

Page 6 - How to Make an Axe Handle

ISSUE: Issue 1

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1972/10/31

of the handle, into the curve at the back. Cut half-way down, leave the chip, turn the handle over and cut to the center • a sort of moon of wood chip falling off, (5) Then Dan Murdoch turned the handle over, still working at the heartwood but this time with the traced lines facing him, cutting away right to the line. Draw a new line top to bottom at the center of the heartwood and sap'vood. Instead of cutting them away, use thera as your guides as you begin rounding the handle to fit the hand. Remember, you want to keep the sides of the axe handle flat, the edges of the sides gently rounding toward the center of the heartwood and sapwood. PS3" " 'Si 'S'\* (7) (8) And as you work, never complete a shaving from top to bo .. . . \_ • , \_ -\_:.- .\_- the center, turn and work toward the center • thus you will complete each shaving smoothly and controlled. (6) Now shape the grip, using your working handle as a model. Cut toward the center. (7) Even here there should be no abrupt angle. The Tightness of your handle will be its feel in your hand. The groove of the grip is made with many small cuts. These are extended toward the center. Then you cut from the center into the groove, and remove the shaving whole. When you shape the eye to fit the eye of an axe head, it is best to work from the top. You want a straight cut. If you put the handle eye-down on the block and try to shape it, the tendency is to cut in and wedge it. It is better to stand the handle eye-up, place the blade where you want to cut and tap the new handle down on the block, working the blade in. What you have now is no longer a split but a rough handle. (8) Now go to a workbench with a block of wood nailed to support the handle while you work. Pressing the eye of the handle against the block of wood, plane the sides flat and smooth. (9) Turn the handle sapxvood-up. Keep the eye wedged against the woodblock but raise the grip end in your left hand. Plane with your right. You want to keep the sides flat and curve the edges in toward the center of the heart- wood. Take nice long strokes about three-fourths the length of the handle. Turn the handle around and over, the grip end wedged and the heartwood up. Use a small (10) Cape Breton's Maga2ine/6