

DENNIS ADAMS - 19th Century Woodworking

I enjoy building wooden boxes with dovetail jointed corners, paneled bottoms and sliding lids. Each box is unique and no two are alike in size. I begin by selecting a board and laying out the six pieces for a box. I try to cut all six pieces from the same board to match grain and color. Occasionally, I will use a highly figured piece for the top, taking advantage of unusual grain or coloring.

Generally, the sides and ends are the same thickness. Using a marking gauge, I scribe a line, equal to the thickness, on all four pieces, both sides and both ends. I then lay out the corners, carefully measuring and marking the dovetails using a handmade template set to a ratio of 1:8.

Using a fine-toothed dovetail saw, I saw on the waste side of the markings to the scribed line. Using sharp chisels I carefully chop out the waste material to establish the dovetails. Then I create the pins by placing the dovetailed side over the end, marking the pins and chopping out the OPPOSITE waste. Each dovetailed corner is then carefully fitted to its matching pins.

I carve a $\frac{1}{4}$ groove around the inside top and bottom of the box to hold the paneled bottom and sliding top. Using gouges I carve a cove on the bottom and top panels, sand the inside surfaces, and fit the box together dry. I assemble the box using a bit of glue in each joint. Once the glue is set, I pare the protruding dovetails and

pins even with the sides and ends. The outside of the box is lightly sanded and finished using a variety of oil stains.

The art of woodworking can be employed and enjoyed by anyone, including those who are aurally and visually challenged. An artist does not need to hear to carve, shape, cut joints, assemble and construct useful wooden items. And those who cannot see can still enjoy this art through the sense of touch and smell.

Niel MaKielski is a blind woodworker who has several videos on You-Tube and **George Wurtzel** is an Industrial Arts Instructor at the *Incorporated Blindness Training Center*. *“The vision that creates is not in our eyes, it's the vision in our mind's eye that gives it life.”*

Resources on the Internet:

Deaf & Blind students in shop class:

tinyurl.com/WoodTeacher

Woodworking for the Blind: Whether you just want to get started or you are a journeyman woodworker, we can provide information to help you. Perhaps you have been woodworking all your life as a sighted person and for some reason you are losing or have lost your vision. You can still continue to enjoy your craft safely and successfully. A blind or visually impaired woodworker uses the same tools and power equipment as a sighted person. The only real difference is how we mark and measure. ww4b.org

Blind Guy Woodworking: My name is Clay Gurganus; I am the owner/woodworker. All of my creations are made of solid wood and high-grade furniture plywood, no particle board. Each item is hand crafted and one of a kind. Woodworking is a type of therapy for me and my items are very affordable.

blindguywoodworking.com

YOUTUBE videos: tinyurl.com/blindwoodworking

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