



# Woody's World

3rd October 2024



## Whittling

Thanks to Mick for an entertaining evening and an insight into the world of Whittling. Just for clarity, the 'dictionary' difference between Whittling and Carving is as follows: "Whittling is typically done with a knife, while carving uses a variety of tools, including chisels and gouges. Whittling is more focused on a hands-on experience and less concerned with a preconceived design.

All woodworking is potentially dangerous but whittling involves sharp knives very close to fingers and hands so particular advice re safety.

Below Mick has a cut proof glove to wear on his left hand and a thumb guard on his right thumb made from cohesive bandage. This is the set up for a right hander – reverse for left hander.

The whittler holds the wood in their left hand so the glove is there for overall protection of that hand from the knife in their right. The thumb guard provides strength to the thumb when pushing the blunt back of the blade and also protection when doing a pull cut towards the thumb.



**Don't whittle without protection!**

Whilst you can whittle with just a pen knife, the picture below show's Mick's range of tools and equipment.

1. A pack of Basswood – the optimum wood for whittling imported from USA. European lime wood is similar.
2. Mick uses the isopropyl alcohol shown (diluted 50/50 with water in the small aerosol) to spray on the Basswood which he keeps in a ziplock bag – this slows down the drying out process which helps keep the basswood softer for whittling.
3. Flexcut knives & gouges – Flexcut is a decent brand and widely available. Knives are in various sizes, same with gouges with round and V profiles used for hair and beard detail etc.
4. The cut-proof gloves and thumb guard bandage previously described. The cutting mat is also a useful surface to work over.
5. A strop block and stropping compound along with a shaped stropping block for various gouge profiles
6. Nail brush to clean up your work as you go along

Illustration of costs: 3 new Flexcut knives about £85, 2 knives + 2 gouges plus stropping kit £135.



There are 4 basic cuts to practice.

Push cut – push with the (should be) bandaged thumb to remove wood.



Stop cut – cut straight in to the wood to form a 'stop' or end, up to which you can do a push cut.

Pull cut – cut carefully back towards the thumb guard.



V-cut – point of knife in one way, turn wood and cut back.

Mick worked on a wizard/woodsman figure - beard/hat/nose etc.  
To begin he marked up his piece of wood approx. 1" for hat brim, then ¼" below that at an angle as shown. Then below that for nose level.



Use the various cuts to create the hat brim and nose.  
Create detail as you work, mouth, moustache, fold in hat.  
Draw pencil lines to use as guide for cutting detail.  
Refine until the final figure emerges.  
Practice using refining cuts eg a V cut either side of the nose to accentuate it and form the cheeks.  
Also, triangular holes either side of the top of the nose to form the eyes – using pencil to make them appear deeper.  
Texture beard with gouges.



**A gallery of some of Mick's whittling – lovely stuff.**



Mick mentioned that Doug Linker has many great tutorials and seems like a nice Canadian [www.youtube.com/@dougLinker](https://www.youtube.com/@dougLinker)



**UK Whittlers** Facebook. Is a Facebook group for whittlers which holds a 1-hour session on a Wednesday evening.

## Forthcoming Club Meetings

If you attended the October meeting when no payment was taken, please remember that you'll be asked for the extra £5 at the November meeting.

Meetings normally are on the first Thursday in the month except when there are elections. Meetings start at **7pm** in Offchurch Village Hall.

<b>Date 2024/25</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Demonstrator</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Sheep or a Cow?	Nick Milton
5 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Festive Decs	Dave Simms
2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Social tbc	
6 <sup>th</sup> Feb	tbc	
6 <sup>th</sup> March	AGM	

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