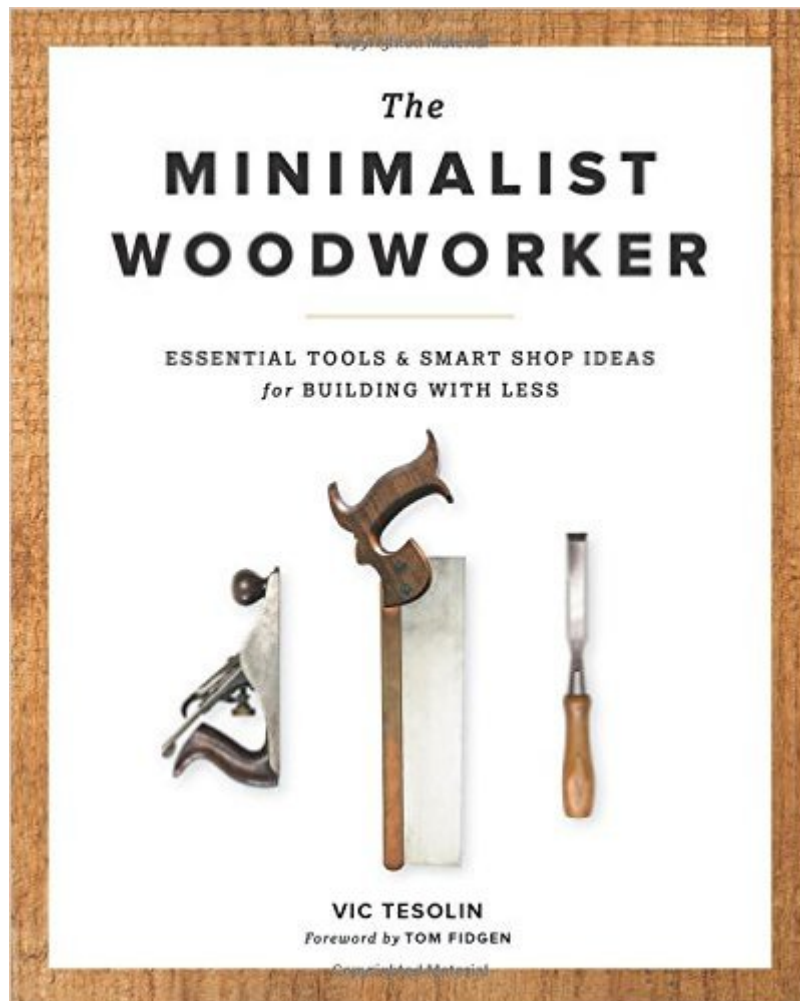


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# The Minimalist Woodworker: Essential Tools And Smart Shop Ideas For Building With Less



## Synopsis

Woodworking is thriving in the hands-on, DIY, maker world we currently live in. Yet, for its increasing popularity, there are many crafters who don't engage in woodworking because they falsely believe you need a large workshop and a full-blown collection of tools and equipment. The Minimalist Woodworker is about eliminating this myth. To enjoy woodworking, all you need is a few essential tools, a little bit of space, and the desire to make something with your own two hands. The Minimalist Woodworker is about making woodworking clean and simple – from the tools and the workspace to the easy-to-follow instructions. It eliminates the fears and excuses as it demystifies the craft. Written by Vic Tesolin, aka the Minimalist Woodworker, a woodworker and woodworking instructor, The Minimalist Woodworker is a stress-free approach for the hobbyist that emphasizes the destination is actually the journey. Beginning with an understanding of the minimalist mindset, The Minimalist Woodworker quickly details how to make a small space productive and outlines the most efficient tools for a woodworker. Each piece of equipment is explained and instructions on how to use are provided. Techniques for keeping them sharp and maintained are also explained. Once space and tools are covered, seven projects are presented: a saw bench and matching saw horse, a Nicholson-style workbench, a shooting board/bench hook, a shop mallet, and a small hanging cabinet. Each project not only develops woodworking skills, but also outfits The Minimalist Woodworker's small shop. With step-by-step instruction, photos and illustrations, and an easy-going voice, The Minimalist Woodworker offers a stress-free point of entry into the life-long craft of woodworking.

## Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Spring House Press (November 15, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1940611350

ISBN-13: 978-1940611358

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 0.4 x 9.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars – See all reviews (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #200,656 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #272 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Woodworking > Projects #5622 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts & Hobbies

## Customer Reviews

Depending upon one's expectations, the book's title may be misleading. I'm a moderately experienced worker of wood but I'm certainly not an expert or master. And, I firmly believe that everyone can always learn something new every day. I know that I do. Consider that Chapter 1 begins on page #11 and Chapter 4 ends on page #59. Pages #61 thru #91 inclusive show how to build a saw bench and bent, step-by-step. The remaining pages, up to page #145 are dedicated to step-by-step plans for building - with a reasonably minimal number of hand tools - four other workshop-related projects: shooting board hook, wooden mallet, workbench and hand tool shelf. So, aside from the excellent photos detailing the five projects, the photos and actual information about the tools themselves is very basic and broad and many times it's predicated upon a "nice to have". As an example, the author mentions the various types of hand planes and their uses in the shop. Photos of each are included. However, several of the types of planes (jointer as one) he mentions are not big box store or home center items and are indeed quite expensive to buy new in good quality. The better-quality used vintage ones are highly sought after as well and are surely not being given away for a song. So, "minimalist" could very well be dependent upon one's budget combined with a willingness to scour flea markets, online listings and estate and garage sales, much more so than physical shop space and what's readily available and affordable. That's what may be misleading. Yes, there is definitely some very useful information in this book so I absolutely do not consider it as money poorly spent. E.g. the pictorial demonstration on making a saw groove is a nifty one as is the discussion of the "cabinetmaker's triangle". But, if as I did, you are thinking of "minimalist" - as it used in this book - as somehow being similar to the minimalist hand tools and woodworking techniques and disciplines embraced by say Japanese craftsmen, you would be incorrect. The five projects illustrated in the book are very nice but they are not high quality, finished pieces. They are dedicated for use in the workshop and yes, the author used mostly hand tools to make them. But, getting from those five projects to higher quality and more finished works with those same hand tools is not discussed in this book.

This book was not useful for me, and I returned it. I respect what the author has attempted to do in writing it and appreciate his publishing a book that aims to popularize woodworking. However this volume attempts to cover too much in too little space, and thus can't go much into depth on anything. Much of the book is taken up with some simple projects. There are lots of photos, which are nicely done, but don't leave room for as much text as I would have hoped for. Statements are made about what hand tools are necessary for woodworking, but little is actually said in detail about

why the tools listed here are needed, or what makes them important vs other options, how to choose them, where to buy them, or what to look for in the comparing various models and features available. I would have liked to see much more comprehensive detail in this area. I learned a lot more than is covered in this book simply by browsing Paul Sellers free videos on the web. Instead of -- or in addition to -- this book, please consider "The Anarchist's Tool Chest" by Christopher Schwarz, for a truly comprehensive, minimalist list of hand tools you really need to do good woodworking, and the comprehensive reasons why these specific tools were selected. Also consider "The Essential Woodworker" by Robert Wearing for an excellent introduction to woodworking for those with little or no experience.

The best word to describe this is simple, in the best sense of the word. Simple means you get back to the fundamentals of woodworking that involve hand-eye coordination, muscle, and a limited set of proper tools that have worked for hundreds of years. Simple lets your focus and think clearly about what you're doing. Plus, you get to make a mallet. You can't beat that. This is a great entry point or a guide to having a simplified season of woodworking.

To be honest, power tools scare me a little bit, except for a screwdriver. I'm also a minimalist, so I don't want too many tools. Lastly, I love the idea of sculpting something with my hands, as I also draw, paint, knit, crochet, and all sort of stuff like that. This is a welcome addition to my very selective library!

A compelling argument for working with handtools. . . without all the preciousness and unnecessary intimidation that often goes with this approach. There are really smart ideas for working in small spaces, as well as projects that help you set up an efficient small shop. And the streamlined book matches the streamlined approach. Love this book for anyone looking to get started woodworking or open to a new approach.

An excellent beginning book if you're interested in working wood with hand tools. It'll help you select a basic kit and take you through a few basic projects, building things you'll need, like a simple (but very functional) workbench. From this book, I'd go on to Robert Wearing's *The Essential Woodworker*, available from Lost Art Press.

Finally, a book that makes using handtools look and sound easy. Nice clean layout, clear text, and

useful, easy-to-build projects. I've wanted to learn the basics of handtools for some time and this book is exactly what I've been looking for...Can't wait to build the basic workbench. By the time I'm finished with this, I'll feel much more confident taking on other handtool projects...great stuff.

I'm a sucker for this genre, and soak up everything I can on the subject. I really wanted to love this book, but there's nothing here I haven't seen before. Half the book is for those who wouldn't know a hammer from a nail. It's a lesser version of Tom Fidgen's already excellent books. Love Vic's website and blog, but this was simply an unnecessary project, and adds nothing to what's out there. Oh, well.

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