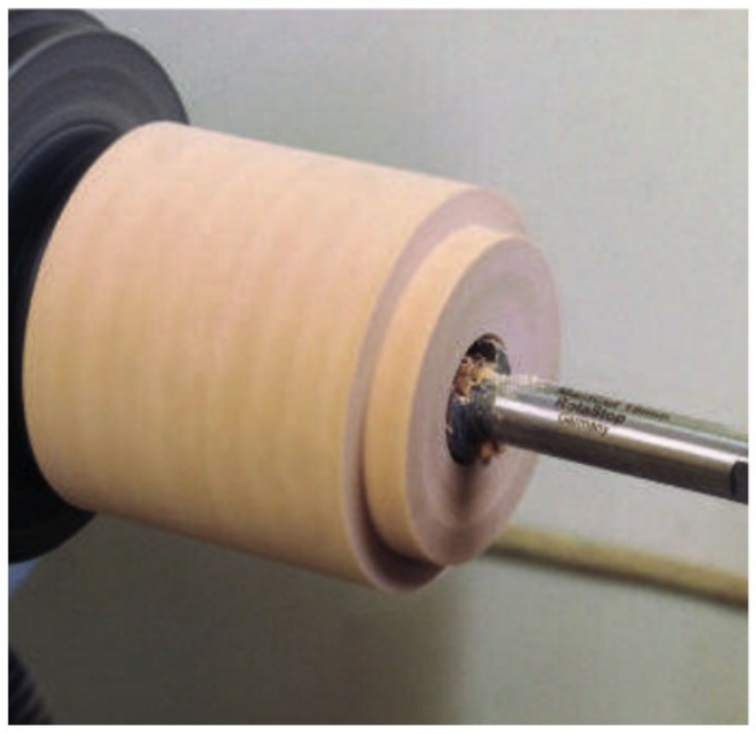
▲ Pic.3 The two pieces are roughed out; one has a spigot on both ends for the tailstock while the other for the headstock only has it on one; there is no need to sand or polish



▲ Pic.4 Mount the one with only one spigot in your chuck and using the spindle gouge turn the jig down to about 30mm in diameter on the end; this is a good starting size



▲ Pic.5 The jig needs to be recessed in the end to be able to accept the ball; a pull cut with a spindle gouge is the best way of doing this, and can be adjusted later if needed



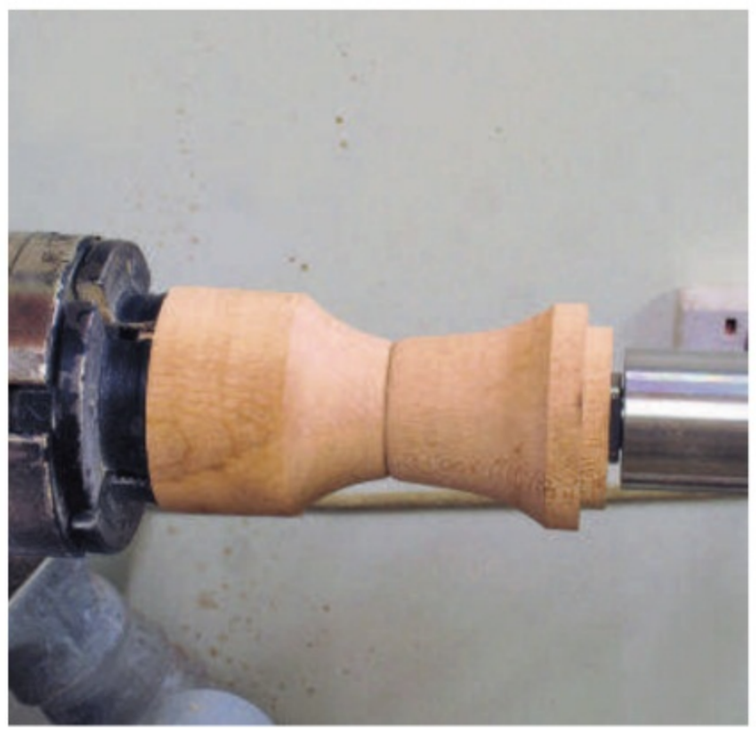
▲ Pic.6 Les's tailstock centre has a threaded nose so he drills a hole so he can tap a thread in the end to suit the centre; if you have a normal centre turn a hole to fit over the end



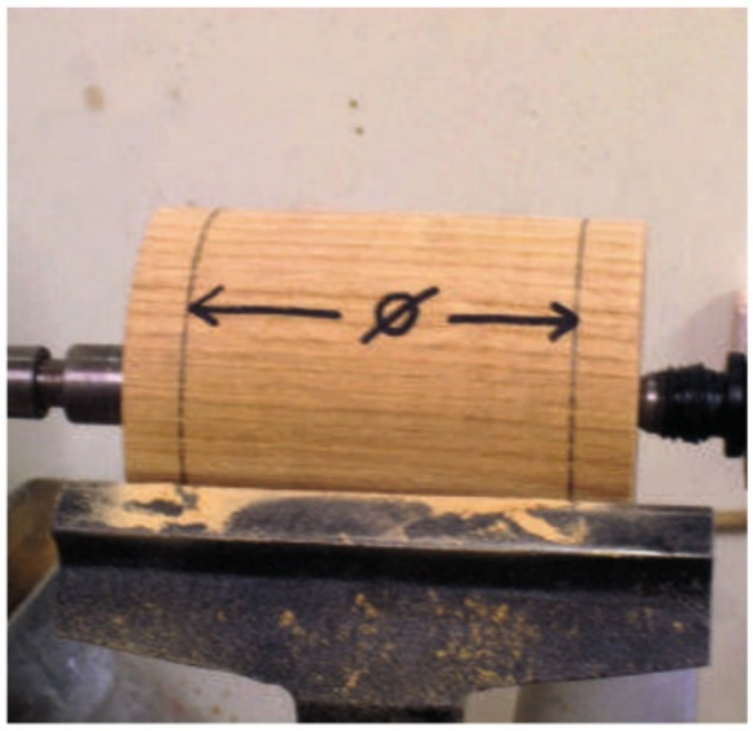
▲ Pic.7 Les uses a ¾ by 16tpi tap to match the thread on the Axminster Evolution revolving centre; these taps are readily available on the internet for a few pounds



▲ Pic.8 Big mistake: Les should have used a much denser timber such as box wood or even MDF; the thread has broken up quite badly but will still work OK for the first few times



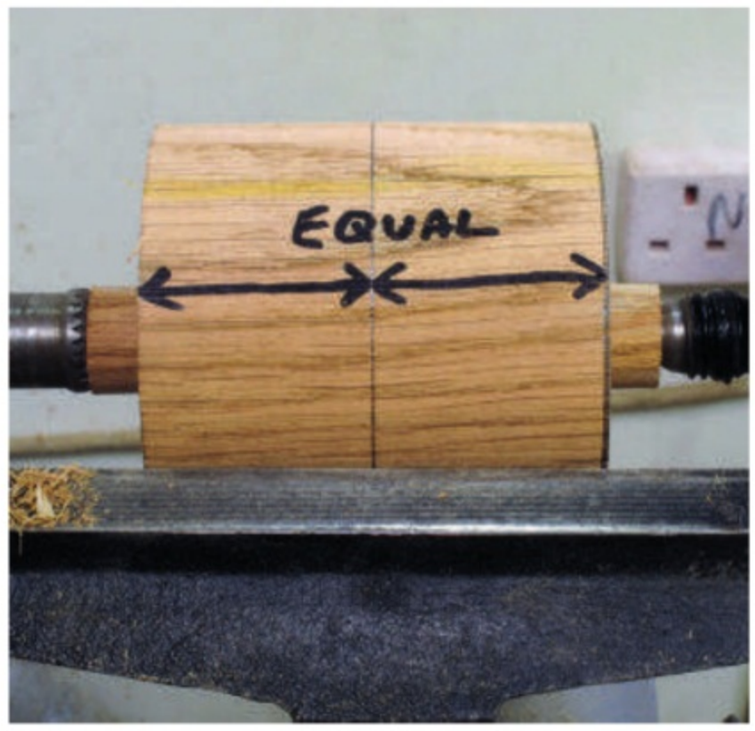
▲ Pic.9 Mount the tailstock jig in the scroll chuck and turn the end down in the same way as the other one; if you leave the chucking spigot on the size can be adjusted to match



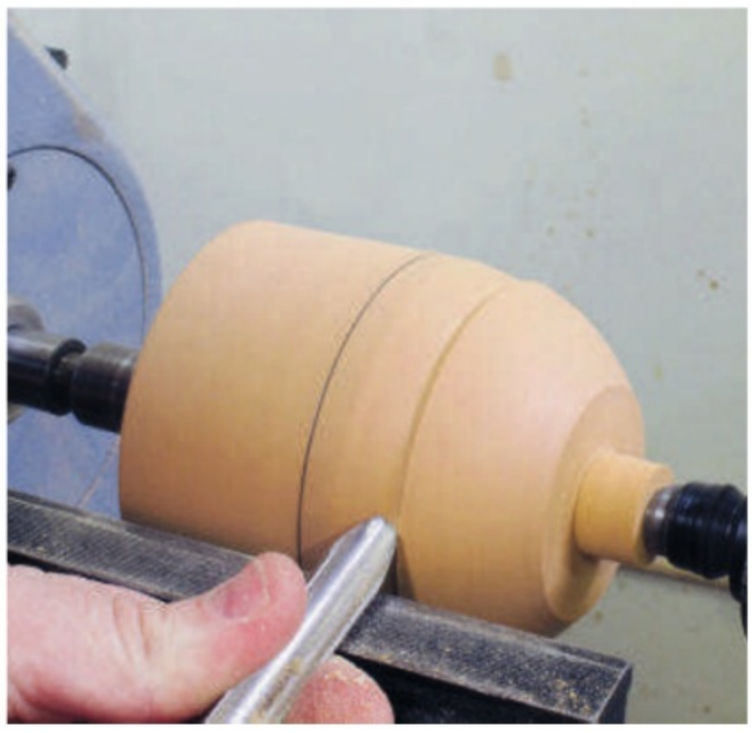
▲ Pic.10 **Now start making the ball; mount a piece of stock, in this case oak, between centres, make it round and then mark the diameter onto the piece as in the photo**



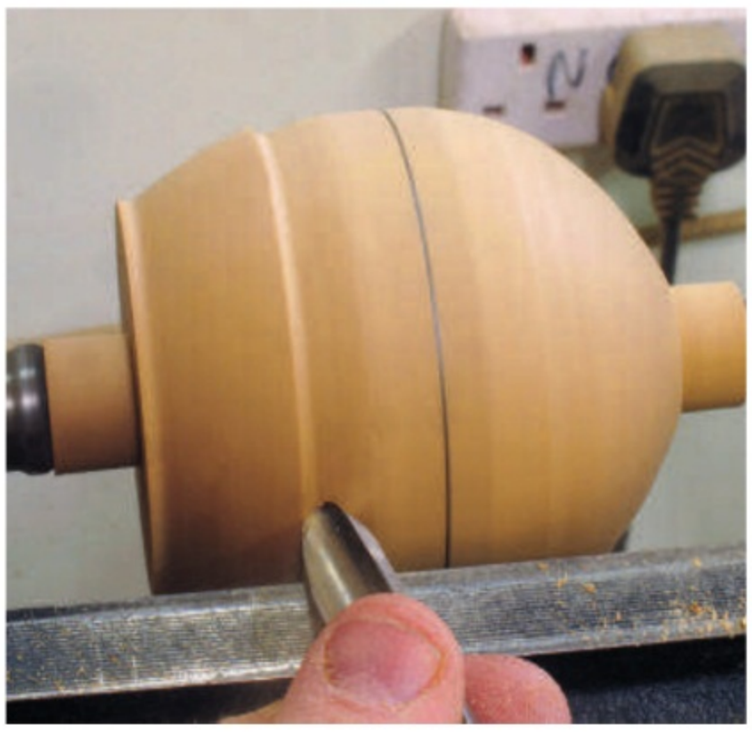
▲ Pic.11 **Use the 10mm round skew as a parting tool to remove the waste on either end down to about 20mm diameter; do not not go thinner as this can weaken the wood**



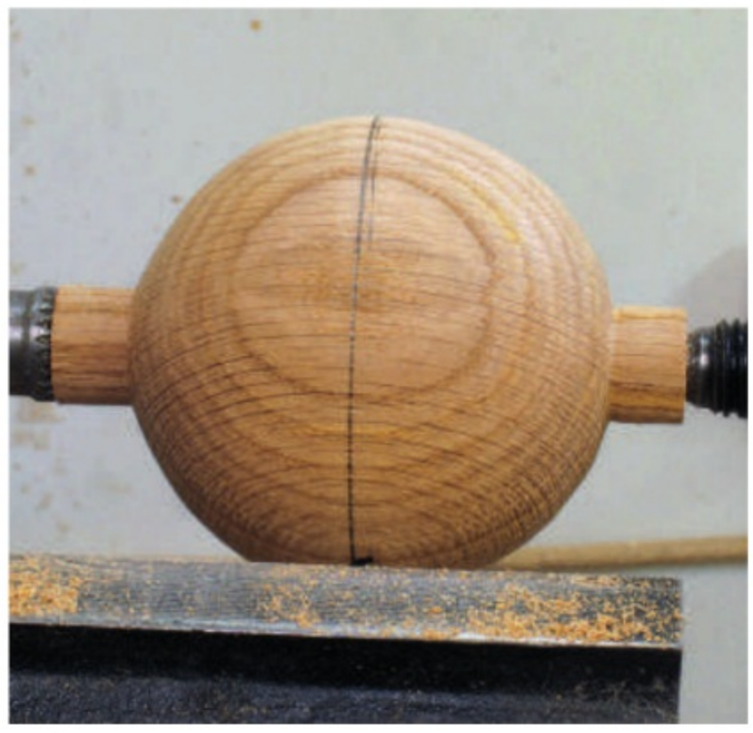
▲ Pic.12 **Once you have the length the same as the width, mark on the centre line as you can see here; the line in the centre becomes the most important datum point in the project**



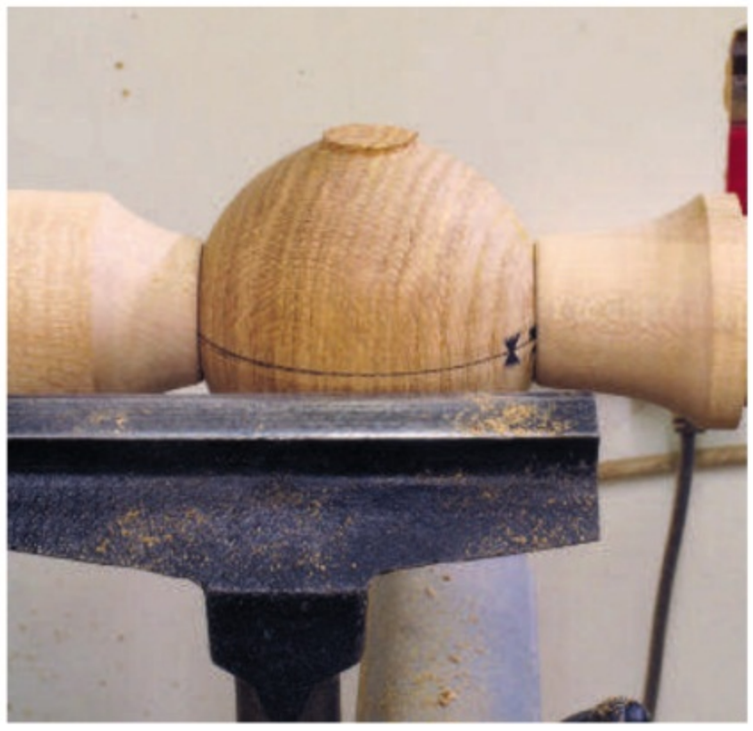
▲ Pic.13 **Using a spindle gouge, start with the bevel rubbing, lifting slightly to engage the cut and rolling over the end of the work; keep the bevel in contact the whole time**



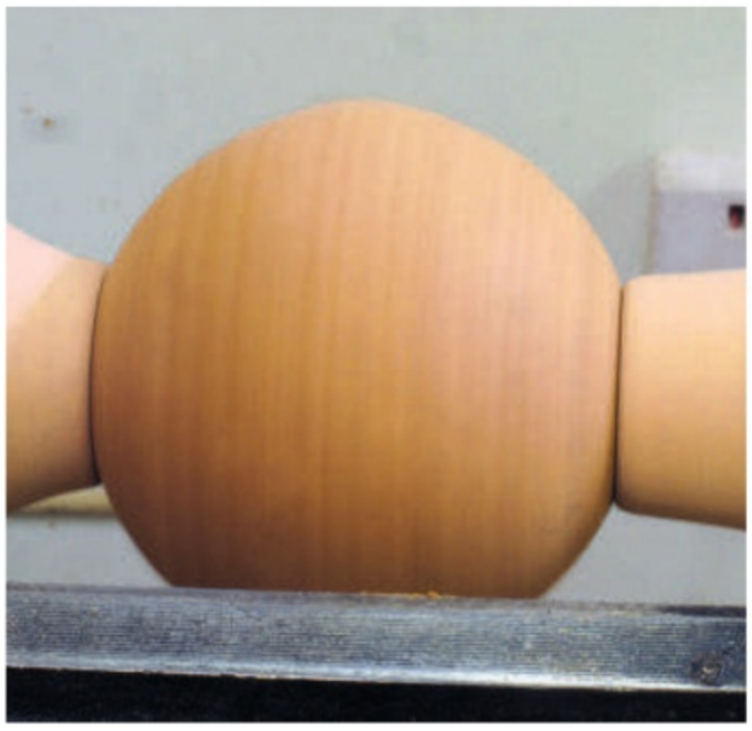
▲ Pic.14 **Do the same on the left-hand side; do not remove too much timber at this stage; the line must stay on the work as this maintains the correct diameter**



▲ Pic.15 **The shape at this stage is more of a rugby ball than a sphere; take the wood off and remove the small waste sections off the end, leaving a protrusion of about 5mm**



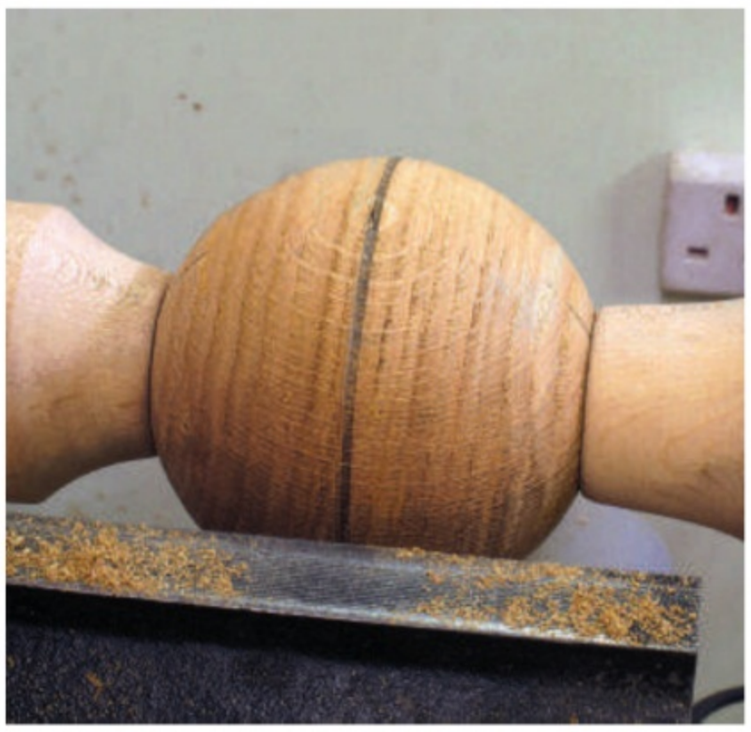
▲ Pic.16 **Mount the ball between centres on your newly made cup chucks; rotate it 90° so the line is now parallel with the lathe bed; check with the toolrest**



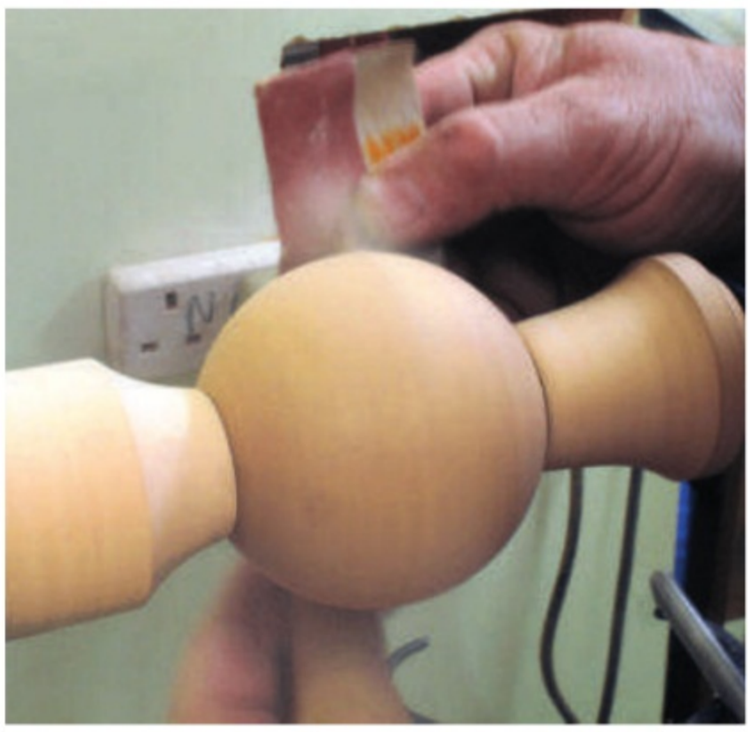
▲ Pic.17 **When you start up the lathe a 'ghost' of the shape will be seen if you look at the horizon of the piece; this is what needs to be turned away**



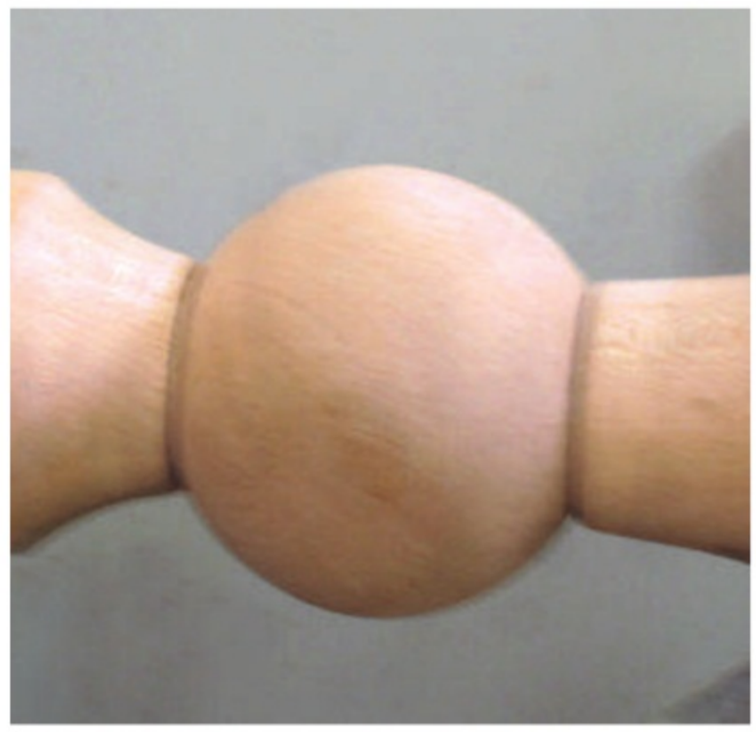
▲ Pic.18 **Light, careful cuts are the order of the day here. Remember that there is a lot of fresh air in this cut so you are cutting the high points down**



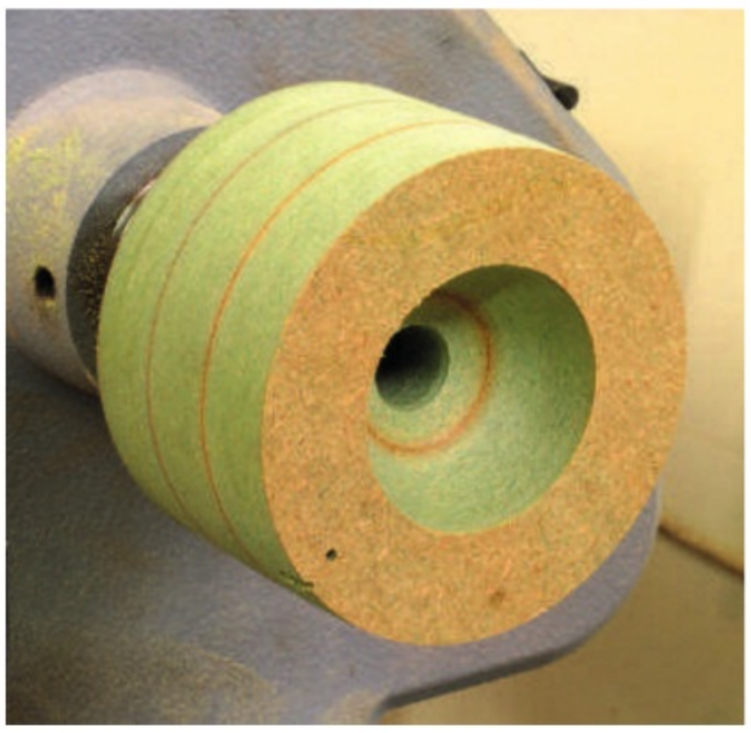
▲ Pic.19 **Mark up the centre again, rotate through 90° degrees and repeat the process; you must make sure that the piece is running as accurately as possible**



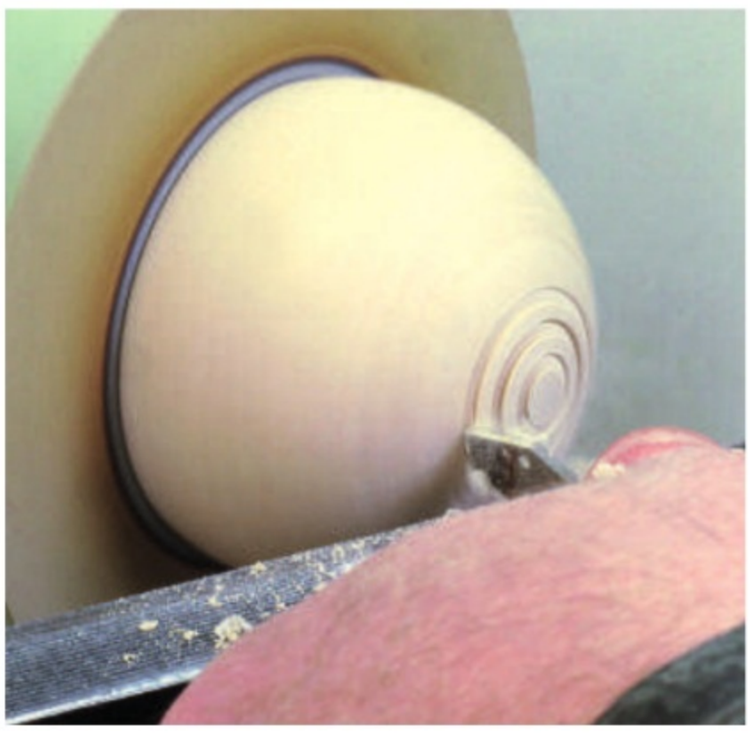
▲ Pic.20 **It's time to sand now, starting with a reasonably coarse grade of abrasive such as 100 grit; keep repositioning the orientation of the ball throughout the process**



▲ Pic.21 **After doing the oak ball Les turned one in sycamore using exactly the same process; this will give him a couple of options for decoration**



▲ Pic.22 **He wants to rework the sycamore ball so has made a jam chuck from MDF that can be mounted back on to lathe; the central hole allows the ball to be knocked out should it stick**



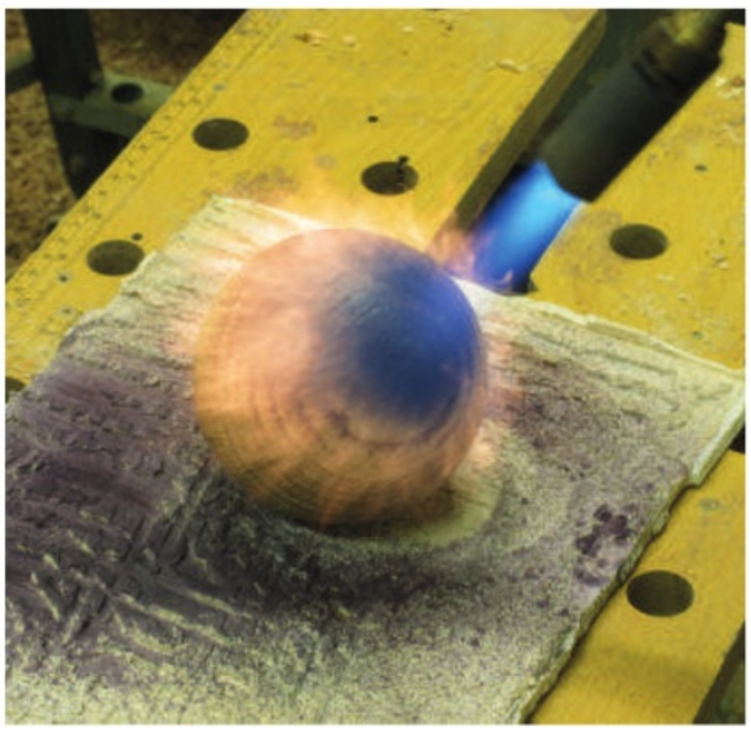
▲ Pic.23 **Using a 3mm parting tool Les is just going to cut a series of grooves in the ball; go carefully as the ball can be knocked out; a little chalk around the chuck rim is helpful**



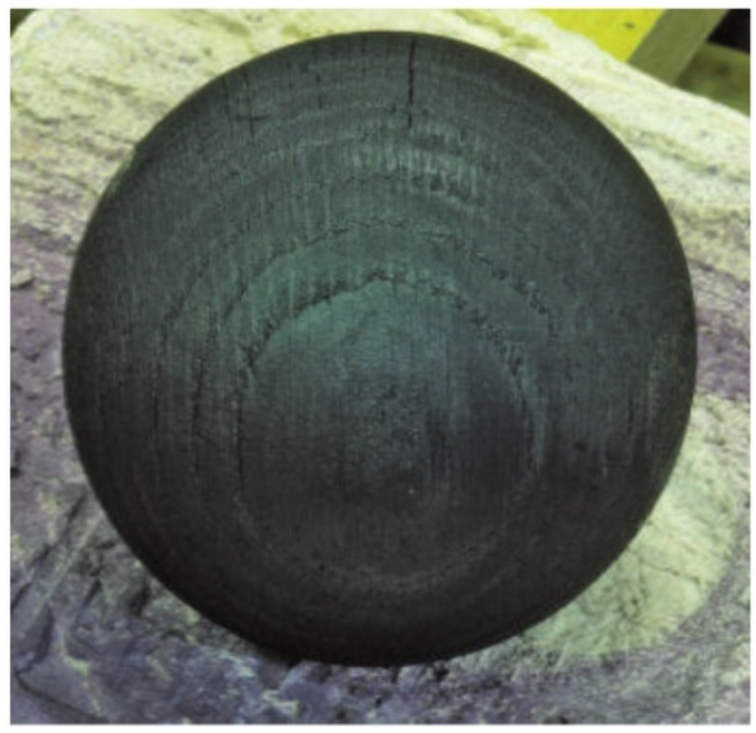
▲ Pic.24 **This is a similar decoration to ones that can be seen on ivory turnings from the past; you could now stain the work or leave it natural**



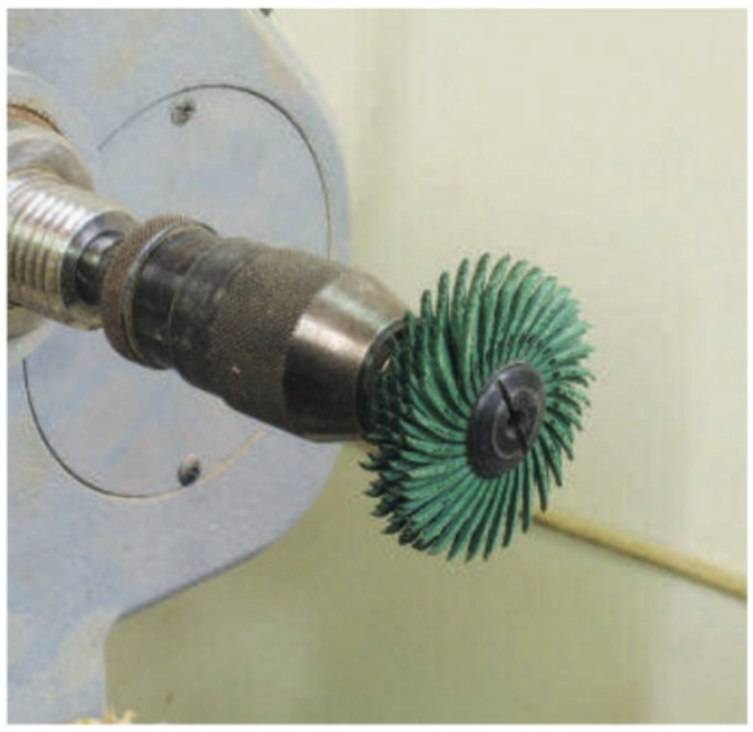
▲ Pic.25 **Les has chosen to spray the work black, then put it back on the lathe and sand it to leave the black paint only in the grooves; he then stains it purple**



▲ Pic.26 **The oak ball is now placed on an old bathroom tile; the blow torch is used to burn the surface to remove the softer early growth, leading to an interesting texture**



▲ Pic.27 **The work is burnt all over; the surface would not have cracked slightly had Les kept the surface temperature of the wood down by spraying with water during the burning process**



▲ Pic.28 **His sanding brush has been mounted on the lathe using a use a Morse taper drill chuck; just tap it into the headstock taper to stop it coming out**



▲ Pic.29 **Get a good hold of the work when brushing away the carbon deposits from the ball; you must clean off all the loose material before painting the work**



▲ Pic.30 **As Les is going to apply an aged copper effect he must first spray with copper paint in a technique shown to him by his good friend Nick Agar**



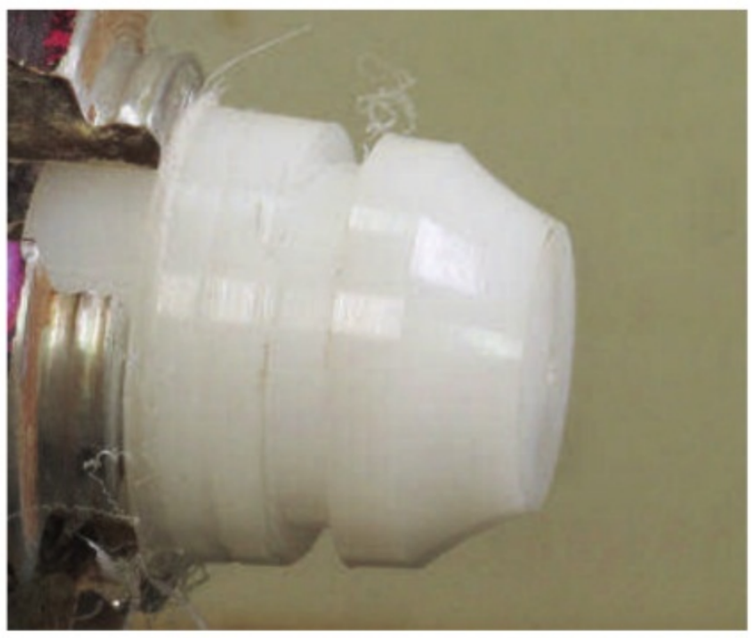
▲ Pic.31 **Now verdigris wax (available from Liberon) is applied all over the ball; you can use liming wax or even make your own colours by adding earth pigments to wax**



▲ Pic.32 **Work it in to all the low points in the texture before removing the excess with a rag. Naturally the green areas on copper appear in the parts that can't be polished**



▲ Pic.33 **As the finishing touch use Daler Rowney's Goldfinger to highlight some areas; this is a very bright gold paint so only apply it in tiny amounts**



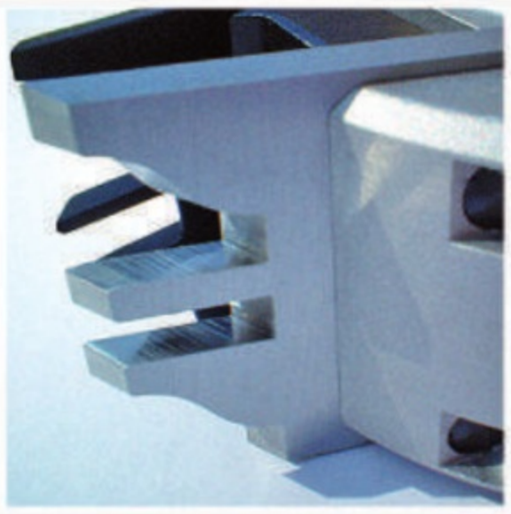
▲ Pic.34 **Les decided to make a couple of small unobtrusive display stands for the balls from PTFE; this is a nylon product used in engineering**



▲ Pic.35 **As you can see here do be careful when you are turning it as the shavings do get wrapped up all over the place and could cause injury**



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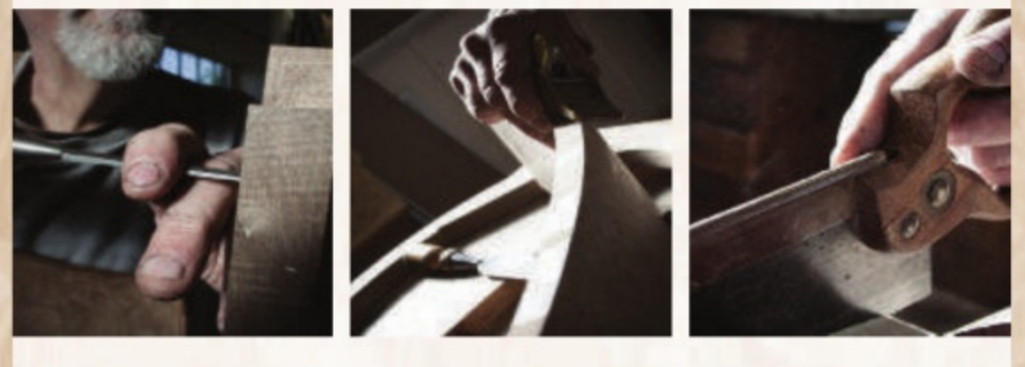
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PLUS...

Les Thorne turns a natural-edge goblet, we restore a sofa table that had been attacked by a dog, Dave Roberts visits a clock maker, Jeff Gorman and Stephen Simmons share their old-school experience and Phil Davy is Around the House

Finishing Touch

In this month's antiques series we examine and restore an Edwardian writing cabinet



▲ Pic.1 **There's even provision for a clock...**



▲ Pic.2



▲ Pic.3



▲ Pic.4

▲ Pic.5

This is an unusual Edwardian writing cabinet. There is a small clock that fits in the central circular aperture but this has been removed during restoration. The inside is lined with Morocco leather and fitted with stationery compartments and pigeonholes. The two silver-plated rectangles are for calendar cards or photos (**Pic.1**).

The case is mahogany inlaid with wide satinwood stringing (**Pic.2**), and the main carcase sits on a simple open-framed stand. This is a similar arrangement to a 17th-century 'cabinet-on-stand'. There is however a problem with the construction – the side to back joint is rebated and pinned. The back panel has come away from the side (**Pic.3**). As it was impossible to access the inside of the back panel due to the interior fittings it was reluctantly decided to hold the panel in place with a small brass screw (**Pic.4**).

Pic.5 shows the finished appearance. The screw was set below the surface and the head then filled over with wax. Should it be necessary to remove the screw this can be easily done, so the 'repair' is reversible. There is a general rule in restoration that you should not try to restrain panels with metal screws, but in this case the pulling back into position by cramps was done slowly over a number of days to allow the timber to be eased into position and it is hard to see what else would have worked. After all, the original maker had nailed the carcase together in order to avoid secret mitre dovetails!

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