



Newsletter

January 2007

Special Notice:

The January meeting of the Midwest Woodworker's Association has been postponed until Monday, January 29, 2007 at 7:00 PM

President's Chipbox

The New Year is already picking up steam. Terry sent me an E-mail saying he wouldn't be available to have the meeting on January 22 so we decided to move it to Monday January 29 for this month at the Boone County Mill Works. Reservations have been made for the Spring Picnic at the Stephens Lake Park at the Happy Hollow Shelter again this year. The date will be May 12, 2007 for a noon gathering. I hope to see everyone at the January meeting.

Mike

MWA Tips for Toy Car Construction

Tips and shortcuts for assembling wooden toy cars collected from members of the Midwest Woodworkers' Association

Assembly

The narrow tip on a school glue bottle is easier to insert into the axle peg hole than the larger tip found on most bottles of carpenter's glue. Empty bottles of school glue can be re-filled with white or yellow glue and used repeatedly.

A light-weight mallet is useful for driving axle pegs into their holes, especially when children are invited to assemble their own cars at various festivals.

A small amount of paste wax brushed on the head end of the axle pegs prevents glue squeeze-out from attaching the wheel to the peg and makes the wheel run more smoothly.

If your car bodies are less than 1 ½' thick, the axle pegs may need to be shortened so they don't meet in the middle of the body and interfere with each other as they are driven into the hole. A simple jig makes shortening the pegs with the table saw easy. Quarter inch holes are drilled into the edge of a board wider than the length of the pegs. The rip fence is set to permit the pegs to be shortened by the proper amount, the blade is raised just enough to cut through the pegs, and a batch of pegs are run through the blade. The pegs are supported in the jig and chipout is minimal.

A notch cut in the blade of a putty knife can be used to properly space the wheel away from the body as the axle peg is driven into its hole. The blade is placed between the body and the wheel with the peg in the notch as the peg is driven home. When the blade is removed, a proper space remains and the wheel is prevented from rubbing against the body.

Cavities drilled into a scrap 2" x 4" slightly larger than the wheels you are using evenly support the car as the axle pegs and wheels are driven home on the second side (and prevent dents in the surface of your workbench made by the ends of the pegs). Cavities can be spaced appropriately to accommodate the space between the wheels on the various sizes of cars you make. Also, spacers can be made from material cut from a heavy plastic bottle and placed between the wheels and the car body to provide adequate space for the wheels to turn freely.

Drilling

Drill the axle peg holes (7/32') in all of the cars you have marked out on each board prior to cutting out individual cars on your bandsaw. The board will lay flat on your drillpress table; drilling the holes in a larger board insures that the holes will be square and all four wheels will touch the ground after the car is assembled.

A shallow countersink in each axle peg hole allows space for the inevitable glue squeeze-out and helps prevent glue from getting between the axle peg and wheel. The countersink also makes it easier to start the peg into the hole.

A nailset with a shop made handle can be used as a reamer to enlarge the outer end of an axle peg hole to make it easier to start the peg into the hole and is quicker than drilling a countersink.

Tentative Schedule of Future Events Midwest Woodworkers' Association

Date	Day	Time	Event
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January 22, 2007 Meeting postponed until next Monday	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
January 29, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	Re-scheduled MWS monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
February 26, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
March 26, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
April 23, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
May 28, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
June 25, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
July 23, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
August 27, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
September 24, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
October 22, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork
November 26, 2007	Monday	7:00 PM	MWA monthly meeting at Boone County Millwork

A Short Guide to Carving Tool Terminology

Aside from cosmetic differences in handles, and of course differences and preferences in brand, the standard sizes and shapes of carving tools have been the same for about 200 years. There are three criteria in defining

a carving tool: the shape of the tool shank, the width of the tool at the cutting edge, and the profile of the cutting edge.

The Shape of the Tool

It can be straight, have a gentle curve going the length of the steel shank (long bent or curved), a pronounced curve, like a spoon at the end of the tool, with the cutting edge on the convex side of the bend (front bent or spoon). Back bent gouges are similar to the front bent gouge, except the bend is the other way, with the cutting edge on the concave side of the bend. Most tools are widest at their cutting edge and have a gentle progression from edge to tang. An older design, which some carvers like because it gives them more access, has the cutting edge flaring out from the shank. These tools are called spade or fishtail tools.

Cutting edges

The cutting edge is defined by two things: the width of the blade at the cutting edge and the shape of the cutting edge. The rule of thumb is that wider tools work faster. The shape or profile of the cutting edge is harder to describe. If the blade is flat with no curvature it is called a chisel or a firmer chisel. Carving chisels are ground differently from bench chisels used in cabinetmaking. These chisels are usually beveled on both sides of the blade. If the blade is flat and cut at an angle to the tool it is called a skew or corner chisel.

The most common carving tools are gouges - chisels with some sort of curvature to them. Gouges come in a vast variety of curvatures, from nearly straight to a very tight arc. This is in addition of the overall width of the tool. You can have, for example, a 12mm gouge of a very shallow arc or a different 12mm gouge with a very pronounced arc. The term for defining these arcs is called "sweep" and the sweeps range from #1 which is a straight chisel to #11 which is almost a semi-circle of the diameter of the width. In theory the sweeps are standard but in fact each maker's sweeps might vary. For example European sweep numbers are usually one sweep greater than the equivalent English sweep. So, for example, an English made #5 sweep 1/2" Ashley Iles is equivalent to a German made Two Cherries #6 sweep 12mm gouge. Most people usually stick with one brand or another so this isn't normally a problem, but if you decide to mix and match it's a point worth knowing.

Once you get past the gouges the landscape simplifies. There are "V" tools of different angles. As a gouge gets increasingly curved it eventually is greater than a semi-circle. These tools are called "veiners" or "grooving tools" and are primarily used in smaller sizes for detailing.

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