

Design Resource

Cane and Rattan Furniture - Mysore

Making of Bamboo Furniture

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Shruti K., Lija M .G. and

Shivangi Sharma

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/cane-and-rattan-furniture-mysore>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
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Introduction

Mysore district is situated in the watershed of the River Kaveri surrounded by hills from north to south. It is known as the 'City of Palaces'. Till the emergence of Raja Wodeyar in 1578 AD, Mysore was a small feudatory kingdom under the Vijayanagara Empire. Raja inaugurated the Dasara festivities which are still celebrated with great pomp, which opened the door for different kinds of arts and crafts. Mysore is a heritage city of palaces, gardens, tree-lined avenues, sacred temples, arts and cultural institutions. It is also the home of many well regarded musicians and artists. Traditional gesso painting, ganjifa cards and sandalwood carving, inlay work, bamboo products and many other crafts were patronized by the Wodeyars. Mysore is also famous for bamboo products and bamboo bazar, which consists of all type of bamboo furniture and especially famous for bamboo mat. The furniture is made by bamboo as well as cane and rattan.

Rattan is widely used for making furniture and baskets as it is a slender stem of 2-5cm in diameter with long internodes between the leaves. When cut into sections, the material can be used as wood to make furniture as inner core can be separated and worked into wicker. Properties of rattan are suitable for furniture also make it a popular choice for handicraft and art pieces. Due to its slenderness it is also used to make walking sticks and crooks for high-end umbrellas. As the fibers are stronger, rattan rich countries use this sturdy plant in their home building projects.



The bamboo sticks are heated for easy bent and flexibility.

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Product made from bamboo material.



Final products touched with a coat of varnish before being dispatched to the market.



Craftsmen at their work place of Bamboo Furniture.



Craftsmen involved in making bamboo furniture.

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Tools and Raw Materials

The tools used are available in the local market. Craftsmen use modern/ automated/semi-automatic tools to save time and improve productivity. Many tools are customized by the artisan to fulfill their requirement. Many tools are carried from the past and remain unaltered for generations. The raw material used in making the furniture is Rattan and cane. These materials are purchased from Chikkamangalore, Belgaum, Mahdeshwara betta, Mandya and Madkeri in Karnataka.

The tools used to make bamboo crafts are:

- **Big Knives (Machu):** It is used to peel the skin of the rattan.
- **Hacksaw Blade:** It is used to cut the rattan stem into pieces according to required size.
- **Hammer:** It is used to hammer the nails into furniture.
- **Nails:** It is used to nail the joints of the furniture.
- **Brushes:** It is used to apply varnish or paint on the furniture.
- **Varnish:** After completion, furniture is polished with natural varnish to obtain glossy finish.
- **Colors:** The finished products are painted with black and brown colors/ paints.
- **Blow Torch:** It is used for heating the rattan to bend it into required shape.
- **Kalikatte:** A wooden tool used to bend the rattan stem.
- **Pointed Chisel (Sooji):** Its helps in inserting the cane strips in narrow areas.

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Bamboo-the basic main raw material used for making furniture's.



The bamboo strips are soaked in water for flexibility and avoid breakages while tying.



Varnish is applied on the final products for shine.



Different types of tools used for making bamboo furniture's.

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Liquid gas flame torch is used to heat the bamboo sticks for easy bend and flexibility.

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Making Process

Rattan is a long stem of certain trailing or climbing palms. They are rated as minor forest products, in spite of the fact that they are probably the most important forest products, after timber. They belong principally to the palm family of the genus Calamus, but a few other related genera like Daenonorops, Ceratolobus, Plectocomia and Koerthalsia yield canes of lesser importance. The internodes vary in length and thickness in different species and even in different plants of the same species. The core of the stem which are soft and spongy, are made up of coarse fibers. The first step is skinning the surface of the rattan. With the help of a sharp knife outer skin of the stem and the knots are peeled and removed. The cane is cut into desired length. The stem is then heated using a blow torch and bending tool to bend the material into required shape which has limitation. Artisan arranges them together to build the basic frame (structure) of the furniture after bending. Base of the furniture is built first by nailing in the required form. After the parts of the furniture are nailed together in the required manner; the frame is then filled by binding the cane strips or thin rattan stems over the frames. The nailed joints are then tightly bound by lengths of split cane strips which acts as cover, both to cover the visible nails and to give additional rigidity. The binding details sometimes have a decorative quality. Clear varnish, enamel paints are applied over the finished product. Generally the natural surface of the cane is retained without any surfaces application. Rattan accepts colors and it can be worked into many styles.



Initially the outer skin and knots of bamboo is peeled out and cut into required lengths using knife.

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The cut bamboo stick is heated on a slow fire, with a flame touch.



The heating process is done to make the bamboo flexible to bend them.



A wooden tool is used to bend the heated bamboo into required shape.



Shaped bamboo twigs are kept aside.

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Initially a basic frame of the desired product is made and then the frame is filled with small length of bamboo sticks.



The bamboo sticks are measured and the length is ensured.



Excess part of the stick is cut using a cutter.



Nails are hammered to fix the bamboo pieces to the frame.

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A thin strip of bamboo is cut to cover the edges of the bamboo sticks.



The strip is placed on the border and measured for exact length.



The strip is nailed and fixed firmly.



Flat bamboo pieces are nailed on joints for firm fittings.

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Thin strips are winded at the joints and edges for stiffness.



The tied strip also acts as a design pattern.



The end of the strip is nailed to the frame.



Hot iron rod is pierced through the lower frame of the furniture to create holes.

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Thin bamboo strip is passed through the holes and tied at the joints firmly.



The strips as a binding material and a design pattern to enhance the look of the furniture.



The outer surface of the furniture is smoothened using sand paper before polishing.



Varnish is applied on the furniture for more shine.

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Final product of the Bamboo.

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Products

The base is made of rattan and filled with cane strips. The most sold furniture's are Sofas, Small stools, Chairs, Tables with or without glass top, Shelves, Small side tables. Many of the properties of rattan are also suitable for handicraft and art pieces and other products include rattan baskets, plant containers, lamp shades, fruit baskets and other decorative works. Sections of rattan are used as rods or canes for **martial arts** and also used to make **walking sticks** and crooks for high-end umbrellas due to its durability and resistance to splintering.



Stylish and restful five seated sofa set that enhance the living area.

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Small size bamboo chair made for small children.



Modern Trivial bamboo table with simple design.

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Video



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You could write to the following address regarding suggestions and clarifications:

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