# How-To Book of Christmas Carving




**32 Projects to Whittle, Carve & Paint**

*The Best of* WOODCARVING ILLUSTRATED

# How-To Book of Christmas Carving

## 32 Projects to Whittle, Carve & Paint

*Editors of*
WOODCARVING ILLUSTRATED

FOX CHAPEL PUBLISHING

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# Introduction

Whether you are looking to make a gift from the heart or add to your Christmas decorations, this book is chock-full of projects to get you into the season! We've included 32 holiday-themed favorites from past issues of *Woodcarving Illustrated*, ranging from Santas and ornaments to angels and Arctic animals. This book also features a range of carving styles, including chip carving, relief carving, woodburning, whittling, caricature carving, and more.

Whatever project you start with, we know you'll create some Christmas magic and memories.

Happy carving!

The *Woodcarving Illustrated* Team






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# Getting Started

Before jumping into these projects, take some time to check out the primary materials and tools needed to carve the projects, tips on carving safely and successfully, basic cuts to keep in mind, and ways to paint and finish your carvings, which are all included in this section.

## Materials

These projects can be completed with just a few materials, all of which are easy to find at your local craft store or woodcarving supplier.

**Basswood:** Basswood is a great beginner wood for carvers; it's lightweight and consistent in grain, with no prominent air pockets. It also takes paint well given its light color. Most of the projects in this book are carved from basswood, but some use medium or darker wood shades for a natural finish. Other wood types used are butternut, cherry, ipe, maple, and walnut.



*Basswood is great for beginners because its consistent grain makes carving easier.*

**Acrylic or oil paints:** Thinned acrylic paints or oil-based paints add color to carvings while still letting the woodgrain show through.

**Stains:** If you do not want to paint your carvings, you can apply stains for a more natural finish.

**Sandpaper:** Sandpaper smooths out and removes fuzzies from carvings before moving onto painting and finishing.




*Acrylic paints thinned with water allow the woodgrain to show through.*

**Pencil, pen, or marker:** Use it to mark the areas you plan to remove on a carving, or to sketch on details before you begin to carve.

**Graphite transfer paper or acetone:** If you do not wish to sketch the pattern directly onto the wood, use graphite transfer paper or acetone.

**Cyanoacrylate (CA) glue, wood glue, or two-part epoxy:** Glue or epoxy allows you to attach additional details to the carvings.



*Two-part epoxy resin can be used to attach additional details to carvings.*

**Boiled linseed oil or Danish oil:** These oils add a protective coating to your carving. Boiled linseed oil is often mixed with mineral spirits to create a protective finish.

**Finishing wax:** Wax can be used to add a protective coat to finished carvings.

**Screw eye:** Screw eyes are metal hooks that allow any carving to be turned into an ornament to display.

**Drywall screws:** If you prefer to make your carvings into a stand-alone piece instead of an ornament, drywall screws allow you to attach carvings to a base.

**Paper towels or cloths:** Paper towels and cloths can be used to wipe off and clean carvings before painting and after adding a finish.

**Cleaner and degreaser:** Use Dawn® dish soap or similar to clean off dirt and pencil marks before applying paint or finish.

**Craft wire:** Wire can be used to attach separate details to finished carvings.



*Craft wire can be used to attach smaller carvings to the main carving.*

**Toothpicks or stylus:** These are a useful addition to your painting arsenal, as they're perfect for making small, identical dots.

**Antiquing wax or medium:** Use this to enhance the shadow areas and give the carving an antique-like appearance.



*Use antiquing wax or medium to give carvings an old-fashioned appearance.*

**String or ribbon:** To make the carvings into ornaments, attach a ribbon or string to the screw eye or hook.

**Clear finish:** Once the painting stage is complete, protect all those fine details with a clear spray finish.

# Tools

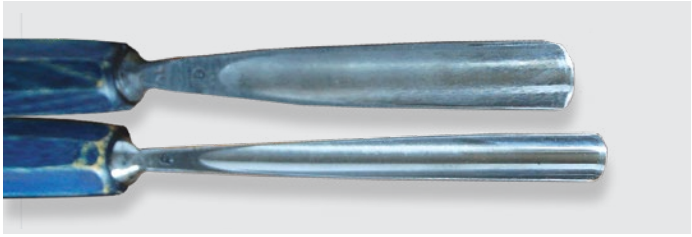
You'll need some basic tools to complete these projects:

**Knife:** A bench knife with a larger blade (at least 1 ½" long) is a great place to start. When choosing a knife, make sure it's forged from quality steel and fits nicely in your hand.



*When choosing a carving knife, make sure to consider the quality and comfort of the tool before purchasing.*

**Gouges:** In numerous projects in this book, gouges are used to carve and refine details. Gouges come in various sizes and sweeps (levels of curvature) depending on your project needs.



*Gouges come in handy for carving and refining details on carvings.*

**V-tool:** V-tools allow you to separate features on a carving as you rough out; they're also useful for adding hair, fur, and grass texture.



*Use V-tools to add texture, such as hair and fur.*



*Additional details such as a walking stick for Santa (page 34) or a rifle for a toy soldier (page 127) can be attached to the main carving by using a drill.*

**Drill with assorted bits:** Some carvings have moving parts or additional details. You'll need to drill holes to attach the different pieces.

**Rotary tool:** Use to sand, smooth, and define carving areas.

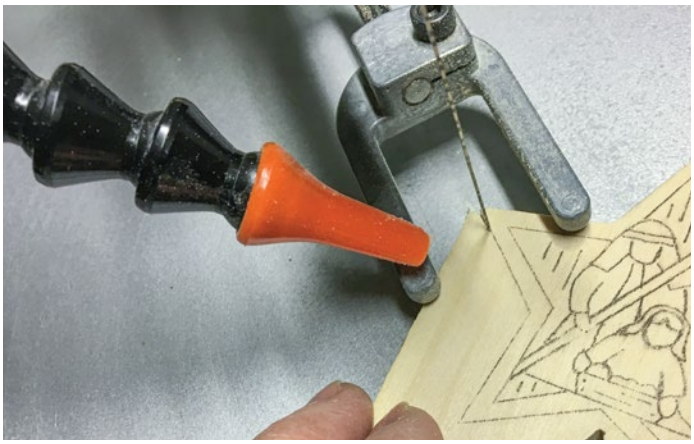
**Ruler or compass:** Before you begin carving, some patterns and will need to be marked and measured on the wood blank with a ruler. For marking pattern diameters, a compass is ideal. For carvings with brick patterns (pages 15 and 21), a ruler allows each brick to be the same size and evenly carved. Before carving projects with rounded tops (page 25), a compass allows you to draw circles with accurate diameters on the top of a blank.



*Belt sanders are one of the many sanding tools you can use to smooth out rough areas.*

**Belt sander**: If you have multiple rough areas on your projects, a belt sander can be used to easily smooth these areas.

**Band saw, scroll saw, or pull saw:** Instead of spending a lot of time roughing out from thick wood, a band saw, scroll saw, or pull saw can be used to cut the basic shape of a project.



*To save time, cut out the shape of your projects on a scroll saw.*



*Instead of carving small details, use a woodburner to burn them into the carving.*

**Woodburner:** If you do not wish to carve smaller details, you can use a woodburner to burn them into carvings.

**Paintbrushes:** Brushes allow you to easily apply finishes, paints, and stains to carvings. Paintbrushes can also be used to remove fuzzies in tight places or help clean up a carving before painting or applying a finish.



*Paintbrushes can be used to apply various finishes such as paints, stains, and antiquing and finishing wax.*

**Hot glue gun:** Some projects with separate details and materials such as craft wire need to be glued to the main carving. You'll need a hot glue gun and glue sticks to secure the pieces.

**Hair dryer:** Use to speed up drying between paint coats.

# Safety

Carving can be a fun pastime, but if you don't take care, injuries can happen. Here are a few things to keep in mind before you make your first cut to ensure a safe and successful carving experience.

**Wear protective gear:** To ensure a safe carving session, make sure to wear a carving glove on your non-dominant hand to avoid injury. If you do not want to wear a glove on your dominant hand, wear a thumb guard or wrap your thumb in medical tape to protect it from the knife. It may be uncomfortable to wear at first, but this will lessen the likelihood of injuries in the long run. Also, when using power tools, such as a band saw for cutting blanks to shape, be sure to wear goggles and a mask rated to filter out small particles (0.1–0.3 microns).




*Wear carving gloves to protect your hands from injury.*

**Be aware of where you are carving:** Make sure you are aware of your cutting direction and the location of your fingers before making a cut. If your finger is in the way of the cut, there is a chance you will injure yourself if the blade behaves unpredictably. Determine the stopping point before making your cut, and always keep a firm grip on the tool. If your tool does slip and fall, never grab it, even if you are wearing cut-resistant gloves.



*Protect your your eyes and lungs while carving with a mask and safety glasses.*

**Avoid dangerous or distracting environments while carving:** Keep in mind your surroundings when you are carving to ensure a safe and stress-free session. This means keeping pets away from work areas and being mindful of children. Make sure to never leave your unsheathed tools unattended.

**Dress for success:** While carving, make sure to wear closed-toe shoes in case a tool falls. Carving barefoot or with open shoes such as sandals increases the risk for carving-related injuries.

**Remember accidents happen:** Keep a first-aid kit near your work area while carving. Even if you're wearing safety gear, an accident can happen, and it is helpful to have bandages handy.

**Take breaks:** Make sure not to overwork yourself; take regular breaks to stretch your hands and walk around. Never carve when tired or preoccupied. Before making that final cut, put the piece down and come back to it another day. Don't rush; it's not a competition.

# Basic Cuts

Carving is a subtractive art—you remove all of the material that isn't part of your vision for the final piece. For example, to carve a dog, remove all of the wood that doesn't contribute to the shape of the animal.

Most carvers use four basic cuts to remove excess wood: the push cut, the paring cut, the stop cut, and the V-shaped cut. Master these four basic types of cuts, and you'll be ready to tackle a multitude of projects.

## Stop Cut

As the name suggests, the stop cut is used to create a hard line at the end of another cut. Your hand position depends on the placement of the cut you need to make. Regardless of your hand position, simply cut straight into the wood to create a stop cut. Stop cuts are used to prevent a consecutive cut from extending beyond the intended area, and to free a chip of wood remaining from a primary cut.



*Stop cut*

## Push Cut

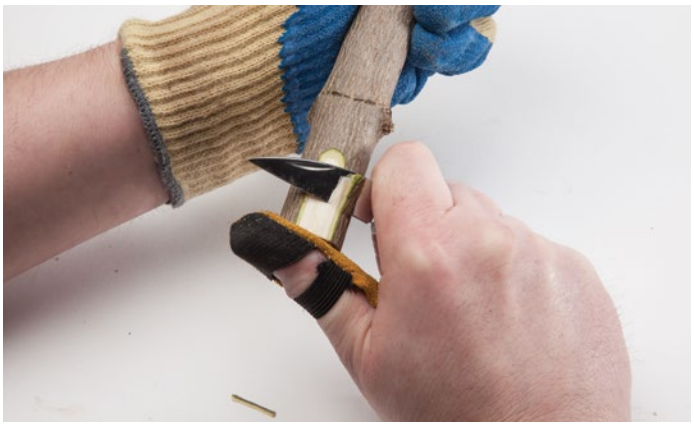
For the push cut, hold the wood in one hand. Hold the knife in your other hand with the thumb pressing on the back of the blade. Push the knife through the wood, away from your body. This type of cut is also called the straightaway cut. For additional control or power, place the thumb of the wood-holding hand on top of the thumb on the blade, and then use the wood-holding thumb as a pivot while you rotate the wrist of your knife-holding hand. This maneuver is often called the thumb-pushing cut or lever cut.



*Push cut*

## Paring Cut

The paring cut gives you a great deal of control but requires you to cut toward your thumb. Wear a thumb guard and be aware of the knife position at all times, especially if it slips beyond the anticipated stopping point. To perform the paring cut, which is also called a draw cut, hold the wood in one hand. Hold the knife in the other hand with four fingers. The cutting edge points toward your thumb. Rest the thumb of your knife-holding hand on the wood behind the area you want to carve. Extend the thumb as much as possible. Close your hand, pulling the knife toward your thumb, to slice through the wood. This is the same action used to peel (or pare) potatoes.



*Pairing cut*

## V-Shaped Cut

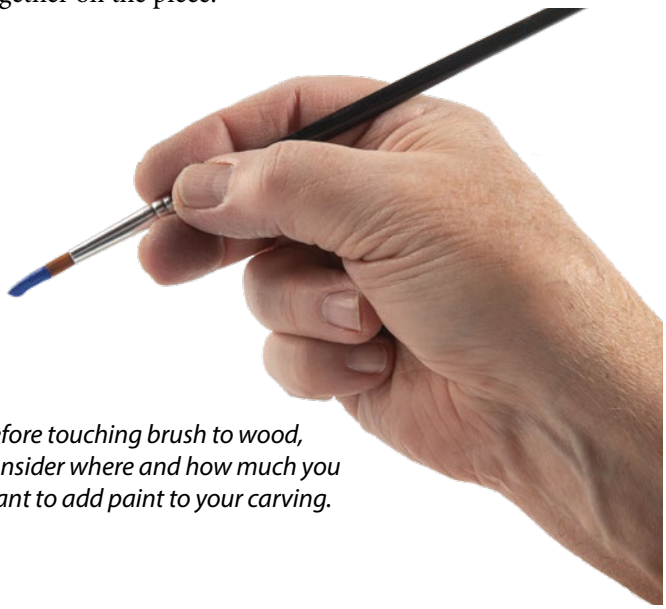
To make a V-shaped cut, hold the knife the same way you do when making a paring cut. Anchor the thumb of the knife hand against the wood, and then cut in at an angle with the tip of the knife. Rotate the wood, anchor your thumb on the other side of the cut, and cut in at an angle, running beside the first cut. Angle the two cuts so the deepest parts of the cuts meet in the center. This creates a V-shaped groove. Use the center of the cutting edge to make intersecting angled cuts on the corner of a blank, creating V-shaped notches.



*V-shaped cut*

# Painting and Finishing

Take time to look over your piece before painting. Remove all fuzzies, knife marks, and pencil marks. Make sure your carving is ready to paint or your mistakes will show. Use a knife and a V-tool to remove blemishes and undercut areas you want to shade with paint; considering how you'll paint as you carve will help the carved and painted details work together on the piece.



*Before touching brush to wood, consider where and how much you want to add paint to your carving.*

## A Word on Brushes

Start with good-quality brushes and maintain them. Before you store your brushes, make sure to wash all the paint out of the bristles with water and soap, such as Murphy® Oil Soap.

## Color Scheme

Decide on a color scheme before you begin and stay with your choice all the way to the end. On any given project, try to use the same color in three different places. If you want a color to stand out, though, only use that color once.

If you wish to have the woodgrain show through, thin your paints by mixing acrylic paint with at least a few drops of water to create a small pool of thinned color. Add very light coats of this mixture to your carving; it may take two or three coats to reach the desired strength. You can always add more coats later; it is not easy to remove them. Some colors will dry darker, so allow time for them to dry before applying another coat. *Note: White and metallic paints do not dilute well and should be used at full strength wherever possible.*

## Sealing

Before painting, mix boiled linseed oil (BLO) with a small amount of burnt sienna oil paint, squeezing about an inch into a 16-oz. container. Mix it well, and then brush it over the entire piece. This seals the carving, creating a better painting surface. It can also create a natural skin tone, depending on the subject. Wipe off as much as you can as soon as you can, and then dispose of the paper towels appropriately, as they can spontaneously combust. Let the carving dry for 12 to 24 hours, and then you are ready to paint.

## Drybrushing

Drybrushing is a technique that allows you to highlight different areas on a carving. It can add interest to a carved texture on fur or a beard, draw attention to prominent facets on a flat-plane carving, or add a distressed, folk-art look to a decorative design. If you choose to drybrush your carving, make sure to use a color that contrasts with the surface you're painting. Wait until the carving is dry, take a small amount of paint on the tip of a flat dry brush, and then dab it several times on a cloth or paper towel.

Drag the bristles lightly over the area you want to drybrush. You only want to catch the high points, so no need to push hard.

Make sure to take your time when painting. Look at how other people paint and don't be afraid to try new techniques. Create your own style and have some fun!

*Before drybrushing.*



*After drybrushing.*



*Drybrushing highlights the facets on a carving for a folk-art look.*

# Projects

From Santas and ornaments to hand-carved gifts for all your friends and family, these Christmas-themed projects will keep you busy carving all holiday season long. No matter your carving level or style, this section has a project for anyone looking to get into the Christmas spirit!













### Materials

- Basswood, ⅜" (10mm) thick: 3" x 6" (7.6cm x 15.2cm)
- Sandpaper: 150-grit
- Screw eye with a ⅜₂" (3mm)-dia. hole: ½" (1.3cm) long
- Graphite paper or acetone
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Ceramcoat®: black, medium flesh, navy, tompte red, white
- Varnish: water-based clear

### Tools

- Carving knife
- Assorted gouges and micro tools
- Paintbrushes: #0, #02, #03 round, #6, #10 shader

# Peekaboo Santa Ornaments

*By Carolea Hower*

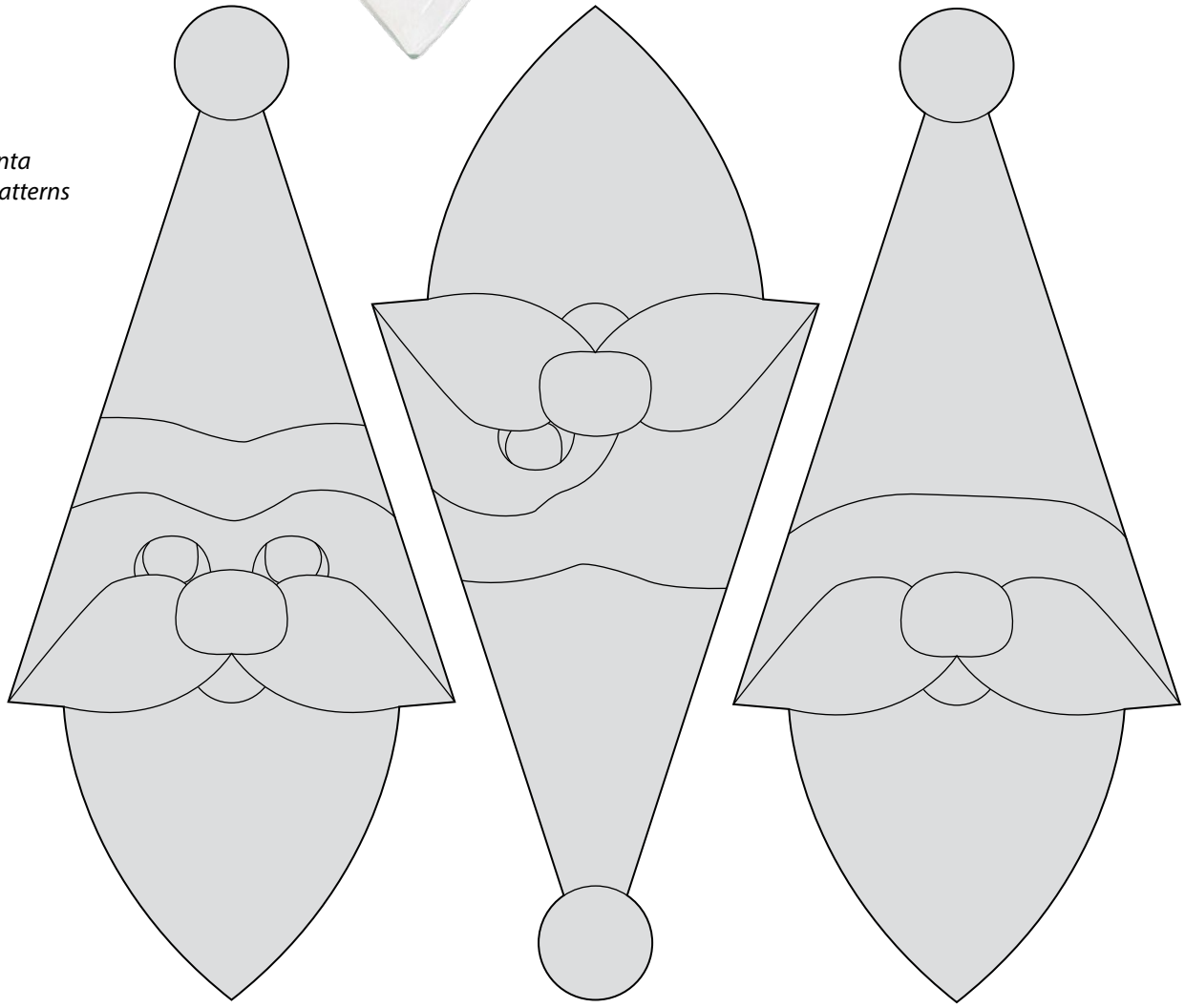
Every year I design a new Christmas ornament. My original pattern for this year was a Santa Claus with a droopy hat covering one eye. Several of my carving students do not like to carve eyes, so I redrew the pattern with the hat covering both eyes. Then, after seeing the one-eyed Santa, a customer ordered her ornaments with both eyes showing. We've provided all three patterns for you. Feel free to adapt them further to fit your mood and skill level.

## Carving the Ornaments

Transfer the pattern to the wood. Use graphite paper, or place a fresh laser copy facedown on the blank. Wearing rubber gloves in an area with adequate ventilation, apply acetone to the back of the paper. The acetone will soak through the paper, pick up bit of the toner, and transfer a mirror image of the pattern to the blank. Then, cut the blank to shape, and carve it using the tools of your choice. I use a variety of carving knives, gouges, and micro tools. *Note: Make sure your knife is sharpened before you make the first cut. A dull knife will cause more damage than a sharp one.*




*Peekaboo Santa Ornaments Patterns*



# Chimney Santa

*By Bob Kozakiewicz*

I give ornaments to my family members and friends for Christmas each year, and my list seems to be growing longer and longer. As such, I am always looking for something quick and easy to carve, like this Chimney Santa ornament. It's a simple whittling project for beginners that requires just a carving knife; most new carvers can complete one in just a few hours. Carve one for everyone on your list and remind them Santa *nose* if they've been bad or good!

### Materials

- Basswood, 1" (2.5cm) square: 5¼" (13.3cm) long
- Pencil
- Acrylic paint, such as Liquitex™: Naphthol crimson, parchment, titanium white; such as Americana®: medium flesh, tomato red; such as Craftsmart:® brick red, wine
- Glue: cyanoacrylate (CA) or tacky, such as Aleene's (put trademark copyright symbol here) (optional)
- Finish: satin spray lacquer, such as Deft®
- Screw eye: brass, ⅛" (3mm) opening
- Ribbon: ¼" (6mm) wide
- Small decorative lights (optional)

### Tools

- Band saw (optional)
- Carving knife
- Ruler
- Paintbrushes



# Prepping and Carving




**Mark the chimney cap.** With a pencil and ruler, mark a horizontal line on all four sides 2¼" (5.7cm) up from the bottom of the block. Then mark another line on all four sides ⅜" (1cm) above the first one.




**Mark the edges of the chimney.** From the lower line, mark vertical lines running down on all of the corners approximately 1/16" (2mm) in from the edges. *Note: You will draw eight of these marks.* The measurements do not have to be exact.




**Shape the chimney.** Carve a stop cut around the lower chimney line. Use a knife. Carve off the edges of the block on all four sides toward the 1/16" (2mm) marks and up to the stop cut. If desired, you can do this with a band saw to save time.




**Draw the chimney bricks.** Using a ruler, mark five parallel horizontal lines on all four sides ⅜" (1cm) apart, moving up from the bottom to the lower chimney line.

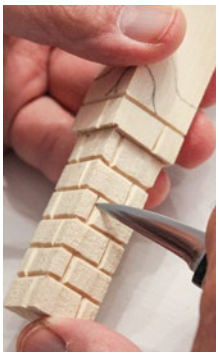



**Finish drawing the bricks.** Mark alternating vertical lines between the horizontal lines on all four sides. Then draw the Santa. Rough sketch Santa's nose and hat above the chimney.




**Begin carving the chimney bricks.** Make long, deliberate V-cuts to carve the horizontal lines of the bricks on all four sides.



**Finish carving the bricks.** Using short V-cuts, carve the vertical portions of the bricks on all four sides. Don't forget the bricks on the chimney cap.




**Begin carving the Santa.** Round off the nose and define the hat trim. I like to leave lots of carved facets on the nose to give it texture. Then begin shaping the hat.



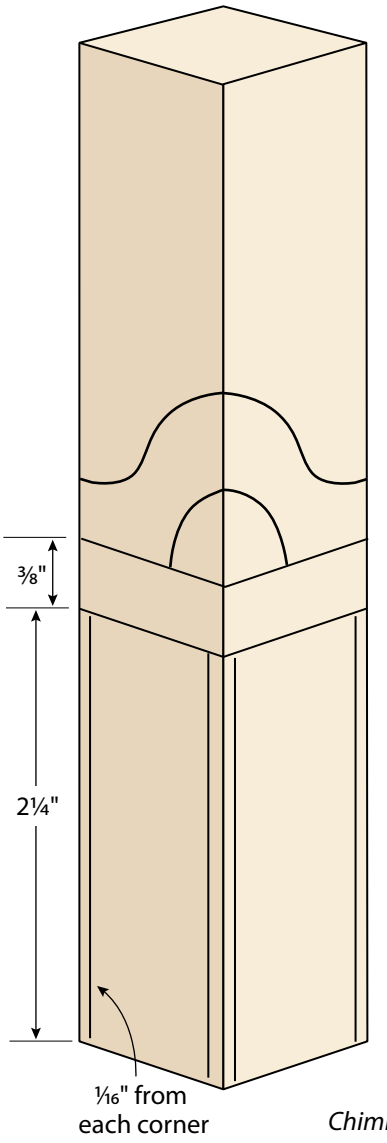

**Finish shaping the hat.** Add a slight rippling movement to the body of the hat and round the trim edges. Add other details or embellishments as desired; you can make the hat more twisty or straight depending on your preference. Carve the ball on top of the hat and clean up any fuzzies with the knife.

## Painting and Finishing

Paint the entire chimney with undiluted parchment, making sure the paint gets into the crevices of the bricks. When that layer dries, randomly paint just the brick surfaces with undiluted brick red, making sure not to allow the paint to bleed into the crevices. Leave several bricks unpainted. Paint the remaining (unpainted) bricks with undiluted wine. Then paint Santa's nose with undiluted medium flesh, add a dab of tomato red into the end, and blend it into the rest of the nose. Paint the hat trim and ball with undiluted titanium white. Finally, paint the hat with diluted Naphthol crimson.

While painting fur or hat trim, I often use a stippling technique. Do this by loading your brush with paint and stippling (or dabbing) the paint onto the carving. This technique is best done with a thicker variety, like Liquitex. It leaves a bit of a rough finish behind, which imitates fur trim better than painting alone does. *Note: Because of the thicker application, paint applied in this way takes longer to dry.*

When the paint is dry, seal the carving with a coat of satin spray lacquer; I used Deft. *Note: Spray combustible finishes, such as spray lacquer, outside where there is plenty of ventilation.* Add a screw eye to the top of the hat and hang with a ribbon or colored string of your choice.




*Chimney Santa Drawing.*



## Decorate Your Santa

Embellish your finished carving with Christmas lights, if desired. Cut a short string of twelve lights and glue them to the chimney using CA glue, or a tacky glue such as Aleene's Original Fast Grab Tacky Glue. Small decorative lights are available in most craft stores.



# Simple Santa

*By Dave Stetson*

My goal with this piece was to create a stylized Santa that was quick to carve but could be decorated in multiple ways depending on how you carve the details. I'm confident that even a beginner can finish this piece in under an hour. The only way to ruin this project is to overthink it and put in too much detail. All of the thinking is in the basic design, before you make the first cut.

I designed this figure using a simple isosceles triangle as the base, leaving a little extra wood on the top and bottom of the hat, the mustache, and the beard. For the math fans, the bottom of the beard conforms to the phi formula (the golden ratio) because it is 1.618 of the distance from the top of the hat to the base. The same ratio holds true for the length of the hat compared to the length of the face. Beginners don't need to worry about this because I've already figured the ratio out for you.

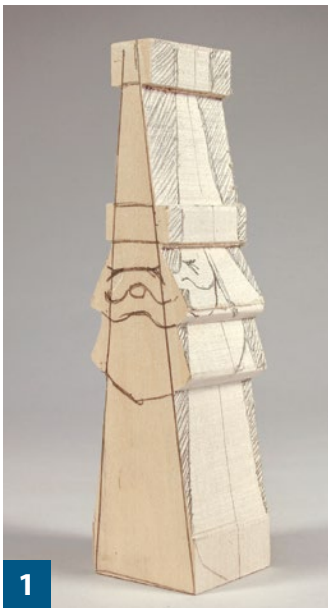
### Materials:

- Basswood, 1½" (3.8cm) thick: 1½" x 6" (3.8cm x 15.2cm)
- Acrylic paints: assorted Christmas colors, light blush color (see Painting and Finishing on page 20)
- Boiled linseed oil
- Permanent ink marker, such as Pigma Micron® Archival ink marker, made by Sakura

### Tools:

- Carving knife
- Small V-tool (optional)
- Paintbrushes

# Simple Santa: Roughing Out the Project




**Transfer the front-view pattern to the blank and cut it.** Draw the side view and shade the areas to remove. As you prepare to carve, remember that all of the cuts should be shallow and long to create a flat-plane look.




**Make a stop cut on the hairline.** Use a carving knife. Then, make stop cuts at the top and bottom of the hat brim and below the pom-pom. Carve up to the stop cuts to remove the shaded wood.




**Make stop cuts around the beard, mustache, nose, and hat.** Use the knife. Then, carve up to the stop cuts to separate these elements.




**Redraw the hairline, mustache, and beard.**




**Carve the hairline.** Use a knife or small V-tool.




**Cut the sides of the beard and mustache.** Connect these two elements with the hairline.




**Round the corners of the body.** Use the knife to remove any sharp corners from the base to the beard.




**Use the knife to carve the angles under the nose.** Remove a three-corner chip from the side of the nose above the mustache. This separates the nose from the mustache and creates the cheeks. Smooth and shape the bottom of the mustache.



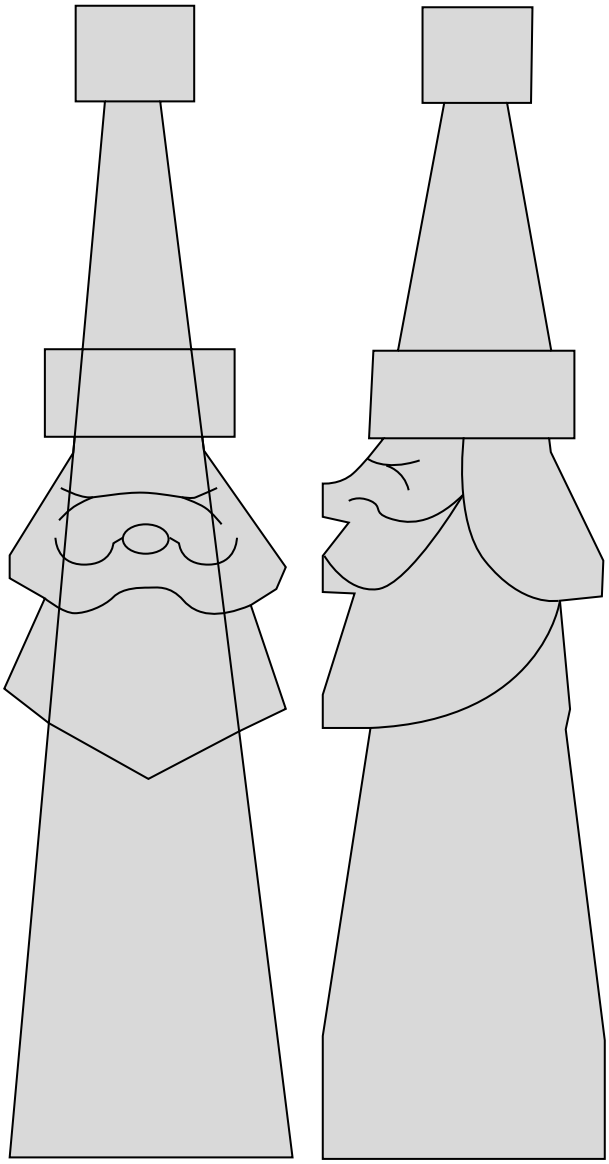
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**Make stop cuts along the eyes and nostril openings.** Use the knife. Carve up to the stop cuts to create simple eyes and to open the nostril holes. Add a series of simple V-shaped cuts for hair texture on the mustache.



10

**Round the ball on the end of the nose.** Deepen the nasolabial fold (the smile line) under the cheek. Carve a few wrinkles under the eyes to create the bags. Add simple V-shaped cuts to the beard to simulate hair texture. Carve an opening for the mouth. Finish rounding the hat and body.



*Simple Santa Patterns*



## Painting and Finishing

Start by drawing any fine lines with a permanent ink marker; I use a Pigma Micron Archival ink marker, made by Sakura, which doesn't fade over time like some permanent markers do. Then, apply a liberal coat of boiled linseed oil to the carving and wipe off the excess with paper towels. Dispose of the oil-soaked paper towels carefully; they can spontaneously combust.

Paint the carving with several light washes of acrylic paint. The goal is to build up color slowly so you can still see the wood grain through the paint. The exposed skin is the actual color of the oiled basswood, but I add a light blush color to the cheeks and lips to make them stand out. Paint the rest of the carving as desired.



# Whittling a Santa

*By Gayle Ihlenfeldt*

Wooden Santas are iconic carving projects; this one can be carved with just a few tools. And you can customize this carving for different friends or relatives by changing the toys you include in the sack.

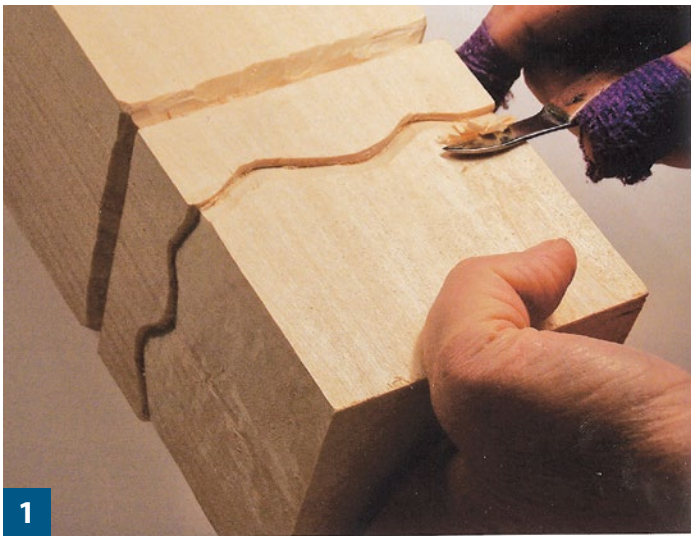
### Materials:

- Basswood, 4" (10.2cm) thick: 4" x 10" (10.2cm x 25.4cm)
- Pencil
- Acrylic paints: black, blue, green, medium flesh, metallic gold, metallic silver, purple, red, white, yellow
- Spray finish: clear matte
- Antiquing medium, such as FolkArt® #819
- Wood conditioner

### Tools:

- Carving knife
- Micro V-tool
- #11 gouge: ⅛" (3mm) (optional)
- Ruler

## Santa: Carving the Chimney




**Rough out the chimney. Draw a line around the blank 4" (102mm) from the bottom.** Make a stop cut straight into the blank on the line. Then carve down to the stop cut to shape the top of the chimney. Draw the snow, make a stop cut straight in on the line, and then remove ⅛" (3mm) of wood from the chimney to separate the snow from the chimney.

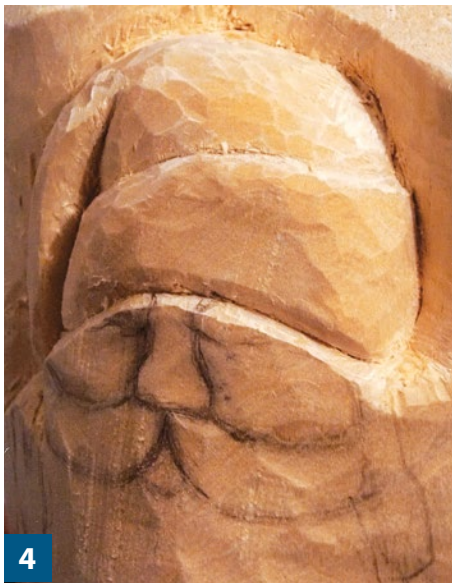



**Finish the chimney.** Round the corners of the snow. Draw lines ½" (13mm) apart on the chimney for the bricks. Mark the 1⅛" (29mm)-wide bricks. Stagger the bricks from layer to layer. With a knife or V-tool, carve grooves along the lines to separate the bricks.

## Santa: Carving the Santa




**Establish the shape of the Santa.** Use a push cut to round the corners of the blank, removing ¼" (6mm) of wood. Designate one corner as the front, and deepen the stop cut on top of the chimney to ¾" (19mm). Repeat the process on the back. Mark the bottom of the beard 2 ¼" (57mm) from the chimney, and then round the belly from the beard to the top of the chimney.




**Carve the hat.** Draw the face, hat, coat, and belt buckle. Make a stop cut around the hat and hat trim. Carve the top of the hat and round it into the stop cut. Carve the fold where the top of the hat flops over. Then carve the fur trim.




**Carve the face.** Make stop cuts around the beard, mustache, bottom lip, alongside the nose, along the eye line, and around the pom-pom. Carve up to the stop cuts around the beard and pom-pom to separate these elements from the body. Carve up to the mustache and lip to separate them from the beard. Round the cheeks up to the brow and down to the mustache. Carve the center of the mustache, and shape the top of the lip. Refine the shape of the nose.




**Shape the top of the hat.** Measure back 1" (25mm) from the front corner and mark the top of the hat. Carefully remove the wood above the hat back to this line to separate the hat from the bag of toys.




**Shape the arms.** Draw the arms. Make a stop cut along the shoulder and carve up to it. Make stop cuts alongside the arms, and then round the belly and back up to the arms. Then round the arms. Make stop cuts along both sides of the cuffs. Carve the sleeves down into the cuffs, and then carve the hands up into the cuffs. Use the point of the knife to shape the hands.




**Shape the coat.** Redraw the front of the coat and the belt buckle. Make stop cuts around these elements. Round the coat into the fur trim. Carve down the belt and separate it from the coat and belt buckle. Then carve out the inside of the belt buckle. Smooth the belt by holding the blade nearly flat. Give the coat texture by making small upward-curving cuts.

## Santa: Carving the Presents




**Carve the top of the bag.** Draw the top of the bag, and make a ⅜" (10mm)-deep stop cut along the top. Carve and shape the bag into the stop cut. Leave a raised rim. For a different look, use a ⅛" (3mm) #11 gouge to add texture to the bag.




**Begin carving the presents.** Draw the drum and ball, and carefully round them. Separate these elements from the square presents and the larger drum in the back. You can carve other presents to personalize the Santa. In the past, I've carved teddy bears, trains, boats, and cars.




**Carve the bow.** Make stop cuts around the bow, and then carve the present down to the stop cuts to make the bow stick out. Make stop cuts around the center knot, and then round the knot and the bows into the stop cuts.



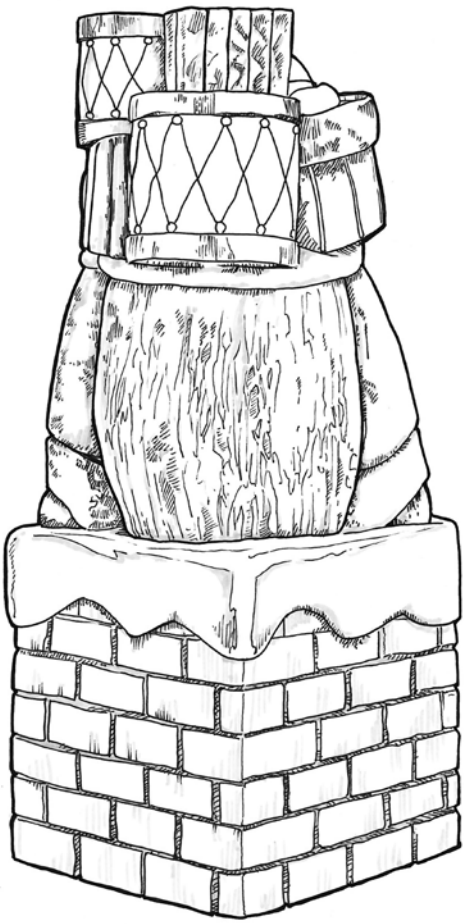

**Finish carving the Santa.** Carve shallow grooves along the detail lines of the drums and presents. Remove the wood in the center of the drums so the rims stick out. Remove the wood from below the lid on the present with the bow to separate the lid from the sides. Then carve the beard and hair texture. I use a micro V-tool, but you could use a knife.

## Painting the Santa

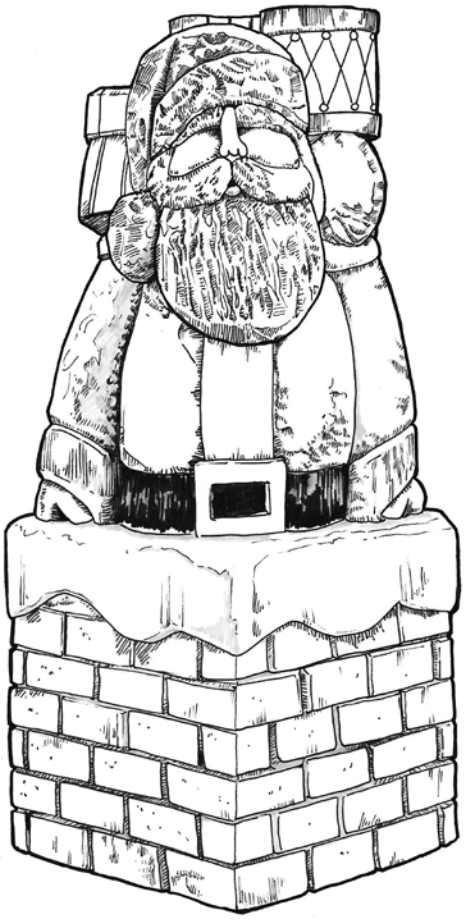
Clean up the cuts, and then scrub the carving to remove any remaining pencil marks and oil from your hands; let it dry. To prepare for painting, I apply wood conditioner according to the manufacturer's instructions. Then make washes by mixing acrylic paints with water and paint the carving. Build up the color by painting several thin coats. You can use my color scheme or choose your own. Let the paint dry. Seal the carving with a coat of spray matte finish. Then apply FolkArt antiquing medium #819 according to the manufacturer's instructions. When the antiquing medium is dry, spray the carving with another coat of matte finish.

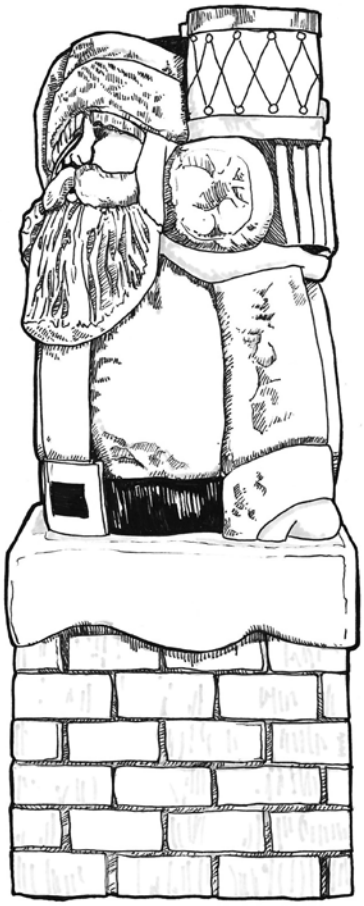














# Grouchy Santa Ornament

*By Steve Kulp*

You'll only need some basswood, a couple of hand tools, and a few hours to complete this curmudgeonly ornament. Leave it solid or hollow out the bottom to make it lighter to hang on a tree—the latter is a great way to experiment with some tools you may not have used before!

### Materials:

- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) square: 8" (20.3cm) long
- Graphite transfer paper
- Screw eye
- Acrylic paints, such as Apple Barrel®: cardinal crimson, matte lite mocha, satin timeless gray, satin titanium white; such as FolkArt: black, classic green
- Danish oil: fruitwood
- Finish, such as Krylon® clear matte spray

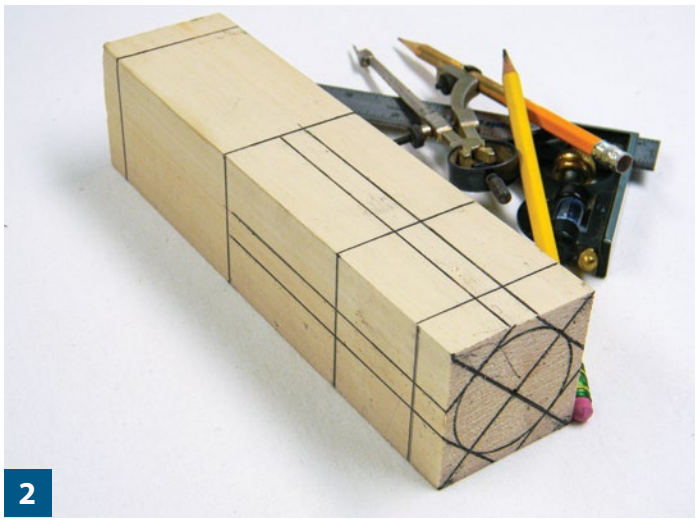
### Tools:

- Pull saw or band saw
- V-tool, 70°: ⅜" (10mm)
- V-tool, 45°: ¼" (6mm)
- Knives: carving, hook
- #3 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- #5 gouges: ⅛" (3mm), ⅜" (10mm)
- #8 gouge: ⅛" (3mm)
- #11 gouges: 1/16" (2mm), ⅛" (3mm)
- Drill with bits: 1/16" (2mm), ¾" (19mm)-dia.
- Combination square
- Compass
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Rotary tool with bit: large flame-shaped carbide point (optional)

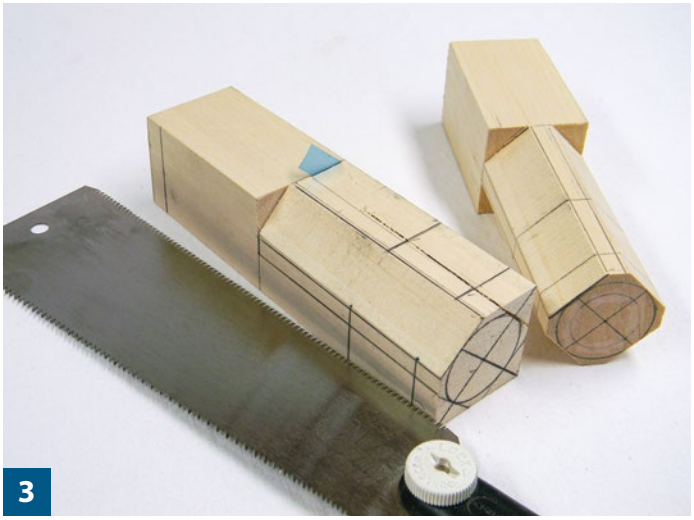
# Shaping the Hat



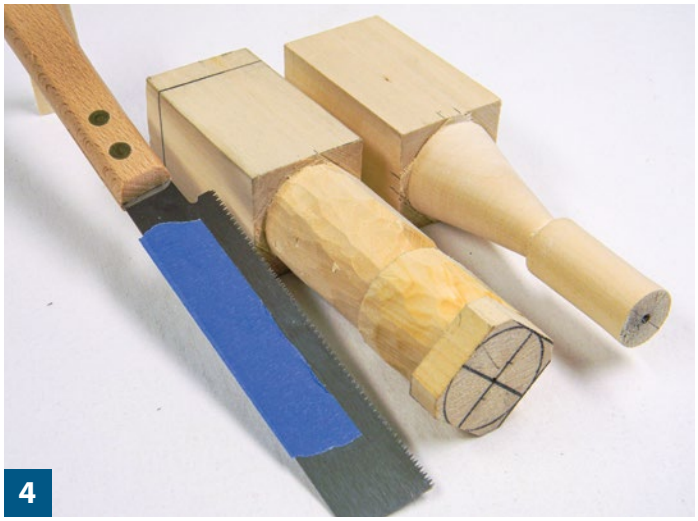
**Draw the basic landmarks.** Start with a blank 2" (5.1cm) square and 8" (20.3cm) long. Measuring from the top of the blank, draw the first line ½" (1.3cm) down, the second line 2" (5.1cm) down, the third line 4 ½" (11.4cm) down, and the fourth line 7 ½" (19.1cm) down.



**Find the center of the top of the blank.** From that point, use a compass to draw a circle 1 ⅝" (4.1cm) in diameter. Draw in the remaining pattern lines with a pencil, or use a combination square to create a square around the circle and extend the lines down the sides of the blank. Stop at the third line from the top.



**Thin the hat area.** Make a stop cut in at the third line from the top on every corner of the blank. Then saw down from the lines of the square on the top of the blank to the stop cuts. I used a Japanese pull saw, but you can use a band saw if you prefer. Drill a 1/16" (2mm)-dia. hole ¾" (1.9cm) deep in the center of the blank. This will be used for the hanger.



**Round the hat.** Use a knife to taper each section toward the top of the blank. Leave the top section as a safety stop. Use the circle you drew in Step 2 as a target to keep the tapering even around the hat. When you're done, the carving should be 1 ½" (3.8cm) in diameter at the third line, tapering down to ⅝" (1.6cm) in diameter at the second. Then from the second line to the first line, round to 1" (2.5cm) in diameter. Remove the ½" (1.3cm) safety stop at the top and discard it. *Note: If you have a lathe, you can save time and turn the blank to all the above dimensions, still leaving the blank square below the third line.*

## Shaping the Body and Face




**Establish the face.** Photocopy the pattern and transfer it to the entire perimeter of the square using graphite paper and a pencil. Make sure the line through Santa's nose coincides with a corner. Trace the lines you just created with a ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool. Then pare down the top of the square so it matches the line of the hat brim and mittens on the pattern. Use the knife.




**Establish the back of the body.** Deepen the cuts on the arms, cuffs, thumbs, and mittens with the knife and ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool. With the V-tool tilted toward the hair, deepen the cuts on the collar top and the bottom of the hat brim. Then, tilting the V-tool, deepen the central back area between the collar bottom and backs of the arms. Trim down the corners and round the back toward the arms, deepening any cuts as needed.




**Establish the front of the body.** With the ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool, deepen all the lines of the arms, cuffs, and mittens. Tilting the V-tool slightly out toward the arms (with the point angled toward the beard), trace around the outside of the beard. Cut the bottom of the hat brim by tilting the same tool toward the face, cutting carefully around the raised eyebrow. Recess the eyebrow and the notch for the nose under the brim of the hat. Use the knife.



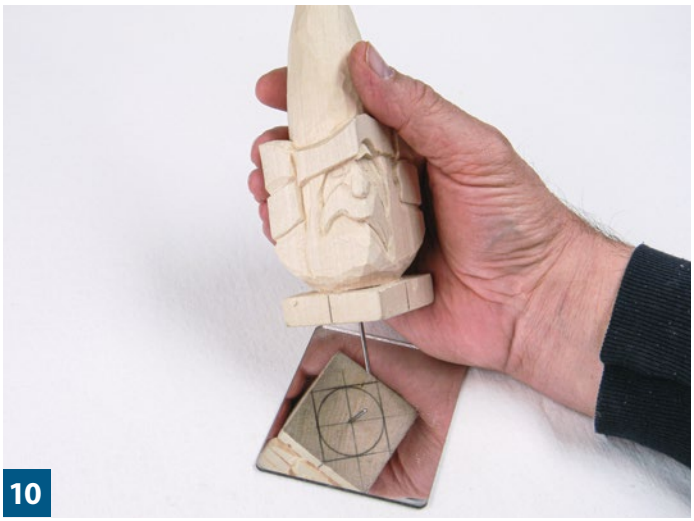



**Add the facial details.** With a 1/16" (2mm) #11 gouge, shape the bridge of the nose, bring down the cheeks, and undercut the hat brim and eyebrow. Round the bottom of the nose; use a ⅜" (10mm) #5 gouge. Trace the inside beard lines and top of the mustache with the ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool tilted on its side toward the nose. Taper the mustache up to the nose; use a ¼" (6mm) #3 gouge and a ⅛" (3mm) #5 gouge. Shape the nostrils with the ⅛" (3mm) #5 gouge.




**Refine the facial details.** Draw the eyes, and follow them with the knife. Use the ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool tool to make deep cuts along the bottom of the mustache. Then start forming the chin ½" (1.3cm) below the center of the mustache. Use the knife. With the 1/16" (2mm) #11 gouge, further separate the hair from the arms and hat; it should look like the beard overlaps the arms and the hat brim overlaps the beard. Clean up all facial details with the ¼" (6mm) #3 gouge.

# Adding the Finishing Touches



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**Round the bottom.** Find the center of the bottom and drill a 1/16" (2mm)-dia. hole 3/4" (1.9cm) deep. Then, as in Step 2, make a safety stop. Use the compass to draw a circle 1 1/4" (3.2cm) in diameter around the center. With a combination square, draw a square around the circle. Then make a stop cut around the carving, 1/2" (1.3cm) up from the bottom. Saw off the corners at the square lines. Then start rounding toward the bottom from below the lowest tip of the mustache, using the circle as a target size for the base. Use the knife. Leave a slightly pointed chin while rounding.



11

**Cut off the safety stop from the bottom.** Refine the arms, cuffs, and back of the carving with the knife. Trim the mittens so they appear to be grasping the brim of the hat. Then carve the tassel into a tear shape, with the point ending at the 1/16" (2mm) hole you made in Step 2. Add a shallow trough where the hat meets the brim; use a 1/8" (3mm) #11 gouge. Avoid the mittens as you go around.



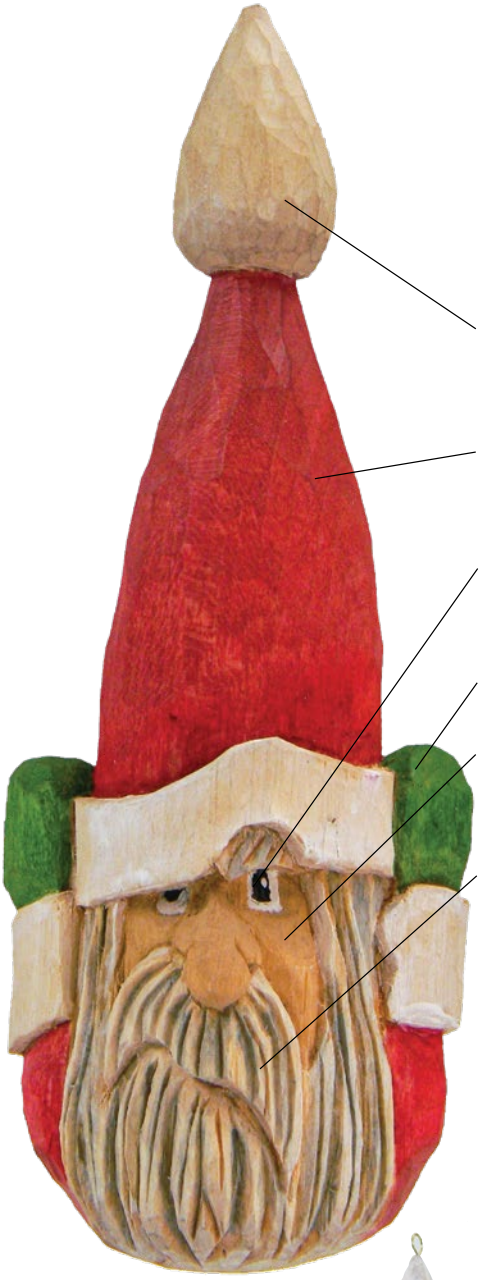
12

**Add the hair texture.** Make short, deep cuts with the 3/8" (10mm) #5 gouge, giving them a little curve to make the beard look wavy. Then make some random, long cuts amongst the existing ones with a 1/8" (3mm) #8 gouge and the 3/8" (10mm) 70° V-tool. Make thin cuts between the deep gouge cuts using a 1/4" (6mm) 45° V-tool. Texture the eyebrows with the same tool. Texture the mustache with the 3/8" (10mm) V-tool, working from the nose out and down. Extend the cuts through the bottom of the mustache.



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**Hollow the ornament.** Drill a 3/4" (19mm)-dia. hole 2 3/4" (7cm) into the bottom of the ornament at the center hole you made in Step 10. Clean up the hole with a hook knife or a rotary tool and bit. Leave about 1/4" (6mm) of wood around the perimeter of the hole so the ornament can stand on its own. If you don't want to hollow the carving, round the bottom a little more, but leave a flat space if you plan to leave it freestanding. If hanging, add a screw eye to the top.



## Painting Guide

**Hat brim, tassel, cuffs, white in eyes:** thinned satin titanium white (1)

**Hat and jacket:** thinned cardinal crimson (1)

**Pupils/irises:** unthinned black (2)

**Mittens:** thinned classic green (2)

**Skin:** thinned matte lite mocha (1)

**Beard and hair:** thinned satin titanium white, matte lite mocha, satin timeless gray (1)

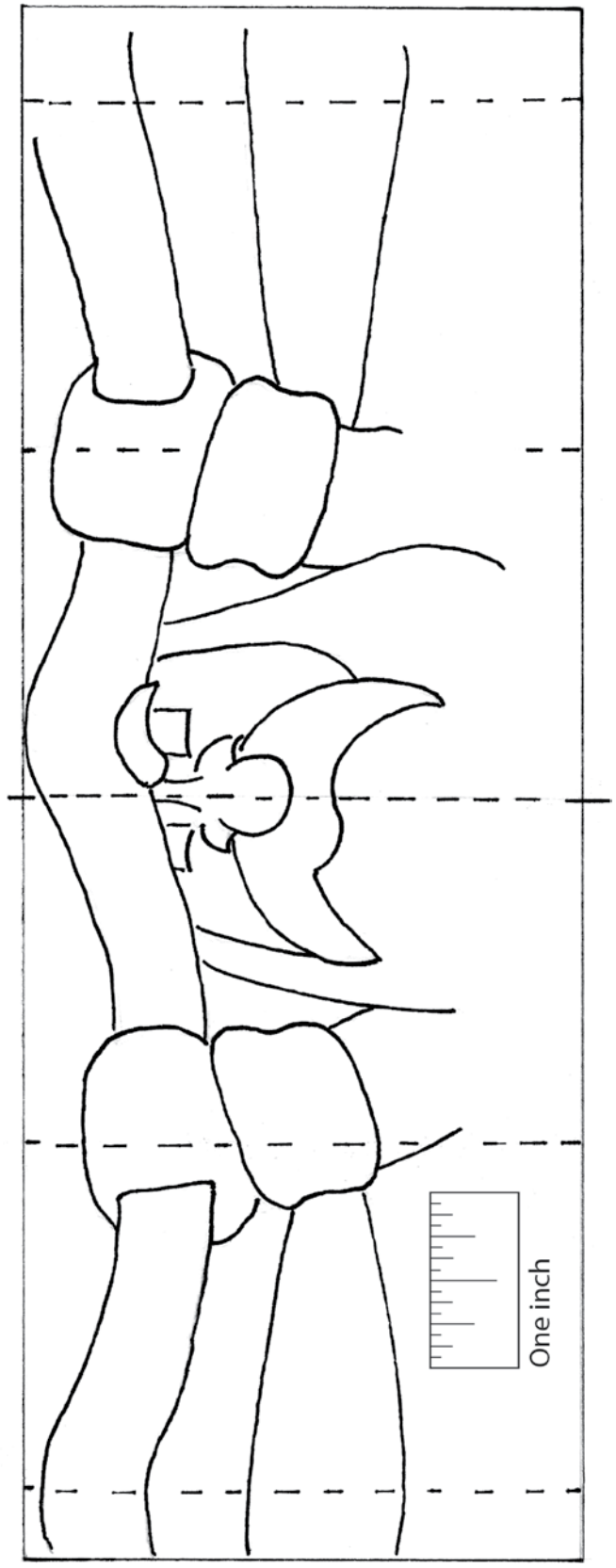
*Plaid Apple Barrel*

*FolkArt*

## Painting and Finishing

Seal the ornament with fruitwood Danish oil and let it dry. Then paint it with washes of acrylic paint, referring to the Painting Guide. Spray with several light coats of matte finish; I used Krylon.






*Grouchy Santa Ornament Pattern*




# Personalized Ribbon Ornament

*By Dwayne Gosnell*

This Santa can be personalized to fit any family name, date, or message you want. He has plenty of character, but skips all the fiddly details that come with carving a full project in the round. This design is also an excellent opportunity to get comfortable carving facial features; once you've carved ten or a dozen for your family and friends, you'll have noses, eyes, and mouths down pat!

Apply the pattern to your blank, making sure the grain runs vertically with the face, and then cut it out on a band saw. Use a pencil to draw the basic landmarks, including a centerline down the face.

## Materials

- Basswood, 1¼" (3.2cm) thick: 4" x 5" (10.2cm x 12.7cm)
- Graphite paper (optional)
- Pencil
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn® (optional)
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Ceramcoat®: black, fire red, fleshtone, hunter green, iridescent pearl, light ivory, metallic bronze, Tahiti blue, titanium white
- Boiled linseed oil
- Mineral spirits
- Paper towels
- Clear finish, such as Minwax®
- Hook or eye screw
- Decorative ribbon or string

## Tools

- Band saw
- Knife: rough out
- V-tools: ¼" (6mm) 45°, ½" (13mm) 90°
- #3 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- #7 gouge: ⅝" (16mm)
- #9 gouges: 1/16" (2mm), ¼" (6mm)
- #11 gouge: 1/16" (2mm)
- Brush: vegetable (optional)
- Hair dryer (optional)
- Paintbrushes: assorted

## Roughing Out




**Shape the ribbon.** Use a rough out knife to make stop cuts around the mitten and the beard. Use the same tool to remove wood between the two landmarks. Make long, sweeping cuts and remove about half the thickness here. Then use the rough out knife to remove 1" (2.5cm) of wood along the top of the hand; this will create the thumb. Use the knife to shape the hand by rounding off the corners. Remember, the mitten is holding the ribbon.




**Block out the face.** Use the knife to remove half the thickness from the left side of the centerline. Taper the left side of the face toward the back of the head. Block out the hat, leaving enough material for the jingle bell. Taper the right side of the face toward the back of the head. Then use the knife to round the face and taper it down toward the beard.




**Rough out the face.** Mark lines for the bottom of the hat and the bottom of the nose. With the knife, carve the wood starting just above the nose area upward to the bottom of the hat. Aim for a depth of ⅜" (10mm) under the bottom of the hat. Block out the ears on either side of the face.




**Shape the nose.** Use a ⅝" (16mm) #7 gouge to make stop cuts along the bottom of the nose. Do not cut straight into the wood. Cut slightly downward toward the beard. This will give you a nice, round nose. Then carve up to those cuts from the mustache area with the same tool. Repeat the process until the nose protrudes about ¼" (6mm) above the mustache.




**Refine the facial details.** Draw the eyes, and follow them with the knife. Use the ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool tool to make deep cuts along the bottom of the mustache. Then start forming the chin ½" (1.3cm) below the center of the mustache. Use the knife. With a 1⁄16" (2mm) #11 gouge, further separate the hair from the arms and hat; it should look like the beard overlaps the arms and the hat brim overlaps the beard. Clean up all facial details with a ¼" (6mm) #3 gouge.




**Redraw the centerline down the face.** Mark the cheeks, mustache, mouth, and the outline of the beard. Use a ½" (13mm) 90° V-tool to narrow the face by scooping out material from the bottom of the ear up toward the bottom of the hat. Bring the depth of each ear area back by about ¼" (6mm). Use the knife to create sideburns. Then carve the top of the mustache, cutting into the cheek area and leaving the mustache higher. Make a stop cut for the top of the hatband. Taper the hat into the hatband.



**Carve the nose.** Use the knife to create a triangle on either side of the nose. Make the right-side triangle (when viewed from the front) higher because Santa is winking. Make a narrow cut above the triangle, framing the nostrils on each side of the nose.



**Shape the eyes.** Using a ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge, carve a horizontal groove at the bridge of the nose. Use the same gouge to separate the eyebrows and create the eye sockets, rounding the face as you go. Use the same tool to narrow the temple area, and then to create the nostrils.



**Define the mouth.** Use the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to carve the bottom lip. Use the same tool to hollow out the center of each ear. Then, using the tip of the knife, separate the top of the lip and the bottom of the teeth. Then separate the teeth. Clean up your cuts. Use the knife to cut triangles in every spot where three areas meet. Removing these triangles will add visual interest and depth.

## Adding Details



**Add hair texture.** Use a ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool to carve the hair. Make short, overlapping cuts. Do the same for the eyebrows. Leave the bottom of the beard alone for now.



**Layer the bottom of the beard.** Push the ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool into the wood, come in toward that cut at a slight angle, and pop a chip out. Repeat randomly across the bottom of the chin. Rather than just rounding over the facial hair, this method gives the effect of a thick, full beard with layers.

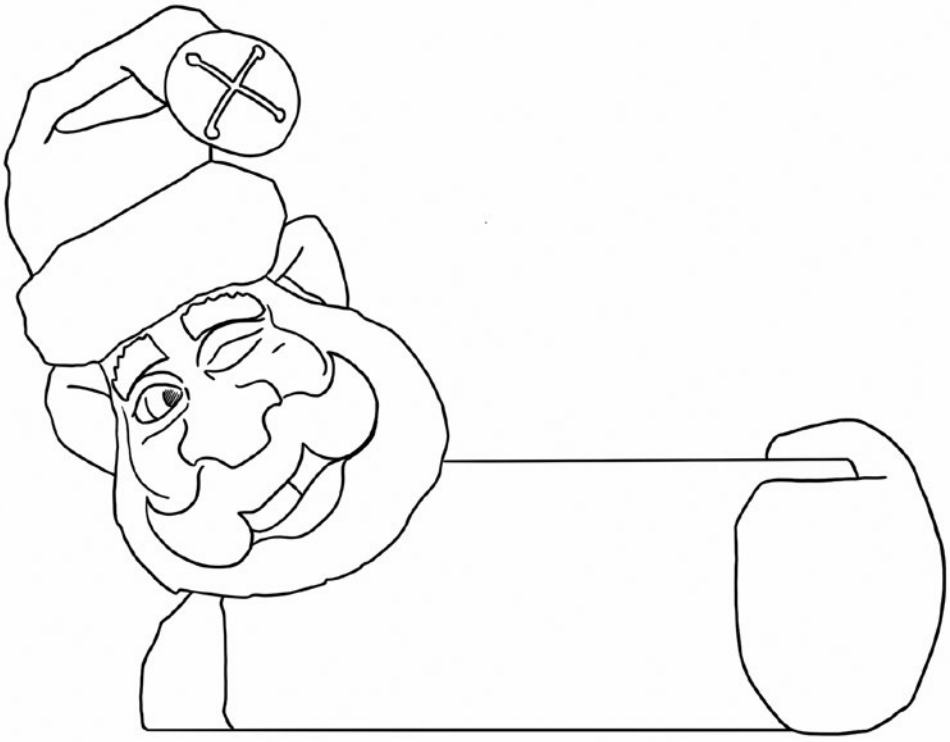
## Adding Details




**Add the fur trim.** Create texture by making small, scooping cuts across the hatband with the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge. *Note: Carving across the grain creates cleaner cuts without chipping.*




**Refine the jingle bell.** Draw two lines on the front of the bell that intersect in the middle. Use a 1/16" (2mm) #9 gouge to "drill" holes into each of the four points of the lines. Then, using the same tool, follow the lines to carve small ridges between the holes. Look the carving over with a critical eye and clean up any sharp edges or fuzzies.



*Personalized Ribbon Ornament Pattern*

## Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. Make sure all pencil marks and hidden chips are removed. If needed, wash the carving with warm water and Dawn® dish soap using a vegetable brush. Let dry and prepare three small containers of water: two for brush cleaning and one to dilute paint.

Add paint. I paint in layers, building the color as I go. Paint the skin with fleshtone or with a color of your choice. Paint the beard and mustache with light ivory. Paint the open eye with titanium white, the iris with Tahiti blue, and the pupil with black. Add a reflective dot with titanium white. I use a hair dryer in between paint colors to speed up the drying process. Paint the body and hat with fire red. Paint the hat trim with iridescent pearl. Paint the mitten with hunter green and the jingle bell with metallic bronze. I left the ribbon natural, but you can decorate it however you wish. Let dry.

Add finish. Apply a mixture of one-part boiled linseed oil to one-part mineral spirits with a brush. I do not dip my carvings. Dab the excess oils with clean paper towels. Safely dispose of oil-soaked rags per manufacturer's instructions, as they can spontaneously combust. Let the carving dry for at least two days. Then brush on a water-based acrylic finish. I find the brush technique uses less finish with more coverage than spray. Add a hook or eye screw, attach a decorative ribbon or string, and display.

# A Snowy Ride

*By Floyd Rhadigan*



After Christmas, Santa has a bit of time to spend with his North Pole pals; here he's decided to show Frosty around his new home. The key to making amusing scenes is to carve each piece separately; that flexibility lets you mix things up. Carve a reindeer or elf instead of a snowman to create a different scene.

I start with a roughout to speed up the process. To start with a block, transfer the front- and side-view patterns to the Santa blank, cut the perimeter of one view, tape the waste back on, and then cut the other view. Repeat the process for the other blanks. Round the sharp corners and start to block in Santa's nose, hands, feet, and other major landmarks. Draw a centerline down the side of Santa's face. Because his head is turned, this helps keep the right proportions on both sides of the face. Then, draw the brow line and the separation between the headgear and the face. If you're carving from a roughout, carve off all of the machine marks; uncarved areas accept paint differently from carved areas.





## Materials

- Basswood, 3" (7.6cm) thick: Santa, 4" x 5¼" (10.2cm x 13.3cm)
- Basswood, 2¼" (5.7cm) thick: snowman, 2¾" x 3¼" (7cm x 8.3cm)
- Basswood, 1" (2.5cm) thick: base, 3½" x 8" (8.9cm x 20.3cm); toboggan, 1¼" x 3½" (3.2cm x 8.9cm)
- Krylon 1311: matte finish
- Micron pen: black
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Ceramcoat: tomato spice red, medium flesh; such as JoSonja®: titanium white, carbon black, moss green, burnt umber, yellow oxide, cadmium orange, phthalo blue
- Finishing wax, such as Watco®: natural & dark
- Drywall screws: 2 each 1⅝" (4.1cm) long

## Tools

- Knives: bench, detail
- #2 gouge: ½" (13mm)
- #7 gouge: ⅜" (10mm)
- #9 gouges: 3/16" (5mm), ¼" (6mm), ½" (13mm)
- Micro gouges: 2mm, 3mm, 5mm
- V-tools: ⅛" (3mm), 3/16" (5mm), ¼" (6mm), ½" (13mm)
- Drill or pin vise with bits: ⅛" (3mm), assorted small
- Paintbrushes: assorted

# Carving Santa



**Separate the face from the hat.** Position a ¼" (6mm) V-tool with one wing on the line and carve along the line. Deepen the groove with a knife. Taper the forehead and hat into the groove. Deepen the groove as needed to maintain deep shadows while you carve the rest of the face.



**Carve the brow line.** Use a ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge. Mark the bottom of the nose, and then use a knife to carve a groove to separate the nose from the mustache. Use the gouge to deepen the eye sockets. Start to separate the nose from the cheeks.





**Shape the cheeks.** Use a knife. Mark the nostrils and stab them with a ⅜" (10mm) #7 gouge. Carve up to the stab cut with the same gouge to free the chip. Draw the top of the mustache and carve along it with the ¼" (6mm) V-tool. Round the cheeks into the grooves with a knife.



**Draw the fur trim and tops of the shoulders.** Carve along the lines with the ¼" (6mm) V-tool. Shape the tops of the shoulders with a ½" (13mm) #9 gouge. Draw the outline of the flowing mustache.





**Carve the outline of the mustache.** Use the ¼" (6mm) V-tool, and then use the V-tool to carve the line that separates the mustache from the beard. Taper the beard into the groove with a knife. Use the knife to remove a triangular chip for the mouth where the halves of the mustache meet. Draw the beard and stop-cut around it with the knife. Carve up to the stop cut to separate the beard from the body.



**Deepen the eye sockets.** Use the 3/16" (5mm) #9 gouge along the bridge of the nose. Draw a lateral line across the eyes to keep them aligned with the bridge of the nose.





**Shape the arms with the knife.** Mark the sleeve cuffs and carve alongside the lines with the ¼" (6mm) V-tool. Draw the thumb and end of the mitten, and then carve along the lines with the ¼" (6mm) V-tool to isolate the thumbs and the tips of the mitten from the hands. Refine the cuffs and mittens with the knife.



**Carve the rough beard, mustache, and hair texture.** Use the 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 gouge. Carve flowing lines, and avoid straight lines. Deepen the grooves and break up the hair masses with a ⅛" (3mm) V-tool. Mark the fur trim on the bottom of the coat and carve along it with a ½" (13mm) V-tool. Use a knife to carve the coat down so the trim protrudes. Repeat on the bottom of the trim.





**Rough out the shoes with the knife.** His front foot is stepping forward, so the toes are up in the air and the heel on the back foot is up in the air. Use a knife to shape the bottoms of the feet. Use the knife and the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to shape the top of the shoes and the bottom of the fur trim. Use the same gouge to remove the wood between the feet. Refine the feet with the knife.





**Draw and carve notches for the heels.** Use the carving knife. Separate the sole and heel from the upper with a 3⁄16" (5mm) V-tool. Add wrinkles to the tops of the shoes with a 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 gouge.





## Carving Eyes

If you're right-handed, carve the right eye first, so you can see it when you are working on the left eye. If you're left-handed, carve the left eye first.

**Define the eyes.** Use a 2mm micro gouge to make a deep spot near the bridge of the nose on both eyes. Draw the upper and lower eyelids. Use a detail knife to make stop cuts around the upper eyelids; carve up to the stop cuts to begin separating the eyeball from the lids. Repeat the process for the lower lids as you round the eyeballs.



**Carve between the upper eyelid and the brow.** Use a ⅛" (3mm) V-tool to add shadows to the eye sockets. Use the same V-tool to carve the bags under the eyes. Use a 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 gouge to carve the divot between the eyebrows.



**Carve the fur texture.** Use a ⅜" (10mm) #7 gouge to make small divots. Stab in the nostril openings with a 4mm micro gouge and free the chip with a knife. (Use a knife because if you pry at all when carving with the gouge, it will snap off the top of the nostril.)



**Add the staff.** Use a knife to carve a small flat spot in the hand. Drill a ⅛" (3mm)-dia. hole in the flat spot. I use a pin vise, but you can use a power drill. Enlarge the hole with a micro gouge. Carve the staff from scrap wood and glue it in place.

## Carving the Snowman



**Draw the hat brim and the crown.** Carve above and below the brim with a ¼" (6mm) V-tool. Use a knife to start rounding the crown. Round the head up to the hat brim and down to the neck. Then round the brim.



**Mark the outline of the scarf.** Carve away the wood around it with a knife. Round the shoulders as you deepen the stop cut around the scarf. Carve up to the stop cut to separate the scarf from the rest of the snowman. Draw the tops of the cheeks.



**Draw the arms, rump, and legs.** Separate them with a knife. Then, remove the excess wood from the chest and belly with the knife on both sides.



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**Carve the feet, legs, and belly.** Shape the feet, which are splayed out with the heels closer than the toes, and then separate the legs with a knife. Use a ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to carve the ankles and thin the tops of the feet. Then shape the belly with the knife.



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**Carve the face.** Use the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to carve a channel just above the cheek lines. The groove should be deeper on the sides to create a shallow bridge of the nose. Thin the temple areas slightly with a knife as you thin the brim of the hat.



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**Draw the eyes.** Stab in the tops using a 5mm micro gouge. Carve up to the stop cuts with a detail knife to start rounding the eyes. Then make stop cuts where the cheeks meet the eyes, and round each eye down to the stop cut. Use the knife to carve a groove to create a deep shadow where the head meets the hat. Make a dot where the nose will be located, and then draw the smile.



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**Carve along the smile lines.** Use the 3⁄16" (5mm) V-tool. Use the detail knife to deepen the groove and open the mouth. The V-groove keeps the knife from slipping as you carve the mouth deeper. Thin the brim of the hat. Use a 3mm micro gouge or a small drill bit to carve a small hole for the nose. Carve a pointed nose from scrap. Test the fit and set the nose aside.



22

**Carve between the arms with a knife.** Be careful, because it's easy to break off the scarf. Round the back and arms, and then carve the separation between the arms and the rump. Clean the back and arms with a ½" (13mm) #2 gouge. Then use the knife to carve simple hands.



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**Remove any remaining machine marks with a knife.** Carve along the top of the brim with a 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 gouge to give it contour and to separate the crown from the brim. Draw the hat brim, and then carve along the top of the band with the 3⁄16" (5mm) V-tool. Then, use the same V-tool to carve where the band meets the brim to create a more vertical angle. Use the ⅛" (3mm) V-tool to texture the scarf. Carve wrinkles in the scarf with the 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 gouge.





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**Cut the sled to shape with a band saw.** Remove the saw marks with a knife. Match the curve on the inside of the sled with the sweep of a gouge, and then use the gouge to clean up the inside of the curve. Round the sharp corners with a knife. Use a ⅛" (3mm) V-tool to carve detail lines on the sled.



25

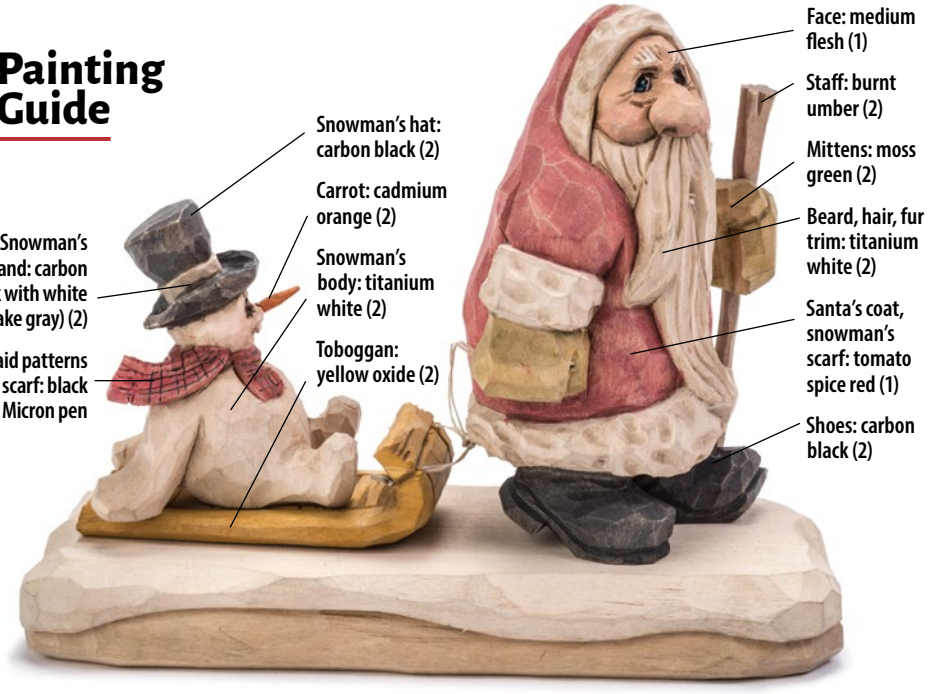


**Carve the base.** Use a knife to remove the sharp edges on the top and to create snowdrifts. Remove the machine marks. Then draw the bottom edge of the overhanging snow, and then make a stop cut along that line with knife. Use a knife to carve up to the stop cut to separate the overhanging snow from the base.

## Painting the Carving

Scrub the carving with warm water and dish soap, and let it dry. Before painting, apply two quick coats of Krylon 1311 matte finish so the thinned paints don't bleed into each other. Unless otherwise noted, I thin a few drops of paint, or a pea-sized amount of tube paints, with an eyedropper full of water. After the paint dries, seal the carving with a few coats of Krylon matte finish. Mix equal parts Watco natural finishing wax and Watco dark finishing wax. Apply the mixture to the entire carving, including the base, with a large round brush. Blot the excess with paper towels and allow the wax to dry. Then buff it with clean paper towels. *Note: Dispose of the paper towels carefully; the boiled linseed oil in the wax can cause the papers to spontaneously combust.*

## Painting Guide




### Santa, Snowman Eyes



Upper eyelid shadows: barely thinned carbon black (2)

Pupil highlights: titanium white (2)

Background: titanium white (2)

Pupils: carbon black

Iris first coat: carbon black (2) (make both eyes look in the same direction)

Iris second coat: phthalo blue (2) mixed with a little titanium white (leave a black ring around iris)

Bottom crescent of iris: phthalo blue (2) mixture with a little more titanium white (2)

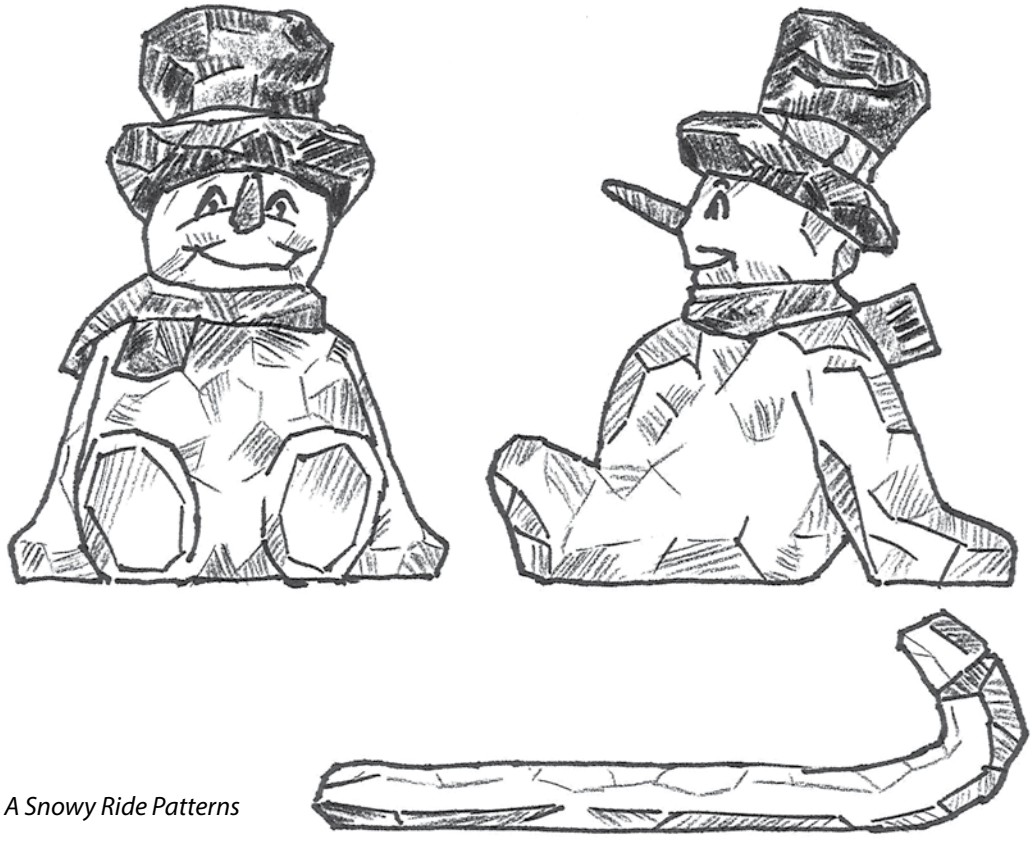
*1 Delta Ceramcoat*

*2 JoSonja*



## Assembling the Carving

Use drywall screws inserted from the underside to attach Santa, the sled, and the snowman to the base. Use a piece of sinew or twine for the toboggan rope.



*A Snowy Ride Patterns*

# Saucer Sled Santa

*By Russell Scott*



Speeding down a snow-covered hill on a saucer sled was one of the highlights of winter for me growing up in Minnesota. Here, Santa is joining in the fun on his own silver saucer sled. In my design, Santa is wearing a Nordic-style knitted sweater and toasty-warm blue snow pants—not his recognizable Santa suit. This way, he can stay undercover and determine who is really being naughty or nice. I designed the carving to be interactive, so it tilts, rocks, and spins around just like a real saucer sled; however, you may want to avoid taking him on any ski outings, as he has been known to disappear for regular cookie breaks!

Transfer the pattern to the blank with the grain running vertically and cut the views on a band saw. *Note: Cut along the grain instead of crossing the grain to make your cuts easier and smoother. Use your thumb to push your knife while cutting to give you more control of the blade.* I made the carving from one piece of wood, so the saucer and sled are connected. Draw the saucer shape on the bottom.




## Materials

- Basswood, 3½" (8.9cm) square: 6½" (16.5cm) long
- Pencil
- Acrylic paints, such as Americana: antique maroon, burnt sienna, burnt umber, lamp black; such as Apple Barrel: pure silver; such as Ceramcoat®: rosy beige; such as Craftsmart: vanilla; such as FolkArt: Christmas red, French blue, navy blue, steel gray, titanium white
- Clear finish, such as matte and semigloss spray polyurethane
- Liquid antiquing wax, such as Watco
- Paper towels

## Tools

- Band saw
- Knives: rough out, detail
- #5 chisel: 1" (25mm)
- #9 gouge: 9/32" (7mm)
- 60° V-tool: 9/32" (7mm)
- Micro V-tool: ⅛" (3mm)
- Shoe brush: medium bristle
- Paintbrushes: assorted

# Roughing Out



**Round the saucer down to the line you just drew.** Use a rough out knife. Make sure to stop about ¾" (1.9cm) up from the bottom on all sides.



**Define the knees.** Draw lines marking the tops of the knees, and then follow them with a 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Then use a 1" (25mm) #5 chisel to cleanly remove the wood above the knees.





**Draw the basic leg shapes in front.** Draw the arm and boot shapes on the sides, and mark the saucer line along the back. Carve along these lines with the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Then begin to define the legs with the rough out knife; the left leg should cross over the right. Round the knees.





**Draw the hairline in back.** Then follow that line with the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Draw the backs of the arms, and then shave down the arm areas with the knife, rounding the back of the body into them. Deepen the hairline cut and carve up to it from below, making the hair protrude. Round the lower back in toward the rump.



**Roughly shape the back of the hair.** Use the knife. Make bold cuts, carving away from you toward the top of the head. Bring the shoulders in slightly, so the hair overlaps them. Round them over with the same tool. Separate the hands from the arms with the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool, and round the arms and hands.





**Roughly draw the facial features and hairline.** Make a stop cut under the nose and carve up to it to relieve it from the face. Angle the face back from the middle of the nose. Create the eye depressions by relieving wood to the left and right of the nose. Use the knife. Remove the wood in clean, triangular chips, with the deepest point sitting at the innermost corner of each eye



**Carve the nose bridge.** Remove triangular chips on the bottom corners, and round the nose into them.





**Add the cheeks and mustache.** Draw the landmarks and then follow the lines with the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Separate the face from the hair and the hat brim from the face with the same tool. Then taper the forehead slightly into the hat brim. Relieve the areas below the mustache and to the sides of the face with the knife. Round the eye sockets.

## Adding the Details



**Use a 9/32" (7mm) #9 gouge to cut out a little crescent-shaped slice from each side of the bottom of the nose.** Round the nose, cutting with the gouge from the nostrils up to the eye sockets. Use the same tool. Cut along the tops of the eye sockets until you form a slight bulge between the brows.





**Round the hair and beard.** Use the knife. Draw the hat brim and pom-pom and follow the lines with the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Soften your cuts with the knife. Deepen the separation between the hair and the neck and the shoulders.



**Round the legs.** Use the same tool. Draw the boot shapes so they lay diagonally. Use the knife to round the boot soles and the tops of the feet. Separate the tops of the boots from the pants with the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. The boots will be thinner than the bunchy pant bottoms.





**Set in the sole and heel of each boot.** Use the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Remove wood around the perimeter of the boots, and use the knife to cut chips around the base of the pants. This will simulate fabric folds. Deepen the separation between the crossed legs.



**Shape the arms.** Use a detail knife to cut in the elbow wrinkles, and switch to the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool to establish the sleeve lines. Deepen the grooves between the arms and the torso with the same tool. Separate the hands from the sweater cuffs and the sweater cuffs from the rest of the garment. Round the hands.



**Add the sweater trim details.** Use the detail knife and the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool to add vertical grooves along the sweater cuffs and the band of elastic around the waist.



**Add the mouth.** Draw a small semicircle under the mustache, and then relieve the area below it to make it stand out. Gouge out a triangular chip at the center of the base of the mustache to give the mouth some depth.





**Draw and then carve the hair flow in the front and back.** Use a knife of your choice. Give the lines a lazy "S" shape, rather than making them straight. The hair alongside the face should seem to originate from the cheeks and chin, rather than from the top of the head. Break up the hair texture at the bottom with a series of V-shaped cuts. Separate the larger locks of hair using the knife. Then add the finer hair texture with 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool, occasionally cutting crisscross lines across the vertical ones to give the beard a scruffy look. Undercut the areas at the bottom of the hair with the knife.






**Draw the crescent-shaped eyes.** Follow the lines with some deep knife cuts. Use a knife of your choice. Remove a triangular chip from the inside and outside edge of each eye, and round and lower the eyeballs. Define the eyelids by sweeping the 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool along the top of the eye depression. Refine with the knife and a 1/8" (3mm) micro V-tool. Add the eyebrow texture with the same tool.




**Shape the saucer.** Draw a centerline at the bottom, and mark around a square inch of space that will remain flat and uncarved. Round all other areas. Use a knife of your choice. Then use the 1" (25mm) #5 chisel to give the top of the saucer a concave shape. Clean up any loose pieces and edges on your carving.

## Applying Finish

Spray the piece with a clear finish, such as matte spray polyurethane, and let dry. Then paint it with thinned acrylic paints, referring to the Painting List. After the paint has dried, spray again, this time with semigloss polyurethane. Once dry, apply a coat of liquid antiquing wax (mixed three parts neutral and one part dark, both by Watco) to give the piece a more rustic look. Before it dries, wipe off the excess, so just a thin layer of wax remains. Let that dry overnight and then buff with a medium bristle shoe brush. The brush creates a soft luster (not a shine).

*Note: When using any finish, make sure you apply it in a well-ventilated area. Spray the polyurethane outside and allow it to dry before bringing it into the house. Wear plastic gloves to protect your hands and follow the safety instructions on the product labels.*



## Painting List

**Face:** rosy beige (3) for skin, thinned burnt sienna (1) for cheeks and lips

**Eyes:** titanium white (5) for whites and reflection, French blue (5) for irises, lamp black (1) for pupils and upper eyeline

**Beard and eyebrows:** steel gray (5), drybrushed with vanilla (4) and then titanium white (5)

**Sweater and hat base:** Christmas red (5)

**Sweater and hat designs:** navy blue (5) and vanilla (4)

**Sweater shadow areas:** thinned antique maroon (1)

**Snow pants and mittens:** navy blue (5)

**Snowy effect on clothing and boots:** drybrushed titanium white (5)

**Boots:** burnt umber (1)

**Sled:** base coat of titanium white (5), then a top coat of pure silver (2)

*1 Americana*

*2 Apple Barrel*

*3 Ceramcoat*

*4 Craftsmart*

*5 FolkArt*



*Saucer Sled Santa Patterns*

# Workshop Santa

*By Chris Hammack*

This carving is how I imagine Santa in his workshop, sleeves rolled up and painting a newly made toy train. (This is obviously Santa from many years ago, because the only toys Santa makes these days have to be WiFi capable, voice activated, remotely controllable, and rechargeable.) The bright colors and tilted head add a bit of interest, and the hand holding the brush is a challenge. The longer you can wait to tackle the fragile details in this project, the better.

Photocopy the pattern views and sketch the outlines on the front and side of the wood block. Cut the views on a band saw.



## Materials

- Basswood, 3" (7.6cm) thick: 3¾" x 4" (9.5cm x 10.2cm)
- Pencil or pen
- Acrylic paints, such as Craftsmart: silver; such as Americana: Christmas red; such as Delta Ceramcoat: black, butter cream, medium flesh, tomato spice, white
- Clear acrylic spray
- Gel stain, such as Minwax: antique oak
- Clean cloths
- Mineral spirits

## Tools

- Band saw
- Carving knife
- #9 gouges: ⅜" (10mm), ¾" (19mm)
- V-tool: ⅛" (3mm) 60°
- Paintbrushes: assorted

## Roughing Out



**Rough out the face.** Mark a rough profile on the left side of the face. Then, using a ¾" (19mm) #9 gouge, generously remove wood up to the line, all the way across the face.





**Define the knees.** Draw lines marking the tops of the knees, and then follow them with a 9/32" (7mm) 60° V-tool. Then use a 1" (25mm) #5 chisel to cleanly remove the wood above the knees.



**Block in the head and train.** Santa's head is facing forward but tilts a bit to the right. This adds visual interest, but requires a bit of work to set up. Begin roughing in the face by drawing a centerline on an angle consistent with the tilt of the head. Create the wedge shape for the face, tapering the face from the ears to the centerline with the knife. Remember to keep Santa's head fairly round. Then draw a centerline down the back of the head and round the corners into that line





**Rough in the arms, hands, and shirt sleeves.** With the knife, shape the lower arm (the one holding the train) and the cuff on the sleeve. Then round the arm to the wrist. Move to the raised left arm (the one holding the paintbrush), and then round it up to the elbow with the same tool. Rough in the sleeve cuff on this side, as well.

## Adding Details



**Refine the face.** Draw two lines across the face, perpendicular to the centerline. The top line establishes the midpoint for the eyes, the bridge of the nose, and the lower line marks the bottom of the nose. With the ¾" (19mm) #9 gouge, cut right across the bridge of the nose, shaping its profile. Then, using the knife, cut in under the nose, nostrils, and cheeks to roughly establish the mustache area. Make a rolling cut above the eyebrows to establish their position, and then roughly shape the large forehead. Shape the wispy patch of hair on the top of the head.





**Carve the train engine.** Sketch on the basic shape and rough it out with the knife. Then work from the outside in, starting by carving the thumb on Santa's lower hand (the hand holding the train). Carve the bar connecting all the wheels, and then carve and shape the wheels. Carve deeper and shape the round body of the train and cab, followed by the cowcatcher (the triangle at the front) and the smokestack. Hollow out the inside of the cab and define the windows. *Note: Try to avoid carving down between the engine and beard, as this can be a tricky spot to clean up. Just let the beard sit right against the engine.*



**Refine the paintbrush hand.** Start by carving a mitten shape with the index finger sticking out. *Note: The thumb and forefinger are oriented across the grain which makes them fragile; hold off on separating them until you detail the hand later.* Starting at the wrist, shape the back of the hand and establish the first row of knuckles, again leaving the index finger sticking out. Then carve the inside of the palm area, with the middle, ring, and little fingers all together. Shape the thumb and index finger, leaving extra wood in this area so he can grip the brush. *Note: For maximum stability, carve the brush separately to control the grain direction.*



**Establish the hairline.** Sketch the shape, beginning under the cheeks and continuing up the front of the sideburn around the back of the head. Remember to maintain the tilt of the head. Then remove some wood in the temple area on either side of the head. Carve the hairline on the back of the head, again remembering to maintain the head tilt. Carve a shallow V-cut to establish the area where the hair meets the shirt. Then sketch on the shape of the mustache, and then carve up to it from below, remembering that it turns up at the outer edges.



**Establish the ears and sideburns.** Sketch the shape of the sideburn and draw the ear behind it. Then, with the knife, carve in behind the sideburn at an angle to establish the basic shape of the ear. Keep in mind that the ear angles in, rather than remaining flat against the head. Do the same for the other side. Rough shape the hair and the exposed area on the neck.



**Define the eyes and eyebrows.** Since the details in this area are small, make sure your tools are sharp. With a ⅜" (10mm) #9 gouge, carve above and below each eye, leaving a small mound for the eyeball in the center. In the middle of each mound, carve in to establish the tops of the bottom eyelids, which arch slightly in the middle to emphasize his smile. Draw the shape of the upper eyelids, carve along those lines, and remove some material from the eyeball areas to recess the eyes slightly. With the knife, add crow's feet at the outer edges of the eyes. Then, with the same tool, carve a V-cut below each eye to form the bags. Add a few random cuts for wrinkles, and then do the same for the inside corners of the eyes. Shape the eyebrows with a few chip cuts, and then draw the pupils on the eyes.



**Refine the hands, clothing, and clothing wrinkles.** Sketch and then carve in the overalls with the knife. Then add the button details on the front of the bib. Add some soft, rolling wrinkles to the sleeves, and then add sharper overlapping wrinkles to the rolled-up cuffs, as well as the areas where the arm bends.





**Finish shaping the hair and beard.** I mostly used a knife to make rolling cuts, so as not to make it look too busy. Occasionally, I will use a larger gouge to give the hair some additional shape. Create large, flowing mounds of hair, adding a few chip cuts at the bottom of the mustache, back of the hairline, and over the ears to break up the clean lines. Shape the lower lip, and then add a few shallow wrinkles across the forehead. Use the knife.





**Add final details.** Sketch the shape of the brush onto a small piece of scrap wood and carve the basic shape with the knife. Use a ⅛" (3mm) 60° V-tool to carve the bristles. I left the handle of the brush long to give myself something to grip while carving. Once you're happy with the shape, carve down the handle to the right length and width until it fits snugly between Santa's index finger and thumb. Carve the insides of the ears, removing little triangles of wood with a few small chip cuts. Refine the fingers, fingernails, and wrinkles on his hands. Make any final tweaks to the paintbrush hand to ensure that the brush fits.

## Painting and Finishing




**Paint the carving.** Paint the entire face, hands, and ears with medium flesh or color of your choice. Then, while it is still wet, add some thinned tomato spice around the eyes, tip of the nose, cheeks, neck area, and ears. Blend it in well with a wet brush. Paint the hair and eyebrows with only slightly thinned white. Paint the clothes, train, and eyes, referring to the Painting List. Add the white eye highlight once the pupils have dried, using the very tip of a small paintbrush.




**Seal the carving.** Add three to four coats prior to antiquing. This step is important; the carving should be completely sealed and dry before you move to the next step, or the stain will soak in and leave you with a dirty-looking carving.




**Antique the carving.** I used an antique oak gel stain thinned to the consistency of a heavy salad dressing. Apply it to the entire carving, and then wipe off the excess immediately using clean cloths and a small brush. *Note: Dispose of cloths according to the manufacturer's instructions.* Take special care in the whites of the eyes, buttons, and anywhere else you don't want to be quite as dark. Finally, use a soft cloth with just a bit of mineral spirits and rub it over the highlights of the carving. This will create some wonderful contrast between the shadows and lighter areas.

## Painting List

**Skin:** medium flesh (3)

**Tint for face, eyes, hands, fingernails, nose:** tomato spice (3)

**Hair, beard, eyebrows, eyeballs:** white (3)

**Pupils, paintbrush handle:** black (3)

**Shirt, paintbrush bristles:** butter cream (3)

**Overalls:** Christmas red (2)

**Buttons:** silver (1)

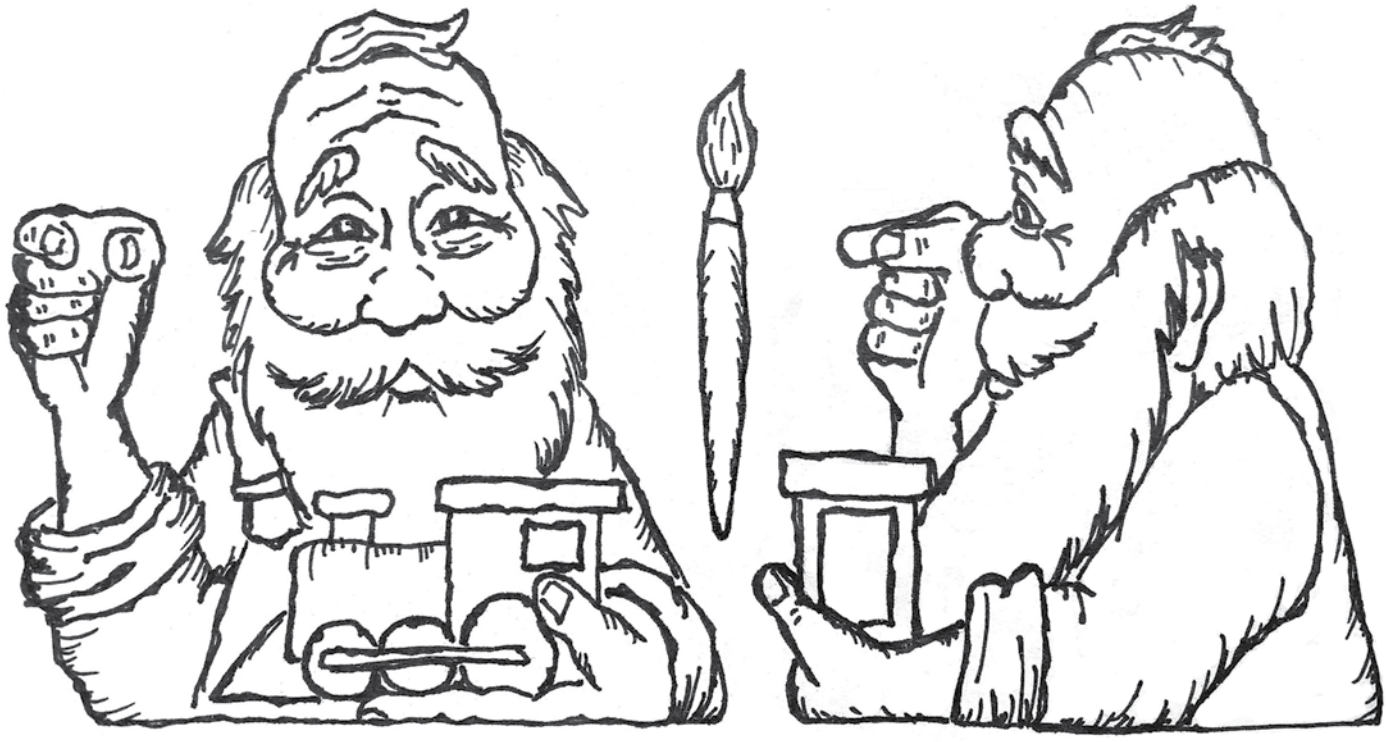
**Train engine:** colors of choice

*Craftsmart 1*

*Americana 2*

*Delta Ceramcoat 3*





*Workshop Santa Patterns*

# Lantern Santa

*By Floyd Rhadigan*

This little lantern-toting Santa project will help you to get more comfortable adding energy in motion to your carvings. Instead of standing completely upright, this fellow has one foot out, as though in mid-step. He's also using the lantern pole almost like a staff; here we see it frozen at an angle, as if he has just brought it down against the snowdrifts for leverage. These little details pack a ton of interest into a relatively small space. Practice adding other signs of movement in this piece—the angle of the back, the shape of the hat, and more. You'll soon discover that it's easier than it looks!

Draw the patterns on the blank with a pencil, making sure that the grain runs vertically. Cut the views on a band saw, starting with the front. I like to have three points of contact with the saw bed at all times, so I included two tabs on the front pattern view to prevent the wood from rocking. Then cut the side view.



## Materials

- Basswood, 3" (7.6cm) square: 4¾" (12.1cm) long
- Pencil
- Clear finish, such as Krylon matte #1311
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Ceramcoat: black, bright red, cadimum yellow, medium flesh, phthalo blue, white; such as DecoArt®: antique bronze; such as Liquitex: Hooker's green
- Antique stain, such as Watco satin finishing wax (natural)
- Oil-based stain: walnut
- Paper towels
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn

## Tools

- Band saw
- Knives: bench, detail
- #9 gouges: ⅛" (3mm), 3/16" (5mm), ¼" (6mm), ½" (13mm)
- #11 gouges: ¼" (6mm), 3/16" (5mm)
- V-tools: ⅛" (3mm) 45°, ¼" (6mm) 45°, 3/16" (5mm) 45°
- Denture brush
- Paintbrushes: assorted

## Roughing Out

**Isolate his right arm and lantern staff first, and then define the arm holding the bag.** Give his back a little twist in the direction of the extended leg to add some movement. Start shaping the head and hat. Remember that the face is shaped like a triangle from the side, with the forehead, nose, and chin representing the three different points. (Even though the chin is hidden by the beard, always keep its location in mind.) Carve the ears, making sure to keep them behind the center of the side of the head. The top of the ear will be even with the bottom of the brow, and the bottom of the ear will be even with the bottom of the nose.

## Adding Details

**Define the cheeks.** Using a 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 gouge, make a curved cut under each brow to define the cheeks along the perimeter of the face. Separate the brows with the same tool. Use a knife or V-tool to define the nose and separate it from the mustache. Carve the eyes with a detail knife. Make a stop cut along the upper eyelid and relieve up to it from below; do the same with the lower lid. Make sure to establish some depth in the corner of each eye.

**Add the remaining details.** I used my knife, along with various #9 and #11 gouges, to shape the legs and feet. Add the fur trim on the coat; I used the 3⁄16" (5mm) #9 and #11 gouges. Add the beard and mustache texture with a ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool, and then add finer texture with a ⅛" (3mm) 45° V-tool. Carve the lantern and boot details using a combination of the detail knife, #9 gouges, and the ⅛" (3mm) 45° V-tool. Make the creases on top of the stationary boot a little deeper than those on the raised boot, to show the additional pressure on that area. Add some waviness to the base to create the effect of snowdrifts.

## Painting and Finishing

**Prepare the carving for paint.** Scrub the entire carving with warm water and a mild cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn dish soap, using a denture brush. *Note: This gets rid of pencil marks and dirt or oils from your hands.* Rinse and let dry. Spray on a light coat of Krylon clear matte finish to keep the paint from bleeding into unwanted areas.







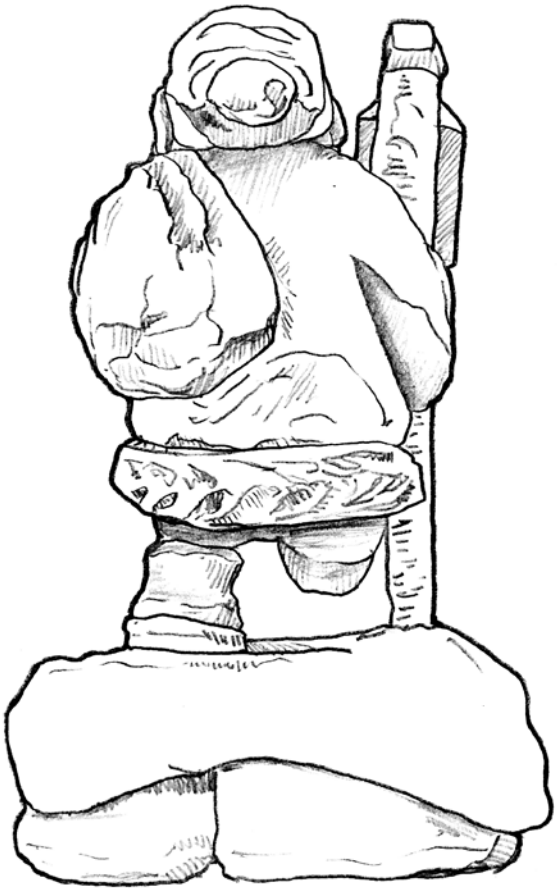



**Paint the carving.** I use a lot of water and very little paint—roughly two drops of paint to twenty drops of water, mixed well. Start with the light colors and then gradually move to the darker colors. Dilute the paint less in the areas you want to stand out, such as the eyes.

Once finished, spray the carving with one more light coat of Krylon in order to seal it. Then antique the piece to give it a rustic look; I used a mixture of 70% Watco satin finishing wax to 30% oil-based walnut stain. Paint it all over the carving, and then rub it off quickly with a clean paper towel. Let dry.

*Note: Remember to dispose of used paper towels according to the finish manufacturer's instructions, as oil-soaked rags can combust spontaneously. I submerge mine in a bucket of water.*







*Lantern Santa Patterns*




# Santa's Little Helpers

*By Shawn Cipa*

This stout Santa enjoys the company of his feathered friends, as well as that of an inquisitive little brown squirrel. And who doesn't love a nice, brightly colored birdhouse? My project is fairly easy to carve, but has several components that require assembly. Although I use a few gouges to rough out the carved pieces, most, if not all, of the details can be easily accomplished with just knives. If you decide to use gouges to rough out as I have, be sure to use a clamping device during this stage to provide control and ensure safety.

Choose clean pieces of basswood, free of blemishes, for ease of carving and painting. Cut out the patterns and trace them onto their respective blanks with the grain running vertically. Use graphite paper and a pencil. Use a band saw to cut out the front view, tape the waste back in place on one side, and then cut out the side view. This will give you a general shape. I also remove excess wood by sawing off the corners; this will require holding the blank at an angle. Do this very carefully. Alternately, you could tilt the band saw table to 45°.

## Materials

- Basswood, 2½" (6.4cm) thick: Santa, 4¼" x 8¼" (10.8cm x 21cm)
- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) thick: base, 3" x 4½" (7.6cm x 11.4cm)
- Basswood, 1¼" (3.2cm) square: birdhouse, 3½" (8.9cm) long
- Basswood, ½" (1.3cm) thick: squirrel, 1¼" x 1½" (3.2cm x 3.8cm)
- Basswood 1" (2.5cm) square: 3 birds, 1" (2.5cm) long
- Pencil
- Graphite paper
- Sandpaper: assorted grits
- Coat hanger wire (or similar material): 5" (12.7cm) long
- Craft wire
- Two-part epoxy
- Finish: fast-drying satin polyurethane
- Gel stain: dark brown
- Acrylic paints, such as Americana: bright blue, bubblegum pink, buttermilk, celery green, green sea, light avocado, metallic gold, Rockwood red, royal purple, Santa red, snow white, tan, tomato red; such as FolkArt: berry wine, black, brushed copper, buttercup, ink spot blue, light blue, raw sienna, school bus yellow, skyline blue
- Cotton rags
- Tape: packaging
- Thumbtack

## Tools

- Band saw
- Vise
- #3 gouge: ⅜" (10mm) fishtail
- #5 gouge: 1¼" (32mm) shallow sweep
- #9 gouges: ⅜" (10mm), ½" (13mm) half-round
- V-tools: ⅛" (3mm) 70°, ⅜" (10mm) 60°
- Knives: large rough out, regular carving, detail
- Drill with bit: ⅛" (3mm)-dia.
- Paintbrushes
- Disposable brushes (for applying finish)

# Roughing Out






**Rough out the general shape.** I do this by securing the blank in a vise and removing wood with a 1 ¼" (32mm) #5 shallow sweep gouge. You can also accomplish this with a larger rough out knife.




**Continue to define the arm and head areas.** I use a ½" (13mm) #9 half-round gouge.




**Refine the hairline and arms on the back side.** Use the same tool.



**Mark and define the beard and hat separations.** Refer to the pattern and use a ⅜" (10mm) 60° V-tool. Use the rough out knife to clean up and round the features. Notice the obvious tilt of the head as indicated by the centerline.



**Continue this step around the back side.**

## Adding Details



**Add the details to the right arm.** Use a regular carving knife. This includes the glove with visible thumb, the fur lining on the sleeve, and the small armpit creases.



**Complete the left arm details.** This includes the fisted glove with visible thumb, the fur lining on the sleeve, and the small armpit creases.



**Drill the hole for the birdhouse post.** Using an ⅛" (3mm)-dia. bit, carefully drill a vertical hole from top to bottom through the fisted glove.



**Mark and define the nose and cheeks.** Use the knife.



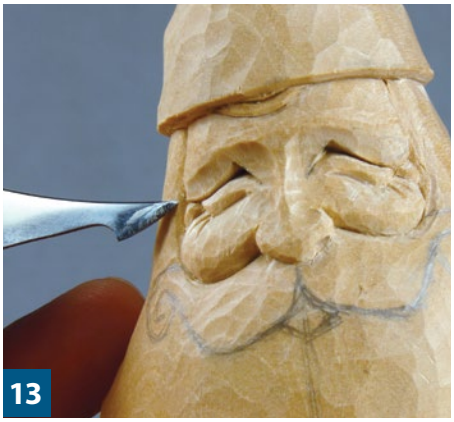
**Define the brow.** Use a ⅜" (10mm) #3 fishtail gouge to scallop out a shallow arching trench across the face. This will also help create the nose bridge. Afterward, draw the outline of the eye socket hollows, as shown. Be sure to maintain your centerline to keep things in balance.



**Define the eye sockets.** Use a ⅜" (10mm) #9 half-round gouge, scooping out along the pencil lines. Then shape the nose and cheeks. Use the knife to clean up and round off the areas you just carved. Referring to the pattern, pencil in the eye slits and a small piece of hair emerging from under the hat.




**Switch to a small detail knife.** Carve the eye slits; be sure to make them deep with clean cuts. If you make them too wide, they will look like gaping holes instead of squinting eyes. Carve the hair details and small nostril holes. Pencil in the bags below the eye slits.




**Add crow's feet in the corners of the eyes.** I do this by making little chip cuts. Referring to the pattern, pencil in the mustache and lower lip.




**Using a ⅛" (3mm) 70° V-tool, outline the mustache and lower lip.** Shape and refine them with your standard knife.




**Pencil in the beard and hair curls.** Follow the lines with the ⅛" (3mm) 70° V-tool.






**Further define and shape each curl to completion.** Use the detail knife.



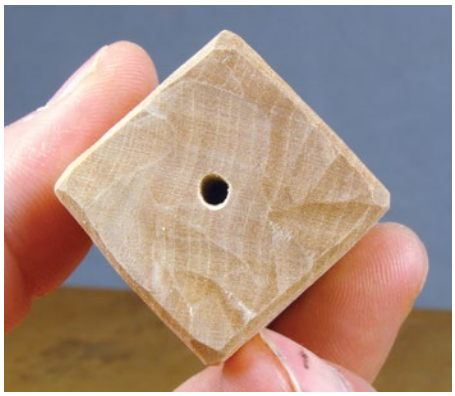

**Define the fur lining on the hat and coat.** Use the standard knife. Then clean up the overall body shape, removing fuzzies and flat spots as needed.

# Making the Accessories




**Carve the base.** You may choose to leave it plain or give it an interesting "book" design, as I have here. Shape the sides with a knife. I sanded the top and bottom to a smooth, straight plane.



**Whittle the birdhouse.** Drill a ⅛" (3mm)-dia. hole into the bottom center of the birdhouse, approximately ¾" (1.9cm) deep.




**Whittle three little birds.** I used scraps from around my workshop. Pierce the bottom of each with a thumbtack or similar needle so that a piece of craft wire can be firmly inserted later.




**Whittle the squirrel.** Refer to the pattern.




**Begin assembling the scene.** Using two-part epoxy, assemble and adhere Santa to the base, the birdhouse to a piece of coat hanger wire (or similar material), and the wire to Santa's glove through the pre-drilled hole. It may help to create a small notch in the base where the end of the wire rod will rest, gluing it there also. Let dry.




**Add the finishing touches.** With more two-part epoxy, attach the squirrel in the bottom corner of the base as shown. Attach the birds by piercing a small hole with a thumbtack in each of the "perching" spots, and using small bits of craft wire as connectors (along with a small dab of epoxy for each bird). Let dry.

## Painting and Finishing

Seal the carving with a thinned batch of satin polyurethane and let it sit overnight. Then begin painting with matte craft acrylic paints. I like to thin my paints and apply them in layers to create depth and interest. For Santa's face, I do not use any flesh tone—I like to leave the wood natural, and enhance his cheeks and nose with pinks and reds. You may choose my colors or create your own scheme. After the paint has dried, seal it with a coat of full-strength satin polyurethane. Once dry, give Santa's face another coat of polyurethane to ensure the unpainted wood is well sealed. Once the polyurethane has cured, antique the carving by slathering on a dark brown gel stain. Immediately wipe the entire carving of any excess stain with a clean cotton rag and let dry.

## Painting List

**Coat:** Santa red, buttermilk (1); berry wine (2)

**Gloves:** celery green, light avocado (1)

**Face and Beard:** coral shell, bubblegum pink, tomato red, snow white (1); skyline blue (2)

**Birdhouse:** bright blue (1); school bus yellow, raw sienna, brushed copper, light blue, black (2)

**Birds:** rockwood red, snow white (1); ink spot blue, school bus yellow, black (2)

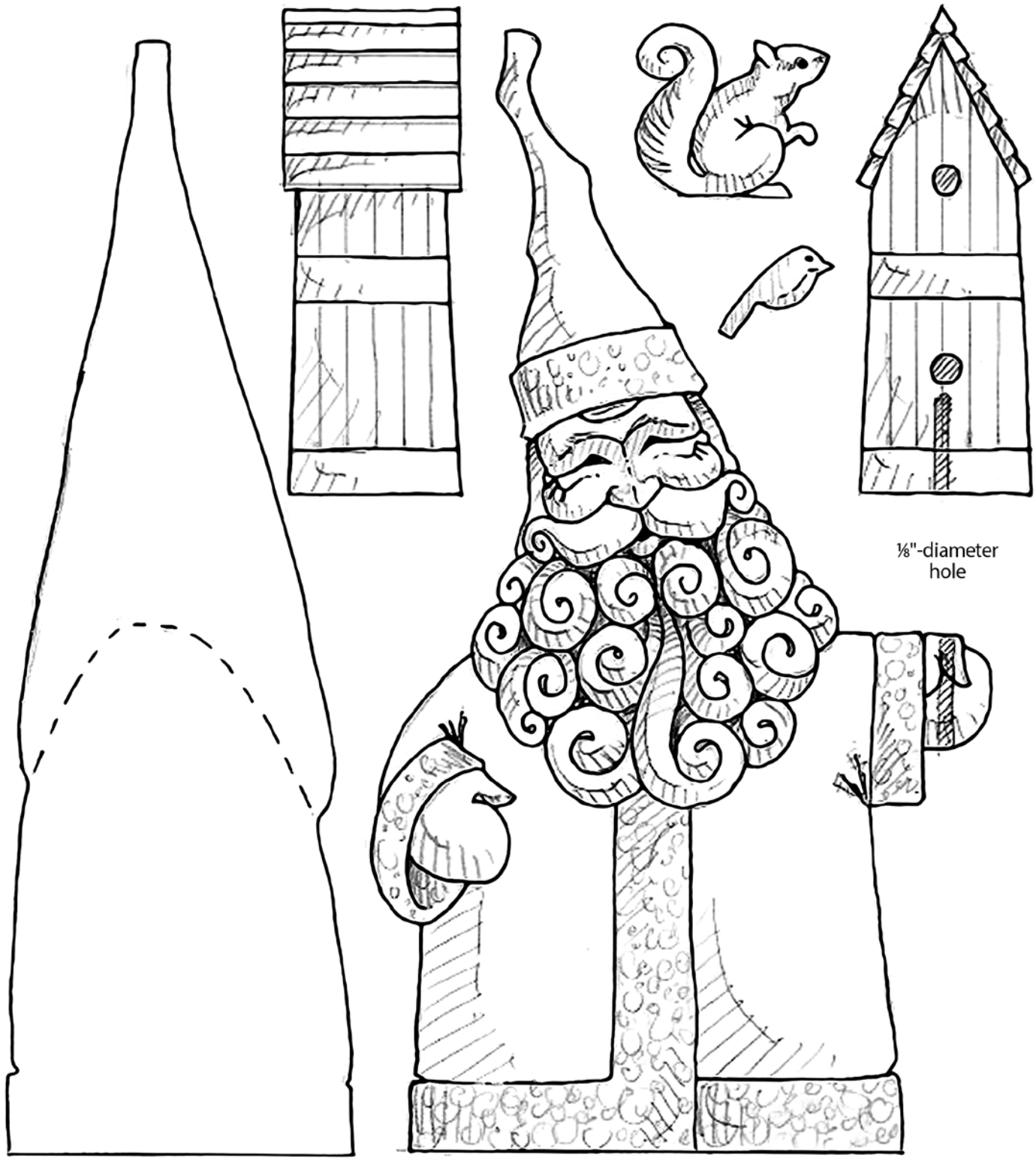
**Squirrel:** tan, coral shell, snow white (1); raw sienna, black (2)

**Base:** green sea, snow white, royal purple, metallic gold (1); buttercup, raw sienna (2)

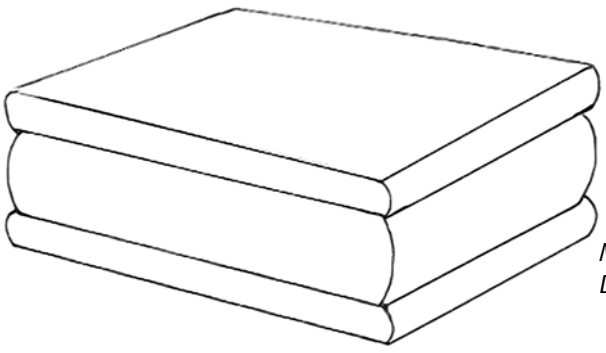
*1 Americana*

*2 FolkArt*





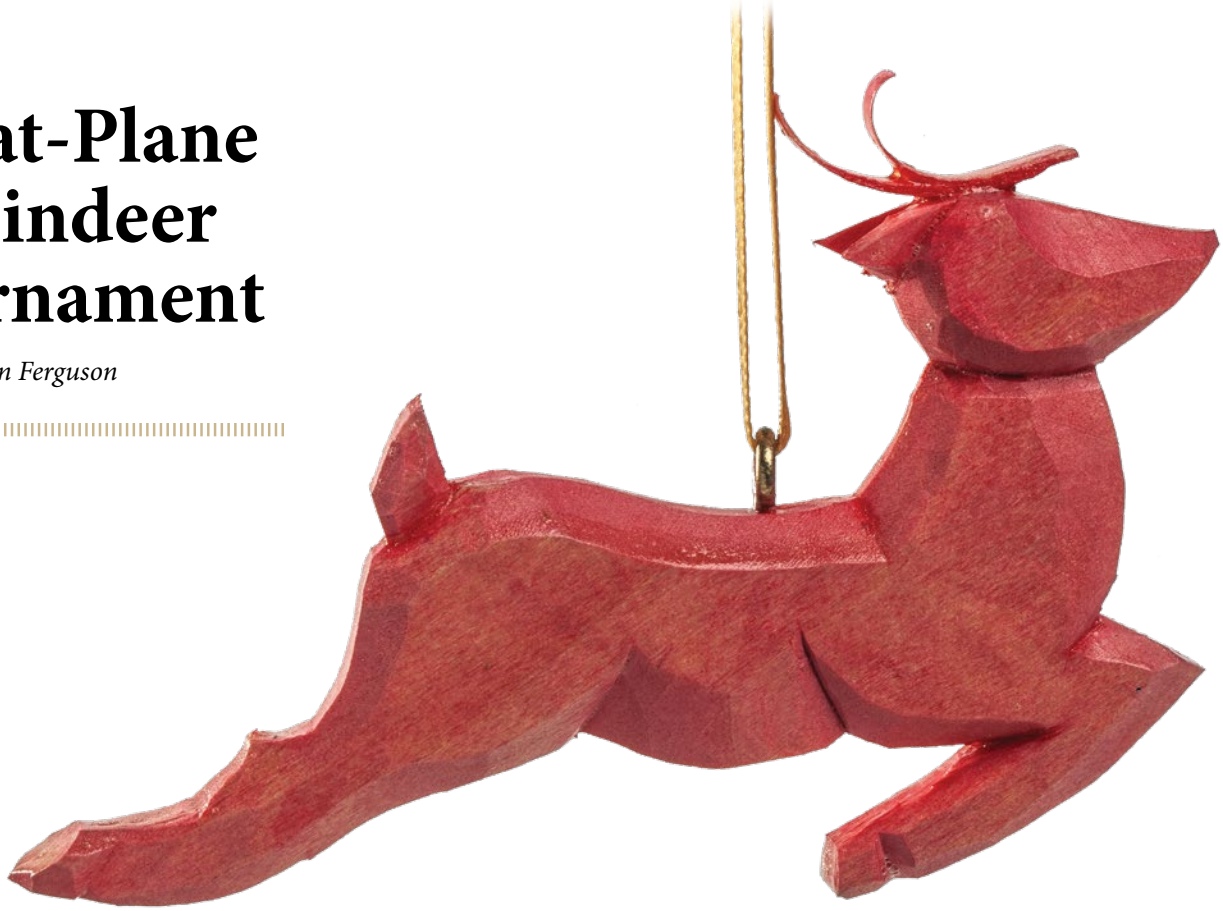

*Santa's Little Helpers Patterns*



*Measured Drawing- Base*

# Flat-Plane Reindeer Ornament

*By Brian Ferguson*



This little stylized reindeer was my contribution to the 2018 Ornament Exchange on the Woodcarving Illustrated forum. I was thinking about vintage tin toys—shaped and painted pieces of sheet tin, soldered or held together by tabs and slots—when I designed him. Antlers, thin legs, and a flying pose leave no doubt as to his identity, but since too much detail will detract from the finished product, I left things like eyes and snout details out. I whittled this project with just a knife, but feel free to use any tools you want to make it your own.

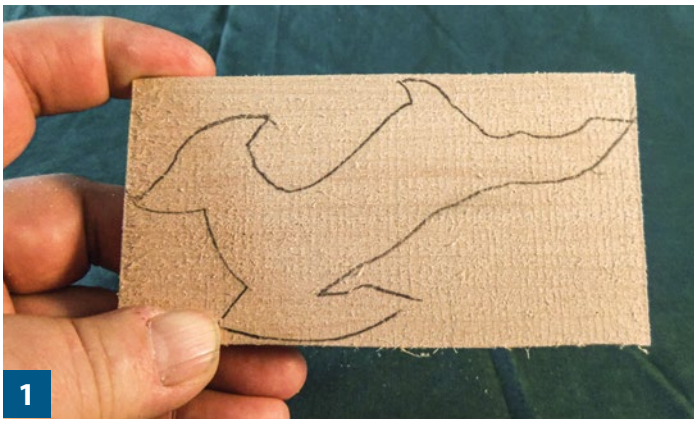
### Materials:

- Basswood or Spanish cedar, ½" (1.3cm) thick: 2½" (6.4cm) x 4½" (11.4cm)
- Scrap basswood
- Glue: cyanoacrylate (CA)
- Pencil
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Simple Green®
- Acrylic paint, such as DecoArt: wild rose pink (optional)
- Finish, such as clear water-based polyurethane
- Screw eye
- Colored ribbon or string

### Tools:

- Band saw or scroll saw
- Knife of your choice (I used a 1.5" (38mm)-long Wharncliffe fixed blade)

## Roughing Out




**Transfer the pattern to the blank.** Trace around the perimeter with a pencil. Orient the wood grain to follow the movement of the back leg, and then cut the outline on a scroll saw or band saw. *Note: If you prefer, you can cut down to the outline with a knife, chisel, or gouge; this method will just take longer.*




**Draw centerlines on the edges of the head, tail, and hooves.** Taper the body, legs, and feet slightly toward those lines. Use a knife. The goal is an even taper ending in hooves that are roughly half the original thickness. Pay extra attention to the bend in the front leg, so as to avoid chip-out. Go slowly, removing small chips. You can smooth it all out in the final steps. Make little V-cuts between the ankles and hooves to separate the feet from the legs.




**Sketch the internal lines around the face and haunches.** You want smooth lines that meet and flow from the outline. For the shoulder, start at the inside bend of the front knee; at the hip, carry the curve from the thigh. Give him a nice, round rump. Outline the head in one smooth curve from the nose, past the ears, and around the jaw.




**Make V-cuts on the lines to separate the legs from the body.** The cut for the front leg ends behind the knee, shallow at the ends and deepest in the center. Continue the facets all the way to the hoof notches. Give the cut along the back leg a serpentine look, and shape the belly into the V-cuts. Knock the corners off the hooves to make them less square.




**Bevel the remaining leg areas in the front and back.** Make a V-cut in the front knee area that includes the chest. Make small cuts, but try to make one or two final passes to smooth out the facet when you're happy with the shape. *Note: The legs, when done, will be eight-sided.* Be careful in areas where the grain changes. Widen out at the back knee, and end at the top hoof notch. Remove all saw cuts as you go.




**Shape the rump and tail.** Watch out here—the tail breaks easily. If that happens, glue it back on with a drop of CA glue. Round the tail by making small V-cuts in the notch between the tail and rump, and then carving up to them. Bevel the rump, blending it into the cuts on the legs. Continue the bevel forward onto the back toward the neck. Put a little swoop in the back cut to narrow down his waist and emphasize the arch in the back. There's another grain change at the base of the neck; at this point, stop your cut with a shallow V.

## Shaping the Head




**Shape the head.** Make stop cuts at the corners where the throat meets the head and thin the chin toward the neck. The front facet starts in the notch above the chest; the facet at the back corner starts just below the ear and meets the swooped bevel on the side of the back. Deepen the stop cuts as needed. Use V-cuts to separate the ears from the head, and shape them to look like small arrowheads when viewed from the side.




**Narrow the snout almost to a point.** Keep it centered. Bevel the square edges of the head—in front of the ears, around the back of the head, and along the jaw to the nose. Final cuts should leave each plane as smooth and continuous as possible. Cut a few flat edges at the end of the nose to blunt the outline and give the impression of a real snout.



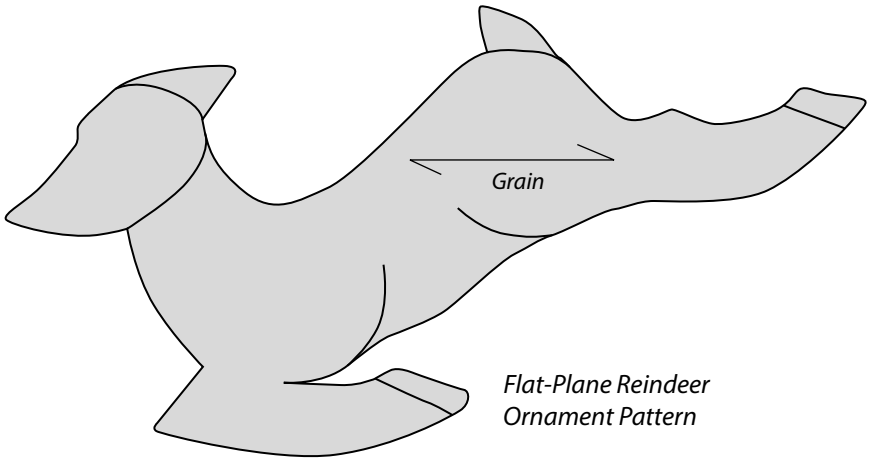

**Shape the eye and forehead areas.** Make a scooping cut on each side of the face from the brow area to the tip of the snout. Whittle a mostly flat spot on top of the head; this will make it easier to add the antlers later. Clean your glasses, hold the carving up to the light, and look it over for any bits that need cleaning up. Make sure you've shaved off any saw marks and rough areas.




**Make the antlers.** Find a small scrap of basswood and, starting about 1" (2.5cm) from the edge, make a slicing cut along the grain, shooting for a flat about ⅛" (3mm) wide. DO NOT go all the way to the edge. Make a second cut under the first one and separate both cuts from your scrap. Clean up the bottom and taper the front antler if necessary. You might have to cut a few sets of antlers to get one keeper. When you're happy with the shape, attach the antlers to the top of the head with CA glue. When that's dry, coat the entire antler with glue to strengthen it. Find a balanced hang point and add a screw eye; I inserted one about ¼" (6mm) back from where his neck stops.

## Painting and Finishing

Before adding finish, scrub the reindeer with soap and water (I use Simple Green) to remove any dirt or oil he picked up during whittling. Let him dry thoroughly, and finish as desired. A natural finish shows up nicely on the tree, as does a single-color paint job. Try this—put a few drops of water and acrylic paint into a small amount of water-based polyurethane to make a color coat. It penetrates nicely, dries quickly, and seals the wood. Add a final topcoat of polyurethane to give him extra shine.




*Flat-Plane Reindeer Ornament Pattern*



# Pinecone Ornament

*By Bob Kozakiewicz*

This little pinecone ornament requires just a knife and V-tool to complete, making it a portable and straightforward project. Although the cuts may seem repetitive, they're a great introduction to using woodgrain to your advantage. You'll walk away from this project with more than an attractive pinecone to hang on the tree—you'll also gain a slew of woodcarving tricks for future carves.

Transfer both patterns onto two adjacent sides of the blank using graphite paper and a pencil. Cut out both sides with the band saw. Sharpen your hand tools as necessary before you begin carving; you will need to keep them sharp as you go with periodic stropping.

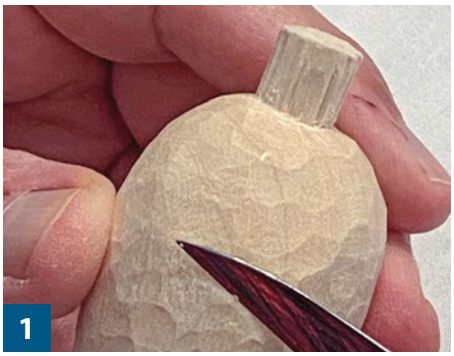
## Materials:

- Basswood, 1¾" (4.4cm) square: 3" (7.6cm) long
- Graphite paper
- Pencil
- Sandpaper: 325-grit
- Cleaner/degreaser, such as Dawn
- Paper towels
- Soft cloth
- Acrylic paints, such as Americana: forest green; such as DecoArt: bright gold; such as Liquitex: mars black, raw umber, titanium white
- Aleene's Glitter Snow
- Finish: clear matte acrylic spray, such as Krylon
- Howard Feed-N-Wax®
- Eye screw: brass, ⅛" (3mm)-dia. opening
- Ribbon or decorative string, for hanging

## Tools:

- Band saw
- Carving knife
- Detail knife (optional)
- V-tool: 1/16" (2mm) 70°
- Nail brush or hard toothbrush
- Horsehair shoe brush
- Paintbrushes: assorted

## Roughing Out




**Shape the pine cone.** Use a carving knife to carve off all four corners of the blank. Continue rounding off until you get a nice cone shape with no square edges. Then carve the finial at the top of the pine cone into a cylindrical shape. Use a 1/16" (2mm) 70° V-tool to carve eight vertical grooves into the cylinder.




**Draw the leaves.** Use a pencil to draw four leaves hanging down from the finial. Each leaf should be about ½" (1.3cm) wide at the top and 1" (2.5cm) long.




**Establish the leaves.** Make stop cuts on all the lines drawn in Step 2. Then carve back to the stop cuts, raising each leaf about 1/16" (2mm) from the surface. Use the knife. Carve down the areas between the leaves so they appear to be raised above the body of the pine cone.

## Adding Details






**Begin adding scales.** Draw a wide upside-down arch between each of the four leaves. Then draw two more U-shaped arches, beginning at the center of the first (top) arch and extending out toward each leaf. Draw these arches all the way around the circumference of the pine cone.




**Begin carving the scales.** Use the knife to make stop cuts along all of the arch lines you drew in Step 4. Then carve up to them.




**Carve the rest of the pine cone.** Continue carving your way down the pine cone in the same manner, one row at a time. Always draw the scales on before starting to carve, as this will ensure a symmetrical finished product. A detail knife is useful as you approach the bottom, but not essential.




**Detail the leaves.** Because you are carving on end grain, the leaves can easily split and break off. Make sure your tools are sharp and take extra caution when carving here. Use the pencil to draw the veins on the leaves. Follow the lines you just drew with the 1/16" (2mm) 70° V-tool. Then carve small V-shaped notches at the end of each vein to break up the lines. Use the carving knife.




**Add the finishing touches.** Because natural pine cones have a rough exterior, I only lightly sand my ornament. Sand the surface, including the finial, with 325-grit sandpaper. Then, with a stiff nail brush or toothbrush, scrub your pinecone all over. This will get rid of any loose fuzzies you may have left behind and prepare the ornament for paint.

## Painting and Finishing

Wash the carving with a mild cleaner, such as Dawn® dish soap and water, to remove leftover pencil marks, dirt, and oil residue from your hands. Allow the carving to dry completely. Thin your paints as desired and apply them in layers to create depth. It is better to add your paint in several thin layers to build up the color rather than applying a single thick coat.

Paint all of the leaf veins with mars black. Allow to dry, and then paint a layer of forest green on just the tops of the leaves, making sure the paint does not bleed into the veins. Paint the finial with titanium white. Allow to dry, and then apply bright gold over the entire surface. *Note: Painting white beneath the gold gives the gold a brighter appearance.* Finally, paint the pinecone scales with raw umber.

Use a mop brush to slightly drybrush titanium white over the leaves and a few of the top pinecone scales. Apply a few small dabs of glitter snow to the leaves and the tips of some of the pinecone scales.

Allow the paint to dry for twenty-four hours. Then seal the carving with a light coat of Krylon clear matte acrylic spray, following the manufacturer's directions. Allow to dry for at least two hours. Apply a coat of Howard Feed-N-Wax® and allow it to sit for twenty minutes. Then buff lightly with a soft cloth and a horsehair shoe brush. Add an eye screw to the top and hang with a ribbon or colored string of your choice.

## Painting List

**Paint Notes**

**Pinecone body:** raw umber (4), titanium white (4)

**Leaves:** black (4), forest green (2)

**Snow:** undiluted titanium white (4), glitter snow (1)

**Finial:** titanium white (4), bright gold (3)

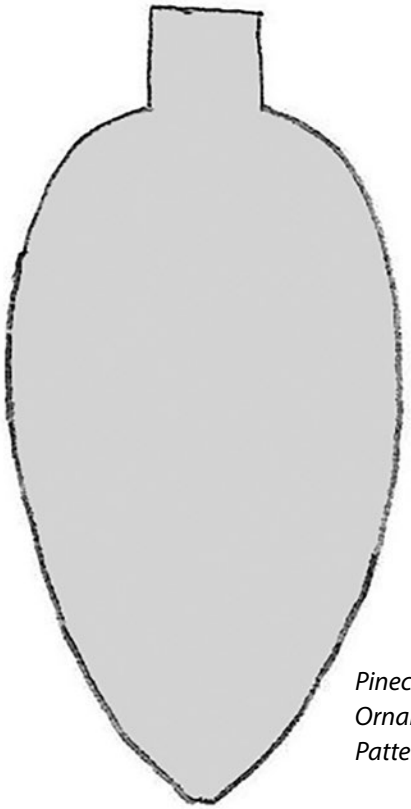
*1 Aleene's*

*2 Americana*

*3 Liquitex*

*4 DecoArt*





*Pinecone Ornament Pattern*



# Thoughtful Angel

*By Roxana Cristean*

I was inspired to create this angel after seeing a nativity scene in my hometown last Christmas. I wanted to incorporate the minimalist Waldorf style into the carving as well; thus, it has understated features. Nonetheless, you can use it to convey a lot of emotion. Adapt this carving by painting it in different styles or patterns, or turn her into a guardian angel to be displayed year-round.

With a pencil, draw a vertical centerline down each side of the blank. On the top of the blank, draw vertical and horizontal centerlines that intersect in the middle. Then divide the front of the blank into three sections by drawing two horizontal lines. Make the first line 1 3/16" (3cm) down from the top of the blank and the second one 1 3/16" (3cm) down from the line you just drew. Extend the horizontal lines to each side of the blank, and then use them as guides to sketch on the pattern.

## Materials

- Basswood, 1 3/16" (3cm) square: 3 1/8" (8cm) long
- Pencil
- Craft wire, such as 28 gauge: 16" (41cm) long
- Boiled linseed oil
- Acrylic paints, such as Pentart: antique gold, dark brown, ivory, vintage rose, white coffee
- Wood stain, such as Pentart: walnut
- Finish, such as Pentart: matte and glossy varnish
- Hot glue sticks

## Tools

- Knives: detail, Morakniv 120
- V-tool: small (optional)
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Round-nose pliers (optional)
- Hot glue gun

## Carving the Head




**Shape the head.** Use a knife to make a deep V-cut on the first line to separate the head from the body. Round the head by knocking off the square edges, and then shape the hair. Round the chin but leave the front of the face flat. At this stage, I find it helpful to redraw the oval before rounding the face.




**Refine the face.** Continue to round the face to an almond shape, with a narrower top and wider bottom. Separate the hair from the head with stop cuts. Using a V-tool to trace and deepen the cuts might be helpful here, but you can just as easily go without. Make a middle part on top of the head, but not all the way through the back; just short enough to be seen from the front. Shape the bottom of the hair; it is about chin length when viewed from the front and a little longer in the back. Deepen the separation between the head and the body with V-cuts; this will set in the shoulders.

## Carving the Body




**Block out the hands.** Redraw the sleeves and hands, folded in a prayer position. Carve the arms in a bent position and separate the forearms from the upper arms with stop cuts. Shape the chest area and the shoulders in a slight downward position.




**Refine the arms.** Sketch the shape of the arms, and then use the knife to turn the lines into stop cuts. Deepen the cuts to separate the arms from the chest. Round the upper body and shape the sleeves by carving away from you.



**Shape the side profile.** Begin by shaping the arms in a bent position. Make deep stop cuts leading from the bottom forearm to the elbow, and then up to the side of the hair. The face should sit in front of the hair and have a round shape when viewed from the side.



**Refine the hands.** Carve the end of the sleeves in a diagonal position, and then shape the hands. They should look like two small almonds facing each other. You can use a detail knife here or a V-tool to deepen the cuts.

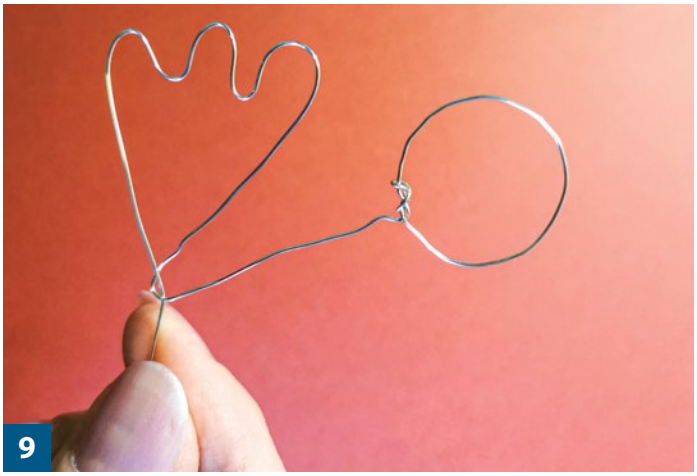


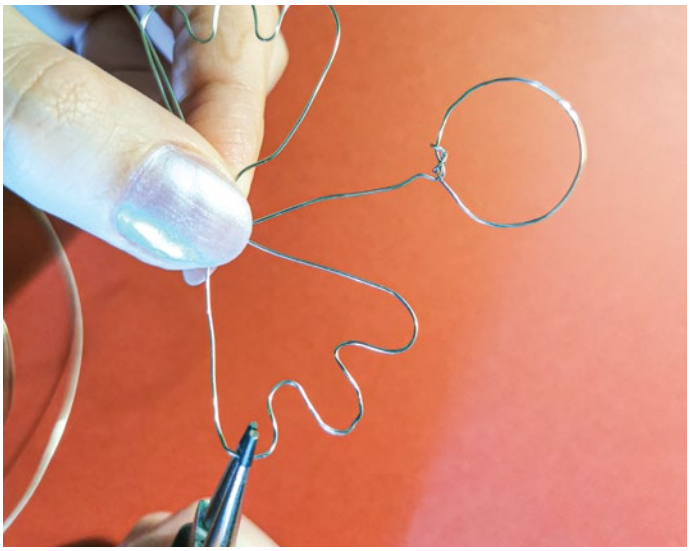
**Shape the bottom of the robe.** Use the knife to remove the sharp edges from the bottom of the carving. Use slicing cuts to round the robe.



**Round the back.** The back of the carving should be kept simple. Carve from the bottom of the hair down to the bottom of the robe. Evaluate the carving from all angles and clean up your cuts.

## Making the Halo and Wings





**Start with a piece of wire that is approx. 16" (41cm) long.** Shape one end of the wire into a 13⁄16" (2.1cm)-wide circle for the halo, leaving the rest of the wire in a straight line. Shape some of the extra wire into a wing with three ruffles. The upper part of the wing should be slightly larger than the lower part; 1 3⁄16" (3cm) for the upper part and about 1" (2.5cm) for the lower part. Round-nose pliers might come in handy here. Wrap the wing over the straight line of wire, 1 3⁄16" (3cm) down from the halo. Use the same technique to shape the other wing, matching it as closely as possible to the first. Use the remaining wire to secure the wings firmly to the halo. Check the fit of the wire elements by placing them on the back of the carving and adjust, if needed.

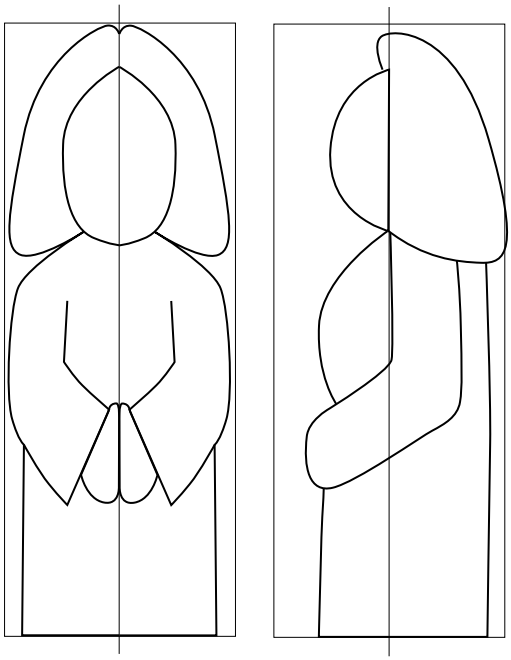
## Painting and Finishing

Prepare the carving for paint. Coat the entire piece in boiled linseed oil and let it sit for about a week. This step allows the colors to adhere more thoroughly and not bleed into the wood or each other. It also helps with taming all the fuzzies left behind in those tight spots, while bringing out the natural color of the wood. *Note: Dispose of oil-soaked paper towels and rags properly, as they can spontaneously combust.*



Paint the edges of the face with vintage rose, leaving the center of the face unpainted. Using a paintbrush saturated with water, blend the color toward the center of the face. Start with less and gradually add more until you're satisfied with the look. Use this method for the hands as well, only applying the vintage rose to the outer edges. Paint the hair dark brown. For the robe, paint the upper part with ivory and the bottom part with white coffee. Before the paint dries, blend the colors together in the middle.

Add the final details. Start adding stars and snowflakes in an antique-gold color with a fine-tip brush throughout the entire robe. Drybrush the hair with ivory to give the piece a nice vintage look. Add shadow around the arms, hands, neck, and face area with a dark brown wood stain. Apply a matte varnish to the face, hair, and hands. I applied a glossy varnish to the robe so the golden stars shine. Let the carving dry, and then attach the halo and wings to the back with a dab of hot glue.



*Thoughtful Angel Patterns*

# Burned and Painted Nativity Ornaments

*By Carolea Hower*

Each Christmas, several of my friends like to purchase nativity-themed ornaments for their grandchildren. I adapted portions of my nativity designs in Winter 2016 (Issue #77) to create these star ornaments. You can display them as standing ornaments or as more traditional hanging versions, simply by adding a screw eye to each one.



### Materials:

- Basswood, ⅜" (1cm) thick: 4 each 2½" (6.4cm) square
- Acetone or graphite paper
- Pencil (optional)
- Acrylic paints: see Painting List
- Finish, such as clear water-based varnish
- Screw eyes, ⅛" (3mm)-dia.: 4 each ½" (1.3cm) long

### Tools:

- Scroll saw
- Woodburner with tip: skew
- Carving knife
- Paintbrushes: #03 and #018 round, #10 shader

# Making the Ornaments



**Transfer the patterns to the wood with the grain running vertically.** I prefer acetone transfers, using gloves and proper ventilation for safety, but you can use graphite paper and a pencil, if desired.



**Cut the stars.** Use a scroll saw.



**Round all sharp ornament edges.** Use a carving knife of your choice.



**Switch to a woodburner with a skew tip.** Burn all the pattern lines on medium heat, pressing the slanted part of the tip straight into the wood to create burned stop cuts.



**Add the finishing touches.** Burn thin lines to suggest the texture of straw.





**Reduce the heat setting to low.** Then lay the skew tip on its side. Burn along the sides of all the lines you just burned, with the exception of the straw manger details. Burning against the straight lines produces a relief carved effect. It also provides the illusion of shading on the finished piece.



**Paint the ornaments.** Refer to the Painting List or use colors of your choice. The burned lines should keep different colors from bleeding into each other. Let dry and seal with a clear water-based varnish.



**Add screw eyes to the tops if desired and display.**

## Painting List

**ALL ORNAMENTS**
**Background, manger:** spice brown (1)
**Manger bedding:** linen (2)
**Skin:** medium flesh (1)
**Star outline, ornament back:** splendid gold (3)

**ORNAMENT #1**
**Staff, headband:** burnt umber (1)
**Mary headdress:** blue heaven (1)
**Mary robe:** copen blue (1)
**Mary hair, Joseph robe:** coffee bean (2)
**Joseph headdress, inner robe:** mushroom (2)

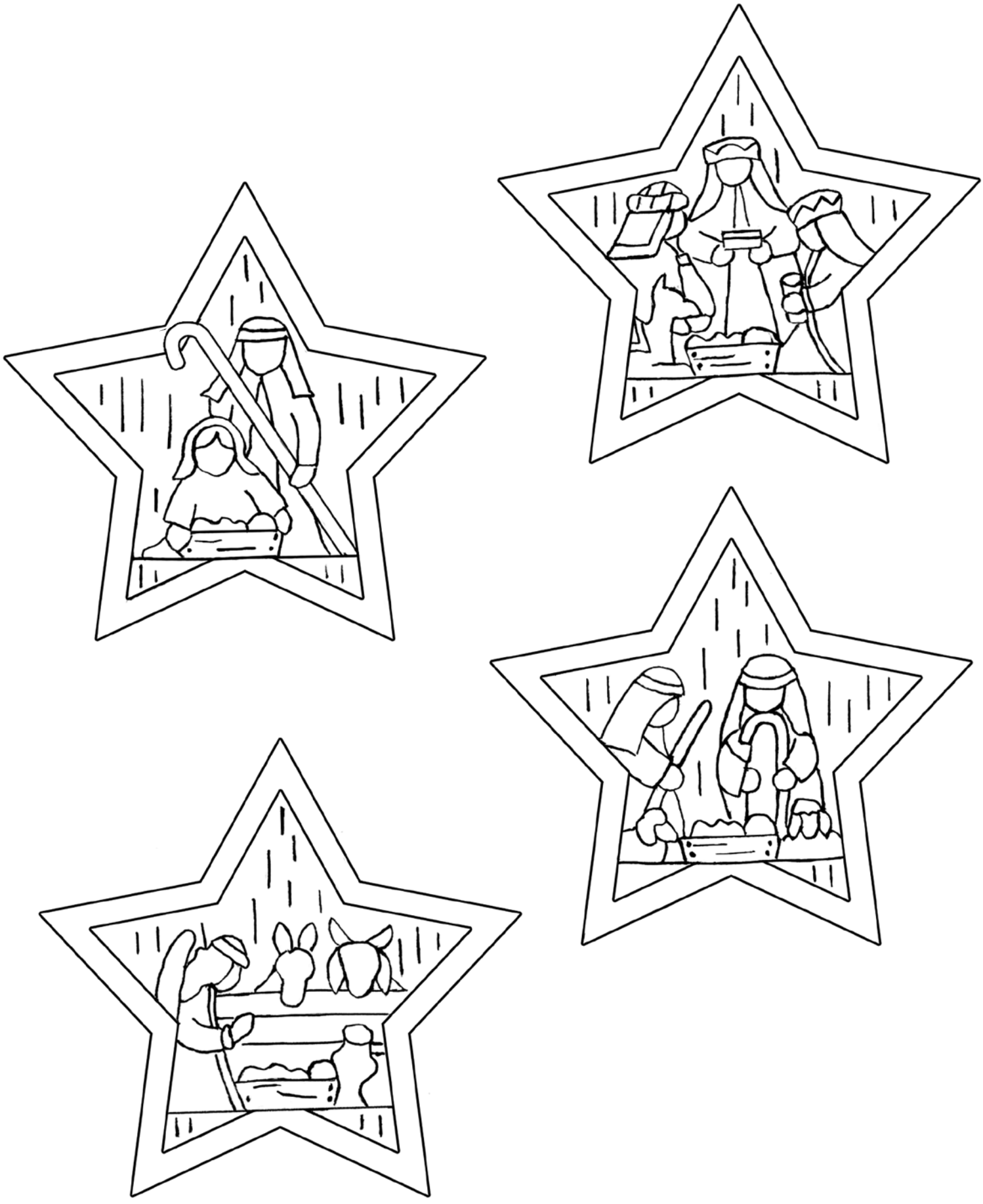
**ORNAMENT #2**
**Crowns, robe trim:** splendid gold (3)
**King #1 outer robe:** metallic Christmas green (2)
**King #1 headdress, inner robe:** metallic peridot (2)
**King #1 gift chest:** metallic gunmetal (2)
**King #2 outer robe:** metallic amethyst (2)
**King #2 headdress, inner robe:** metallic plum (2)
**King #2 gift bottle:** metallic espresso (3)
**King #3 robe:** metallic sapphire (2)
**King #3 headdress:** metallic blue pearl (2)
**King #3 gift:** metallic copper (2)

**ORNAMENT #3**
**Staffs, headbands:** burnt umber (1)
**Shepherd #1 outer robe:** aspen green (2)
**Shepherd #1 inner robe, Shepherd #2 headdress:** mushroom (2)
**Shepherd #1 headdress:** sage (2)
**Shepherd #2 robe:** Bambi brown (1)
**Sheep bodies:** white (1)
**Sheep faces:** medium gray (4)

**ORNAMENT #4**
**Halo, robe trim:** splendid gold (3)
**Angel hair:** light yellow (2)
**Wing:** metallic pearl (2)
**Robe:** metallic rose (2)
**Cow horns,** donkey body: medium gray (4)
**Cow body:** raw sienna (1)
**Jar #1:** Georgia clay (1)
**Jar #2:** mushroom (2)

*1 Ceramcoat*
*2 FolkArt*
*3 DecoArt*
*4 Apple Barrel*





*Burned and Painted Nativity Ornaments Patterns*

# A Chip-Carved Christmas

*By Bruce and Judy Nicholas*



Cut the blank to size and sand it with progressively finer grits of sandpaper up to 220-grit. To transfer the pattern, draw directly on the wood with a soft B-lead pencil or use Saral® Transfer paper to trace the pattern.

Start with the largest chips first. Cutting order is important, especially when chips are used as borders and to make shapes. When carving adjacent chips, make the first cut of the second chip with the knife blade pointing away from the first chip. This prevents the blade from exerting too much pressure and damaging the side wall (or ridge) between the chips.

To embellish the ornaments, consider adding texture or color. This is one of the easiest ways to alter a carving to make it uniquely yours! We use a tack hammer and nail set to add texture. Make sure you use a diameter large enough that you don't create holes in the carving instead of small round dimples. To add color, we use water-soluble wax crayons thinned with painter's flow medium. We love this method because the crayon and flow medium mix provides color without covering the wood grain. After the paint dries, apply a coat of clear finish.

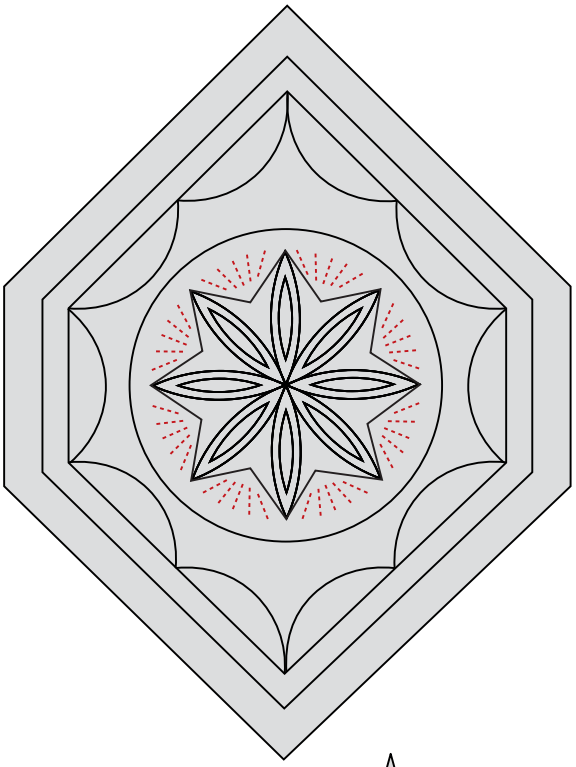
If you prefer a natural finish, apply a few light coats of clear finish, and then apply a tinted wax. Mix clear finishing wax with a small amount of brown wax and apply it with a medium stiff brush. To hang your ornaments, drill a hole through the face or the side (depending on the design) or insert a screw eye into the top.

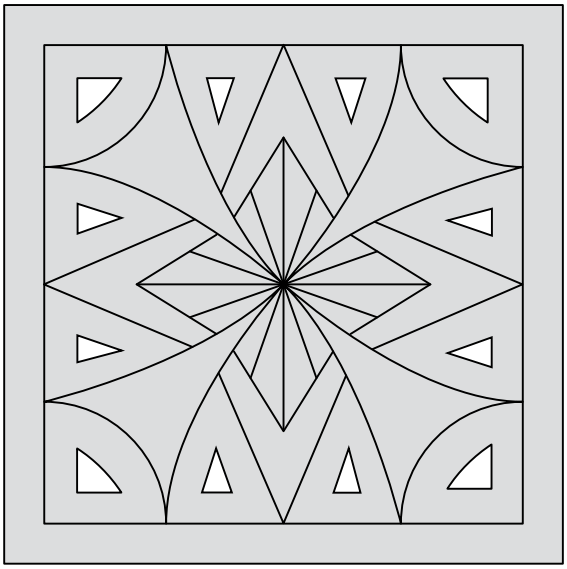
## Materials

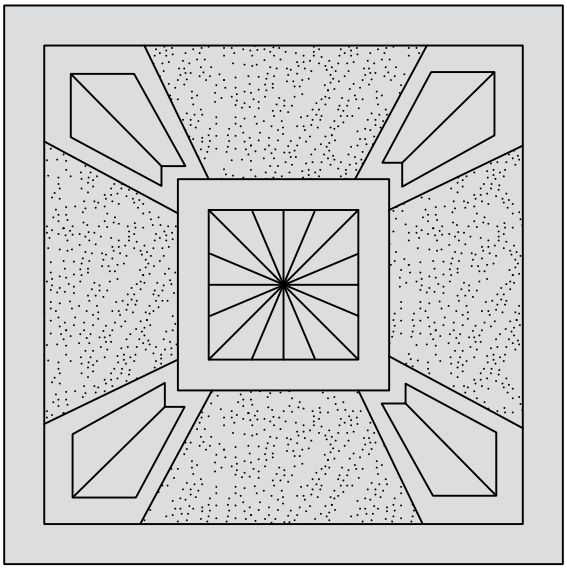
- Basswood blank, ¼" (6mm) thick: assorted sizes
- Soft B-lead pencil or Saral Transfer paper
- Eraser
- Sandpaper
- Clear spray finish, such as Deft
- Water-soluble wax crayons
- Flow medium
- Finishing wax: clear, brown

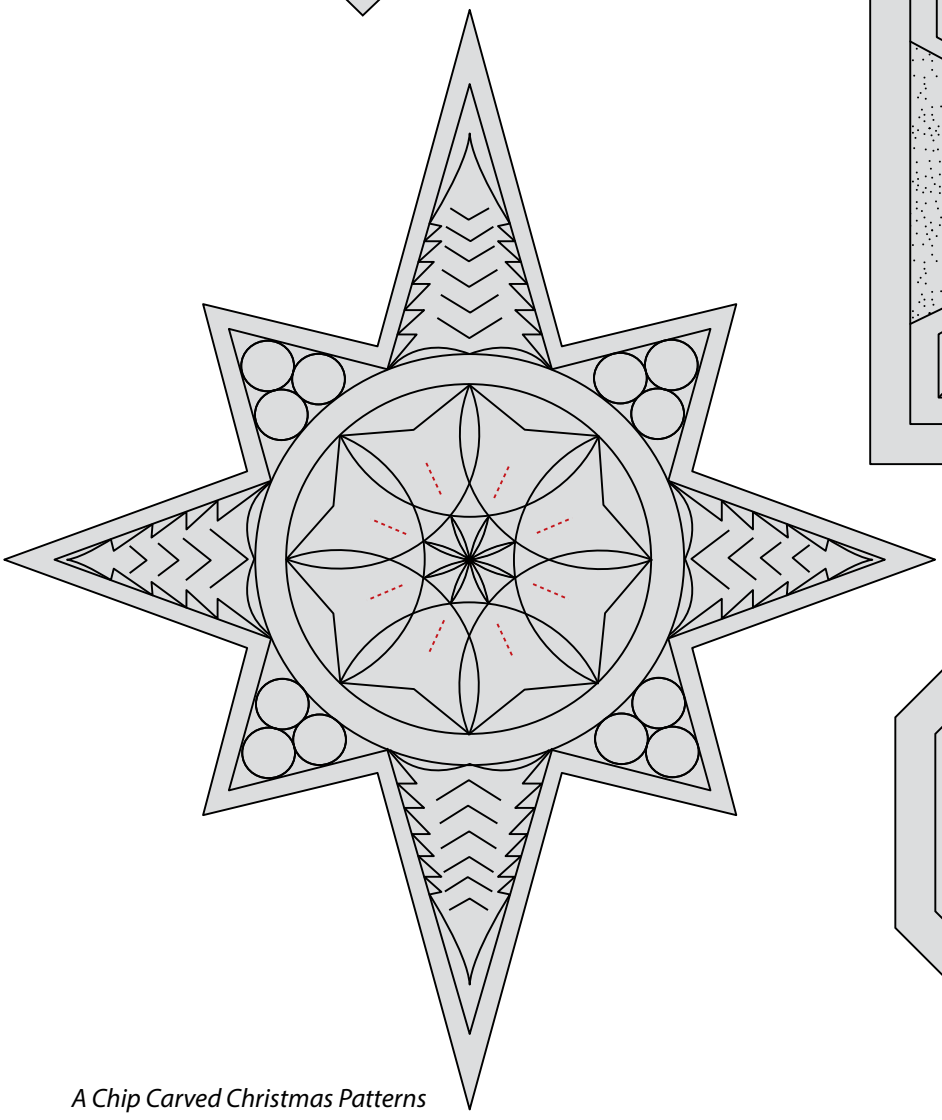
## Tools

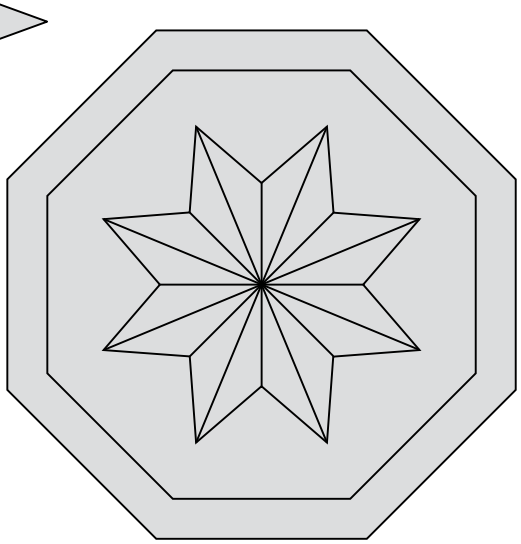
- Chip-carving knife
- Paintbrushes: #5 round, #4 flat, medium-stiff bristle











*A Chip Carved Christmas Patterns*



# Traditional Ornament

*By Glenn Stewart*

*Step-by-Step photos by Shanna Nugent*

My prime carving season starts in the fall and ends around Christmastime. Every year I carve Christmas ornaments that have a flat back, so they can be worn as a pin. My wife, Judy, enjoys wearing different pins each day during the Christmas season.

Transfer the pattern to the blank. Drill a blade-entry hole and cut the area between the top of the bulb and the ribbon and greenery with a scroll saw or coping saw. Cut the perimeter of the project. Draw a centerline around the edges of the blank.

## Materials

- Basswood, ½" (1.3cm) thick: 3⅛" (7.9cm) square
- Sanding pads: medium, fine
- Acrylic paints: Christmas red, green
- Shoe polish, such as Meltonian® shoe cream: #1 neutral, #129 chamois
- Cyanoacrylate (CA) glue, such as Super Glue®
- Small paper clip or wire
- Pin back or fine wire
- Toothpick

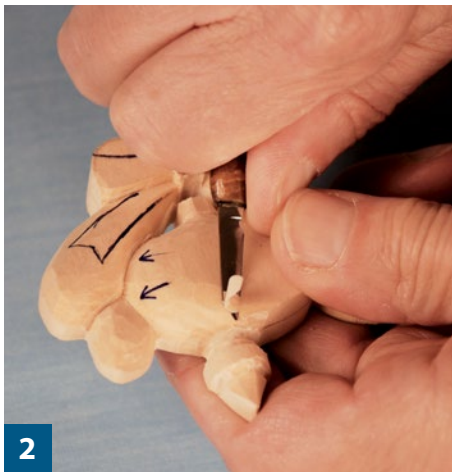
## Tools

- Carving knife
- Detail knife
- Micro gouge: ⅛" (3mm)
- Micro V-tool: 1/16" (2mm)
- Eye punch: ⅛" (3mm)
- Compass
- Needle-nose pliers: small
- Drill with bit: 1/32" (1mm) dia.
- Shoe brush
- Paintbrush
- Woodburner with tips: writing, skew

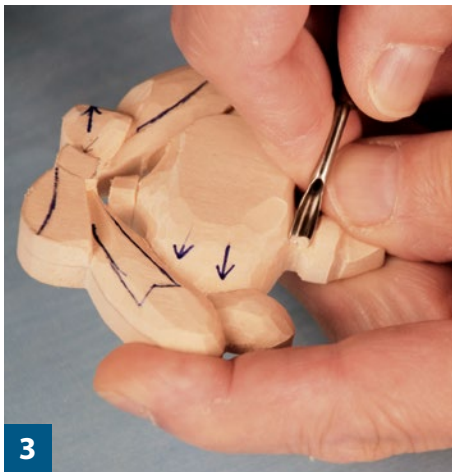
## Roughing Out the Project




**Rough out the greenery.** Use a detail knife to make stop cuts around the edges of the ribbon and along the sides of the bulb. Use a carving knife to carve the greenery down ⅛" (3mm). Make stop cuts around the lower left greenery, and then carve it down an additional ⅛" (3mm).




**Rough out the ribbon and ornament.** Redraw the ribbon streamers and make stop cuts around the streamers and the lower left greenery. Carve away another ⅛" (3mm) from the lower left greenery. Round the bulb from the center to the edges. Carve the top and bottom of the bulb down to ⅜" (10mm) thick. Rough in the top of the bulb.




**Shape the bulb and ribbon loops.** Use a ⅛" (3mm) micro gouge to carve the grooves in the bottom of the bulb. The grooves should be about ⅜" (10mm) wide, and the wood at the bottom of the grooves should be ¼" (6mm) thick. Carve the loops on both sides of the knot down ⅛" (3mm). Round the sides of the bulb and ribbon to the centerline.

## Refining the Carving




**Refine the ribbon streamers.** Clean up the stop cuts around the streamers. Some of the right streamer is behind the greenery, so taper it with the carving knife. The left streamer is on top of the greenery, so make stop cuts around it and remove wood from the greenery until the ribbon sits on top of the greenery.




**Refine the ribbon.** Use a 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool to add the diagonal groove in the knot. Use the detail knife to make stop cuts in the ribbon loops, and use the carving knife to carve the backs of the loops down to the centerline on the edge of the blank. Refine the back of the bulb to give it more of a 3D effect. Taper the tops of the loops almost to the centerline to make the ribbons look thin.

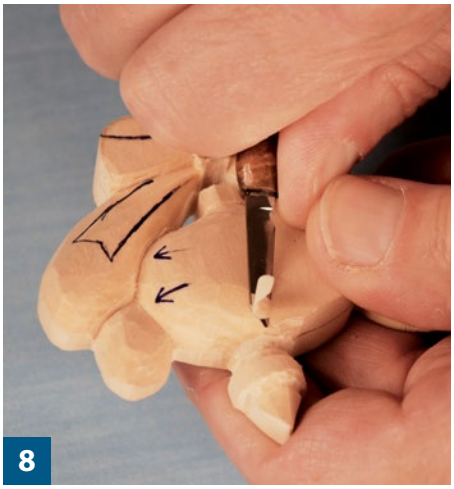



**Texture the greenery and top of the bulb.** Make short random cuts in the front and back of the greenery with the 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool. Do not carve into the ribbon or bulb. Use the micro V-tool to carve the grooves around the top of the bulb. Use the 1/8" (3mm) micro gouge to hollow the top of the bulb. Sand the bulb with a medium-grit sanding pad cut into strips. Then sand it with a fine-grit sanding pad.

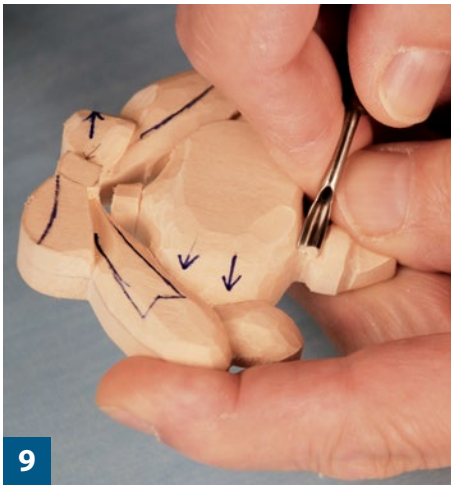



**Place the point of a compass in the groove in the knot positioned so the pencil will mark both sides of the ornament evenly.** Press the point into the knot. Mark a line 3/4" (19mm) from the point, 1" (25mm) from the point, and 1 1/2" (38mm) from the point. Carve along the lines with a 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool.

## Adding The Details




**Embellish the ornament.** Place the edge of a 1/8" (3mm) eye punch in the center of the second V-groove in the center of the ornament. Press it in to make a light circle. Place another circle close to the first one. Continue the circles across the front of the ornament. Use the detail knife to remove the small inverted pyramids between the circles. Deepen the circles with the punch. Then use the 1/8" (3mm) micro gouge to carve a groove between the top two V-grooves.




**Make the wire embellishments.** Bend a piece of a small paper clip into a "U" shape with needle-nose pliers. Then, create small loops in the end of two additional pieces of paper clip, and hook the loops together.



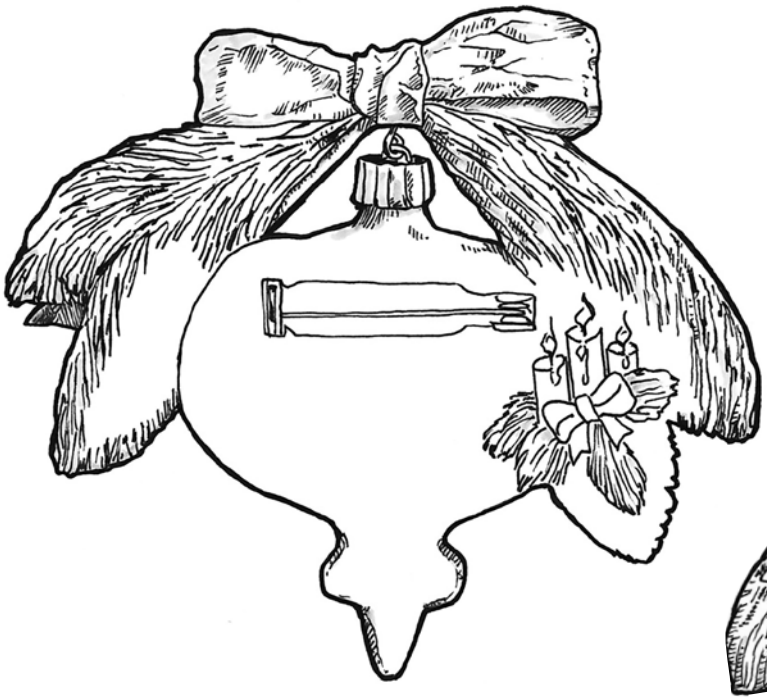

**Attach the wire embellishments.** Drill 1/32" (1mm)-diameter holes for the wires. Drill at an angle into the top of the bulb and the bottom of the ribbon to get the holes in the middle of the blank. The holes don't need to be deep; they just need to hold the wire in place with a bit of CA glue. Bend the wires parallel with the surface of the ornament. If you plan to use the carving on a tree, add a U-shaped piece of wire for the hanging ribbon.

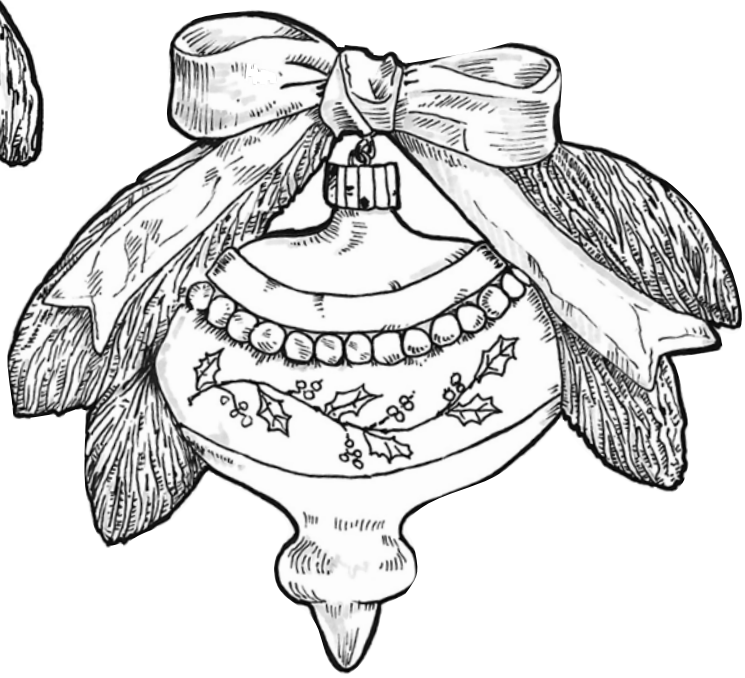



**Burn the texture and holly details.** Give the bulb a final light sanding where the holly goes. Draw the holly leaves and berries. I use a woodburner with a skew tip to burn the greenery and a writing tip to burn the holly.




**12 Paint the ornament.** I use thinned Christmas red and green acrylic paint. Apply layers of color to keep the paint from looking thick. For the holly berries, dip a toothpick point in full-strength paint and touch the berries. Allow the paint to dry, and then apply Meltonian shoe cream #129 chamois to the whole carving. Allow it to dry for a few minutes, and then buff it with a shoe brush to bring out some luster. Repeat the process with Meltonian shoe cream #1 neutral. To make an ornament, feed a wire through the top loop. To make a pin, attach a pin back with epoxy.





*Traditional Ornament Patterns*



# Snowman Ornament

*By Sara Barraclough*

I've always enjoyed the challenge of making a design work with the wood I have at my disposal. This snowman came about when I had a handful of wonky end cuts that I just couldn't throw away. Once you carve a snowman or two, you should be able to start experimenting with different sizes and accessories. Have fun with it! I've provided two bonus patterns to keep the fun going. You can complete them all with just a knife, although I also used a micro hand drill (which is my most-used tool aside from my carving knives).

Transfer the pattern to the blank with a pencil or pen.

## Materials

- Basswood, approx. 1½" (3.8cm) square: 4" (10.2cm) long
- Pencil or pen
- Glue: wood
- Boiled linseed oil
- Paper towels or rags
- Stylus (optional)
- Toothpicks
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Ceramcoat: liberty blue; such as Americana: light buttermilk, titanium white; such as FolkArt: black, navy blue, tangerine
- String or thread
- Hook: eyelet

## Tools

- Carving knife
- Band saw
- Drill with bit: micro
- Paintbrushes: assorted

## Roughing Out



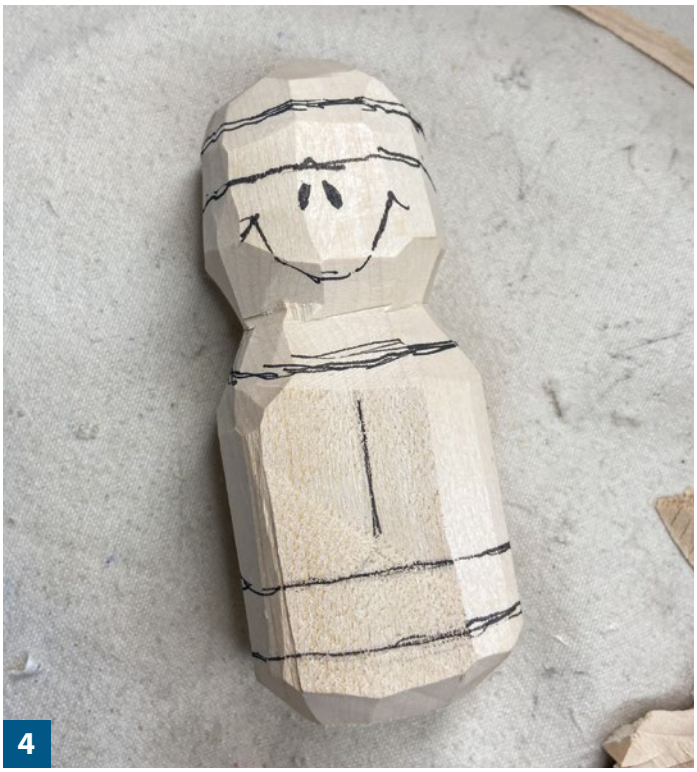
**Rough out the head.** Separate the head from the body by removing wood near the neck. I like to take in each of the four corners first so that I have a visual all the way around.



**Shape the head.** Remove material at the corners and sides, rounding the head into the neck and shoulders. Keep in mind that the snowman is wearing a beanie, so leave the top of the head a little higher and avoid rounding it completely.



**Round the body.** Aim for long, sweeping cuts. You don't have to take a lot off the sides, but do focus on removing the sharp edges and rounding the bottom corners.



**Redraw your lines.** Mark the eyes, smile, and trim of the hat and sweater. At this stage, the head and body should be roughed out.



**Shape the hat.** I used a series of stop cuts and V-cuts to define the top and bottom of the hat trim. To create the separation, cut up from just below your guideline, and then cut down from just above the guideline to meet the first cut. Repeat this process all the way around the piece.



**Shape the trim on the sweater.** Create the neck and collar of the sweater using the same method you used with the hat in Step 5. This area should be the narrowest part of the body. Repeat the process for the bottom trim of the sweater.



**Refine the overall shape.** Exaggerate your existing cuts, separating the trim from the sweater and the hat from the head. Then remove wood from the sides of the bottom of the snowman so that the sweater appears to overlap it.



**Add a separation line down the front of the sweater.** Follow that line by making a deep V-cut with the knife.



**Add a smile.** Make a stop cut along the line, and then cut into it from below. Use a micro hand drill to make a small hole for the nose. I drilled approximately 1/64" (.4mm) deep. Insert a toothpick into the hole and trim it accordingly. Don't glue it in yet.

## Painting and Finishing



**Prepare the carving for paint.** Coat the entire piece with boiled linseed oil, let sit for a few minutes, and then wipe the excess off. Let dry for about twenty-four hours before painting. *Note: Dispose of any used paper towels or rags according to the manufacturer's instructions, as oil-soaked rags can spontaneously combust.* Then, using a 4:1 water to paint ratio, paint the head and the very bottom portion under the sweater with light buttermilk.



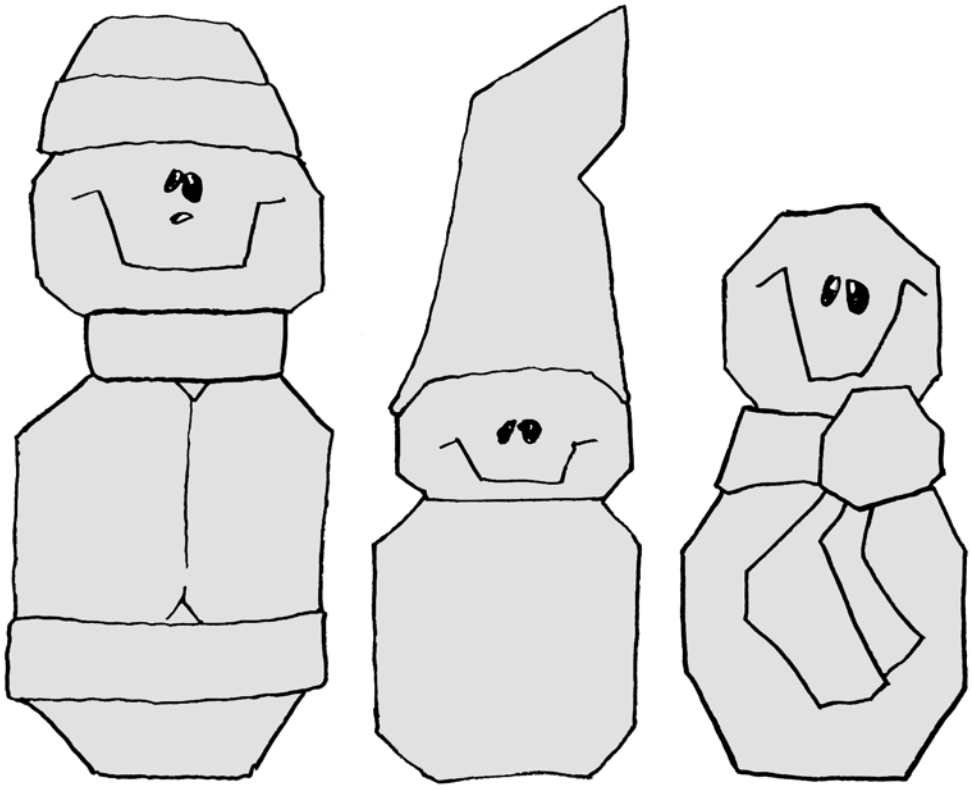

11

**Paint the clothing.** Using a 2:1 water to paint ratio, paint the sweater with liberty blue. While the paint is still damp, apply navy blue to the creases to create a "shadow" where the sweater meets the lining. Repeat for the top portion of the hat.



12

**Add finishing details.** Use a stylus or a toothpick to apply dots to the hat and sweater with light buttermilk. Paint the nose with tangerine. Paint the eyes with black. Allow the black to dry completely before applying eye highlights with titanium white. Glue the nose in place. Drill a small hole at the top of the head, and attach an eyelet hook in the hole with glue. Add string or twine to the eyelet and display as desired.



*Snowman Ornaments Patterns*



# Layered Relief Ornament

*By Betty Padden*

This peaceful, wintry church tableau is a lovely ornament to gift to a friend or keep for yourself. The scene contains lots of details, but with three separate layers, you'll find carving it a breeze. This technique allows you to achieve depth without having to dig down deep into the wood at odd angles. I prefer to use oil paints for projects like this—their long drying times allow for blending at your leisure. The colors are also much richer than those found in standard acrylics.

Transfer the patterns to the wood with graphite paper and a pencil. Drill the blade-entry holes for the cut out sections, and cut the perimeters of the pieces on a band saw. Cut the interior sections on a scroll saw. Lightly hand-sand the pieces with 220-grit sandpaper to remove fuzzies.

## Materials

- Basswood, ⅜" (1cm) thick: Layer 1, 3" x 4" (7.6cm x 10.2cm); Layer 3, 3" x 4" (7.6cm x 10.2cm)
- Basswood, ⅝" (1.6cm) thick: Layer 2, 3" x 5¾" (7.6cm x 14.6cm)
- Graphite transfer paper
- Pencil
- Sandpaper: 220-grit
- Paint thinner
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn dish soap
- Oil paints, such as Winsor & Newton™: Alizarin crimson, burnt sienna, burnt umber, cadmium yellow light, lamp black, Payne's gray, Prussian blue, raw sienna, raw umber, titanium white
- Acrylic paint: gold metallic
- Markers: gold metallic, light gray
- Wood glue
- Screw eye: ¼" (6mm)-dia. opening
- Ribbon or decorative hook, for hanging
- Toothpick

## Tools

- Band saw
- Scroll saw with blades: #3 reverse-tooth
- Drill with bit: small
- Rotary tool with bit: fine-grit flame-shaped diamond
- #1 skew chisel: ½" (13mm)
- #2 gouge: 3/16" (5mm)
- #3 fishtail gouge: 5/16" (8mm)
- #5 gouges: 5/16" (8mm), ½" (13mm)
- #7 gouges: ½" (13mm), 9/16" (14mm)
- #11 gouge: 9/32" (7mm)
- V-tool: ¼" (6mm) 45°
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Old toothbrush

## Carving the Layers



**Carve Layer 1.** First, draw the inner arch of the shape of the ornament. Separate the snowy hills from the sky with a ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool. Then scoop out the sky area using a 9/16" (14mm) #7 gouge, bringing it down by about ⅛" (3mm). Round over the hills with a 5/16" (8mm) #5 gouge.



**Carve Layer 2.** Make stop cuts between the edges of the ornament and the trees using the ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool. Drop the surface of both trees by about ⅛" (3mm). Then bevel the tree boughs toward their tips with the 5/16" (8mm) #5 gouge. Define the boughs with a rotary tool and a fine-grit flame-shaped diamond bit. Now separate the church front from the roof with the ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool and drop the front of the church wall by about ⅛" (3mm) with the 5/16" (8mm) #5 gouge. Round the snowy ground into the church with the same tool. Then cut the path with a 9/32" (7mm) #11 gouge. Drop the spire ¼" (6mm) and pitch the top and sides in with a 5/16" (8mm) #3 fishtail gouge. Drop the belfry slightly using a 3/16" (5mm) #2 gouge. Round the top finial with the 5/16" (8mm) #5 gouge, and round the bottom finial using a ½" (13mm) #7 gouge. Separate the sections with the ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool and refine with a ½" (13mm) #5 gouge.

## Painting and Finishing



**Carve Layer 3.** Separate the fence posts from the fence with the ¼" (6mm) 45° V-tool, cleaning up the corners with a ½" (13mm) #1 skew chisel. Drop the fence by about ⅛" (3mm) with the ½" (13mm) #1 skew chisel and the 5/16" (8mm) #5 gouge. With the same skew chisel, drop the fence posts by about 1/16" (2mm) and then round the finials on top of the posts. Round the outer edges of this layer with the 5/16" (8mm) #5 gouge.



**Prepare the ornament for paint.** I used a 50-50% mixture of rubbing alcohol and water, scrubbing all surfaces of the carving with an old toothbrush. Do not glue the layers yet.



**Paint the sky and landscape.** Starting at the horizon on Layer 1, make a half-circle arc of titanium white. Surround this with a dark blue made of four parts Prussian blue and one part burnt umber. Blend these and then tap in some trees, using Payne's gray and a little cadmium yellow light. Paint the snowy hill with titanium white, add a mixture of Prussian blue and titanium white at the base, and blend. Add the blowing snow in the sky by dipping a toothpick into titanium white—or, if you are brave, use a stiff brush dipped in slightly thinned titanium white and then flick or spray it onto the sky with your thumb. *Note: Practice this on scraps before attempting!*

## Painting and Finishing



6

**Paint the wall of the church and the snowy ground from Layer 2 with titanium white.** Paint the path with a mixture of burnt sienna and a bit of alizarin crimson. Add some cadmium yellow light to the middle and blend. Paint the belfry with cadmium yellow light, as well. Then paint the trees with a dark green mixture made up of a little cadmium yellow light and Payne's gray. Add a little cadmium yellow light to the inner edges, and after blending these, tap some titanium white on a few outer boughs to simulate fallen snow.



7

**Add the church shadows and snow details.** Tap a little titanium white randomly along the walk for snow. Shade the snow with a mixture of Prussian blue and titanium white. Add shading in the corners of the church under the roof and by the ground with three parts raw sienna and one part raw umber. Blend well. Paint the inner edge of the cutout area with the dark sky blue color from Step 5.



8

**Add detail to the belfry lights.** Paint some burnt sienna onto the existing colors in the belfry and blend. Use the pencil to draw the windows and door.



9

**Add the window and door details.** Paint the top half of each window with cadmium yellow light, added titanium white to the lower half, and blended. Add a very small amount of burnt sienna to the very top of the window and blend that, too. Paint the center of the door with cadmium yellow light, and then add alizarin crimson to the outer edge and blend. Mix a little lamp black into the alizarin crimson for a dark red, and add some vertical splits in the door with a script liner brush. Use the raw sienna/raw umber mixture to paint a step under the door.



10

**Paint the roof and steeple.** Start with a layer of lamp black, adding titanium white to the edges to highlight. Blend. Note the black framing the light in the belfry. Use the same mixture you used to paint the church step as a base coat for the fence on Layer 3. Once dry, add the fence slat details with titanium white. Paint the posts with raw sienna and add some burnt umber shadows. I used an acrylic metallic gold paint for the finials on the fence. Use a light gray marker to draw the door frame and window details on the church.

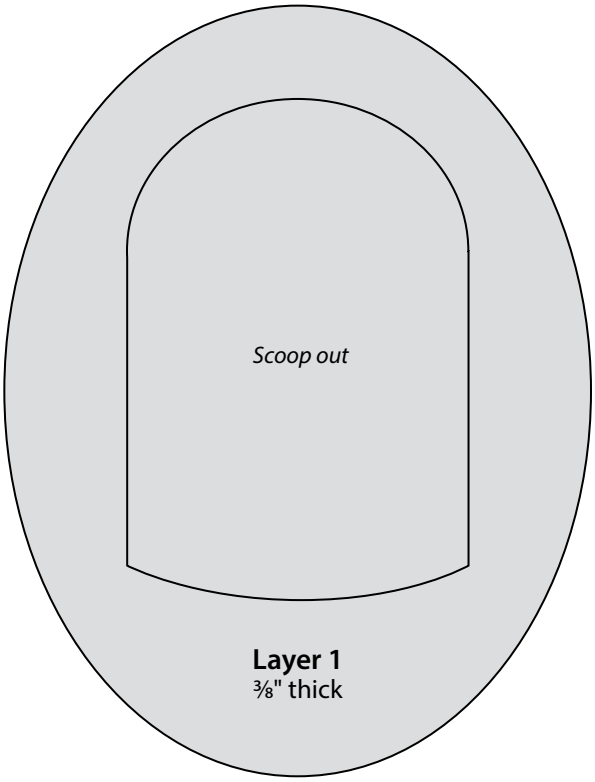


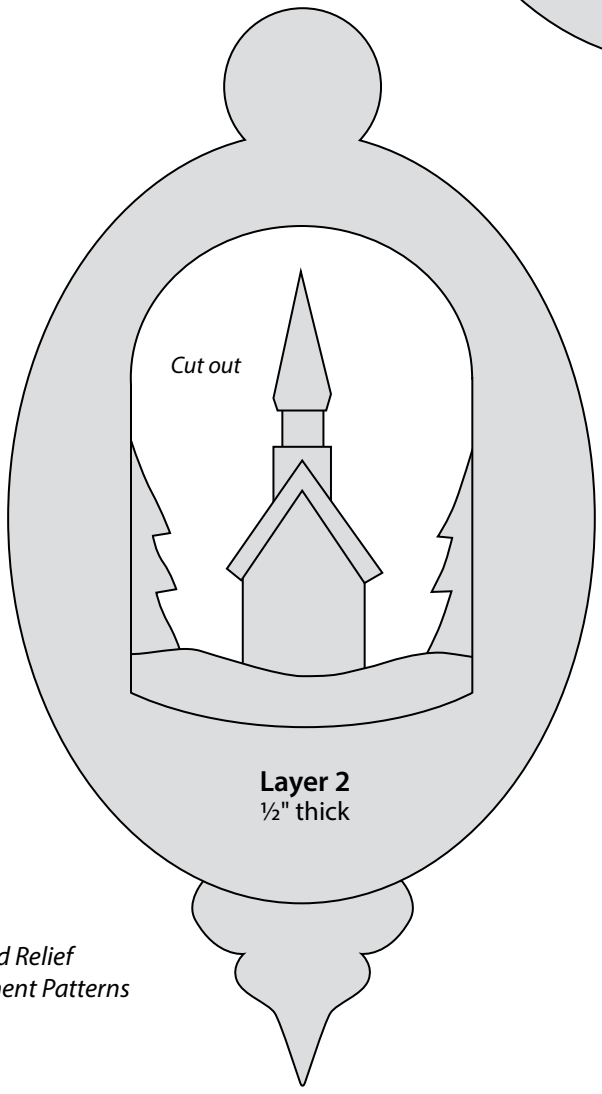
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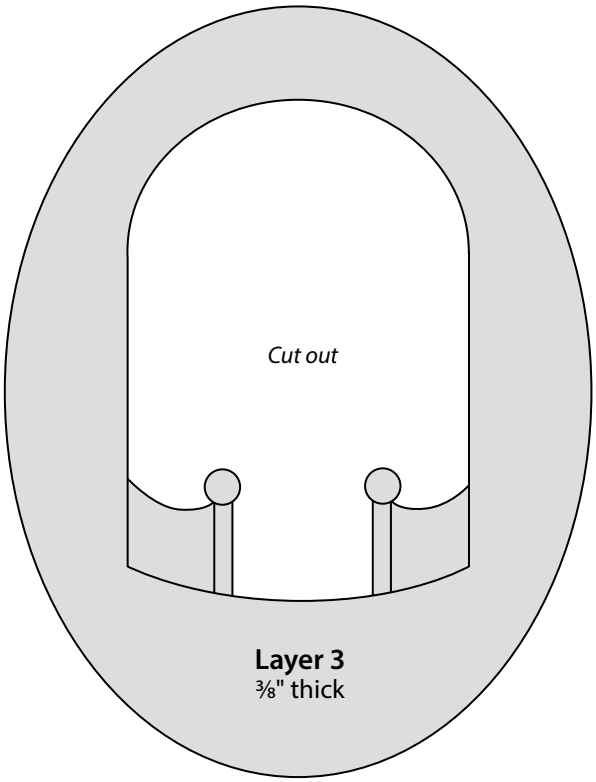
**Glue and clamp the layers together.** Once dry, carve the outside to join and smooth the layers, leaving nice, smooth facets for a folk-art look. Use a gouge of your choice. Add the screw eye to the top of the finial. Paint the outside of the ornament with titanium white, add Prussian blue to the lower edges, and blend. Paint the top and bottom finials with gold acrylic paint.




**Add the finishing touches.** I drew on some delicate snowflakes with a metallic gold marker.




*Layered Relief Ornament Patterns*

# Norbert the Elf

*By Bob Kozakiewicz*



Over the years, my inspiration has come from many noted woodcarvers. Norbert the Elf builds in part on ideas from the works of Lundy Cupp, Marc Gargac, and Kathryn Overcash. I hope this project will serve as inspiration for you! In my imagination, Norbert is in charge of making the wristwatches in Santa's workshop; he's been doing it for over 175 years! His watches are the best you can find anywhere—even better than the ones you see in those fancy, expensive jewelry stores. After 175 years, though, Norbert's eyesight isn't what it used to be, so he got himself a pair of wire-rimmed glasses that help him to see the tiniest gears and watch parts. Norbert is a unique and fun project that is easy to carve and paint. His glasses are simple to make and add a special touch.

Begin with a 2" by 2" by 7 ½" (5.1cm by 5.1cm by 19.1cm) block of basswood cut diagonally on a bandsaw. This gives you two triangular blocks 7 ½" (19.1cm) long by 2 ¾" (7cm) across the back (you can make two elves). Transfer the pattern onto one of the triangular blocks with graphite paper and a pencil. Align the patterns with the center edge of the block, not the outer edges. Mark the locations of the bottom and bridge of the nose and draw the bottom of the hat. After you trace the pattern, cut away some of the waste wood with the band saw. Before you begin, make sure your tools are sharp. Keep them sharp as you go with periodic stropping.

## Materials

- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) square: 7 ½" (19cm) long; cut diagonally making two (2) blocks each measuring 2" x 2" x 2 ¾" (5.1cm x 5.1cm x 7cm): 7 ½" (19.1cm) long
- Graphite paper
- Pencil
- Boiled linseed oil
- Acrylic paint, such as Americana: alizarin crimson, bluebird, light buttermilk; such as Apple Barrel: grape soda; such as Craftsmart: black, cherry cobbler, gold ochre, peach, vanilla, white
- Finish: satin spray lacquer, such as Deft
- Howard Feed-N-Wax
- Cyanoacrylate (CA) glue
- Sandpaper: 180-, 320-, 400-, 600-grit
- Wire: brass, 20 gauge
- Screw eye: chrome, ¼" opening
- Ornament hanger, chrome: 11" (28cm) (optional)
- Soft cloth
- Toothpick
- Paper towels

## Tools

- Band saw
- Carving knives: rough out, detail
- #5 gouge: 9/16" (14mm)
- #6 gouges: ¼" (6mm), 5/16" (8mm), ½" (13mm)
- #8 gouge: ⅜" (10mm)
- #9 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- #11 gouge: ⅛" (3mm)
- Micro gouge, such as Dockyard: 1.5mm
- V-tools: ⅜" (10mm) 70°, ¼" (6mm) 70°
- Micro V-tools, such as Dockyard: 1/16" (2mm) 90°, ⅛" (3mm) 75°
- Calipers
- Hand drill with bit: 1/16" (2mm)
- Wire cutters or pliers
- Paint brushes: assorted
- Horsehair shoe brush

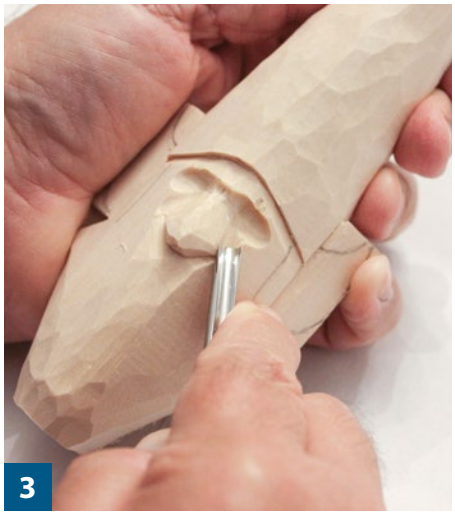
## Roughing Out




**Begin blocking out the face.** Use a rough out knife. Cut a large notch at the mark indicating the bottom of the nose. Cut a small notch to indicate the bridge of the nose. Make stop cuts along the brim of the hat and cut up to them. Make stop cuts at the ears and cut into them, lowering the insides of the ears just a bit.

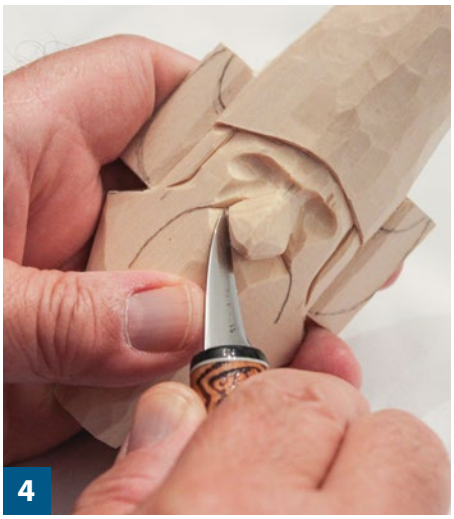



**Begin shaping the face and hat.** Use the rough out knife. Taper the hat area as you get closer to the top. Round the top of the hat and remove some wood around the brim. Carve down the forehead and taper the nose back toward the forehead. Make sure you maintain the notch indicating the bridge of the nose. Carve off the sharp edges of the beard to round it a little. Draw the ears and sideburns about ¼" (6mm) in from the sides of the face with a pencil.




**Shape the eyes and nose.** Use a ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge. Carve across the notch at the bridge of the nose. Use the rough out knife to enlarge and define the bottom of the nose. Then use the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to carve a triangle from the outer points at the bottom of the nose up to a center point at the bridge of the nose. Shape the nose slightly with the rough out knife. Carve the eye sockets deeper with the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge.

## Defining the Face




**Begin defining the face.** Use a ¼" (6mm) #6 gouge. Angling slightly outward, stab the gouge in at the outer corners of the nose wings to define them. Use the same gouge or a detail knife to cut toward the nose to define the outer corners. Draw the smile lines. Remove a large triangular chip from the corner where the smile lines meet the bottom of the nose. Use the rough out knife. Make a stop cut at the sideburns and carve up to them from the cheeks to raise them slightly above the face.




**Finish the nose.** Continue shaping the nose with the detail knife. Use a ½" (13mm) #6 gouge to define the nostrils. Use the ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to carve a groove at the bridge of the nose to separate the eyebrows. Using the rough out knife, carve stop cuts into the smile lines to form the dental (mouth) mound. Draw the lower jaw and chin. Then follow the pencil lines with a ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool to set them in place.




**Carve the chin and ears.** Use the rough out knife and the ⅜" (10mm) 70° V-tool to lower the beard area and form the chin. Carve and shape the outer ears.



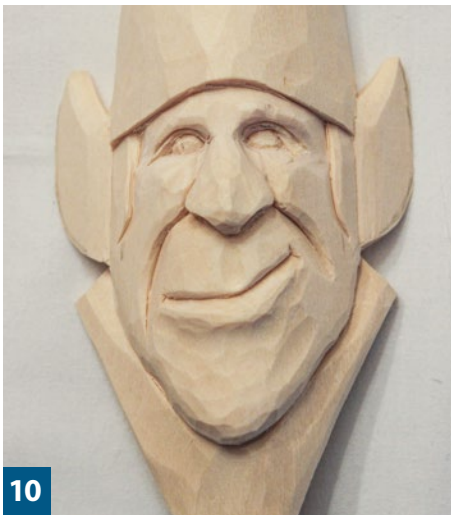

**Carve the mouth.** Draw a line for the mouth, giving the elf a slightly crooked smile. Follow the line with the detail knife. Using a ⅜" (10mm) #8 gouge, carve below the mouth to form the lower lip. Use the same tool to carve the cleft between the upper lip and nose. Shape the chin further with the ½" (13mm) #6 gouge. Use the rough out knife. Make a stop cut at the sideburns and carve up to them from the cheeks to raise them slightly above the face.




**Measure the eyes.** Use a pencil and calipers. Mark the centers as well as the inner and outer corners of both eyes. Place a dot at each of these marks with a pencil. Draw the top and bottom eyelids.




**Set the corners of the eyes.** Use a 1/16" (2mm) 90° micro V-tool. Stab the V-tool into the corners of the eyes and take out a small chip from each corner. Deepen the corners of the eyes to round the eyeballs from side to side. *Note: The inner corner of the eye is the deepest part of the face.* Depth should also be emphasized at the outer corner of the eye. You should be able to see the roundness of the eyeball when viewing the carving from the side. Redraw the top and bottom eyelids if necessary.




**Carve stop cuts along the lines for the top and bottom eyelids.** Use the detail knife. Be careful not to use too much pressure here as the wood can fracture. Round the eyeball from the center toward each stop cut. Use a ⅛" (3mm) 75° micro V-tool to carve the top eyelid. Start at the top center of each eye (just under the eyebrow) and carve down towards the nose. Then go back and carve down toward the outside of the eye. Use the detail knife and a 5/16" (8mm) #6 gouge to shape the temples and forehead.




**Add the facial details.** Use the detail knife to carve bags under the eyes. Add face wrinkles with the 1/16" (2mm) 90° micro V-tool. Add hair texture to the sideburns with the ⅛" (3mm) 75° micro V-tool. Make sure the ears are cut in behind the side burns. Use a 1.5mm micro gouge to carve the eye brows. Draw the inner ears.




**Add the hat texture.** Use a ⅝" (16mm) #9 gouge, the ⅜" (10mm) #8 gouge, and the ½" (13mm) #6 gouge to carve the wrinkles in the hat. Smooth the sharp edges left by the gouges with a detail knife.



**Thin the back of the beard.** Use the rough out knife and a 9/16" (14mm) #5 gouge. This lightens the ornament somewhat and shapes the edges of the beard.



**Carve the beard.** Use a detail knife and a 1/4" (6mm) 70° V-tool to shape the beard. Be sure not to use any straight cuts here. Carve the beard using gentle S-curves and C-cuts.



**Shape the ears.** Use the 5/16" (8mm) #6 gouge, the 1/4" (6mm) #6 gouge, and a 1/8" (3mm) #11 gouge to carve the insides of the ears. Use a detail knife to slightly round off the outside of the ears.

## Painting and Finishing

Sand the carving all over, particularly the hat, to remove the knife and gouge marks. After sanding, use a 1/16" (2mm)-dia. bit to drill a 1/4" (6mm)-deep hole into the corners of both temples where the hat meets the sideburns. Brush the carving with a coat of boiled linseed oil. Wipe off the excess with a clean paper towel, and then lay it on another paper towel and allow the carving to dry overnight before painting. *Note: Dispose of the paper towels appropriately; paper towels and rags soaked in boiled linseed oil can spontaneously combust.* Paint in this order: hat, face, hair, and eyes.



**Paint the hat and then the face.** For the face, blend a mixture of gold ochre, peach, and a tiny bit of cherry cobbler, and dilute with plenty of water. Brush the diluted mixture over the entire face and ears. Then take diluted cherry cobbler and brush it over the lips, nose, cheeks, chin, and tips of the ears to create a rosy blush.

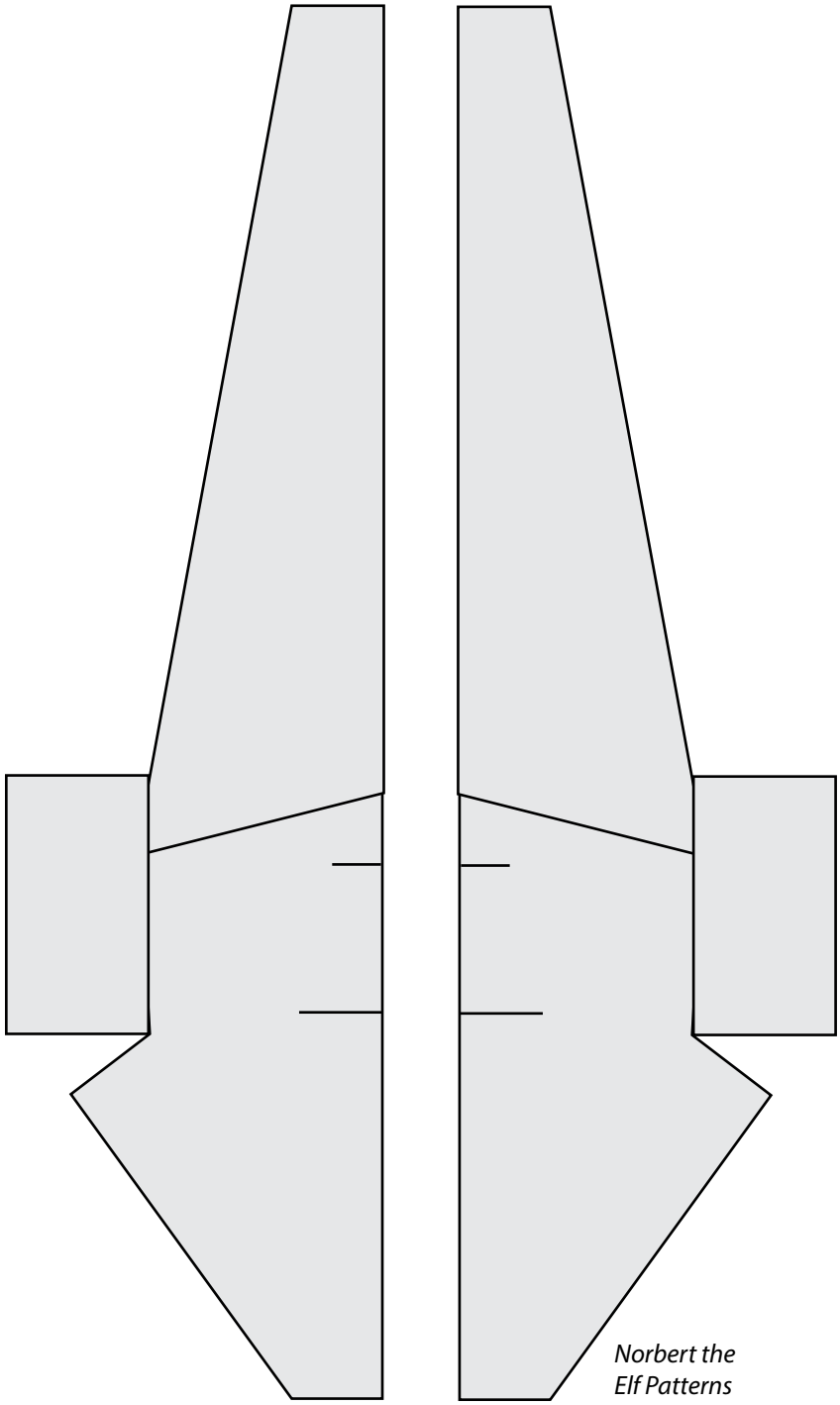


**Paint the hair then the eyes.** For the eyes, start by painting a large black iris with a #0 spotter brush. Rinse the brush thoroughly and allow the paint to dry. Use the same brush to paint a bluebird iris over the black one leaving a very thin outer rim of black. Rinse the brush thoroughly and allow the paint to dry. Then paint a black pupil. When the paint is dry, use a toothpick to add a tiny dot of white to the same spot in both pupils so that the eyes look in the same direction.

Allow the paint to dry for twenty-four hours. Then seal the carving with two coats of a satin spray lacquer, such as Deft. Follow the manufacturer's directions. Allow the lacquer finish to dry for twenty-four hours. Apply a coat of Howard Feed-N-Wax and allow to sit for twenty minutes. Then buff with a soft cloth and a horsehair shoe brush. Finally, add a screw eye at the top. I displayed my elf ornament directly on an 11" (28cm) chrome ornament hanger, but you can also add a ribbon to the screw eye and display it that way.

## Making the Glasses

Starting 2½" (6.4cm) from one end tightly wrap a 10" (25.4cm) piece of 20 gauge brass wire completely around a pencil one time, forming one circular loop. Remove the pencil from the loop. Leave about ⅜" (1cm) of wire after the loop and tightly wrap it around the pencil again, forming the second circular loop. Remove the pencil from the loop. You should now have two loops with wire sticking out at each end. Bend the end wires back 90° right at the loops to form the ear pieces of the glasses. Trim both ear pieces to about 1" (2.5cm) with wire cutters or pliers. Shape the glasses by hand as necessary and fit them onto the carving by inserting the ear pieces into the holes that were drilled in the temples. You will need to trim the ear pieces with the wire cutters until you get the glasses to fit just right. *Note: Be careful not to trim the ear pieces too short.* A drop of CA glue will hold them permanently in place.



*Norbert the Elf Patterns*





# Kitten in a Mitten Ornament

*By Leah Goddard*

Here is one for the cat lovers, which I happen to be. The best part of this project is its flexibility. Reduce or enlarge the pattern to match the size you want, or use a dowel to attach the carving to a base to make an adorable shelf sitter. And, of course, feel free to change the paint colors to match your own cat!

## Materials

- Basswood, 3" (76mm) thick: 3" x 5" (76mm x 127mm)
- Acrylic paints: burnt umber, sap green, cadmium yellow, cadmium red, unbleached titanium, titanium, ivory black
- Mod Podge®

## Tools

- Knife
- V-tool: ¼" (6mm)
- Woodburner with tips: spear tip, bent spear tip

## Roughing Out the Carving






**Rough out the features.** Transfer the pattern to the blank and cut the outline. Remove the sharp corners and block in the major masses using a knife. Then draw the basic landmarks for the head, rim of the mitten, thumb, and tail.




**Outline the major elements.** Use a knife to make V-shaped cuts along the lines to separate the elements. Round the wood into the V-cuts to block in the major forms. This helps separate the kitten from the mitten and the cuff from the mitten hand and thumb.






**Rough out the face.** Draw a vertical centerline and use it to draw the simple kitten face lines. Make a V-shaped cut along each line with the knife. Round the muzzle and eye areas.

## Refining the Carving




**Separate the paws.** Draw three lines to separate the toes of the front paws. Make a V-shaped cut along each line, and round the toes into the cuts. Draw small triangles at the bottom inside corner and upper outside corner of both eyes. Then make a chip-style cut in both corners of both eyes.




**Carve the pads of the back foot.** Draw the lines to separate the toes of the back foot, and draw the footpads. Make V-shaped cuts along the lines with a knife. Use chip-style cuts to remove the wood around the pads of the foot, and then round them with a knife.




**Separate the tail from the mitten.** Draw the open area that separates the tail from the mitten. Use the knife to shape the tail and separate it from the mitten. Refine the cuff of the mitten behind the tail.




**Add the mitten details.** Carve a slight groove in the middle of the cuff. Sketch the ribbing on the cuff, and then make tight V-shaped cuts on the lines. Draw the seam pattern on the mitten, and make a tight V-shaped cut along the seams.




**Texture the face.** Finish shaping the ears and hollow the insides slightly. Detail the nose. Add the fur texture using a ¼" (6mm) V-tool. Do not texture the muzzle.

## Woodburning the Texture




**Burnish the smooth parts.** Use a bent shader tip at a low heat to burnish the eyes, footpads, and nose to smooth and round these parts. Increase the temperature and use the same point to burn the stitching details along the seam lines.




**Burn the fur texture.** Use a spear tip at a high temperature setting. Burn the texture using short strokes on the head, ears, tail, and paws. Make even shorter strokes to add texture to the muzzle.






**Apply the basecoat.** I thin acrylic paint heavily with water. Use burnt umber for the kitten and sap green for the mitten. I apply three coats of both washes to build up the color in layers.




**Paint the detail areas.** Paint around the eyes, inner ears, and tip of the tail with unbleached titanium thinned to the same consistency as the basecoat. Build up the white color by applying several coats of the wash. Shade all of the cracks with ivory black thinned almost to the consistency of watercolor paint.




**Dry-brush the fur highlights.** Mix burnt umber, a bit of cadmium yellow, cadmium red, and unbleached titanium with a palette knife. Pick up a tiny amount of paint on a dry brush and lightly drag it across the kitten's fur to highlight the texture. Repeat with undiluted unbleached titanium to highlight the white areas.




**Dry-brush the mitten highlights.** Mix sap green and cadmium yellow, and dry-brush across the mitten texture. Add even more yellow and dry-brush the new mixture across the mitten again to create even more highlights.



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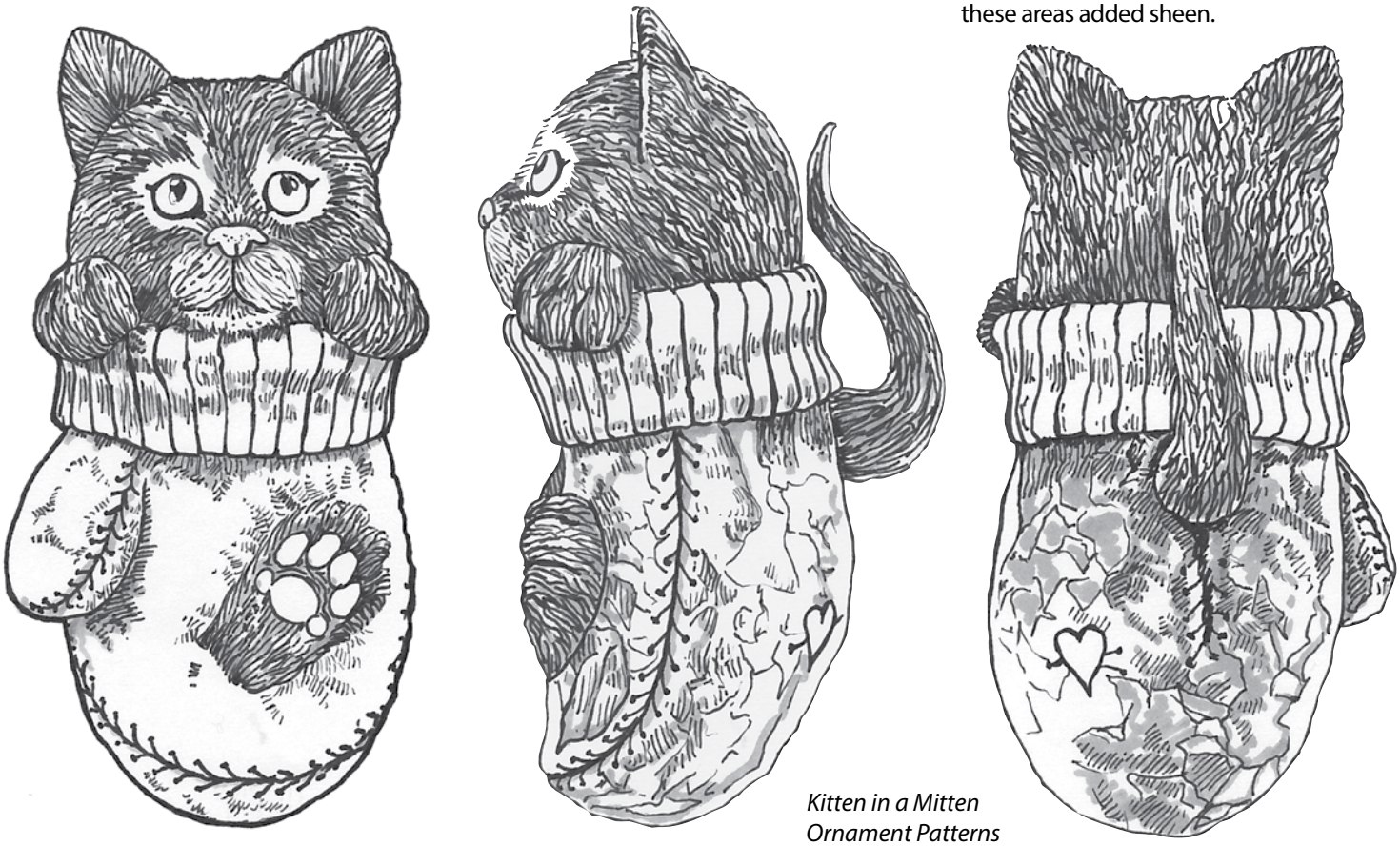


**Paint the footpads, nose, and eyes.** Mix cadmium red, cadmium yellow, unbleached titanium, and a touch of burnt umber, and thin it to a creamy consistency. Apply the mixture to the footpads and nose with a small round brush. Thin ivory black to the same consistency and use the small round brush to paint the eyes.



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**Paint the details.** Mix burnt umber, cadmium yellow, and a touch of cadmium red. Use a small round brush to apply the mixture to the inner eyes. Use the same brush to apply small dots of ivory black to highlight the mitten stitches. Paint the heart with cadmium red and ivory black. Dry-brush the mitten cuff and the other white areas with titanium. Apply Mod Podge® to the eyes and heart to give these areas added sheen.



*Kitten in a Mitten Ornament Patterns*

# Tramp Art Christmas Tree

*By Andrew DiPace*

I learned tramp art carving, which is a very simple style that dates back to the 1800s in England, from Jim Sebring. These trees were inspired by a kit of Jim's that features a much larger tree. They are a quick, easy, and versatile holiday project, so I can make one for everyone on my holiday list. The pins are faster than the ornaments, but you can easily carve either in an afternoon.



## Materials

- Basswood, ¼" (6mm) thick: pin, 3" x 3½" (76mm x 89mm); ornament, 3" x 4¾" (76mm x 121mm)
- Tacky glue
- Boiled linseed oil
- Mineral spirits
- Acrylic paints: green, assorted colors for lights
- Pin back

## Tools

- Carving knife
- Triangle template (thin plastic ruler)
- Spring clamps
- Saw

# Tramp Art Tree: Carving the Pin



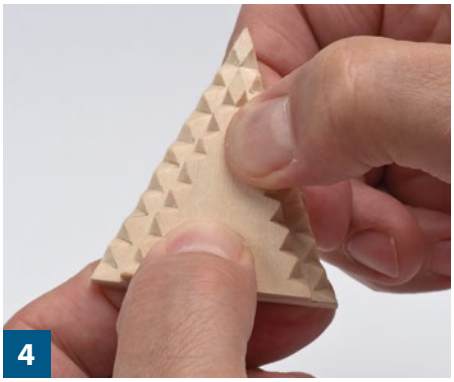

**Trace the patterns onto the blank.** For each pin, you need one large, one medium, and one small piece. I put all of the pieces on the same blank so it's easier to cut them. If you plan to make more than one tree, transfer the pattern to a piece of thin cardboard and trace around it. Use any saw to cut out the pieces.




**Transfer the triangles onto the edges of the pieces.** I cut a series of triangles in the edge of a thin plastic ruler. This makes it easy to trace the triangles onto the blank. I cut the triangles 3⁄16" (5mm) wide and 1⁄8" (3mm) deep. When marking the blanks, place the template so the points are against the edge of the piece and mark the two sides of the cut out.




**Carve the pyramids.** Position a knife slightly in from the line, and carve down at a 45° angle. Then go back and clean up the cuts to the line, but do not cut through the bottom edge of the piece. If you try to carve the pyramids in one cut, the wood will probably chip out. Repeat the process for all of the pyramids and all of the blanks.




**Assemble the tree.** Spread a small amount of tacky glue on the back of the middle piece. Position the middle piece on the back piece, and hold it for a few seconds until the glue grabs. Then apply a few spring clamps to hold it together for about fifteen minutes. Repeat the process to glue the top piece to the middle piece.

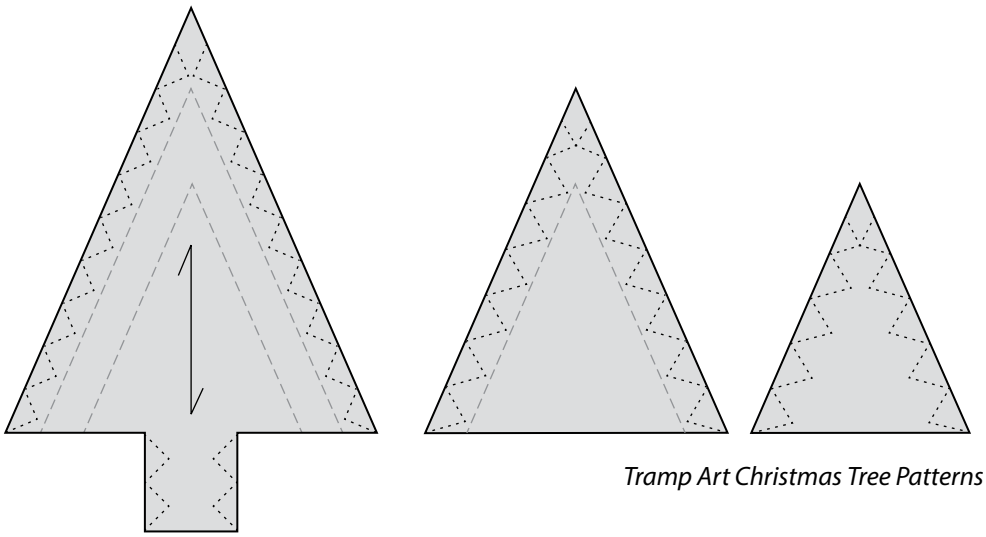
## Making an Ornament

Trace and cut one large, two medium, and two small pattern pieces. Drill a small hole in the top of the large blank (the one with the trunk). When carving the large blank, angle the knife so the cuts end in the middle of the edge. Then transfer the triangle pattern to the back of the blank and repeat the cuts to create a diamond-shaped pattern on the edges. Refer to Step 3, above, to make two medium and two small sections. Glue a medium and a small section to each side of the large blank.



## Finishing the Tree

**Mix equal parts boiled linseed oil with mineral spirits.** Paint the mixture on or dip the completed carving into the mixture. Allow the finish to dry for one to two days. Dilute acrylic paint with water and paint the tree. Apply multiple coats to build up the desired color. Apply dots of full-strength acrylic paint to represent the lights. When the paint is dry, attach a pin back.



*Tramp Art Christmas Tree Patterns*



# Comfort Penguins

*By Tom Mellott*

They may look awkward on land, but penguins are sleek and smooth in the water. I find great satisfaction in watching them glide along under the ice. So, inspired by Frank Faust's comfort birds (seen in *Woodcarving Illustrated Holiday 2011*, Issue #57), I created these comfort penguins. They are smooth and a pleasure to hold. These penguins are also easy and quick to make. I find them relaxing to carve and fun to paint using a variety of color schemes—I even made a pink one. You can carve them from a variety of woods and in a variety of shapes.

In this project, I experimented by adding color with India ink, and it worked very well. India ink can be diluted with rubbing alcohol, so it dries quickly. Apply additional coats (or layers) to build up the density or intensity of the color that you want. India ink is widely available at art stores and comes in a variety of colors, which you can blend to suit your preference.

## Materials

- Wood, such as basswood, butternut, or walnut, 2" (5.1cm) square: 4" (10.2cm) long
- Sandpaper: 80-, 100-grit
- Synthetic steel wool, such as Scotch-Brite®: fine
- Rubbing alcohol
- India ink: black, brown or orange, white
- Skewer or dowel (painting stick)
- Lacquer, such as Deft gloss spray

## Tools

- Band saw or scroll saw
- Carving knife: straight blade
- V-tool: ¼" (6mm) 70°
- #3 gouge: ⅝" (16mm)
- #11 gouge: ⅛" (3mm)
- Drill with bit: 3/32" (2.5mm)-dia. twist
- Paintbrushes: ⅛" (3mm) flat or shader, #4 round
- Paint palette
- Eyedropper

## Roughing Out



1



**Trace the patterns onto the two sides of the blank.** Be aware of the grain direction. Cut one side view with a scroll saw or band saw. Tape the pieces back together with masking tape, and retrace any patterns as needed. Cut the other view. Remove the tape. Draw centerlines on all four sides of the blank.

### Long-Lasting Centerlines

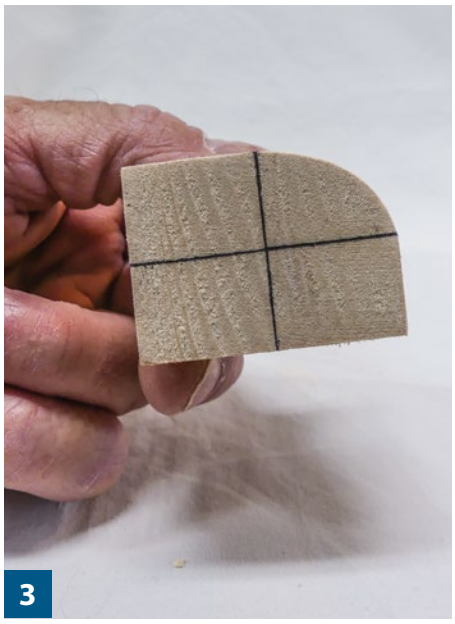
Draw the centerlines with a ballpoint pen. The pen ink doesn't rub off like pencil graphite, and your carving glove stays cleaner.





2

**Round the body.** Use a straight-blade carving knife. Pay attention to the grain direction as you work from the head to the feet. Do not carve the beak or wings until the end. Use paring cuts (pulling the knife back toward your thumb guard) and push cuts (using your thumbs on the back of the blade to push the knife away from you).



3

**Finish rounding the body.** Use the centerlines as a guide. The photo above shows a cross-section of the penguin at its midsection. I work on one-quarter of the penguin at a time. Hold the carving up to the light to check for the symmetry and general shape, and to identify any out-of-place bumps or protrusions.

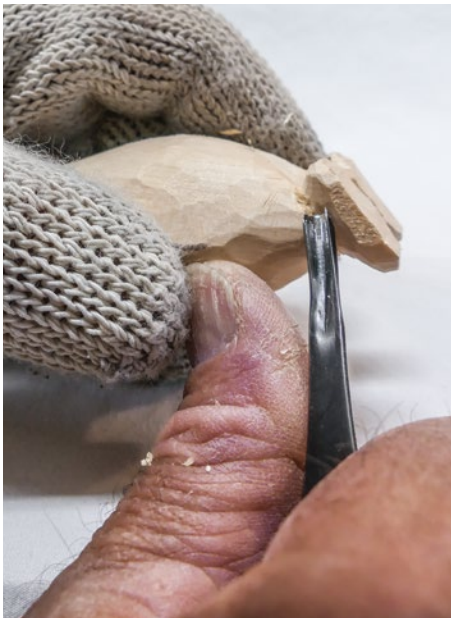
### Making Slicing Cuts

As you're carving, if you feel resistance on your sharp blade, add a little "slicing" (sideways) motion to either paring or push cuts.



## Adding the Details



**Shape the feet.** Use the knife and a ⅛" (3mm) #11 gouge. Make the feet look like smooth, rounded, flat-bottomed boots.




**Shape the beak.** I aim for a wide or broad beak, but you may like to make it pointed. Try to keep it somewhat blunt—remember, this is a stylized carving. Then, use 80- or 100-grit sandpaper to smooth the penguin and remove the centerlines.




**Cut out the wing pattern on a copy of the side-view pattern.** Place the pattern onto the side of the penguin and trace the wing. Flip the pattern and trace the wing onto the other side.






**Carve a groove on both sides of the wing.** Use a ¼" (6mm) 70° V-tool. Use the carving knife and a ⅝" (1.6cm) #3 gouge to remove the wood around the wings up to the V-grooves. Sand everything smooth with 80- or 100-grit sandpaper, leaving the wings raised. Then, use progressively finer grits of sandpaper up to 220- or 280-grit to smooth everything. For a very smooth surface, finish with 400- to 600-grit sandpaper.

## Painting Stick

Drill a 3⁄32" (2.5mm) -diameter hole between the legs. Insert a wooden cooking skewer or dowel into the hole to hold the penguin while the ink or paint dries.





## Painting and Finishing

It's possible to paint these penguins using acrylic paint sealed with lacquer or give them a natural oil finish sealed with the same. However, I added color using India ink, which comes in a variety of colors, dries quickly (especially when thinned with rubbing alcohol), and allows for control over the intensity of the color.

Put black India ink in one section of a paint palette and rubbing alcohol in another. Use an eyedropper to dilute the ink by 10% to 20% with rubbing alcohol. For more translucent color, dilute it with more rubbing alcohol. Test the color on scrap wood.

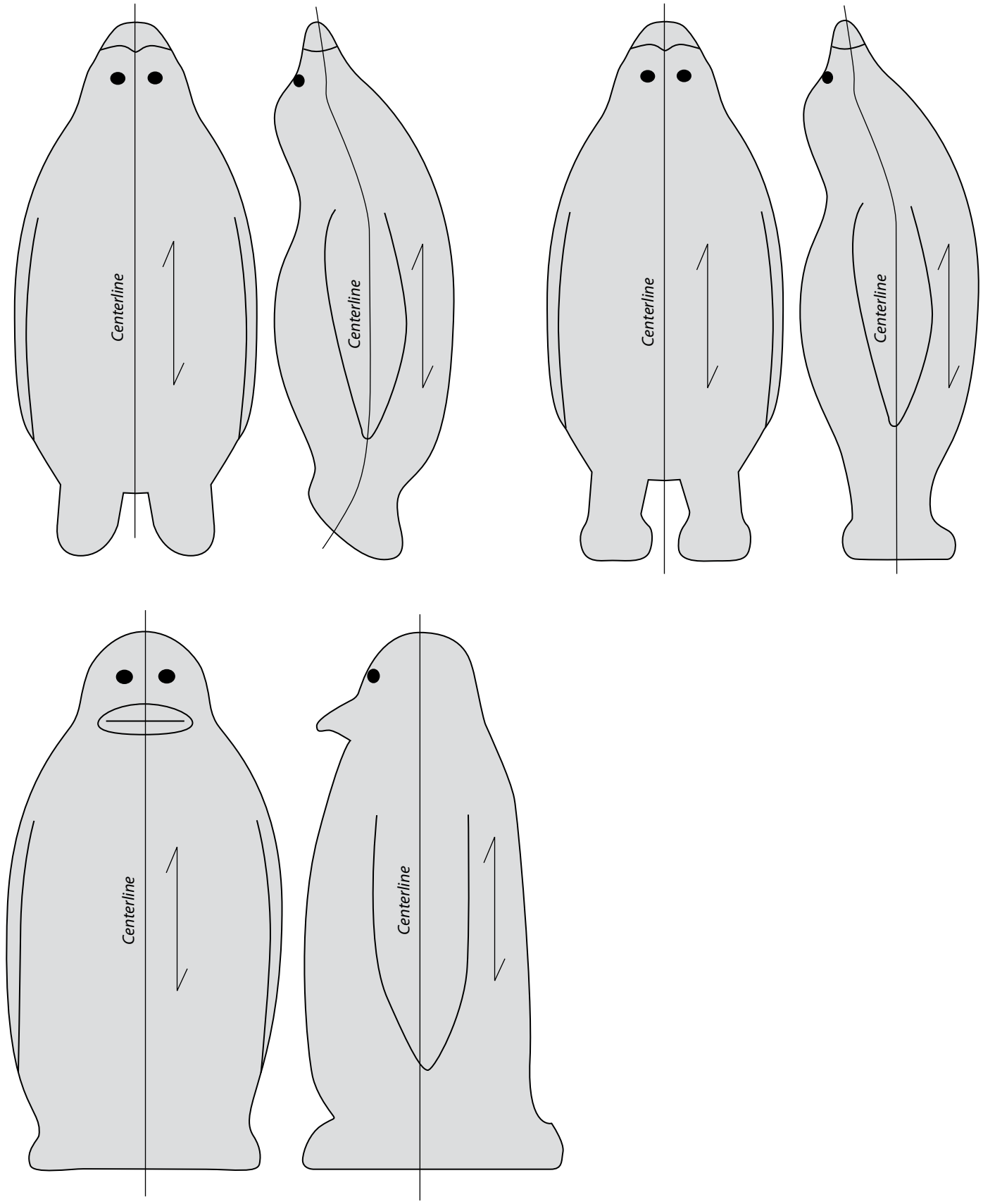
Pick up ink with a ⅛" (3mm)-wide flat brush (shader) or a #4 round brush. Dip the brush in the diluted ink and rub most of the ink off on the side of the section as you pull the brush out. You don't want the brush fully loaded with ink; it should be reasonably dry.



Orient the carving so the area to be colored is downstream of the rest of the carving. That way, if the ink bleeds, it will bleed into the area you're painting. To even out the coloration, brush the ink with just rubbing alcohol or a very diluted mixture of ink.

Use the same process to paint the chest with white India ink and the beak with brown or orange India ink. Use undiluted black India ink and a very dry brush to paint the eyes.

When the ink is fully dry, apply a light coat of Deft clear spray lacquer. The coat seals the wood and raises the grain and any fuzzies. Buff the carving with fine-grit synthetic steel wool, such as Scotch-Brite. Then, apply several more light spray coats of Deft clear gloss lacquer until you achieve the desired finish.




*Comfort Penguin Patterns*

# Folk-Art Napkin Rings

*By Jeff Pretz*

### Materials

- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) thick: per napkin ring, 2" x 2" (5.1cm x 5.1cm)
- Acrylic paints, such as Apple Barrel and Americana: bright yellow, burnt sienna, country red, lavender, true blue country red
- Shellac, such as Zinsser® Seal Coat
- Finish, such as Deft: clear
- Small cups, such as disposable plastic communion cups
- Sanding disc: 100-grit

### Tools

- Detail knife
- Paintbrushes
- Belt sander
- Drill and 1 ⅜" (35mm) Forstner bit
- Woodburner with ball-shaped tip

I got tired of making Santas one year for Christmas, so I decided to make these napkin rings. After making eighty rings in one year (twenty sets of four), I worked out a way to carve and paint them quickly. Since I live in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, I embellished mine with Pennsylvania Dutch folk-art designs. But you could chip carve them, or carve nearly anything you want.

Cut a 2" by 2" by 2" (51mm by 51mm by 51mm) cube for each napkin ring. Draw diagonal lines from corner to corner on both end-grain sides; the spot where the lines intersect is the center of that side. Use a 1 ⅜" (35mm)-dia. Forstner bit to drill a hole through the napkin ring on the center mark. Use a flexible sander in a drill to sand the inside of the hole smooth so it doesn't snag the napkin.

To transfer the patterns to the blank, mark the center of each side by drawing diagonal lines from corner to corner. Then, use a square to draw a vertical centerline. Draw the patterns directly onto each side of the blank or use graphite paper to transfer the designs.



## Tramp Art Tree: Carving the Pin




**Outline the double-headed eagle.** Holding a carving knife almost vertically, make a smooth, continuous stop cut around the center heart and around both bird heads. Then hold the knife at a shallow angle and carve up to the stop cuts to separate the designs from the background.




**Outline the bird's wings, tails, and heads.** Make stop cuts around the wings, and then carve up to the wings to separate them from the background. Then carve grooves around the bird's heads to separate each head from its beak and neck. Use the same process to outline the tail.




**Carve the flower between the birds' heads.** Make a stop cut around each petal, and carefully carve up to the stop cuts to separate the flower from the background. Make the cuts clean and remove any rough cuts.




**Add the wing texture.** Carve an angled groove on each wing to represent the feather groups and to break up the flat spot of the wings.




**Add the details to the center heart.** Carve a shape into the heart, such as smaller hearts, a diamond, or a star. Carve a groove around the shape to break up the flatness of the design. Then carve grooves to represent the tail feathers.

### Watch Where You Are Carving

When you approach the edge of the blank, it is easy to chip out the piece. Use caution and watch the angle of your knife blade to keep the wood strong.

## Napkin Ring: Finishing the Project






**Carve the other sides.** Use the outline and relief-cut technique to carve the remaining three sides of the napkin ring. Carve thin grooves to represent feathers and other details. Modify the designs to suit your preferences.




**Sand the sides.** Use a belt sander to sand the end grain. Then, use a 100-grit sanding disc on the workbench to remove pencil marks. Carefully round the corners. Use the knife to restore any lost details.



**Burn the double-headed eagle details.** Use a woodburner with a ball-shaped tip to add a few dots above the bird's heads to represent feathers. Use a skew tip to attach the dots to the tops of the heads. Burn a few V-shaped lines onto the neck to represent feathers. Burn along the grooves in the wings and tail to create greater depth in these creases. Use the ball-shaped tip to burn the eyes.



**Add the details to the distelfink (single bird).** Use the ball-shaped woodburning tip to add a few light dots along the neck and body. Then use the skew to burn the feet and the wing and tail textures. Add the dots and lines to represent the head feathers.

## Sealing and Painting the Rings



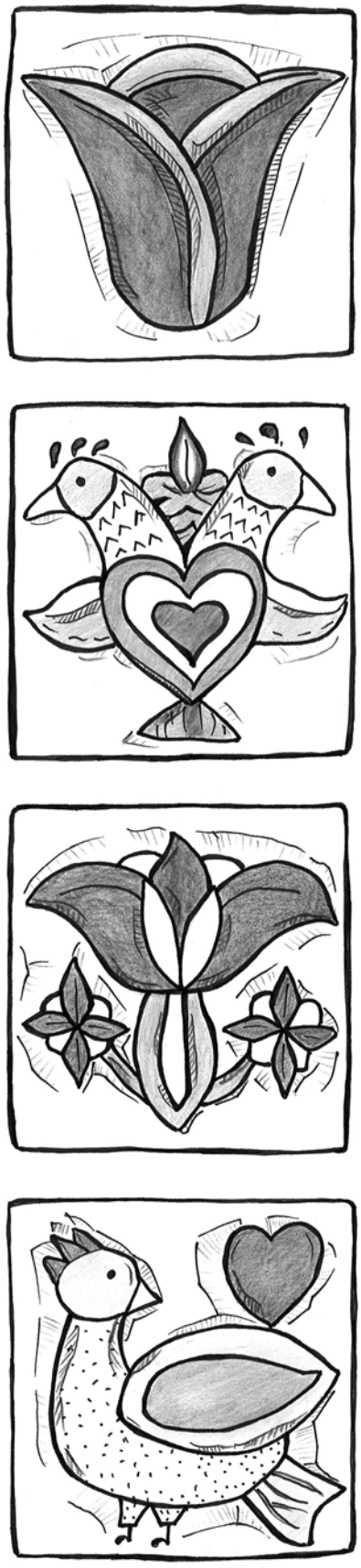


Seal the napkin rings by dipping them in Zinsser Seal Coat, which is a pre-mixed one-pound-cut shellac. Allow the shellac to dry (it dries quickly) and then start painting. I add a few drops of craft acrylic paint to a plastic communion cup and thin the paint with water.

Start by antiquing the carving. Apply heavily thinned burnt sienna acrylic paint to the whole carving, but do not paint the inside of the hole. Allow the paint to dry.

Paint the pieces using primary colors. Because this is a folk-art piece, the colors don't need to be realistic. I try to paint each ring differently so you can tell which napkin is yours. Hold the top and bottom so you don't put your hand into the fresh paint. If the colors are not dark enough, apply a second coat. For the flower stems, paint just the tops of the ridges. Do not paint inside the stem grooves.

When the paint is dry, apply a second coat of thinned burnt sienna to antique the carving and tie all of the colors together. Let the paint dry, and then seal the carving with a few light coats of Deft clear wood finish.



*Folk-Art Napkin Rings Patterns*



# Momma Polar Bear and Cub

*By Tom Hindes*

## Materials

- Basswood, 1" (2.5cm) thick: momma bear, 2" x 3½" (5.1cm x 8.9cm)
- Basswood, 1" (2.5cm) square: cub, 1½" (3.8cm) long
- Basswood, ¼" (6mm) thick: small background piece, approx. 2½" x 3¾" (6.4cm x 9.5cm)
- Basswood, ¼" (6mm) thick: large background piece, approx. 5" x 12" (12.7cm x 30.5cm)
- Basswood, ¼" (6mm) thick: base, approx. 4" x 12" (10.2cm x 30.5cm)
- Pencil
- Transfer paper
- Acrylic paints, such as white and black
- Sandpaper: assorted grits
- Glue: wood

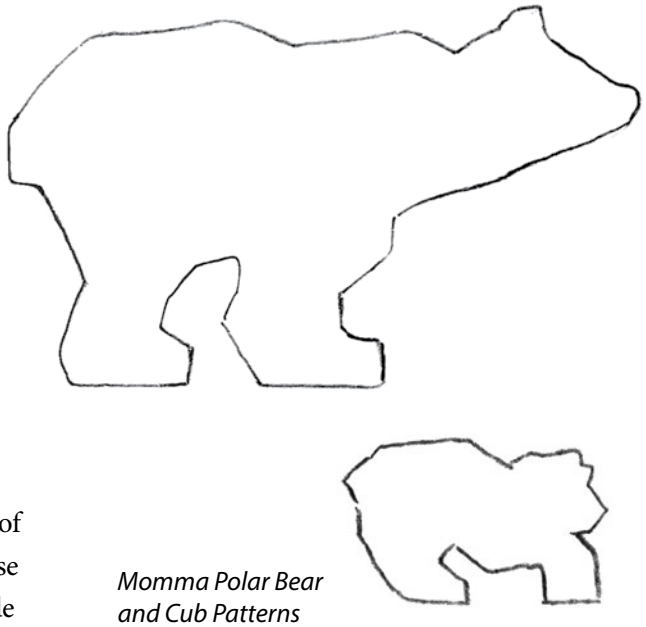
## Tools

- Band saw, coping saw, or scroll saw
- Carving knife
- Paintbrushes: assorted

After I finished carving this polar bear, I decided that I had to whittle her a cub. Polar bears spend nearly all of their lives on ice floes and snow-covered lands. Sometimes, when the mother polar bear has to swim to find food, the cub rides on her back.

These carvings can be a stand-alone project, but I suggest you create an arctic scene for momma and cub. To complete the project, you'll only need to use stop cuts, thumb-assisted push cuts, and paring cuts. This is an ideal project for the new beginning wood carver. The only wood carving tool necessary is a sharp knife.

Using your method of choice, transfer the pattern onto a piece of 1" (2.5cm)-thick basswood, with the grain running from nose to tail. Cut the perimeter with a band saw, scroll saw, or coping saw. Draw detail lines for the neck, legs, and tail on both sides of the blank, and then draw a centerline along the edges. As you work, use the centerline as a reference and try to make the same cuts on each side of the blank. One side should mirror the other.



*Momma Polar Bear and Cub Patterns*

## Carving the Momma Bear




**Separate the head from the neck.** On both sides of the blank, rock the knife blade up and down to make stop cuts between the bear's head and neck. Remove thin slivers of wood until the head is slightly thinner than the body and tapers toward the nose.



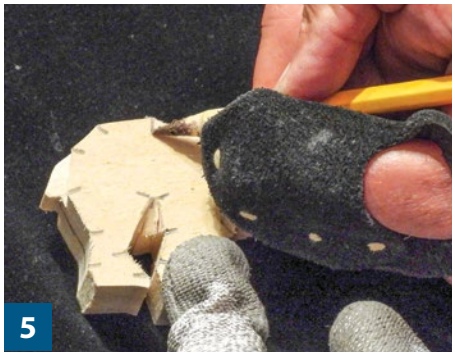

**Define the belly.** Make two stop cuts: one between the front legs and the belly, and one between the rear legs and the belly. Use either paring or thumb-assisted push cuts to remove a sliver of wood from the front and back of the belly.




**Separate the tail from the rump.** Make stop cuts between the tail and the rump, on both sides of the blank. Make a series of shallow, decisive cuts from the edge of the tail up to the stop cut you just made. Use your thumb as a pivot point for control. Continue to deepen the stop cuts and remove thin slivers of wood until you've removed about one-third of the tail's width from both sides.




**Separate the ears.** Make a stop cut down the middle, and then slice into the stop cut at an angle from each side until you remove the wedge of wood.






**Add the flat-plane details.** With the pencil, mark the points where the straight edges intersect—in other words, wherever a straight line along the perimeter changes direction. Make a shallow stop cut at each of these places. Then remove a thin sliver of wood between every set of cuts. Continue these cuts around the entire body, using a combination of thumb-assisted push cuts and paring cuts. The resulting flat planes should be clean and of uniform width (about one-third of the blank's thickness); if you're careful, you will get one continuous line running around the entire bear. Repeat on the opposite side. Carve the cub using the same method.

## Painting and Finishing

You can complete the polar bear in a few different ways: leave the knife cuts visible in the flat-plane style, and then paint or stain the piece to finish, or sand it smooth. (For a simpler look, you could also leave the carving unfinished.) I chose to paint my version with thinned white acrylic paint and sand it lightly once dry to highlight the facets. Add black dots for the eyes and nose.

Build a home for the polar bears. Cut the background pieces from ¼" (6mm)-thick basswood. Use the same techniques you used for the bear to create flat planes on the top edges of the background pieces. Paint the background pieces and a base with white. Once dry, glue the pieces onto the base.



*Create a freestanding iceberg to house the polar bears.*

# Block Nativity

## Stylized design makes a beautiful and durable decoration

*By Andrew DiPace*




This modern nativity scene is durable and easy to pack. I can guarantee that you're not going to unpack this heirloom and find that the angel's wing has broken off! You can add as little or as much detail as you want to the figures. Because you're carving mostly on end-grain, which can be very challenging, I opted to leave the pieces more stylized and used a low-relief style of carving. But a carver looking for a challenge could easily choose to add more details.

This carving was inspired by a photo I saw in a catalog. The piece in the catalog was mass produced and probably made of resin. I altered some of the carvings and added a base to make it more stable.

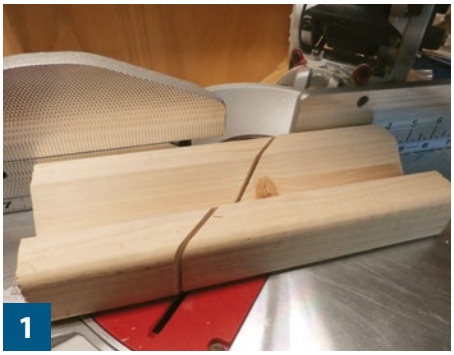
### Materials

- Butternut, 1 ½" (3.8cm) square: 55" (139.7cm) long
- Butternut, ¼" (6mm) thick: ¼" x 19" (6mm x 48.3cm); 1 ¼" x 13" (3.2cm x 33cm); ½" x 28" (1.3cm x 71.1cm)
- Baltic birch plywood, ¼" (6mm) thick: 6 ¼" x 6 ¼" (15.9cm x 15.9cm)
- Construction 2 x 4: 24" (61cm) long
- Wood glue
- Sandpaper: 220-grit
- Acrylic paints, such as Delta Ceramcoat: Bridgeport grey, black, denim blue, Christmas green, white, dark brown, straw, Santa's flesh; Accent Acrylic: purple canyon; FolkArt: metallic pure gold
- Boiled linseed oil
- Mineral spirits
- Satin varnish, such as JoSonja water-based polyurethane
- Wood screws: 9 each #8 x 1" (25mm) long
- Tape, double sided

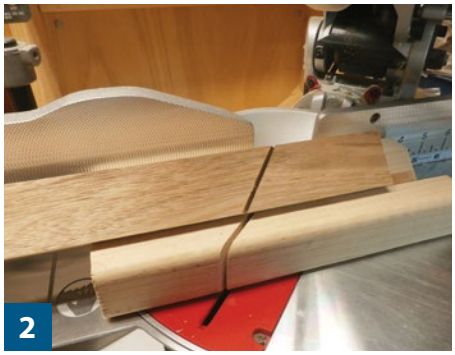
### Tools

- Saws: table, miter
- Detail knife
- #3 gouge: ½" (13mm)
- Micro gouge
- Micro V-tool: 75°
- Woodburner with small tip
- Clamps

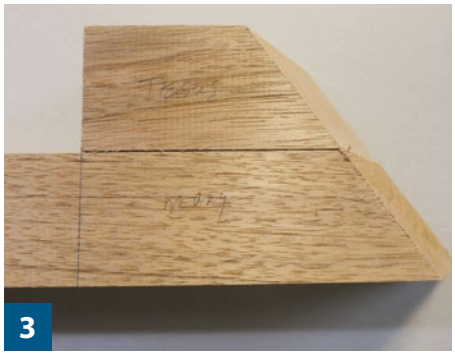
# Nativity: Preparing the Blanks



**Make a cradle for your miter saw.** Cut a flat, untwisted construction 2 x 4 to 24" (610mm) long. Set the table saw blade to 45°, set the height to ¾" (19mm), and set the fence 1 ½" (38mm) from the blade. Rip the 2 x 4, rotate it 180°, and rip it again. This should free a wedge of wood from the center. If the wedge does not come free, raise the blade a bit and rip both sides again. Repeat the process until the wedge falls free. Cut the cradle off at 9" (229mm) long, and use double-sided tape to attach it to the miter saw table on both sides of the blade. Then cut through the cradle at a 45° angle; the double-sided tape secures the cradle to the saw.



**Cut the figure blanks.** Use the cradle to support each figure blank as you cut the top off at a 45° angle. Then cut the figure blanks to their rough lengths. *Note: I measured the blanks from the square end to the longest point of the angled end.* Lightly mark the name of each figure on the back of its blank in pencil.



**Trim the figure blanks to their final sizes.** Start by cutting the Jesus blank to 3 ⅝" (92mm). To make sure you get an accurate cut, clamp the blank to the miter saw table before cutting. Use the Jesus blank to mark the lengths of the Mary and Joseph blanks. Use one of the Mary/Joseph blanks to mark the length of the Lower Wise Men/Shepherd blanks. Repeat the process to mark and cut the remaining blanks. Finally, cut the base pieces to size.

# Carving the Project



**Carve the figures.** Draw lines from corner to corner, crossing in the center, to make it easy to position the pattern correctly on the figure blanks. Trace the patterns onto the blanks and carve along the lines with a micro V-tool. Round and shape the elements into the V-grooves as desired.

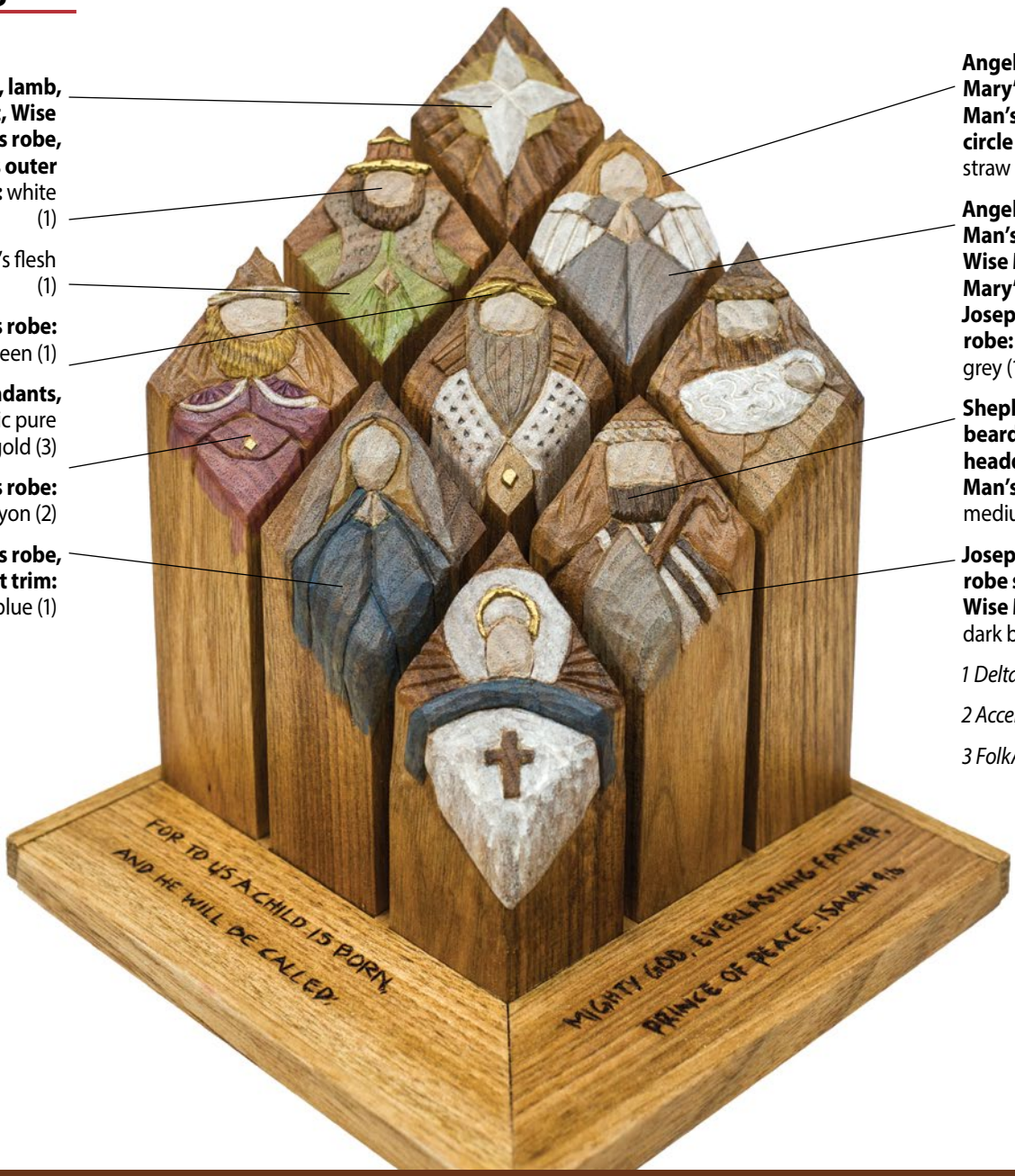



**Assemble the base.** Align the angled ends of the inner frame pieces with the corner of the base and clamp them in place. Dry-assemble the figure blanks on the base, separating them with the base long and short dividers. Trim the pieces as necessary to fit. Then remove the inner frame pieces, sand with 220-grit sandpaper, and burn a bible verse onto them, if desired. Glue and clamp the inner frame in place, and then carefully remove the base dividers and glue them in place. Trim and miter the ends of the outer frame pieces. Glue and clamp them in place.



**Finish the carving.** Sand any exposed wood, including the uncarved sides of the figure blanks, with 220-grit sandpaper. Coat the bare wood with a mixture of equal parts boiled linseed oil and mineral spirits. Allow the mixture to dry for two or three days. Paint the figures with acrylic or oil paints (I used acrylic paint). Allow the paint to dry, and then seal everything with JoSonja Satin Varnish. When the varnish is dry, drive a screw through the base into the bottom of each figure blanks to secure it.

## Painting List




**Star, wings, lamb, blanket, Wise Man's robe, Joseph's outer robe stripes:** white (1)

**Faces:** Santa's flesh (1)

**Wise Man's robe:** Christmas green (1)

**Crowns, pendants, halo:** metallic pure gold (3)

**Wise Man's robe:** purple canyon (2)

**Mary's robe, blanket trim:** denim blue (1)

**Angel's hair, Mary's hair, Wise Man's beard, circle around star:** straw (1)

**Angel's robe, Wise Man's robe collar, Wise Man's beard, Mary's headdress, Joseph's inner robe:** Bridgeport grey (1)

**Shepherd's beard, Joseph's headdress, Wise Man's headdress:** medium brown (1)

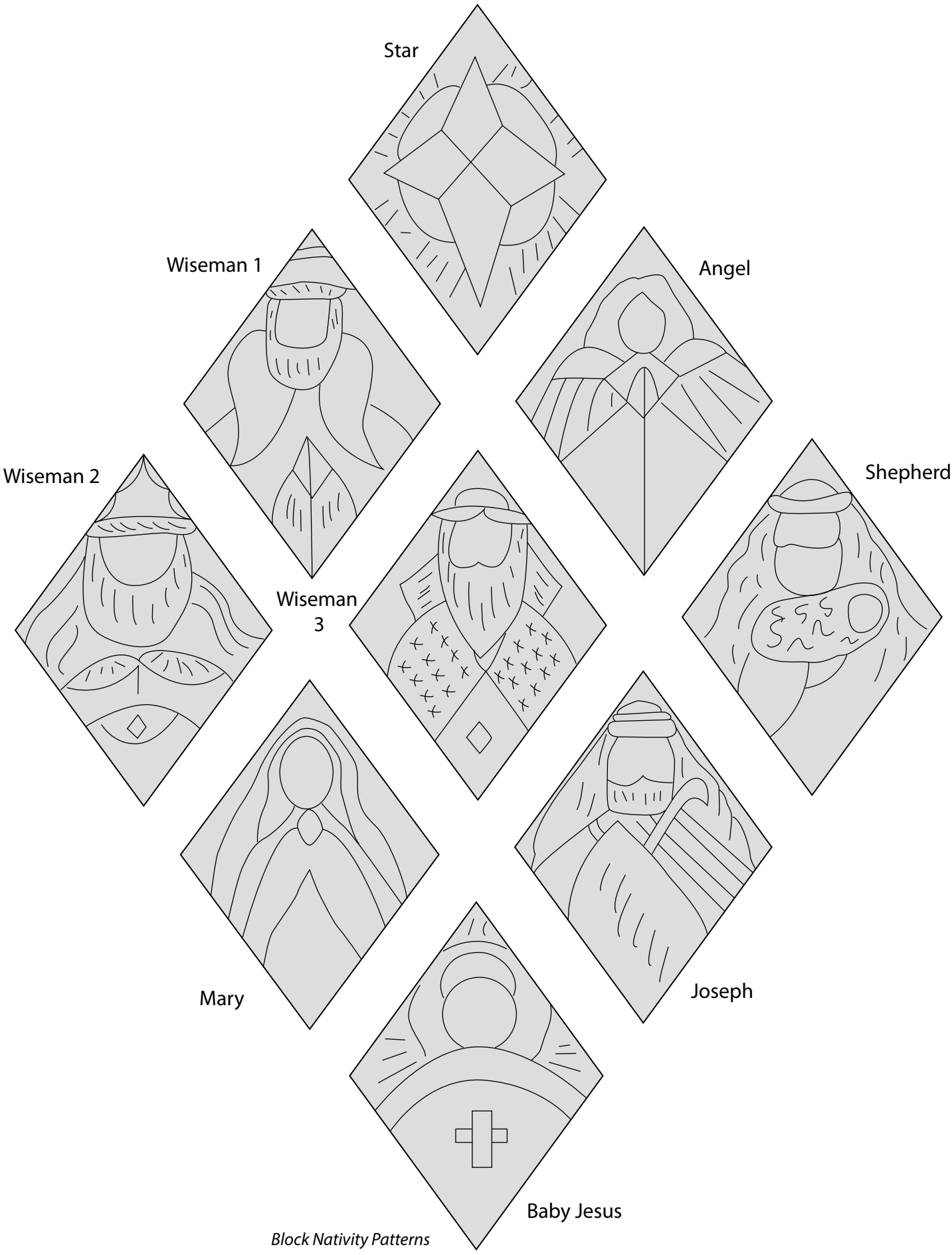
**Joseph's outer robe stripes, staff, Wise Man's beard:** dark brown (1)

*1 Delta Ceramcoat®*

*2 Accent Acrylic*

*3 FolkArt*

| PARTS LIST |
|---|
| **Star- Butternut**, 1½" (38mm) square: 8" (203mm) long. 1 each |
| **Angel/Top Wise Man**- Butternut, 1½" (38mm) square: 7" (178mm) long, 2 each |
| **Lower Wise Men/ Shepherd-** Butternut, 1½" (38mm) square: 6" (152 mm) long, 2 each |
| **Mary/Joseph**- Butternut, 1½" (38mm) square: 5" (127mm) long, 2 each |
| **Jesus**- Butternut, 1½" (38mm) square: 4" (102mm) long, 1 each |
| **Base**- Plywood, ¼" (6mm) thick: 6¼" (159mm) square, 1 each |
| **Base outer frame**- Butternut, ¼" (6mm) thick: ½" x 6¾" (13mm x 171mm), 4 each |
| **Base inner frame**- Butternut, ¼" (6mm) thick: 1¼" x 6¼" (32mm x 159mm) cut at a 45° angle on one end, 2 each |
| **Base long dividers**- Butternut, ¼" (6mm) square: 4¾" (121mm) long, 2 each |
| **Base short dividers**- Butternut, ¼" (6mm) square: 1½" (38mm) long, 6 each |




*Block Nativity Patterns*



# Ball-in-Cage Snowman

*By Pete Zanauskas*
*Concept by Roger Young*

When my kids were young, our first post-snowstorm activity was always to bundle up, grab some carrots from the fridge, and bolt outside to make a snowman. From Frosty to Olaf, these creatures have always held a special place in the hearts of children. I try to achieve the same magic in this fun take on a whittler's classic.

For the most part, this is a symmetrical carving. Transfer the single pattern to the front and side of the blank. Cut along the lines with a band saw. Draw a centerline on all four sides. *Note: The head is the same size as the ball.* Draw an additional line on each centerline as a rough guide to the initial rounding of the carving. Draw a circle the size of the ball on the bottom of the blank.

## Materials

- Basswood, 3" (7.6cm) square: 5" (12.7cm) long
- Basswood: pipe, nose, assorted scraps
- Acrylic paints: black, green, grey, orange, raw sienna, red, white
- Toothpicks
- Glue: white
- Dish soap
- Stain: Minwax clear
- Finish: Deft satin
- Sparkles: red

## Tools

- Carving knife
- #2 gouge: ½" (13mm)
- #5 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- #9 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- V-tool: ¼" (6mm)
- Small drill bit
- Toothbrush
- Paintbrushes

## Roughing Out



**Round the snowman.** Use a carving knife and shallow gouge.



**Draw the scarf.** Carve along the outline with a small V-tool. Use a knife to remove the sharp corners of the V-groove. Then draw the posts. Mark the areas to remove between posts, and then remove them with the V-tool.

## Making the Ball-in-Cage





**Make a stop cut within the V-groove.** Use a carving knife. Be careful not to cut too deep or you will create a defect in the inner ball. Remove the wood between the bars using a somewhat flat, small gouge, such as a ¼" (6mm) #5. Look at the pattern and the circle drawn on the bottom for a rough idea on how deep you can carve before compromising the inner ball.



**Draw a line around the hat brim.** Include bends and folds. Then use a ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to scoop wood out from around the inside of the hat brim. Shape the hat with the knife and ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge.



**Carve the eyes and mouth.** Use the ¼" (6mm) V-tool. Soften the corners with the knife or the ¼" (6mm) #5 gouge. Make sure you leave room to add his pipe.



**Begin rounding the ball.** Insert your knife into each corner to create a deep stop cut. Free the wood up to the stop cut with the ¼" (6mm) #5 gouge.



**Round the ball as much as you can from all sides.** Then mark all of the posts and the ball in the area behind the posts.

# Carving the Add-Ons




**Make several cuts along the bar lines.** Use the knife. I start with making several cuts along the lines I just drew. Then, use the knife or ¼" (6mm) #5 gouge to round the inner ball as much as possible before cutting it free from the bars. It will be a challenge to hold and carve after you free it.




**Carve the nose and pipe from separate pieces of wood.** Twist an appropriate drill bit in your fingers to drill holes into the nose and pipe. Glue toothpicks into the holes to hold while you carve. Trim the toothpick in the nose and use it to attach the nose to the face. Cut the toothpick in the pipe and use it as the pipe stem. Glue it in place.

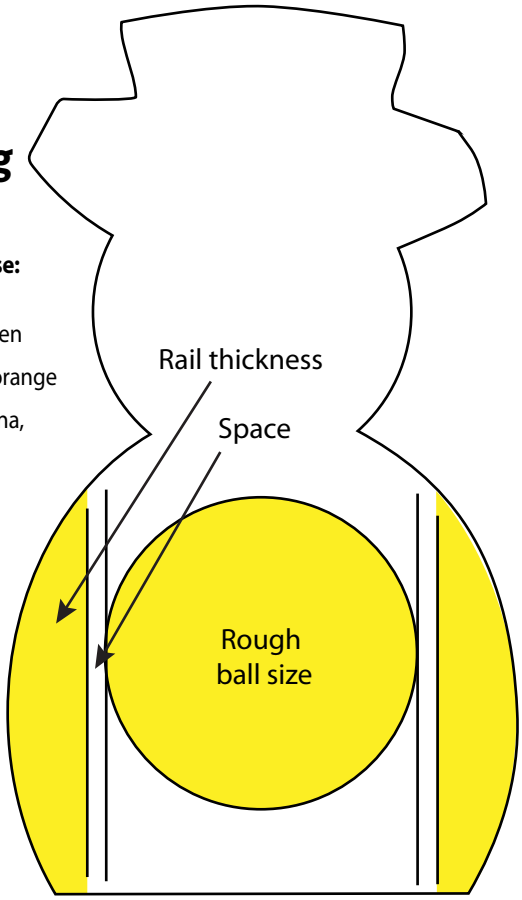
## Painting the Carving

Scrub your carving with a toothbrush in a bowl of water and dish soap. Rinse it and let it dry. Paint the eyes and the white parts. Apply a coat of Minwax clear stain. Then paint the rest of the carving with thinned acrylic paints, and fill the pipe with a mixture of Elmer's® glue and red sparkles. After the paint dries, apply a couple coats of clear satin finish, such as Deft.



### Painting List

- **Hat, eyes, nose:** black
- **Hat band:** green
- **Carrot nose:** orange
- **Pipe:** raw sienna, grey
- **Scarf:** red
- **Body:** white




*Ball-in-Cage Snowman Pattern*



# Circle of Love Nativity

*By Chuck MacKnee*

When designing this nativity, I wanted to depict a scene in which Mary and Joseph gaze avidly at the baby Jesus nestled in their joined figures. The contrasting woods represent the diversity of humankind and help distinguish each family member. The carved elements aren't difficult, but they give the scene dimension and personality.

I used walnut for Joseph, cherry for Mary, maple for Jesus, and ipe for the stand. Transfer the patterns to the blanks. Cut the figures with a scroll saw or band saw. Cut off the heads so they can be thinned dimensionally before reattaching. It's also easier to use the gouge to carve the piece without the protruding heads. Secure the figures in a vise before carving.

## Materials

- Walnut, ¾" (1.9cm) thick: Joseph, 4" x 5½" (10.2cm x 14cm)
- Cherry, ¾" (1.9cm) thick: Mary, 5¼" x 5½" (13.3cm x 14cm)
- Maple, ½" (1.3cm) thick: Jesus, 2" x 3" (5.1cm x 7.6cm)
- Ipe, ¾" (1.9cm) thick: base, 1¾" x 5" (4.4cm x 12.7cm)
- Sandpaper: 120-, 220-grit
- Glue: wood, cyanoacrylate (CA) glue
- Wipe-on polyurethane, such as Minwax
- Wood screw: 1½" (3.8cm) long

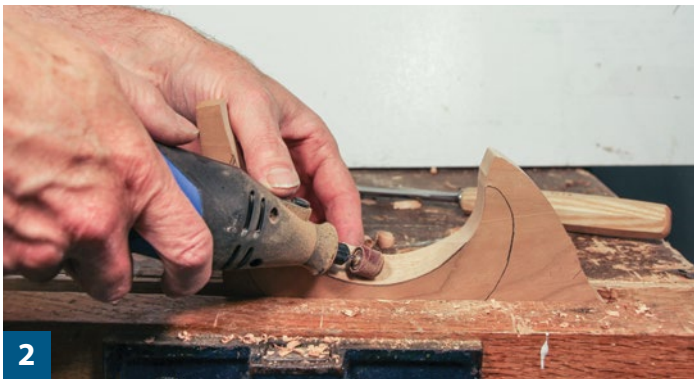
## Tools

- Scroll saw or band saw
- #7 gouge: 9/16" (14mm)
- Rotary tool with sanding drum
- Vise
- Belt sander
- Router in router table with bit: ½" (13mm) radius
- Drill with bits: ⅛" (3mm)-twist
- Phillips-head screwdriver

# Carving and Assembling




**Carve concave, sweeping grooves from the inner line to the edge of the arms.** Use a 9/16" (14mm) #7 gouge. Carve from the neck toward the middle and from the middle to the neck. The groove narrows toward the front of the figures as it gets close to the head region. Repeat the process on all three figures.




**Sand the groove.** Use sanding drums in a rotary tool or hand-sand. Start with 120-grit sandpaper and work up to 220-grit. Adjust the joints of the two main figures so they can be glued tightly together.




**Cut 3/32" (2.5mm) off of Mary and Joseph's heads.** Use a scroll saw. Round the outer edges of the heads with a drum sander in a rotary tool. Reattach the heads with CA glue and wood glue. The CA glue holds the pieces together until the wood glue sets.




**Join the two main figures.** Use CA glue and wood glue. Once the glue sets, sand the figures to create smooth transitions between pieces.




**Round the outer front edge of the completed circle.** Use a 1/2" (13mm)-radius roundover bit in a router table. Sand the figures with progressively finer sandpaper up to 220-grit.





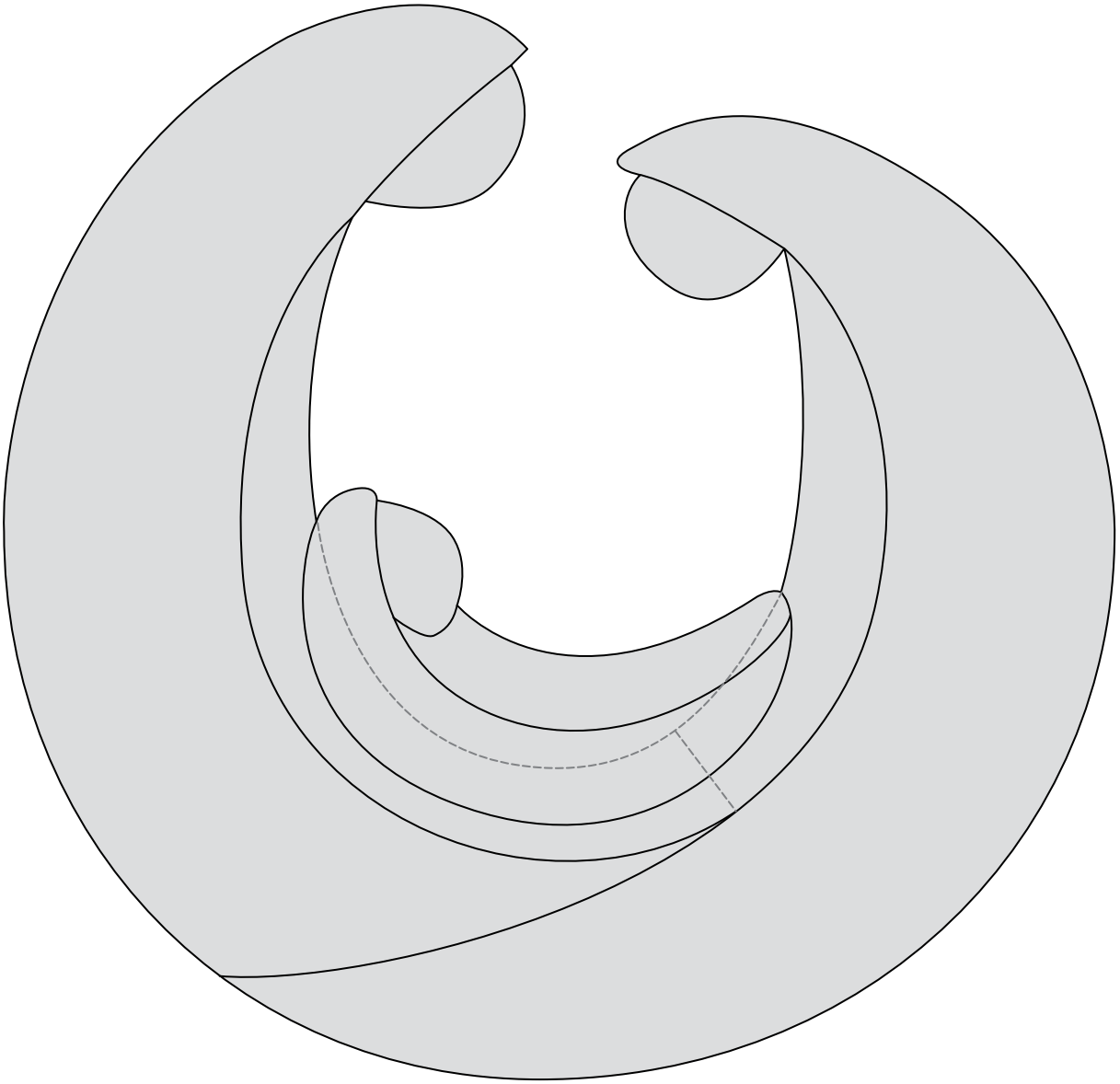

**Trace a guide line onto the back of the infant Jesus.** Shape and round the bottom and back of the figure with a belt sander until it fits nicely into the center of Mary and Joseph's arms. Then glue it in place.




**Cut the base to size with a 35° angle cut on the front.** Drill a hole centered on the length and 5/8" (1.6cm) from the back. Set the figures on 3/8" (1cm)-thick risers and drill the pilot hole into the figures, using a level for reference. Sand a 1/2" (1.3cm)-wide flat spot onto the bottom of the circle, add a dab of glue, and screw it in place.

## Finishing

Apply a wipe-on polyurethane finish, such as Minwax, to show off the natural warmth and beauty of the wood. When it dries, apply a couple coats of clear satin finish, such as Deft.



*Circle of Love Nativity Pattern*

# Winter Solstice Tomte

*By Betty Padden*

While called by different names—*nisse* in Norway and Denmark, *tonttu* in Finland, and *tomte* in Sweden—this particular fellow is portrayed similarly across Nordic cultures, recognizable by his small stature, beard, and large pointy hat. According to tradition, the tomte provides aid to his designated farm family, protecting their crops from harm (and treating them to the occasional prank). In the last few centuries, this character has even taken on a Santa-type role, given his association with gift giving at Christmas and around the winter solstice. I love the simplicity of the figure and hope he brings warmth to your hearth this season!

Transfer the front pattern view onto the blank with graphite paper and a pencil. Make sure the grain runs vertically. Cut the view on a band saw. Draw on the side profile.



### Materials

- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) square: 4⅝" (11.8cm) high
- Graphite transfer paper
- Pencil
- Rubbing alcohol
- Paint thinner
- Oil paints: burnt umber, Prussian blue, raw sienna, raw umber, titanium white
- Acrylic paint: titanium white
- Craft wire (optional)

### Tools

- Band saw
- #5 gouges: ⅛" (3mm), 5/16" (8mm), ½" (13mm)
- #11 gouges: ⅛" (3mm), 9/32" (7mm)
- #15 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- Rotary tool with bit: fine-grit cylinder-shaped diamond
- Micro V-tool of choice (optional)
- Paintbrushes: assorted
- Stiff bristle brush or old toothbrush

## Roughing Out and Adding Details




**Rough out the hat and ears.** Remove material from the front and back of the ears and thin the hat in the front and back, almost to the side profile lines. Use a 9/32" (7mm) #11 gouge to create a separation between material you want to keep and material you want to remove; use a ½" (13mm) #5 gouge for removing material.




**Round and shape the hat.** Make a stop cut around the top of the brim with a ¼" (6mm) #15 gouge, and then use the ½" (13mm) #5 gouge to give the hat a knobbly, rippled shape. Drop and round the hat brim, making sure that it always protrudes slightly from the rest of the hat (by around 1/16" [2mm]). Begin to shape the top of the nose and beard. Refer to the side profile as you go.




**Round the beard and hair.** Use the same tools and technique as in Step 2. Define the nose and tuck the hat brim under it. Draw the basic ear shapes.



**Add the pointy ear details.** Shape them down to the drawn lines using a 5⁄16" (8mm) #5 gouge**.**



**Round the tops and scoop out the underside of each ear.** Use the 9⁄32" (7mm) #11 gouge. When done, the ears should look a little like crescent moons, with a point sticking out at the top and the lobe sticking out at the bottom.





**Add the final hand-carved details.** Carve the nostrils and separate them from the nose with a 1⁄8" (3mm) #11 gouge. Round the sides of the nose and slightly taper them back and up toward the hat. Make clean angled cuts under the nostrils with a 1⁄8" (3mm) #5 gouge, round the edges, and then tuck the beard up and under them. Add the basic beard texture with the 9⁄32" (7mm) #11 by carving vertical wavy depressions. Use the same tool to soften and round the edges of the depressions.



**Add the finer hair texture.** Use a rotary tool with a fine-grit cylinder-shaped diamond bit; alternately, you could use a micro V-tool of your choice. Clean off any fuzzies by spraying the carving with a mixture of one part water and one part rubbing alcohol. Scrub with a stiff brush or an old toothbrush.

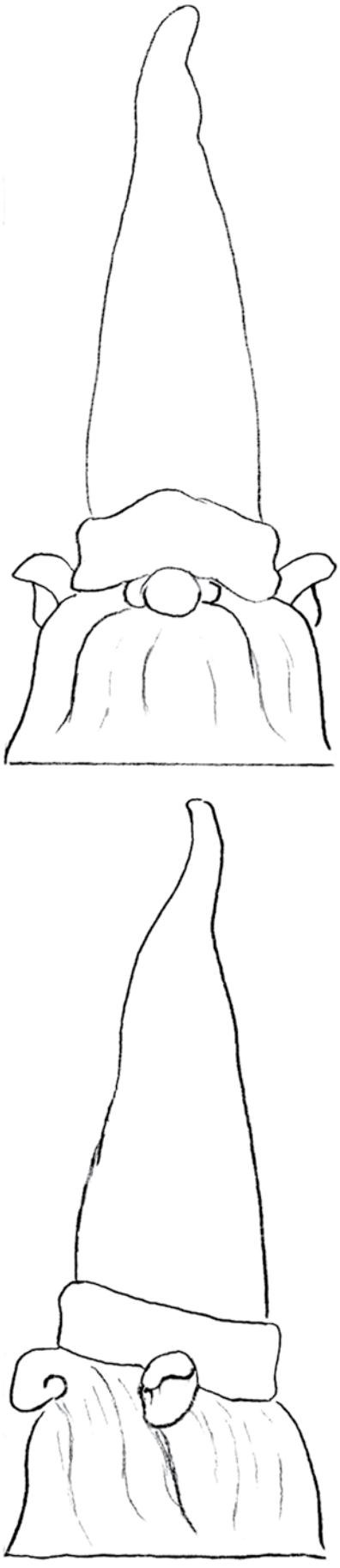
## Painting and Finishing



**Add paint.** Paint the beard with slightly thinned titanium white oil paint. Mix three parts raw sienna to one part raw umber and apply this under the hat brim, in the nostrils, and in the gouges of the beard. Then paint the ears and nose with a mixture of titanium white and raw sienna oil paint, adding more white to the tips to create highlights. Blend. Paint the hat with a base coat of four parts Prussian blue and one part burnt umber, stopping two-thirds of the way to the top. Add some titanium white to this mixture and paint the top third, blending with the darker blue as you go. Paint the hat brim with a thinned mixture of one part raw sienna, four parts raw umber, and a tiny bit of titanium white. Highlight the tip of the hat with titanium white. Blend.



**Add the hat details.** I used slightly thinned titanium white acrylic paint for this step. Decorate the brim with some of the remaining hat color, if desired. Shape some craft wire into a pair of spectacles. They will rest on the nose and ears.



*Winter Tomte Patterns*



# Toy Soldier

*By Matt Kincade*

Toy soldiers make me think of a simpler time, where staying warm, sharing a meal, and spending time with loved ones was what mattered most. So why not whip up some of that simplicity this holiday season? Take a break from the busy and complicated world, carve a jolly soldier, and give it to someone you love.

Cut the soldier blank roughly to size on a band saw; you'll cut the true outline in Step 1. Make sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for setup and safety. Then, with the grain running vertically, transfer the front pattern view to the blank using graphite paper and a pencil. Use the same method to transfer the rifle pattern, making sure that the grain runs vertically for both the soldier and the rifle. To hold the patterns still while sketching, you can use thumbtacks in the waste areas.

Strop knives and tools thoroughly, and re-strop often. Sharp tools are less likely to slip and cause injury; you'll also have more control over the look of the finished project.

## Materials

- Basswood, 2" (5.1cm) thick: soldier, 2 ¼" x 6" (5.7cm x 15.2cm)
- Basswood, ⅜" (1cm) thick: rifle, ½" x 3 ¾" (1.3cm x 9.5cm)
- Wooden dowel, ⅛" (3mm)-dia.: approx. 1" (2.5cm) long
- Graphite transfer paper
- Thumbtacks (optional)
- Pencil
- Cleaner and degreaser, such as Dawn
- Clear non-yellowing spray finish: matte
- Acrylic paints, such as Apple Barrel: sunny day; such as Americana: black, burnt sienna, colonial blue, country red, deep midnight blue, Hauser dark green, Hauser light green; such as FolkArt: burnt umber, French vanilla, skin tone, yellow ochre; such as Liquitex: metallic silver
- Antiquing medium, such as FolkArt: apple butter brown
- Paper towels
- Toothpicks
- Super glue gel or 5-minute epoxy

## Tools

- Band saw
- Scroll saw
- Drill with bit: ⅛" (3mm)-dia.
- Knives: rough out, detail
- #3 palm gouge: ⅜" (10mm)
- #5 palm gouge: 1" (25mm)
- V-tool: ¼" (6mm) 70°
- Calipers or ruler
- Side cutters
- Paintbrushes: assorted (preferably with angled bristles)
- Toothbrush or denture brush

## Roughing Out



**Cut the outlines.** Use the band saw to cut away the largest waste areas, leaving at least 1/16" (2mm) of material past the pattern lines. Draw a vertical centerline down the front and back of the soldier blank to help with symmetry. You will need to redraw these lines several times while carving. Then cut the rifle shape on a scroll saw.



**Carve the rifle.** With a detail knife, taper the edges and shape the rifle, distinguishing the stock, barrel, and other elements with a series of V-cuts. It's a small piece, so go slowly. If you feel any resistance, turn it around and carve in the opposite direction to prevent splitting the wood. Keep the rifle fairly wide at this point, as it should fit snugly into the notch of the soldier's right hand once carved. (You can always carve it down later, if necessary.)

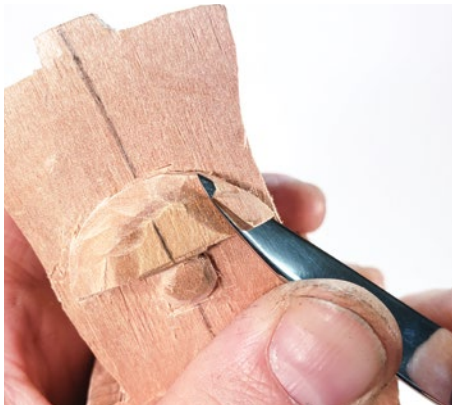


**Refine the outlines.** Carve the sides of the soldier up to the outline with a rough out knife or a 1" (25mm) #5 gouge, removing all the saw marks. Draw the landmarks for the lid and ribbon of the present base. *Note: I like to draw vertical and horizontal lines on my pattern (and carving) to help visualize where shapes are located*. I typically use a pencil to split the piece into halves and sometimes quarters. With a detail knife, make stop cuts along the bottom of the lid and along the sides of the ribbon. Carve up to these lines at an angle, going about 1/16" (2mm) deep. (You could carve deeper under the lid for added dimension.) Shave off the sharp corners of the present and ribbon to soften them.



**Rough out the torso.** Draw a line across the bottom of the hat brim. Centered directly under this line, draw a 1/4" (6mm) square to mark the nose area. Next, draw a 1/2" (1.3cm) square around the rifle hand. Turn these into stop cuts. From the hat brim down to the bottom of the feet, remove around 1/4" (6mm) of material. Be sure to leave the areas around the nose and rifle hand untouched at this point.





**Refine the nose and hat brim.** Referring to the front view, draw the top arch shape of the hat brim. Make a stop cut along this line and, as in Step 4, remove around 1/4" (6mm) of material around the hat brim and nose. Redraw the centerlines. Shape the brim by rounding it from side to side and front to back; use the detail knife. Then round the nose.



**Shape the hat.** Draw the outline of the feather, make a stop cut along the lines, and bring down the area surrounding it by ⅛" (3mm). Mark the bottom of the hat all the way around with a V-cut, using either the detail knife or a ¼" (6mm) 70° V-tool. Round and shape the hat with the rough out knife, starting with the four corners. Round the head. As you work, regularly measure the width and depth of each area with calipers or a ruler to ensure symmetry.



**Refine the hat.** On both sides of the back of the hat, draw a vertical reference line that tapers inward and down toward the bottom of the hat. This angle will give the hat the appropriate shape while making it appear to be tipped back on the soldier's head. Carve the back of the hat up to this line and continue rounding. On the top of the hat, make a stop cut behind the feather and remove the material behind it. Clean up any remaining saw marks on the top of the hat with the 1" (25mm) #5 gouge.





**Add the arm landmarks.** On the front, draw a horizontal line for the bottom of the coat and vertical lines to indicate the width of the arms. Then draw the thickness and position of the arms on the sides. Pay particular attention to the angle of the arm holding the rifle.



**Define the arms.** Make stop cuts along the arm lines on both the front and sides. Carve up to these with the knife and a ⅜" (10mm) #3 gouge, working from the front toward the back and the back toward the front. The soldier's features will be blocky at the moment; resist the urge to add details at this stage.





**Rough out the legs and feet.** Draw a straight line across the top of both feet, make a stop cut, and cut back around ¾" (1.9cm) of material between the bottom of the coat and the tops of the feet. Repeat this process on the back—but this time, cut back about ¼" (6mm) of material. Redraw the centerline, and then make a V-cut down the middle of the legs and feet to separate the legs. Use the rough out knife.

# Adding Details




**Shape the back.** With the rough out knife, carve this area in until it is roughly even with the back of the hat. Referring to the side pattern, notice how the overall shape of the body tapers down from head to toe like an upside-down triangle. Begin to round the blocks of the feet, legs, torso, arms, neck, and head.




**Shape the rifle arm.** Measure and mark the notch for the rifle grip on the front of the carving, making sure to leave enough width for the thumb area. Carefully make stop cuts with the detail knife around the space for the notch. With the ⅜" (10mm) #3 gouge, remove small slivers of material, periodically test-fitting the rifle. Do not apply too much pressure, as the thumb can easily snap off. Make adjustments to the notch and rifle as needed to get a snug fit without having to force the rifle into position.




**Add the rifle.** Very carefully, drill a shallow ⅛" (3mm)-dia. hole in the center of the rifle shoulder. I used a Dremel® for this, but a drill works fine on a low speed. Slip a length of ⅛" (3mm) dowel into the hole. Snip the end with a pair of side cutters so that it protrudes around 3⁄16" (5mm). Hold the rifle close to position and mark the drilling area on the rifle. Drill the hole.






**Add the clothing details.** Sketch the belt and chest straps, make stop cuts along the outlines, and make shallow cuts around these areas with the detail knife. Detail the feather, hat trim, and fringed shoulder pads with V-cuts using a knife or V-tool of your choice. Draw the rest of the ribbon on top of the lid and shape it with shallow stop cuts.




**Add a smile!** Draw a jolly grin and carve it with a detail knife using deep V-cuts. Turn the carving and examine it from all angles. Check symmetry, finish any details you may have missed, look for jagged edges, and clean up loose wood fibers (fuzzies).

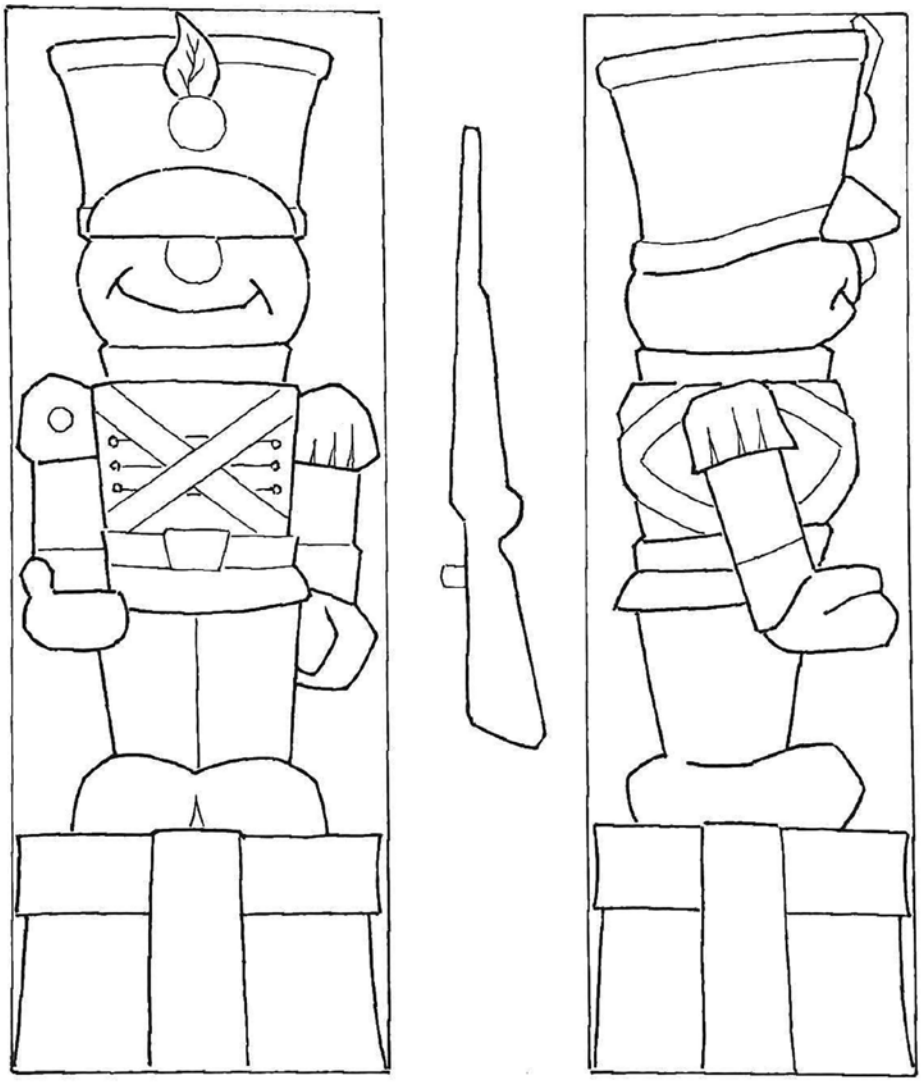
## Painting and Finishing


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**Prepare the carving for paint.** Wash it with a mild cleaner and degreaser, scrub with an old toothbrush or denture brush, and allow to dry. Paint the entire carving with an even coat of diluted burnt sienna. *Note: I mix all my paints to a ratio of approx. 60% water to 40% paint to allow some woodgrain to show through.* Paint the hat and coat with country red, and then paint the hat trim and shoulder pads with yellow ochre. Paint the pants with colonial blue, the present with Hauser light green, and the present ribbon with Hauser dark green. Paint the shoes, gloves, belt, feather, and hat brim with a mixture of dark midnight blue and a touch of black. Paint the chest straps with French vanilla and the rifle with burnt umber. I used a light skin tone for the face, but you can use any color you wish.


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**Apply a finish.** Spray the whole carving with a non-yellowing matte spray and let dry. Then brush on some diluted antiquing medium (I dilute mine using the same ratio as for paint) and wipe off immediately with paper towels. After antiquing, use full-strength metallic silver for the belt buckle and the feather ornament. Using a toothpick with full-strength sunny day, paint the buttons under the chest straps. To make the black areas a little more interesting, you can lightly drybrush a little full-strength colonial blue over them. When you're done painting, spray the carving again with matte spray. Finally, mount the rifle with a small amount of 5-minute epoxy or gel super glue, following the manufacturer's instructions.



*Toy Soldier Patterns*

### Painting Like a Pro

To get nice, sharp edges when painting, allow one color to dry before adding another. Load an angled brush with paint and dab once on a paper towel. Start away from an edge and work toward it so the excess paint has a chance to thin out and not run. Take care of your brushes by cleaning them immediately after use, and maintain the chiseled edge of the bristles by running them through your fingers before storing.




# Santa's Helper

*By Nikki Reese*

### Materials

- Basswood, 1 ½" (3.8cm) square: 3 ½" (8.9cm) long
- Pencil
- Pen: fine
- Paperboard
- White paper
- Glue: cyanoacrylate (CA)
- Boiled linseed oil
- Acrylic paints, such as FolkArt: cardinal red, daffodil yellow, French gray, licorice, real brown, titanium white, true green
- Mod Podge: matte
- Paper towels
- Finishing wax, such as FolkArt

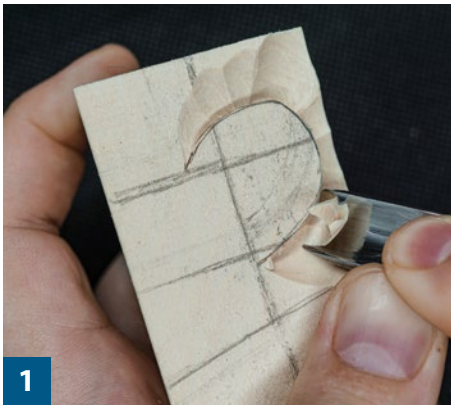
### Tools

- Knives: rough out, detail
- #3 gouge: ⅛" (3mm)
- #7 gouge: ½" (13mm)
- #9 gouge: ¼" (6mm)
- Micro V-tool: 1/16" (2mm)
- Paintbrushes: assorted

Cal Rumpleshoot is the head of the SHWU, the Santa's Helpers Workers Union. Fair pay for fair labor in the elven world. Anyway, it's the end of the building season, and contrary to popular belief, things are pretty chill at the North Pole. The reindeer are fed, the workshop is tidy, and all orders are sorted and loaded, ready for distribution. All that remains is to shovel the snow around Headquarters—and boy, is there a lot of it. This is a fun and festive holiday carve that you can achieve in a few sittings with a couple hand tools.

Prepare the blank. With a pencil, draw centerlines down each side and a teardrop-shaped circle on the top to mark the location of the head. On the sides of the blank, draw the ears. You can draw reference lines around the entire block where the tops and bottoms of the ears will be to keep them symmetrical.

# Roughing Out





**Rough out the ears.** Using a rough out knife, make the ear lines into deep stop cuts. Then, using a ½" (13mm) #7 gouge, carve up to the ear stop cuts to make them stand out from the head. The more you carve in, the more the ears will stick out, and the smaller the head will be.

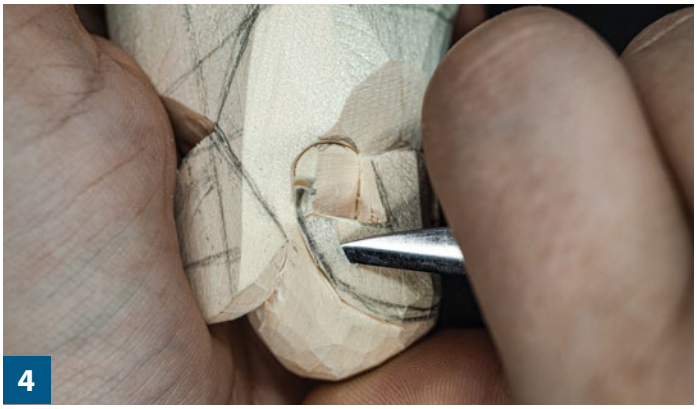


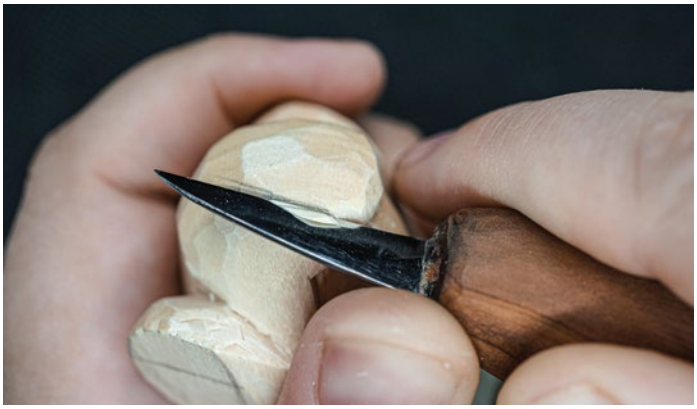
**Round the head.** Use the rough out knife, going by the teardrop circle you drew. Carve a peak evenly on the front for the face. Round the head by paring back the top edge in small slices until all flat areas from the ears up have been removed.





**Rough out the face.** Draw the beard, nose, and hairline onto the front of the head, and turn the nose and eye lines into stop cuts (make sure to redraw the beard and hairline as they get carved away). Carve up to the stop cut at the bottom of the nose. The more you carve here, the bigger the nose will be. Carve along either side of the nose up to the eyebrow line to establish the rough shape of the nose and eyes.





**Define the hair and beard.** Use the knife to turn the lines into stop cuts. In the same way that you carved along the side of the nose, carve along the side of the sideburns, and down from the cheeks into the beard to make the facial hair stand out from the face. Carve up to the hairline to make the forehead. The more you carve here, the more the face will sink into the facial hair. Draw a side part on the hair, and then follow that line with a V-cut.



**Refine the ear.** Draw a line from the top front corner of the ear to the bottom front corner. Follow the line with a stop cut, and shave off wood on the front of the ear to sink it gradually into the beard line. Make a stop cut along the bottom of the beard, and then carve up to it to separate the beard from the body. Repeat on the other side.

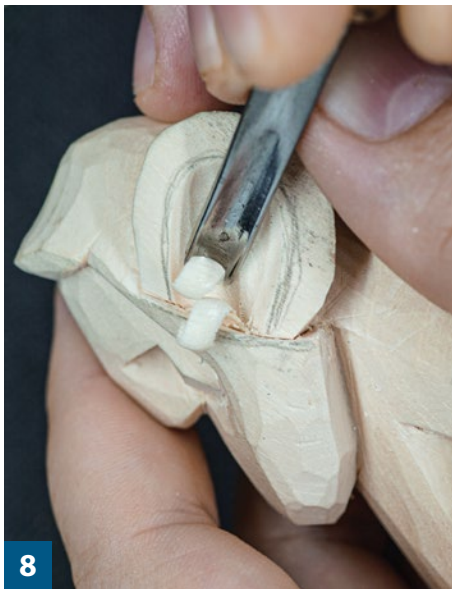


**Rough out the body.** To block out the shape of the body, draw a horizontal line on the bottom of the blank, ¼" to ½" (6mm to 1.3cm) up from the bottom. Make the line into a stop cut, and then carve down to this line from above to establish the feet. Turn the blank around and carve the corners off the back. Draw the arms and hands on either side, giving them a slight bend at the elbow. On the back of the blank, draw a line below the elbow landmark for the elf's bottom. Make this a stop cut, and carve up to it. Then round the bottom over slightly.

## Adding Details



**Rough out the arms.** Make the arm lines into stop cuts and carve along those cuts to pull the arms away from the body. This is a crucial step, so remove wood gradually and be aware of where the tip of your knife is at all times.



**Refine the ears.** With a detail knife, thin the backs of the ears. If your ears aren't that thick, don't worry about this step. Use a ¼" (6mm) #9 gouge to hollow the insides of the ears, starting from near the top and carving down into the hairline. The ears should look like little bowls when you're done.

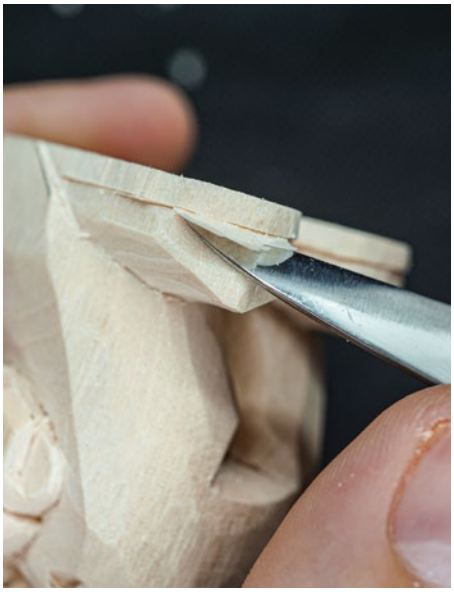


**Define the mustache.** Draw it onto the face, and then make that line into a stop cut. Using either a knife of your choice or a ⅛" (3mm) #3 gouge, carve up to the line to separate the mustache from the beard. Draw a line for the bottom lip and turn it into a stop cut. Using the same tool, carve up to the bottom of the lip. Then, using either your knife or a 1/16" (2mm) micro V-tool, add texture to the beard, mustache, and hair. Break up the bottom profile of the beard to make it look more realistic.



**Add the clothing details.** Draw the overalls and shirt cuffs onto the blank, and then turn these lines into stop cuts. Carve up to the clothing lines to separate the overalls from the shirt, creating layers of clothing. Carve the mittened hands up to the stop cut for the cuff, shaping the mittens as you go. Add a thumb to each mitten.





**Add clothing creases.** Use the detail knife to create a series of V-cuts at the elbows. Then carve a round shirt button and add creases around that, too. Separate the feet with a large V-cut, and round the toes. Separate the legs with another V-cut. Carve the feet up to the pant cuffs, add a horizontal stop cut just above the bottoms of the feet, and carve down to these cuts to create shoe soles. Carve a small slit in one of the mittens; the clipboard will go here later.

## Painting and Finishing




**Make the clipboard.** I cut mine from a small piece of brown paperboard, and glued a smaller sheet of white paper to it. Allow it to dry and write your to-do list and clipboard details. Coat with matte Mod Podge® for extra strength and to protect the paper.



**Prepare the carving for paint.** Brush it all over with boiled linseed oil, or an oil of your choice, and let sit for at least a few hours. Wipe away the excess with paper towels, disposing of them safely per the manufacturer's instructions. Lightly draw the stripes of the overalls to ensure even spaces, and plan the stripe pattern; I used cardinal red and titanium white.



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**Paint the remaining details.** Paint the beard and hair with lightly diluted French gray and a touch of licorice. Paint the mittens and shoes with licorice. Paint the shirt with diluted true green. Mix a tiny amount of licorice to the true green, and then use a thin brush to apply this to creases to create a shadow effect. Keep a dry brush on hand to help blend the darker green paint into the lighter for a smoother gradient. Then paint the skin, diluting a tiny bit of real brown, cardinal red, and daffodil yellow with water until you reach the desired tone. You can test the color on the bottom of the feet, or a scrap piece of basswood. If painting a lighter skin tone, go back in afterward with heavily diluted cardinal red to add blush accents to the nose, ears, and cheeks. Let dry.




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**Add the finishing touches.** Heavily drybrush the beard and hair with titanium white. Then lightly drybrush the rest of the carving with the same color to highlight the carving facets and give the elf a frosty look. Add a finish, if desired; I prefer FolkArtcraft wax.

## Avoid Bleeding

Separate painted areas from each other with full-strength paint to keep the colors from bleeding together. You can fill the insides of the stripes with diluted paints later.



*Santa's Helper Patterns*

# Bringing Home the Tree

*By Russell Scott*




This design came from two of my favorite pastimes: demonstrating woodcarving at a tree farm during the holidays and stories from the 1920s. I've carved many "trees on a car" ornaments featuring modern cars but, feeling nostalgic, I decided to carve a version of my great-grandfather bringing home a tree for Christmas. This is my version of what I envision it was like in days gone by. This is a stand-alone piece rather than an ornament.

I found photos and drawings of Model T cars to help me develop the basic design. Then, I designed the evergreen carving attached to the top. I tied the tree to the car using string to emulate rope. I hope you enjoy this carving to bring quaint holiday memories from the past and add to your holiday woodcarving collection.

Transfer the side and top patterns to the wood and cut along the lines with a band saw. Then mark the wood to remove from the sides above the fenders.

## Materials

- Basswood, 3" (7.6cm) thick: car, 3" x 4½" (7.6cm x 11.4cm)
- Basswood, 1¾" (4.4cm) thick: tree, 1¾" x 6" (4.4cm x 15.2cm)
- String, such as #18 cotton chalk line twine
- Dowel, ¼" (6mm)-dia.: 1½" (3.8cm) long
- Acrylic paint, such as Americana: black plum, bright white, burnt sienna, Christmas green, Christmas red, yellow, such as FolkArt: thunder blue, antique white, metallic silver, pure black, thunder blue
- Spray finish, such as Deft: clear gloss
- Finishing wax, such as Watco: dark, natural

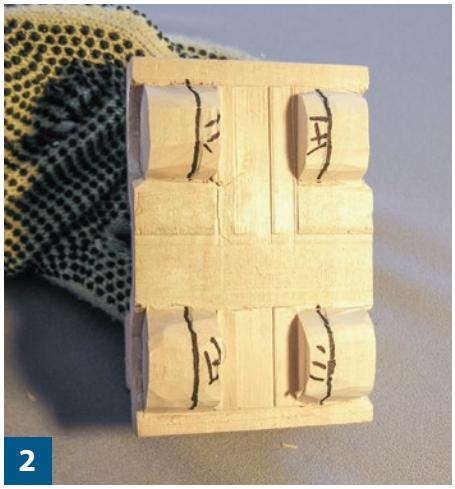
## Tools

- Carving knife
- V-tools: medium, small
- #3 gouge: ½" (13mm)
- Drill with bits: small, ¼" (6mm)-dia.

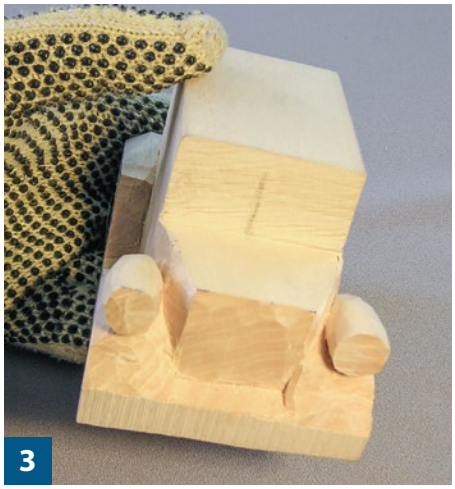
# Carving the Model T




**Remove the excess wood from the body and fenders.** Then remove the excess wood from the radiator and the front fender. Repeat the process for the back, back fender, spare wheel, front fender, and headlights.




**Round the wheels.** Then remove some wood from the insides of the wheels to thin them slightly.




**Draw the headlights.** Taper the wood in front of the headlights down to the fender and round the headlights. Draw the line separating the radiator from the hood and the radiator cap. Mark the bottoms of the fenders. Carve away the bottoms of the fenders to show the wheels. Use a V-tool to separate the hood from the radiator. Shape the radiator cap with a knife.




**Draw the spokes in the spare wheel.** Then make chip carving-style cuts to separate the spokes. Shape the rear lights and bumper. Mark the arched top and carve it to shape.




**Draw the arches along the side.** Use a long-bladed knife or flat chisel to carve the arch from the middle of the sides to the running board. The bottom of the chassis should be thinner than the top. Round the front and back corners of the chassis and the top.



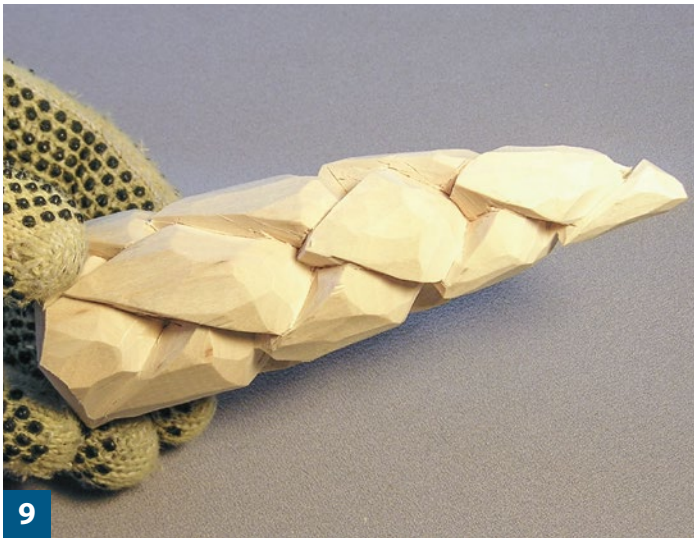
**Draw the side and back windows and the windshield.** Then, draw the back of the chassis. Carve along the lines with a V-tool. Recess the windows and windshield slightly to separate them from the rest of the car.



**Draw the wheel rim and spokes for all four wheels.** Use the knife to make chip carving-style cuts to remove the wood between the spokes. Then use the V-tool to carve the diagonal pattern on the radiator. Drill small holes in the front and back license plate holders for the rope.



**Cut the tree to shape.** Then round the tree. Draw random V-shaped designs up and around the tree. Connect these V-shaped patterns to each other. Carve along the lines with a V-tool.



**Separate each branch.** Use the knife to make large chip carving-style cuts to create shadows between the branches. Use the tip of a sharp knife or a gouge to carve dents in each branch.

## Make More Trees

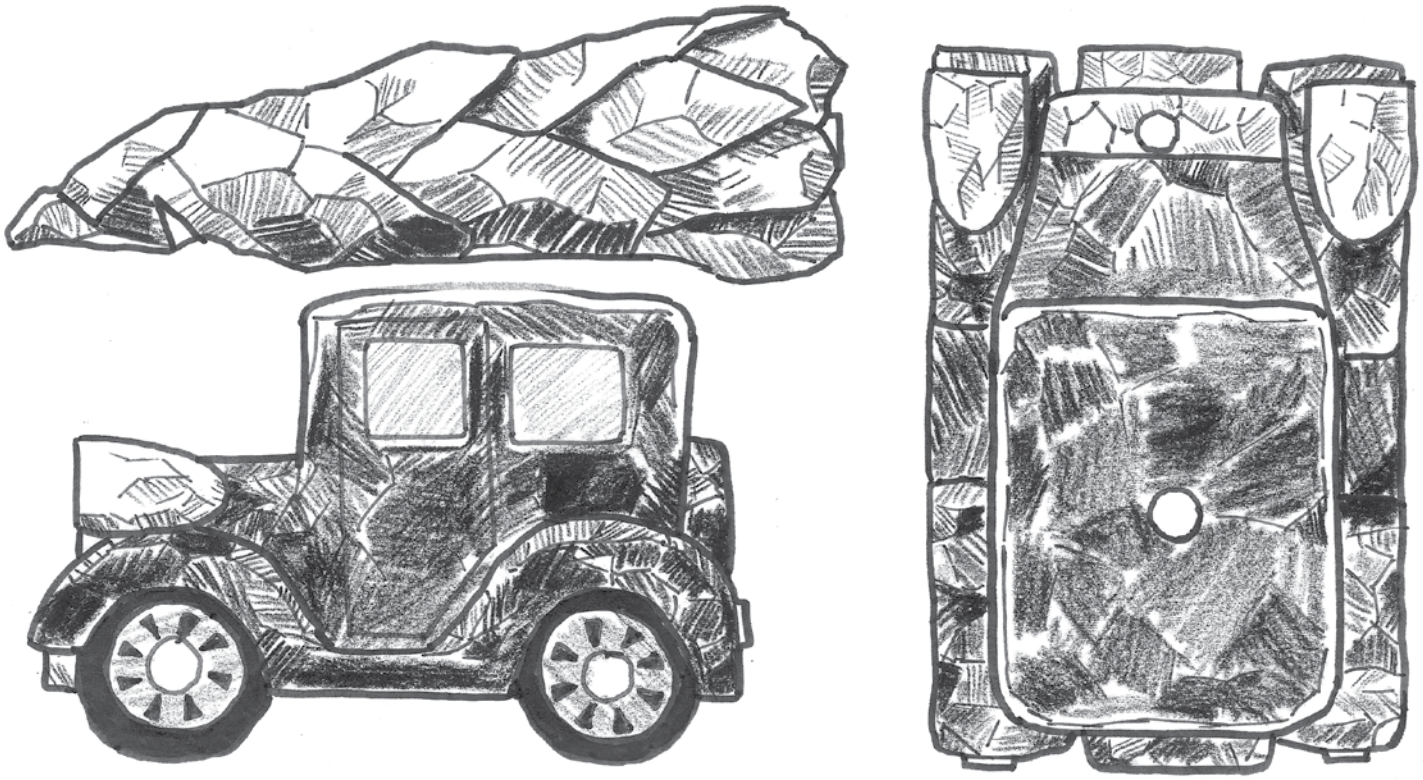
While you only need one tree to top your Model T, I like to carve more in assorted sizes. Use them to make a forest scene for the car, as easy holiday accents, or to stock your craft fair table.



**Draw the stump.** Use the V-tool to separate the stump from the branches. Use the knife to separate the bottom branches. Shape the side of the tree to fit the top of the car. Drill a ¼" (6mm)-dia. hole in the side of the tree and a matching hole in the top of the car. Glue a short ¼" (6mm)-dia. dowel into the hole in the tree. Do not glue the tree in place until after painting and finishing both pieces.

## Painting List



*Bringing Home the Tree Patterns*

# About the Authors



**Sara Barraclough** lives in Southern Utah with her daughter. She started carving about five years ago to carry on her great-grandpa and great-great-grandpa's carving legacy (they were Scandinavian-style master carvers). She recently discovered the scroll saw. Find her on Etsy and Instagram *@theclevercarver.*



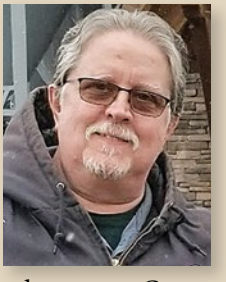
**Shawn Cipa** was recognized as "Santa Carver of the Year" after he won Woodcraft's National Santa Carving contest. He is the author of several books with Fox Chapel Publishing. Shawn accepts commissions for his work and can be contented at *shawncipa.com.*



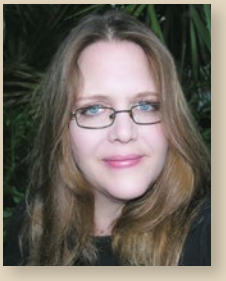
**Roxana Cristean** began carving in 2020 after finding carving tutorials online. She is often inspired by nature and animals. Roxana has a Master's degree in the theory and practice of translation, and lives in Timișoara, Romania. Find her on Instagram *@etno_creations*, or on Facebook at *Roxi Cristean.*



**Andrew DiPace** is originally from New York City, but now lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. A carver for seventeen years, he is a member of the Lancaster County Woodcarvers and serves as the club's show co-chairman, as well as a teacher of beginning carvers. Email him at *LancCarvers@gmail.com.*



**Brian Ferguson** whittles just outside of Buffalo, New York. He's been involved with woodworking since picking up a circle saw at the age of twelve, and started whittling with varying degrees of seriousness in 2008. Major influences are Gene Messer and Harley Refsal, both of whom have been more than helpful in Brian's whittling adventures. Contact Brian through his blog at *BfloBif.com.*



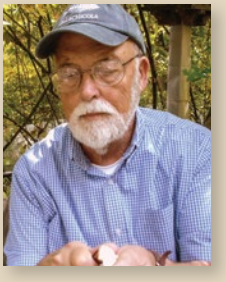
**Leah Goddard** lives and carves in beautiful Gatlinburg, Tennessee. She is the author of the book "Carving Nature's Rascals" as well as various Magazine articles. The Kitten-in-mitten rough-out may be purchased through *stadtlandercarvings.com.*



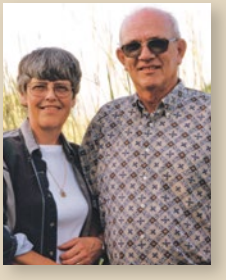
**Dwayne Gosnell** lives in Hickory, North Carolina, and works in law enforcement. Carving gives him a break from his job, which is high-stress, but allows him to view some pretty unique incidents. These often find their way into his caricatures. Dwayne started carving in 2006 and has been addicted ever since. He is a member of the Caricature Carvers of America. See more of his work *dgosnellwoodcarving.com.*



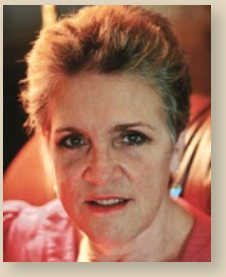
**Chris Hammack** has been a professional woodcarver creating whimsical designs for over thirty-seven years. He has taught carving seminars all over the country, and now teaches woodcarving classes online. He is a long-time member of the Cowboy Cartoonists International and the Caricature Carvers of America (CCA). He currently lives and carves on a small island in the Caribbean, off the coast of Mexico. Find out more about Chris and his carvings at *chrishammack.com.*



**Tom Hindes** started whittling and carving in the early 2000s. Now retired from a career in technical training development at The Ohio State University, Tom lives in Port St. Joe, Florida. He carves Noah's arks, Christmas ornaments, wizards, and gnomes. He is the author of *Whittling in Your Free Time* and *20-Minute Whittling*, both available from Fox Chapel Publishing.



**Carolea Hower** is a retired physical therapist who lives on a farm with her husband, Ken. You can reach her via email at *caroleahower@gmail.com*.



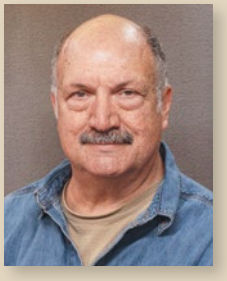
**Gayle Ihlenfeldt** painted with oils for several years, but started carving because she couldn't find a clay sculpture class. She fell in love with woodcarving. Gayle retired from Northwest Airlines in 2006 and relocated from Detroit to Sun City West, Arizona, where she is a member of the Cactus Carvers. Contact Gayle at *Gayleswhittlecreations@gmail.com*.



**Matt Kincade** has been interested in art since childhood. He grew up watching and admiring his mom, who was a talented oil painter and watercolorist. Matt has taken classes at the University of Indianapolis and the Indianapolis Art Center. After years of trying different things, he found his true creative passion in 2018, when he stumbled upon caricature carving. It seemed to come naturally, and he's always pushing himself to learn and improve. Matt lives in Lebanon, Indiana, with his wife and twin boys. See more of his work on Instagram *@matt.kincade*.



**Bob Kozakiewicz** lives in Ramsey, New Jersey with Pat, his wife of forty-seven years. A self-taught, award-winning carver, Bob, who also enjoys instructing beginners, has been carving since he was a teenager. His favorite subjects are Santas, elves, ornaments, and small caricatures. Today his wood carvings can be found in private collections throughout the United States, and abroad. Find Bob on Facebook at *Bob Kozakiewicz*, through Instagram *@carverbobk*, on his woodcarving blog at *woodchipchatter.com*, or via email at *rwkoz51@gmail.com*.



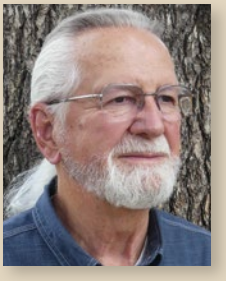
**Steven Kulp** was introduced to woodcarving by his uncle, Norris White, in 1983, and has been carving on and off ever since. Recently, he started competing in local and national carving competitions and has won a few ribbons. Steven lives in Souderton, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Elda, and son, Mike, and is a member of the Delaware Valley Wood Carvers. See more of his work on Facebook at *S.G. Kulp Carving*.



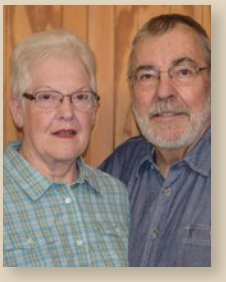
**Carol Leavy** lives in Iowa with her husband. She has three sons. Carol got serious about carving in 2008 after taking a class with Mike Shipley at the International Woodcarvers Congress. She's a member of four clubs in the Midwest and is a past president of the Affiliated Wood Carvers.



**Chuck MacKnee** is a psychologist who teaches at Trinity Western University British Columbia, Canada. He also has a counseling practice. An avid woodworker, he finds that creating and completing woodworking projects complements the ongoing process of working with the human psyche.



**Tom Mellott** of Colorado Springs, Colorado, remembers carving a hippo from Ivory soap as a Cub Scout in the late 1940s. He also carved neckerchief slides as a Boy Scout. After retiring from a career in engineering, Tom studied and worked part-time as a cooper (barrel maker) at a colonial village for twelve years. A past member of the Bloody Thumbs Carving Club in Roaring Springs, Pennsylvania, he's currently a member of the Pikes Peak Whittlers and the First Lutheran Carving Club. Shoot him an email at *malcath361@gmail.com*.



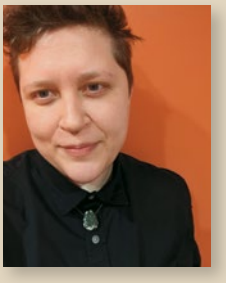
**Bruce and Judy Nicholas** discovered their favorite art forms in the 1980s—for Bruce, chip carving, and for Judy, painting. Judy quickly saw the potential for combining her painting skills with Bruce's chip carving, and the couple has been collaborating ever since.



**Betty Padden** and her husband, Bob, own Wooden Apple Signmakers in Auburn, Massachusetts. They have been professional sign carvers for thirty-five years and have been teaching their craft to students for more than thirty. They are the creators of SantaCarls®, a unique figure that has been sold at Disney parks and Busch Gardens. Betty also designs and paints for Ne'Qwa Art and Blossom Bucket, among other companies. Visit *bettypadden.com* for cutouts, patterns, and designs, and help for woodcarvers struggling with projects. See more of Betty's work at *woodenapplesignmakers.com*.



**Jeff Pretz** is a retired Lutheran pastor living with his wife in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. A carver since he was a Cub Scout, Jeff really got hooked about twenty-two years ago. He is a member of the Lancaster County Woodcarvers and Manheim Township Woodcarvers.



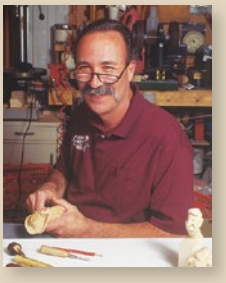
**Nikki Reese** is a wood carver based in Austin, Texas. Her work predominantly focuses on the whimsical and fantastical. You can find her published work in Woodcarving Illustrated, and sometimes you can catch her instructing carving classes. Examples of her work can be found on Instagram *@yetirage*.



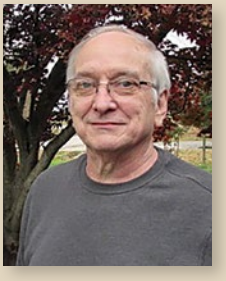
**Floyd Rhadigan** has been carving for fifty years and teaching the craft for forty-five. He is a member and past president of the Caricature Carvers of America, and was awarded the Woodcarving Illustrated Woodcarver of the Year Award in 2016. Floyd spends his time traveling around the United States, teaching the art he loves so dearly. See more of his work at *fantasycarving.com*.



**Russell Scott** of St. Paul, Minnesota, has been carving since 1999. He is the author of Carving Undercover Santas by Fox Chapel Publishing and teaches online and in person at carving shows and meetings. Check out his free instructional videos on YouTube at *Scottcarvings*. See more of his work on Etsy and purchase his roughouts at *scottcarvings.com*.



**Dave Stetson** is co-creator and founding member of the Caricature Carvers of America (CCA). He teaches workshops online, hosted by the *WoodCarvingAcademy.com*, to share his fifty years of carving thru videos. Dave is the author of *Caricature Carving From Head to Toe*, available from Fox Chapel Publishing, *foxchapelpublishing.com*.



**Glenn Stewart** has been carving for more than thirty years. He lives in Hawesville, Kentucky, with his wife, Judy. They have two daughters, two granddaughters, one grandson, and one great-grandson.



**Pete Zanauskas** lives in Connecticut and has three daughters. A lover of the outdoors, Pete has been carving since 1995. Pete would like to thank his parents for their constant support, and for being his biggest fans.

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# Carve Some Holiday Magic

No matter your carving skill level, you are going to love working on all these charming Christmas-themed projects. Collected by the editors of *Woodcarving Illustrated* magazine and written by the woodcarving artists themselves, this book features 32 of the best and most fun projects from the last decade of the magazine. With easy-to-follow directions, full-color coordinating photography, and ready-to-use patterns, this delightful book has everything you need to make super cute carvings to hang on your own tree or give as gifts.







## Features:

- **An introductory section on project materials, tools, basic cuts and finishing.**
- **32 cute Christmas projects including an angel, Santa ornaments, elves, snowmen, comfort penguins, toy soldier, and so much more!**
- **Patterns and projects contributed by today's leading carving experts including Dave Stetson, Dwayne Gosnell, Chris Hammack, Russel Scott, Sara Barraclough, Betty Padden, Tom Hindes, Nikki Reese, and Many others.**

**"This is a wonderful compilation of stellar Christmas carves by a group of amazing carvers! A fabulous book for carving and painting!!"**—Sara Barraclough, artist, and author of *Learn to Carve Gnomes, Trolls, and Mythical Creatures, Quick Whittles* and *Weekend Whittling Projects.*

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