

Design Resource

Wood Carving - Jaipur

Making of Wooden Idols

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and

Sandhya B.

NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur>

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



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Introduction

The Pink City Jaipur has preserved ancient art and craft, and has grabbed the attention of billions across the globe. It is known for its rich culture and is one of the noted places of India. The crafts of this city maintain their own techniques and stand out with grace.

Jaipur is the capital and largest city of Indian state - Rajasthan, Northern India. Jaipur is a well-known place in India. It is a tourist's delight. The city is known for its palaces and forts. Another factor that adds for being very well known is that its crafts' conduct. One can see a variety of crafts practiced at Jaipur like – Bandhni, stone carving, minakari, zardozi, blue pottery, silver jewelry making and so on. Woodcarving is one among them and has its share in making finest crafts of Jaipur. It has been practiced from a very long time, the time when Maharaja of Jaipur wanted to collaborate art and craft. The craft got passed on in the family and few interested artisans learnt from their respective Gurus. It is a well-established craft and making of wooden idols in particular has become quite known in Jaipur.



Image showing process through which a simple wooden block transforming into a beautifully carved idol.

1. **Introduction**
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details

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1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details



Artisan working on a piece of wood with electric drilling tool.



An image showing wooden piece taking most of its shape through the help of electric drilling tool.



Artisan checking the idol for any flaws or imperfections.



Artisan working on finer details of the idol, which require precise carving.

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1. **Introduction**
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. Products
5. Contact Details



An idol of “Lord Hanuman” intricately carved to perfection.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Following are the tools and raw materials used for wood carving:

- **An Electrical Motor:** This machine comes with a rod to which drilling bits can be attached.
- **Drilling Bits:** These drilling bits come in various sizes that help to carve wood. Bigger ones are used to carve roughly and smaller ones are used to give more details.
- **Hammer:** Helps to blow on a chisel to carve out the wood.
- **Plucker:** Steel plucker is used to remove any unwanted nails from the wood.
- **Chisel:** Along chisel with wood/plastic handle to hold, helps in chiseling out the wood. Chisels come in various sizes, small to bigger ones depending on the detailing the artist chooses the chisel.
- **Pliers:** To tighten the drilling bits in drilling machine rod.
- **Scale:** To measure the length and breadth of wood to cut into blocks to carve.
- **Kadham Wood/Soft Wood:** It becomes easy to carve with this particular wood and it is available in markets.



Hammer used in hitting the chisel, for carving.

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details

Design Resource

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1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details



An electric motor used as a drilling tool, which turns a smaller wheel, which in turn turns a rod, equipped with a drill bit.



Various tools used in repairing of electric drill.



A steel plucker, to remove any false nails away from the wood.

Design Resource

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/tools-and-raw-materials>

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

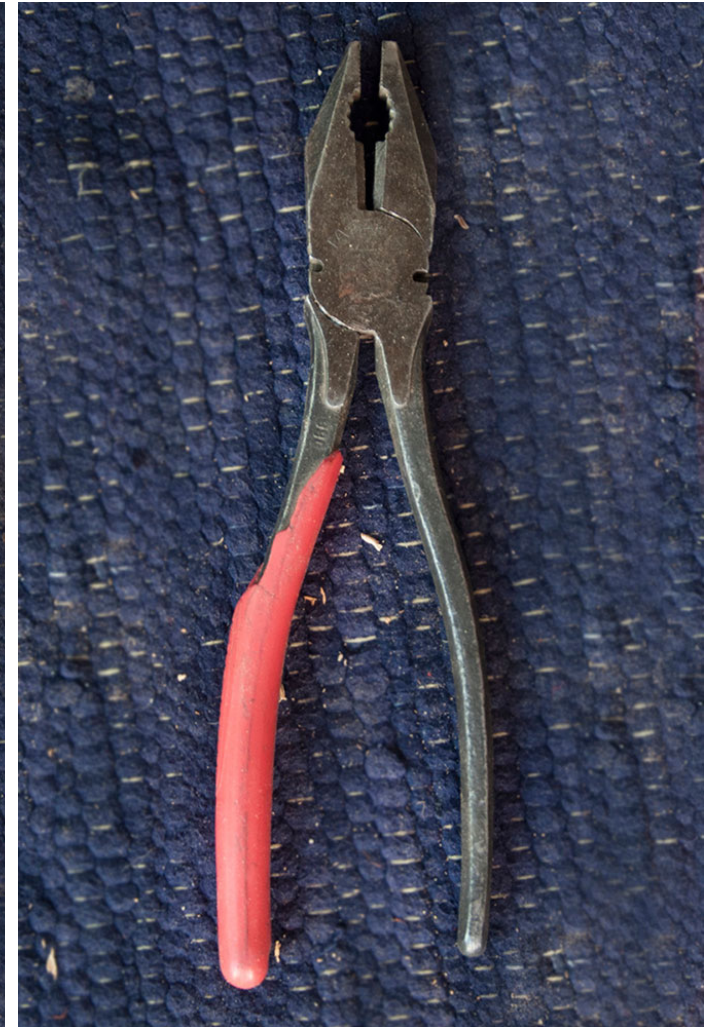
3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details



A large chisel with plastic handle, used in carving, along with the hammer.



A plier used in fitting drill bits in the drilling machine rod.

Design Resource

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tools-and-raw-materials](http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/tools-and-raw-materials)

1. Introduction

2. **Tools and Raw Materials**

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details



A scale to measure the amount of wood required for carving the idols.



Various chisels used in carving the finer details onto the idol.



Various sizes and typed of drill bits used in carving the wooden block to a required shape.

Design Resource

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1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. Contact Details

Making Process

The wood that artist prefers to use for carving in Jaipur is called as Kadham wood. It is available in markets and it is easy for the artists to carve like in soft wood. The artists are well versed in carving out idols. The wooden idol carving process roughly follows three steps - marking on wooden block, carving and finishing it with all the details.

1. Marking on Wooden Block:

After cutting a block of wood of desired length and width, it is roughly marked with pen. The outlines of the picture that has to be carved to an idol are marked on that block of wood. Rough outlines are drawn on the block of wood so it becomes easy to carve.

2. Carving:

The outlines help the artist to carve and chisel out the wood. With the help of drilling bits artist carve out wood layer by layer. First with a bigger sized drilling bit the artist roughly carves to attain the basic shape of an idol. After working layer by layer once the artist is satisfied with basic shape he changes the drilling to smaller one to give further details. In this stage, the idol could be identified.

3. Finishing:

The idol still has to go through a lot of refining or detailing, the jewelry part, eyes, nose and ears, detailing of palm everything else is done with tools held in hand. The detailing of the palm is done with sandpaper. Other smaller chisel tools are used to give depth to the idol. The detailing is hand done for a good finish and a flawless work. The idol is polished with wax after all the detailing is given and the woodcarving of an idol is complete. The idols are carved according to the orders that the artisans get. Most of which are idols of Hanuman and Buddha.

Design Resource

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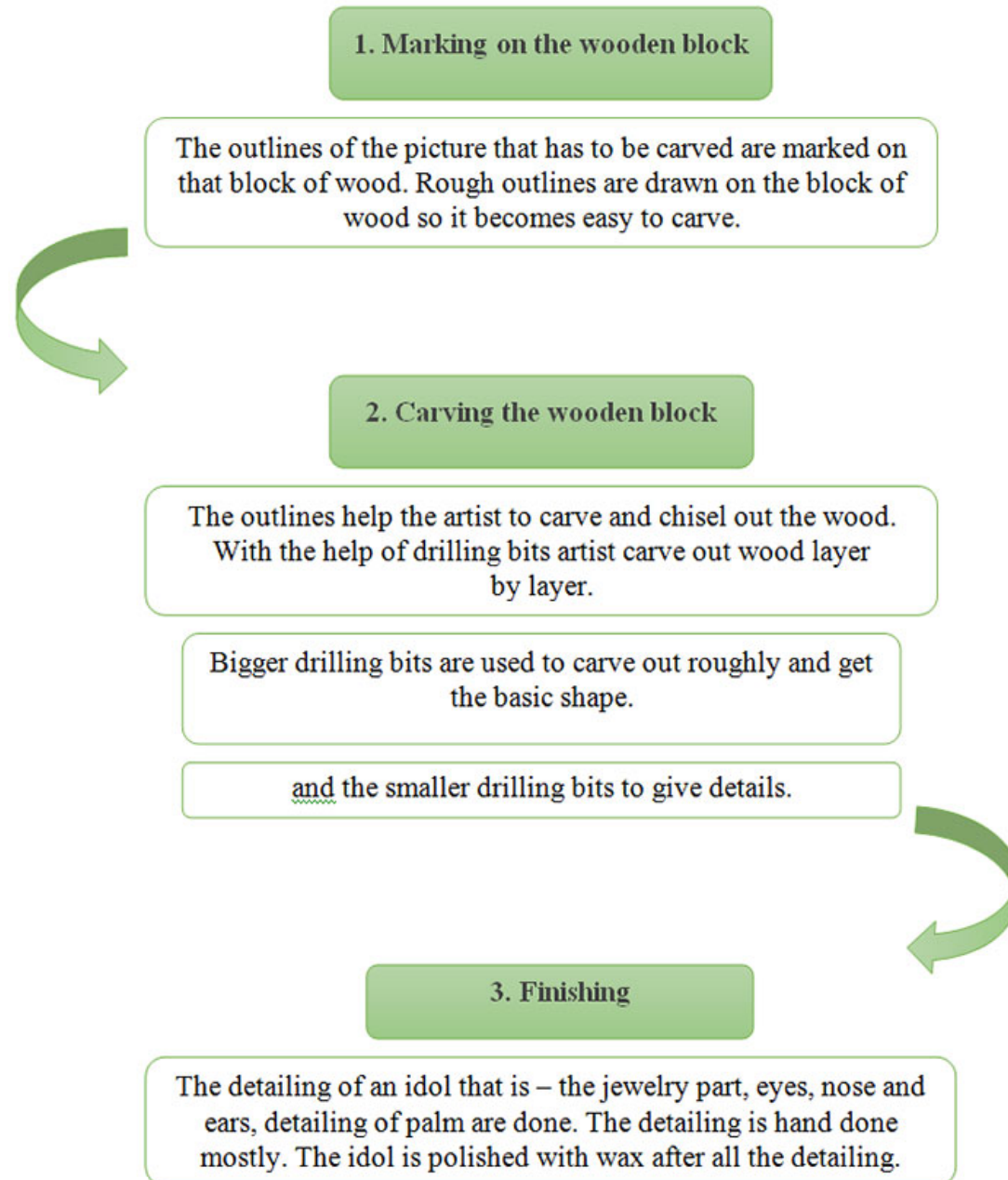
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Flow Chart of Making Process:



1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. **Making Process**

4. Products

5. Contact Details

Design Resource

Wood Carving - Jaipur

Making of Wooden Idols

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NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/making-process>

1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. **Making Process**
4. Products
5. Contact Details



Artisan marking the roughly chopped wooden block to start carving a basic shape out of it.



Artisan then drills away the excess wood with the help of markings.



An image showing wood taking a basic shape of the idol.



Artisan then changes the drill bit to a smaller bit to carve even more details.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/making-process>

1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. **Making Process**

4. Products

5. Contact Details



Artisan uses fingers and hand to measure the block through his experience.



He then carves the wooden piece with smaller bit.



With a smaller bit, artisan can carve deeply into the wooden block until a basic shape is achieved.



Artisan then carves the finer details with smaller chisels.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/making-process>

1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. **Making Process**

4. Products

5. Contact Details



After the details are achieved, it is then sanded to remove rough grains and to achieve a smooth flawless finish.



An image showing an idol before carving minute details / sanding and an idol after it.



An image showing a completed idol with wooden polish / wax polish on it to give it a shining finish.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/products>

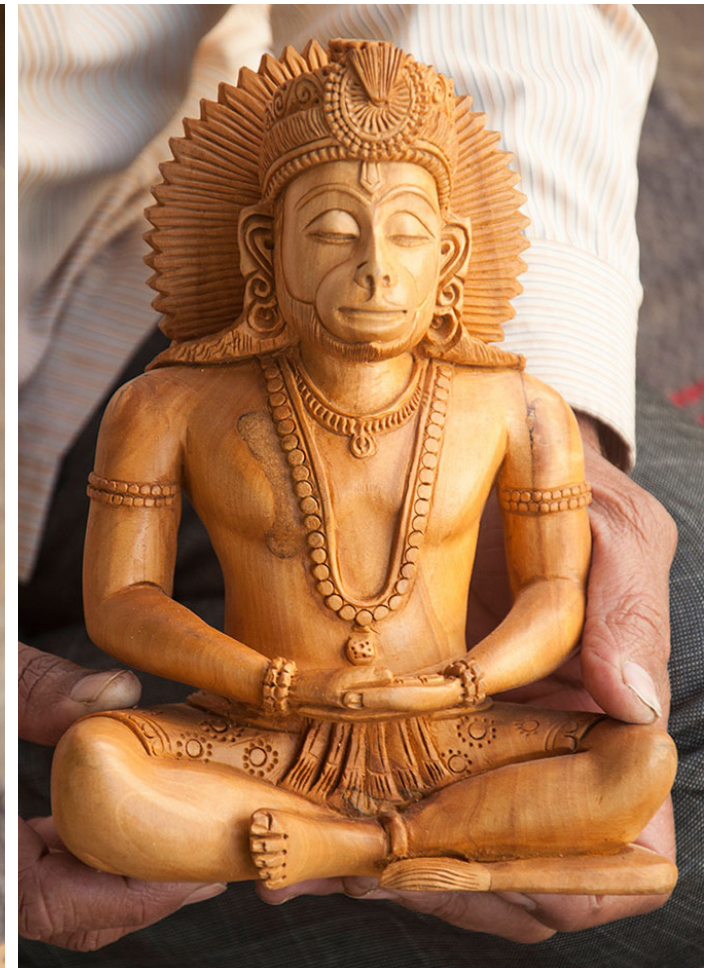
1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
4. **Products**
5. Contact Details

Products

The wooden idols are carved according to the orders that the artisans get most of which are idols of Hanuman and Buddha. The Wood that goes in making the idols is kadham wood, which is well known for its strength yet quite easy to carve and has a long life. There are various techniques and the most common one is carving in relief. Beautiful Ganesh, Buddha, Elephants in different shapes, chess sets and other intricate decorative figurines are carved from this wood.



An idol of Goutam Buddha in Meditative state, sitting on a lotus flower.



Idol of Lord Hanuman in meditative state, carved with finest details.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/products>

1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. **Products**

5. Contact Details



Idol of Goutam Buddha, standing on a pedestal with finely carved drapes.



Idol of Lord Hanuman, Blessing.



Idol of Goutam Buddha, Blessing.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/products>

1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. **Products**

5. Contact Details



Image showing a thin sheet of wood carved intricately with rich floral patterns to form a Jaali (Mesh).



Idol of Lord Ganesh, Blessing while sitting on a lotus flower.

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/wood-carving-jaipur/products>

1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. **Products**

5. Contact Details



Idol of Gowtam Buddha Meditating, with beautifully carved banyan leaf behind.



Image showing Front and back view of Gowtam Buddha's Idol with its pedestal carved intricately with minute details, showing different kinds of scene.



A front, back and Side view of Lord Bhramha's Idol, showing its signature four sided face carved for perfection.

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1. Introduction

2. Tools and Raw Materials

3. Making Process

4. Products

5. **Contact Details**