

Hamilton Woodturners Club

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Terry Scott  WOODTURNING 
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MELISSA shows her versatility. Quite adept at turning small highly practical objects, Melissa can turn her hand to faceplate mounted creations too.

The picture above shows a line up of a pulley system for a chandelier while the other shows her being equal to the task at bowl turning.

TUTOR'S COMMENT

Good day to all our TT readers.

The club challenge has been set, and as quick as a flash, a couple of members appear to be half-way there already.

Do remember the useful tip of keeping the outside wall near the top of the bowl more or less vertical.

This approach will enable the easy fitting of the handle to complete your wooden basket.

In response to requests I have included some information about the process for **STEAM BENDING WOOD**. (*that's just one way of shaping a handle*)

Some wood varieties respond extremely well to steam bending while others do not. So I have included a few tips in that department too.

All is well with the mask-wearing requirement during woodturning sessions. The PM has signaled a move to COVID response third phase "shortly".

If so, please watch this space for information about what that might mean for our groups of turners.

Cheers **CLIVE** (*Psssst--- Given that this is likely to be your first handled basket would you make the handle first then make a bowl to fit the handle----or the other way round?!*)



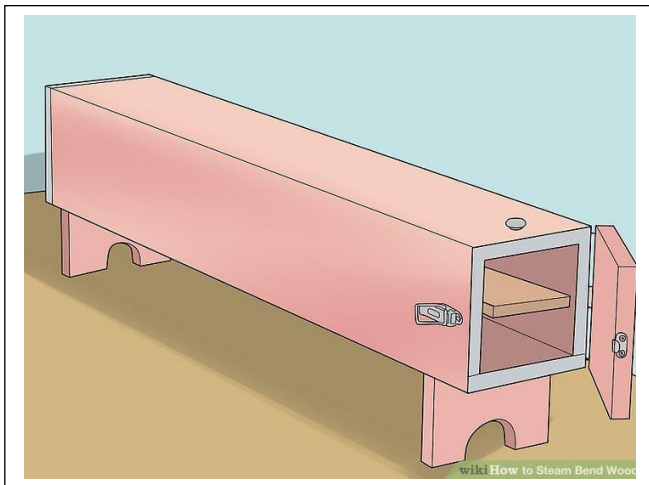
STEAM BENDING WOOD

Steam bending wood is a woodworking technique used to create curved wooden forms.

You'll need a steam box, steam generator, and some wooden forms or molds to bend the wood with.

Steam the wood in the steam box, then carefully bend it while it is still hot and secure it against a form or in a mold and let it dry overnight to create curved wooden pieces.

TIP: Soften the wood fibres by soaking in water for at least 24 hours before starting the steaming job.



An easy-to-make steam box using wood. A length of PVC pipe would do the job just as well.

Remember to have the steam entering at one end and allowing it to escape via a couple of holes at the other end.

Size? You choose a size to fit the job.

Place the moist wood into a steam box. A steam box may be constructed from wood or PVC pipe. The steam box needs to be big enough to let the steam flow around the piece of wood and needs openings, like drilled holes, so that the steam gets airflow.

- Construct your own steam box from lumber, like plywood, or from PVC piping. A steam box is essentially just an enclosure that opens at 1 end and has a hose running into it from a steam generator.
- If possible, work outside when you are steam bending wood. Steam gets very hot, so be incredibly careful around the steam box and generator. Wear heat-resistant gloves and safety goggles while you are steaming and bending the wood.

Hook up a steam generator to the steam box with a hose. A steam generator may be store bought (Bunnings???) or you can use an appliance like a wallpaper steamer. Attach the steam generator to the steam box via a hose or tube.

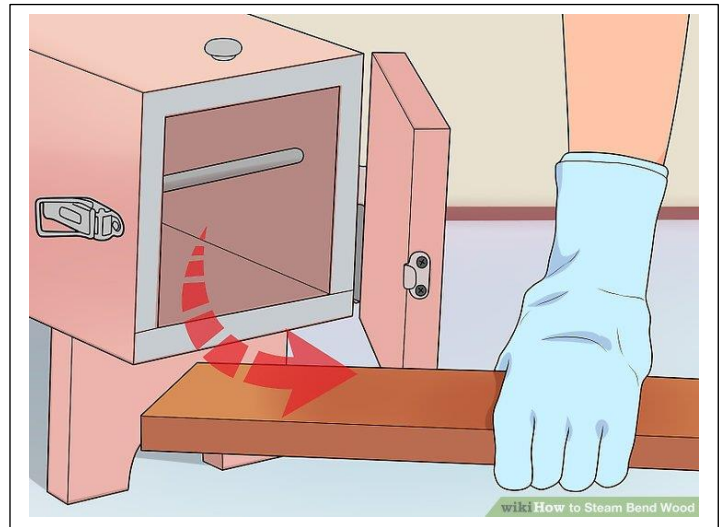
- Wallpaper steamers are the most recommended way of creating a homemade steam generator. They are available cheaply at most home decorating stores.
- If you made a homemade steam box, you can drill a hole to fit the hose or tube that connects to the steam generator.

Steam the wood for 1 hour for every 1 in (2.5 cm) of thickness. (HANDLES are generally Thinnish) Fill the steam generator's tank with water and turn it on. The general rule for steam bending wood is 1 hour for every 1 in (2.5 cm) of thickness of the piece of wood that you are processing, but since all woods are different the time can vary.

- If you don't steam the wood for long enough, then it will snap when you try to bend it. It's a good idea to do a test on a scrap piece of the same wood you want to bend to get the correct amount of time down.

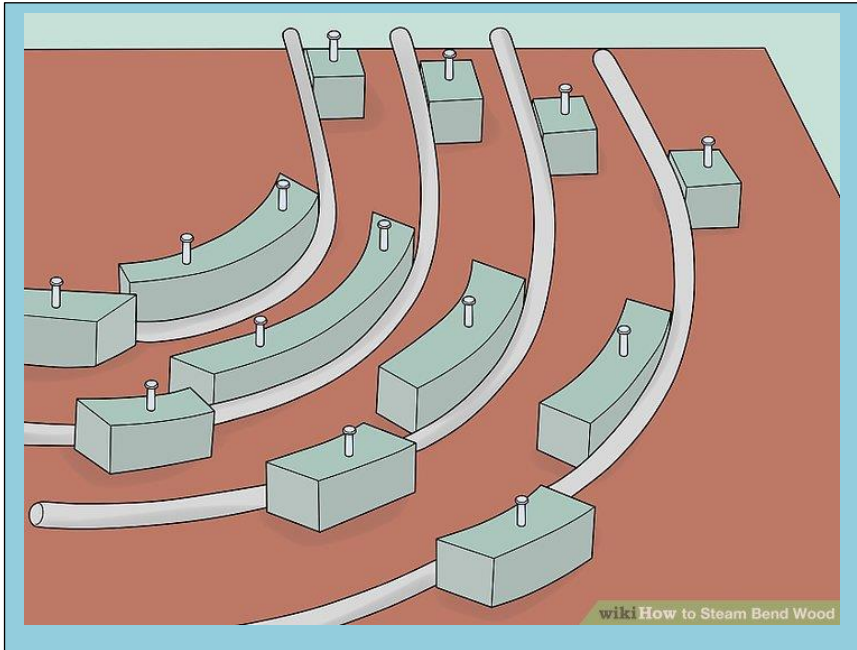
Maintain the temperature at about 212 °F (100 °C). This is the temperature that water boils at, so as long as you have proper ventilation in your steam box the temperature should stay close to this number. Open the steam box door to reduce pressure and temperature if it gets more than 2 degrees higher than this.

- You can monitor the temperature in the steam box by inserting a thermometer, like standard kitchen thermometer, into an opening (like one of the ventilation holes). You can add more ventilation to your steam box by drilling holes if you have difficulty maintaining the temperature.



Remove the steamed wood with heat-resistant gloves when the time is up. Turn off the steam generator and carefully open the steam box with heat-resistant gloves. **Remove the steamed piece of wood and begin the bending process as fast as possible before it loses its pliability.**

- Make sure you have everything ready for bending before you remove the wood from the steam box so you can get started right away.



Place the steamed wood in the mold if you made a bending board. Carefully bend the wood in between then curved pieces of plywood or MDF that you used to make a mold. Start at one end and work your way to the other.

- Bending boards work well with smaller pieces of steamed wood to create more intricate curves

What woods bend best?

Red oak

There's hardly a better wood to start steaming with. (There's some of this wood in our workshop). _ Note: it may be labelled "Scarlet Oak"

White oak

Generally fabulous for steam-bending.

White ash (You will find some of this wood in the back shelves in our workshop)

This dream wood was sent from the steam-bending gods. A superb stand-in for oak if the parts are to be stained.

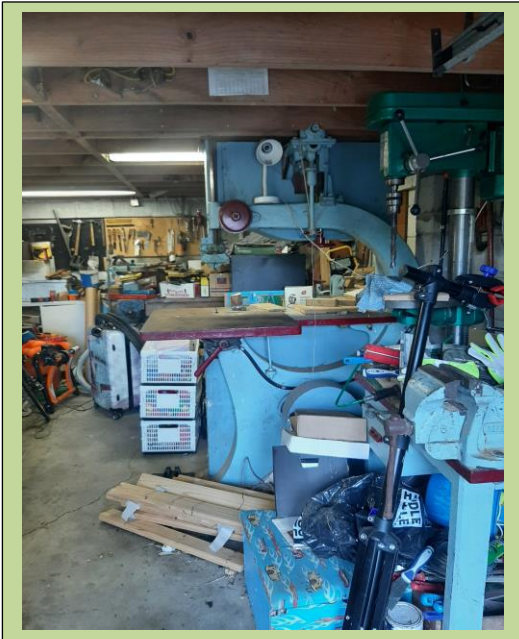
Cherry

Very good for steam-bending. (Have a gander in our shelf store for this wood)



Howzat for a wood bending project?

Industrial woodworking machines for sale



TOP Left: Large bandsaw

Top Right: Planer

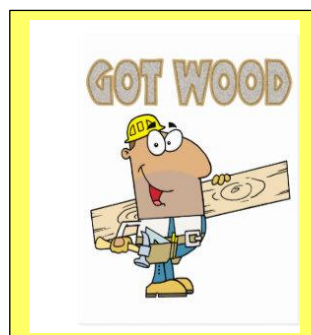
Bottom left: Table saw

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NOTE: 3-phase power supply is needed to run these solid, robust woodworking machines.



Now go bend it.

WHOLE-CLUB CHALLENGE (repeat notice)

MAKE A BASKET (i.e. basically a wooden bowl with a handle).

The Challenge rules

- Your basket must be made from wood. (the bowl, the handle, and any fitting methods - all wood! Wood, the whole wood and nothing but the wood.
- The project can be decorated, enhanced, pierced, burned, scorched, coloured, surface carved, tall, short etc
- Your basket can have one handle or two - your choice.
- The handle can be fixed or swinging off an attachment to the bowl
- Any method to shape the handle is OK (try steam bending!!!!)
- There are two entry categories CAT 1. Open to all CAT 2. Beginners only i.e. members who have been less than 12 months turning experience.
- Five weeks are allocated to this initiative - closes: THURSDAY 24th March 2022
- ANY SIZE basket is permitted. Super big will not necessarily have advantage over anything small.
- Put your creative thinking to the test. Be unique, express yourself through your hands and great ideas.

COLIN, the challenge promoter, has donated some super-special prizes for the more successful entries.

NOTE: Judges one-eye patches will be removed, they must remain totally impartial and forbidden to take bribes.

C'mon....give it a go.....it's a fun way to kick off the new turning year.



TONY and **TREV** made a top job of their paper pots maker. This little gadget is for growing plants from a single seed in a protected case then transferring the seedling together with its paper case to a plot in the garden. This approach minimizes/eliminates transplant shock as the tiny roots are not disturbed.



Wow! Look at that as an example of wood bending

Want more information about wood bending techniques? Visit the internet and search for an article by TOM RAFFIELD.

Happy hunting

CLIVE