

SCROLLSAWS

By Jacob von Holzen

HISTORY OF FRETWORK;

Fretwork is the craft of creating very ornate and decorative items with numerous inside or cut-out openings, that involve series of quick turns using a fine bladed fret-saw. It is a form of craftwork that was very popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and is now being rediscovered.

Fretwork is primarily cut from solid Woodstock and plywood's of various thicknesses with a hand held fretsaw or treadle saw and more recently with powered scrollsaws.

It is very difficult to determine exactly where and when in history fretwork had its first beginnings. Egyptian furniture removed from tombs provide proof that veneers were used as ornamental fret-like overlays some 3000 years B.C. Delicately Ornamental overlays were also found in European and Scandinavian countries in the 16th and 17th centuries. Elaborate fretted furniture parts were clearly evident in works of famous 18th century European craftsmen including Frenchman Andre Charles Boulle (1642-1732) Englishman Thomas Chippendale (1740-1780 and others.

Early this century Fretwork became a popular pass-time in the homes of hundreds of thousands of adults and children indulging in the creative and absorbing activity, creating useful and decorative items for the home and play. A large number of New Zealand boys who attended school between the 1920's and the late 1940's will have had some experience with a hand held fretsaw. More recently with the introduction of the powered scrollsaws, the craft is experiencing a revival, as more people discover the possibilities of the Scroll saw.

Jacob von Holzen.

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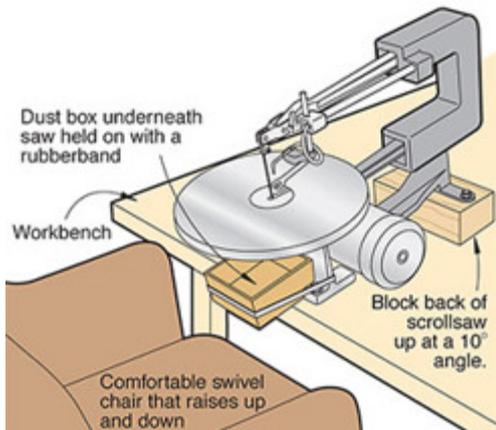
BOOKS; with Scrollsaw designs for beginners by Patrick Spielman., should be available from your library.

The Tauranga Woodcrafter's Club has a number of designs, which members can get photocopied for their own use.

Jacob

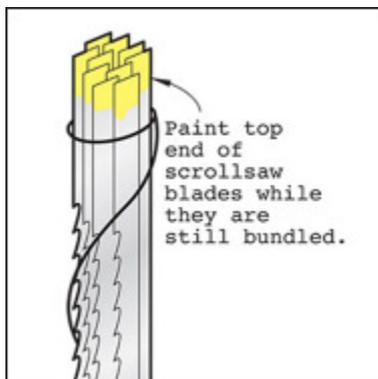
SCROLLSAW TIPS

Cut fatigue with a swivel chair and tilted scrollsaw



Many people love to scrollsaw for hours at a time, but hunching over a saw for that long can give you a stiff neck and shoulders. Set up your scrollsaw work station for comfort. First, get a swivel chair and raise it higher than you normally sit. Then, tip the back of your scrollsaw up with a block of wood so the saw sits at about a 10° angle. (Be sure to bolt the saw to the block and the block to your table or bench.) In this position, you won't need to lean over the saw to work, and your muscles and joints will thank you for it. You also can attach a dust-collection box below the table to make clean-up easier.

-- Allen Salfer, Atlantic Beach, Fla.



Code blades for easy insertion

The older I get, the harder it is to see the teeth of my scrollsaw blades to make sure they go into the saw right-side up. So when I buy a new bundle of blades, I figure out which end is up, and dip that end of the blades into a bottle of brightly colored model paint. The blade always goes into the scrollsaw with the painted end up. For quick identification, I dip blades of different types or tooth-counts into different colors.

-- Henry Worrells, North Fort Myers, Fla.