

Woodworking Enthusiasts

The hobby of woodworking wasn't exactly a hobby decades ago. Back then, older generations made what they needed for their homes. While it's true that they did this out of necessity, the projects they created were beautiful and long lasting.

They were passed down through the years and many of those items are now considered valuable antiques. As life got busier, it became easier for families to simply purchase any kind of wooden furniture or other wood gadget that they needed.

It's sad too, because these mass produced items are not as well made and they don't hold the same meaningful legacy. Woodworking is more than a hobby - it's a way of life.

The skills discovered through woodworking can be used to surround yourself and others with one of a kind pieces.

What Is Woodworking?

Woodworking is a once-lost art that's now back in style because people appreciate the quality that can be found by creating the furniture and other items that they need themselves.

The skill of woodworking means to create something out of wood. That "something" can be a lot of different items. When you have the knowledge, skills and woodworking designs to follow, you can do amazing things around your home.

In the kitchen, you can build cabinets or a center island. You can make a hutch or you can create chairs. You can even master how to create embellishments on the doorways or on the floor trim.

You can add beauty and value to every room in your house. You'll save both time and money when you learn how to do woodworking. If you go to a custom woodcrafter to get something made for your home, you're going to end up paying at least triple what you would pay over making the same item yourself.

Remember that a custom woodcrafter was once someone who knew nothing about woodcrafting, but by learning, he or she got good enough to turn the skill into a business.

With the right guidance, instructions and wood plans, you can reach that level, too. But you have to learn from someone who knows the ins and outs of

woodworking - and you want to try to find it all in one place so that the teaching is consistent.

A product like [Ted's Woodworking](#) would be a good resource. It's like a one-stop shop where you can get all you need except for the hand tools and tangibles - those you'll have to get on your own. But you can get diagrams, a woodworking guide and a CAD viewer with a single download.

Along with the instructions, you'll also get the videos that make learning easier. That's a huge help for people who are visual learners. You can read about it and then follow up the learning by watching one of the video aids.

Who has time to waste weekend after weekend sitting in on local woodworking classes and *then* going home to try to carry out the instructions? It also doesn't help if you have no choice in what's being taught. With a course that you download, *you* get to choose.

Selling Your Own Woodworking Projects

There is a large market for woodworking projects that sell really well. When you've decided to start selling what you make, you have to consider the time involved in creating the item versus what you can earn.

You want to look at pieces that are popular, can be made quickly and can garner you a lot of repeat business from customers. One of the well-known items that always sells well is a birdhouse.

Birdhouses always sell well regardless of the season. The reason for this is because people do use them in their yards as homes for birds so they can watch the birds and create a nice little haven in their yard.

But there are also people who collect birdhouses and use them as part of the décor around their homes. If you search through country decoration magazines, you'll see a lot of this trend.

It's not just collectors and bird enthusiasts that like to buy birdhouses. Other craft oriented business owners like to buy birdhouses. Many of these crafters will buy plain wooden birdhouses in bulk.

They take them home, add a hand painted design or stencil something on it. Then they turn around and take those birdhouses to craft shows and sell them. While there's no limit to what you can create by learning how to sell your woodworking - you always want to choose projects that will move.

While a gorgeous four poster bed will sell, it's not going to move as rapidly as some of the smaller items will. So when considering things to sell, think smaller items.

Benches are always huge sellers. People will buy benches for the foyers of their homes for themselves or their children to sit on to kick off their shoes, to store school bags underneath or as a decorative piece.

These items are used on front porches as part of a decorating theme, especially during holidays like Halloween and Christmas. People love to buy benches and create a little garden area in their yard.

It doesn't take long to make different size benches and though these are not thought of as extremely large items, they can command a great price. You can expand on the benches to make outdoor sectionals and those are also big sellers.

Wood units created to hold DVD cases sell very well. You can create horizontal or vertical ones because both styles are popular. Wooden candlestick holders sell well. End tables are hot selling items and so are stools used at kitchen islands.

While you want to create a wide variety of projects that will sell fast and launch your business, you also want to choose a specific woodworking niche. For example, specialize in selling wooden toys and you can quickly earn a reputation as the person to order from when someone is looking for a great wooden toy.

That resource that was mentioned earlier, [Ted's Woodworking](#), has diagrams for making some great wooden toys. Once you've got a few wood projects made and ready to go, you'll need to find a market to sell the items.

This isn't difficult at all because you can sell woodworking items on or offline. To sell your items online, look for places that allow the sale of handmade items. One place that many woodcrafters have found success is at www.custommade.com and another place is www.etsy.com.

Both places have areas where you can list your project by category. You can also create a personal website dedicated to selling your projects. You'll need photos of the finished project, a price list and an online payment processor such as PayPal.

Offline, you can sell your creations at craft shows that are in your area or within driving distance. You can also sell at farmer's markets and community gatherings.

Many communities host bazaars where residents can gather to sell their wares. You can also rent a booth space in a craft store. Put up a sampling of your small items - but you don't want to miss out on the publicity opportunity - so hang photos of larger items that you can custom make, too.

There are some retail stores and restaurants that accept custom-made wood projects from local craftsman. You can check on how to get into these stores by contacting their home offices.

You do want to avoid trying to put your items in any local woodcrafters' shops unless you have an established relationship prior to asking. Because otherwise, to them, you're the competition and they're not going to want to give you any space to take business away from them.

Creating Woodworking Projects as Gifts

Woodworking projects make gifts for all year long holidays and special occasions. You can create gift items for birthdays, Christmas, weddings, graduation, Valentine's Day and more. These unique projects will be cherished for years to come.

You can create trinket boxes for men, women or children. They can be in a wide range of sizes as well as shapes. Children love these trinket boxes. What one woodworker did was to create wooden trinket boxes in the shape of a duck for boys and in the shape of a teddy bear for girls.

They can be used to hold small toys, jewelry, little cars, keys, wallets and special photographs!

Wooden dollhouses make wonderful gifts for little girls at Christmas time. You can even make the miniature furniture that goes inside and give a child a special gift that she'll pass down for years to come. You can make baby doll beds that any child will treasure.

Wooden trucks, airplanes, toolboxes and wagons are a hit as a boys' gift. You can create a large, outdoor playhouse for the kids in your own family or to sell so others can give it as a gift. You can build a jungle gym or a slide and a host of other outdoor items that make great gifts.

You can make a lovely wooden clock to give a couple as a wedding gift or create a curio cabinet for a couple sharing a milestone anniversary. For the expectant couple, you can create a lovely baby cradle.

You can also make a porch swing for people to sit on and enjoy those lazy summer evenings. The dog can even be the recipient of a wooden gift when you make a one of a kind wooden doghouse for him.

Woodworking for Kids and High School Students

It's a good idea to get a kid or a teenager interested in woodworking. Woodworking can help a young person develop a sense of responsibility and a sense of independence.

It can also boost their self-esteem, give them a creative outlet and help increase concentration. Kids and teens can make simple projects as beginners. Projects such as wooden boxes, sailboats, cars, games and birdhouses make great starter creations for them to do.

But as they learn more in terms of skills, a child can make more complicated projects. For example, he can make a step stool, bookends, a cutting board or a boomerang.

Teenagers can make bowls, a picnic table, chairs, benches or an entertainment center. They can create beautiful trunks or jewelry cabinets. Or they can make decorative items like a grandfather clock.

With the right plans, they can create game tables such as a ping-pong table. In other words, kids and high school students can learn young to create the same great projects that an adult can.

Teaching a young person how to master woodworking is a gift that you can give that can make a difference in their life. Giving a young person this skill is something that will benefit him as he gets older around his own home or he can use the skill to make items as part of a woodworking trade.

Woodworking Tools

Whether you're a beginner or an advanced woodworker, you need certain tools to complete a project. The simpler the project, the less range of tools you'll need. Tools can be expensive if you go out and buy everything you need all at once.

What you want to do is buy your tools based on the project that you're going to work on. Read the project instructions and it will tell you what tools you'll need. As your skills increase, you can add to your toolbox.

Don't buy cheap tools, either. Pay what needs to be paid to get the quality stuff because poor tools can make a difference in how well the project turns out. Let's start with a dozen tools that no woodworker should be without.

You'll want to have gauges. These provide accuracy and make a reference point that lets you know where to follow with the blade or chisel. You'll see these as marking gauges or a bevel gauge.

They're called marking gauges simply because they mark the spot. You'll also want a marking knife. What some new woodworkers do is to draw a line with a pencil where a cut is supposed to go.

But you don't always get the kind of accuracy you need by using a pencil. That's where a marking knife can help. You'll also want to have clamps on hand as well as sanding materials. You can use a belt or disc sander.

Have a basic drill and you'll also need a router. When you're working with angles, you need a tool that will let you make those sharp lines. This tool is called a combination square.

You'll need a saw. Most woodworkers use a combination of saws. The most popular are a table saw, a miter saw, a coping saw, a jigsaw and a dovetail saw. You'll need a set of chisels in various inches.

You'll need planes, too. Pick up a block plane first. You'll move on to a smoothing plane and a shoulder plane as you grow in knowledge. Always read through your design plans to see what is needed before you assume to know what tools will come in handy.

Where to Find Woodworking Plans

Woodworking is something you can enjoy whether you're a beginner or advanced. But either way, you need plans if you want to build something. There are some woodworking magazines that have some great projects in them, but you're kind of limited on how many projects you get in that copy.

That's because if the magazine gave you all that you wanted, you'd never buy a second copy of the magazine. You can find free online downloads, but this can be time consuming and the downloads may or may not be a complete list of instructions and tools needed.

It would be a pain to start on a project from a downloaded form only to find out that you're missing part of what you need to know. You can watch videos on some of the video sharing sites, but you have to go through a few hundred to find some good ones.

The best place to find woodworking plans is wherever you find a site that has everything you need right there, especially if you're new to woodworking. Find a site, like [Ted's Woodworking](#), that will get you started right away on the project you want to create by giving you plans, guides and tips.

When you check out that site, you'll see a ton of different projects you can try. You get more than 16,000 you can choose from, so it's pretty comprehensive.

You'll have projects suited for just starting out all the way up to plans for when you're ready to start making money from your hobby.

You can get started with woodworking today and who knows? Maybe decades down the road, something you've created will be cherished as an antique by your family.

