

VINTAGE WORDS OF WISDOM

HOME CARPENTRY

A Practical Guide for the Amateur in
CARPENTRY, JOINERY, THE USE OF TOOLS
LATHE WORKING, ORNAMENTAL WOODWORK
SELECTION OF TIMBER, ETC., ETC.

By

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

This **Vintage Words of Wisdom** was written in 1933 to offer the aspiring amateur carpenter and joiner a comprehensive introduction and guide to the subject of woodworking. Although there are many modern tools – particularly power hand tools – that have superseded those outlined here, the fundamental techniques and ideas for projects remain as applicable now as they did eighty years ago.

The emphasis is very much on the practical. After describing the various woods and their use in carpentry and joinery the first half of the book concentrates upon woodworking tools and how to use them (see also our title *Woodwork Tools and How to Use Them* by William Fairham, which includes a more detailed guide to using vintage tools). Thereafter the focus shifts to the application of tools and techniques and there are numerous suggestions for the construction of articles for use around the home and garden. These range from a workbench to chairs, windows and doors – even a kitchen table. There are plates and drawings to help explain some of the techniques. The instructions for the construction of greenhouses stages, roller-blinds and other items are extensive but, as you would expect, all measurements are imperial. Therefore, we have included a metric to imperial conversion chart in this volume, which we hope will be helpful.

Although this title pre-dates the huge variety of power tools now available to the modern DIYer or hobbyist if you prefer to 'keep it simple' or get 'back to basics' this volume provides everything to help you get started or improve your technique. Also, of course, some of us have inherited tools from fathers and grandfathers, or have picked up vintage tools from market stalls. There is a certain pleasure and satisfaction from using and caring for family heirlooms or tried and tested vintage tools that were made to last.

Before you start - a word of warning. Although of interest, some of the techniques recommended are no longer relevant and will now be considered dangerous or suggest using substances that are illegal. For example the use of potassium cyanide for cleaning rusty tools is certainly not recommended and we imagine the purchase of Sperm Whale Oil may prove difficult! However you are taking a glimpse back a few generations, when this was quite acceptable, and it does provide a fascinating insight into how things change.

The language and terminology may sound quaint to the modern ear but we think this adds to the charm of the work. Frequently the author refers simply to 'stuff' when he means timber and he does not skimp on detail, for example presenting a well-rounded exposition of the respective merits of Turkish, Indian and American stones for sharpening tools.

This is another **Vintage Words of Wisdom** title that combines practical advice, interest and charm. We think that *Home Carpentry* will appeal to anyone keen to learn, or improve, the basic skills of woodwork.

The Metric to Imperial Conversion Chart included in this book has been included with the kind permission of Eric Meier of the Wood Database www.wood-database.com

VINTAGE WORDS OF WISDOM

The **Vintage Words of Wisdom** titles are not simply facsimiles of old books. They have been carefully selected and professionally produced as high quality ebooks. Our aim is to make the best vintage books on popular topics of interest more widely available again. The books range from practical titles that include wisdom from times past to unashamedly nostalgic works that will appeal to those who may remember these or similar titles from their childhood. Often amusing and quaint, these vintage volumes also contain wise words and advice that may have been forgotten in the intervening years. So often it is worth revisiting the past to remind ourselves that the best ideas stand the test of time. Above all, the **Vintage Words of Wisdom** titles are highly entertaining and provide a fascinating snapshot of life in days gone by. We have chosen books with wonderful illustrations, exciting stories of daring and adventure, practical advice and charming nostalgic descriptions of a simpler life.

Titles include:

Poultry-keeping

Room and Window Gardening

Ferns and Fern Culture

Woodwork Tools and How to Use Them

Home Carpentry: A Practical Guide for the Amateur

The Boys' Book of Aeroplanes

The Railway Age

Sky Roads of the World

Lillie London's Needlework Book

The Cottage Farm Month by Month

For further details and the most up-to-date information on our titles please visit our website www.wordstothewise.co.uk

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The title of this volume indicates to some extent its scope. It will show those who are inexperienced, or have but little technical knowledge of the subject, the elementary operations of Carpentry and Joinery, the materials and tools to use, and the processes to be followed in such constructive and mending work as may be needed in the home from time to time.

In its way it is as complete a work as the amateur could desire, but those who wish to go further into the subject are recommended to a larger volume entitled *Every Man His Own Mechanic* (from which *Home Carpentry* has been compiled and edited), by the same Author. Of that book the *Daily Telegraph* said:

“The instructions given are of the most complete description, and it is conclusively shown how the cost of mending (if the work is done by the householder himself) is just six times less than if he employs a skilled workman to do it.”

J.B.

ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE:

- I PLANES
- II THE SAW
- III CHISELS
- IV WORK-BENCH ACCESSORIES
- V SHARPENING TOOLS
- VI EDGE JOINTS
- VII ANGLE JOINTS
- VIII MITRE JOINTS, ETC.
- IX FRAMING JOINTS
- X WORK-BENCHES
- XI WINDOWS, DOORS AND GATES
- XII BOXES, DRAWERS, ETC.

Metric to Imperial Conversion

Fractional Equivalents:

Millimeters	Inches	Decimal	MM
1	.039	1/16"	1.59
2	.079		
3	.118	1/8"	3.18
4	.157		
5	.197	3/16"	4.76
6	.236	1/4"	6.35
7	.276		
8	.315	5/16"	7.94
9	.354		
10	.394	3/8"	9.53
11	.433	7/16"	11.11
12	.472		
13	.512	1/2"	12.70
14	.551	9/16"	14.29
15	.591		
16	.630	5/8"	15.88
17	.669	11/16"	17.46
18	.709		
19	.748	3/4"	19.05
20	.787		
21	.827	13/16"	20.64
22	.866	7/8"	22.23
23	.906		
24	.945	15/16"	23.81
25	.984	1"	25.40
26	1.024		
27	1.063		
28	1.102	1 1/8"	28.70
29	1.142		
30	1.181	1 1/4"	31.75
35	1.378	1 3/8"	34.93
40	1.575	1 1/2"	38.10
45	1.772	1 3/4"	44.45
50	1.969	2"	50.80
55	2.165		
60	2.362		
65	2.559	2 1/2"	63.50
70	2.756		
75	2.953		
80	3.150	3"	76.20
85	3.346		
90	3.543	3 1/2"	88.90
95	3.740		
100	3.937	4"	101.60

CHAPTER VI

THE WORK-BENCH AND ITS FITTINGS

To the professional carpenter and joiner who is constantly engaged in work of a varying character a properly constructed bench with numerous adjuncts may be more or less essential. The work of the amateur artisan will be, however, as a general rule, of a much more simple nature, and though even in his case there may be occasions when a well-equipped joiner's bench would prove to be a convenience, the great majority of the operations which he will perform will require nothing more elaborate than a strongly made plain bench or table, which, when necessary, can be rigidly fixed and fitted with simple contrivances for holding boards during the process of planing. The actual size and position of such a bench will be determined largely by individual circumstances and requirements.

The bench may be either fixed or movable and, with regard to position, it may be against a wall of the workshop or shed or it may stand in the middle of it, so that there may be free passage all round it. As a rule, the amateur will find it convenient to have it against the wall of his shed, and if possible immediately under the window by which the shed is lighted. A large bench need not be fixed, as its own weight will keep it in position; but a small one, such as an amateur artisan will generally have, will be all the better for being secured to the side of the shed or to the ground, if possible. For the amateur, then, there can be little doubt that the bench should be against a wall and fixed; but of course there are cases in which this would be impossible, and in determining position, etc., everyone must be guided by the necessities of situation, light, etc., and settle these points as may best suit his own convenience.

The fixing is easily managed. Four iron brackets, having two arms at right angles to each other, and pierced and countersunk for screws, will be all that is necessary. If two of these brackets be screwed to the sides of the bench near the top and also to the wall, and the other two secured to the front legs and the floor, the bench can neither tilt away from the wall under pressure nor slide along the floor under the thrust of planing. When the bench stands against a wall, a wooden rail to which the bracket may be screwed must first be fixed to the wall in a horizontal position. As for the floor, if this be of stone, concrete, or even earth, it is always desirable that the bench should stand on a very low platform, and it will be better that the wall behind the bench, if it be of brick or stone, should be match-boarded. The utility of this will appear presently.

First, as to the dimensions of a bench; these must depend very much upon space, for the bench must be made according to the room at command. The following will be found convenient dimensions: *length*, from 5 ft. to 7 ft.; *breadth*, from 1 ft. 6 in. to 2 ft. 6 in.; *height*, from 2 ft. 6 in. to 3 ft. The height should be regulated according to the stature of the user, as in planing and similar operations it is desirable not to stoop over the bench more than is absolutely necessary. Excessive length should be avoided, as a long bench is liable in course of time to become slightly hollow in the middle, and this is a serious defect. An average sized bench for general use might be 6 ft. by 2 ft. with a height of 34 in.

A glance at any tool-maker's catalogue will show that ready-made benches, well fitted, and suitable either for amateur or professional workers, may be obtained at moderate prices. It is assumed, however, that the handy-man will prefer to make one for himself which will in every way suit his convenience. In order to meet varied requirements it is proposed to describe the making of a rough and ready bench which can be easily put together either for temporary work

or as a makeshift even in the workshop itself, and afterwards the more complete and permanent bench which in his progress he may at one time or another desire to possess.

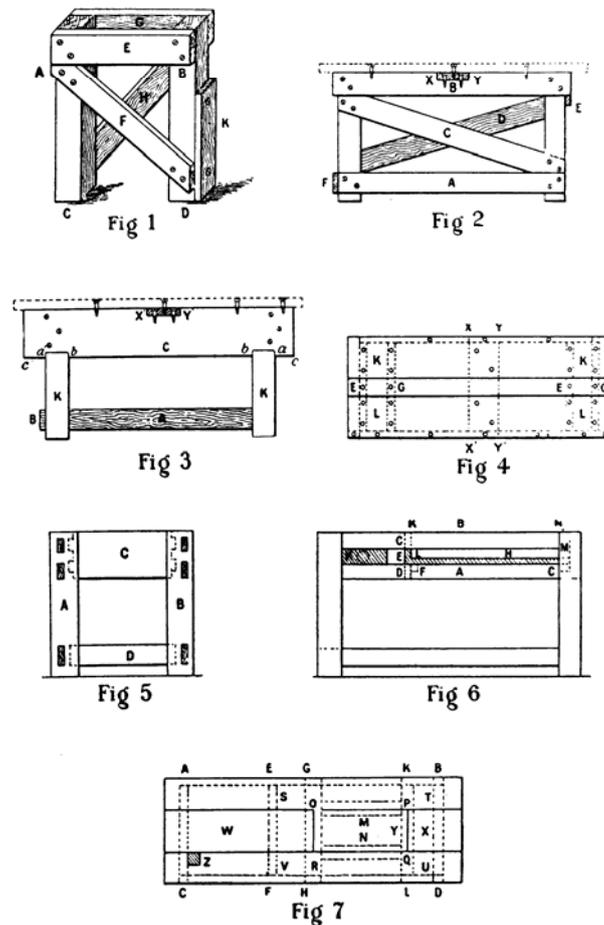


Plate X: (1) End trestles; (2) Back elevation; (3) Front elevation; (4) Plan of top; (5) Framework of ends of permanent bench; (6) Front elevation of permanent bench; (7) Plan of top of permanent bench.

Temporary Bench (Plate X) - First get out four pieces of quartering, about 3 in. by 2½ in. and some strips of board about 3½ in. wide and 1 in. thick. A board of white deal, 11 in. wide, may be ripped down in three lengths for this purpose. Three pieces of the same kind of board 6 ft. long must also be provided, and some 2 in. and 2½ in. screws; about three dozen of each will suffice. In putting together a temporary bench of this description, or any kind of work that is to be taken to pieces again, use screws instead of nails, as by screws less injury is done to the wood, and the material may be utilized when it has served its first purpose for something else. And more than this, no nails or fragments of nails will be left in the wood to damage the teeth of a saw or the edge of a plane-iron.