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The Unplugged Woodshop: Hand-Crafted Projects For The Home & Workshop



Synopsis

Unplugged – no power tools needed! For the growing number of woodworkers who are opting out of power tools and returning to hand tools, The Unplugged Woodshop is a refreshing concept and a welcome change. Written by custom furniture maker and hand tool expert Tom Fidgen, this new book promises to be as successful as his first book, Made by Hand. Handcrafted projects with a distinctly retro look. Recycling designs from our not-so-distant past, this collection of projects has been repurposed for use today and includes: A classic library card catalog converted to use as kitchen storage A medicine chest that does double duty as a four-bottle wine tote A gentleman’s classic valet that becomes an elegant clothing stand Get some useful pointers from a popular blogger. Founder of theunpluggedwoodshop.com, Tom offers savvy advice for working with and sharpening hand tools. He also delves into glues, finishes, and even how to make hand tools using only hand tools. Visual inspiration. Practical instruction. The Unplugged Woodshop takes you on a fascinating adventure back to a simpler time when everything was made by hand. It’s a refreshing experience that takes you far away from today’s hi-tech, fast-moving world. And it shows you how to handcraft some handsome projects you’ll find satisfaction in making – whether or not you choose to use only hand tools!

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Customer Reviews

“Amid the current flurry of excellent books on hand tool woodworking, it is hard to say that

one or the other stands out from the rest. And yet, as I see it, this one by Canadian woodworker Tom Fidgen does. The Unplugged Woodshop is a stimulating source of ideas and techniques that will help any woodworker build her or his hand tool skills, all the while creating beautiful and useful projects for the home and woodshop. The Unplugged Woodshop is a great resource and learning opportunity for any woodworker who is beginning or continuing the hand tool journey. More advanced hand tool woodworkers will find the project ideas stimulating and educational. And all woodworkers will find this book to be a fun read. (Highland Woodworking/Wood News Online)

Tom Fidgen is the owner/instructor at the Unplugged Woodshop - Toronto. A "hand-tools only" school, store, maker space and studio in downtown Toronto, Canada. Tom builds custom furniture using hand tools and hand-selected hardwoods. He is a contributing author to Woodworking Magazine and has written for Fine Woodworking, Popular Woodworking, Canadian Woodworking, Furniture & Cabinetmaking, British Woodworking Magazine and the Lee Valley Tools newsletter. Tom enjoys teaching in his own woodworking school in Toronto, as well as Internationally. When not at the workbench, Tom also writes and records music. Visit the UnpluggedWoodshop.com for more information.

Tom Fidgen's second book does not disappoint. This book is filled with beautiful along with useful projects for the home and around your shop. His first book is what inspired me to work with hand tools and this book just sends that message home. Tom is so talented and his style of design is different than the majority of woodworkers out there. I really like the way he explains each project, almost leaving a little mystery for you to figure out. He also compliments some of the projects with videos on youtube which is pretty awesome. Aesthetically the book has beautiful photography and just flipping through it gets me excited to get into the shop! Do yourself a favor and pick up a copy, you won't be disappointed. So many projects so little time!

As a recent diver into the world of hand tools, I found this book a great find. Projects set up specifically for the hand tool only shop. I don't have an issue with power tools, per se, I just really enjoy the tactile feel of hand tools and the lack of need for hearing protection is a major bonus. The projects are set up in a logical manner, progressing as you work through the book. I would say the only negative I could harp on is his use of specialty joinery tools, such as a plow plane and rabbet planes. If I had these tools, I would most certainly use them, but as a novice with limited funds, I am

stuck trying to find alternative methods (which he does elude to).

I purchased this book because the author's premise of using just hand tools to produce some shop projects was appealing to me. Mr. Fidgen does a great job of describing the use of each tool, and his instructions are paired with numerous, beautiful color photographs. I particularly enjoyed the small 'Tips' boxes scattered throughout his book as they offered timely insights and sage advice in small, easy to digest portions. Overall, this is a terrific book, but what truly sets it apart from its peers, and the reason why you should include it in your library, is the sheer quality and scope of its projects: Each and every one is gorgeous in its design and functionality, and each one literally screams out to be made. From the gentleman's valet to the library card holder, each project hails from a bygone era but each one has decidedly modern applications. I have never been so inspired by a book's projects and I'm indebted to Mr. Fidgen for giving me the mojo to get back into my shop and create rather than camping out in front of a TV watching others create.

Fidgen covers a number of projects that will challenge the hand tool woodworker. The projects covered are beautiful and useful. His prose is clear and entertaining. Immerse yourself completely in the joys of working without using power tools of any sort (however, it is just as enjoyable and instructive if you go hybrid). My one caveat is that you should read his first book, exploring the methods and projects in it before tackling this one.

I'm not a woodworker but I can appreciate fine handwork so I bought this book on an impulse. Several great projects here, some listed (and a few unlisted as well) ones within other projects. I'd like to have many of these items even if I do have very little actual use for them. I can even get ideas for other dream items. One reviewer dislikes the useless, "arty", photographs- I liked looking at them in part because the text does not go into enough detail for the complete amateur. I can figure out some of the missing information, a trained woodworker would know more. Someone without previous experience will definitely need more books on the subject. You'll find project item lists, but only for the wood needed, very little said on some of the metal bits and tools seen in some projects. I appreciate the listing of relevant websites (and a few more within project texts), I'm sure some missing detail can be picked up there. I'd give the book 5 stars if it had amateur level detail.

Once again Mr. Fidgen has put out a book that is hard to find, a book that offers a variety of tips and advice for the hand tool woodworker. Power tool woodworking books are a dime a dozen, but to find

a good hand tool book is a real challenge and this book is it for me. Even if you are not a woodworker anyone who just flips through the pages will find a book full of master crafted pieces and will be in awe of the things that can be created using only hand tools.

Great book love his designs.

Excellent

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