

SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL

WOOD

CRITERIA

DEFINITION

In the promotion of excellence the SCC encourages original design, however, recognizes that in this medium patterns and plans may sometimes be used, and they must exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship.

The process of woodworking consists of designing an article with the intention of creating an attractive object, which more often than not must perform a function as well, and then executing the design with care, and control over the material in order to achieve a desirable level of craftsmanship.

All wood medium groups must meet the product safety standards of Health Canada. Articles made from plans or patterns are acceptable and must be identified as such, when they exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship.

This category includes any article which is made primarily of wood – bowls, lamps, marquetry, musical instruments, intarsia, boxes or containers, furniture, free standing sculpture, etc. A combination of media may often occur and the criteria of more than one category will need to be used – i.e. a room divider made of wood and fibre or a miniature made of wood and metals.

TECHNIQUES

Turning

By using a lathe to turn a block of wood and a variety of hand-held tools, various round shapes can be made. This includes spindles, bowls, plates, table legs, beads, etc. The surface created is smooth and can greatly enhance the grain of the wood depending on the design used. Exterior textures can be added later by hand if desired. The block of wood, before being turned, can also be laminated to create contrasting patterns on the final article. In items of this sort, the laminated pattern should compliment the over-all form of the object. Moulding, knobs and table legs and other accessories made on a lathe are often used in combination with other techniques. A number of fittings might be purchased. These are acceptable, provided they are a part of the over-all design, i.e. a trim on a door of a cabinet. These objects (i.e. pens, nutcrackers, letter openers, etc.) must not dominate those items displayed for sale (i.e. objects showing skill and craftsmanship must form the majority of the booth).

Laminating and Bending

Laminating is an assembly made by bonding layers of veneer (thin layers of wood) or lumber with an adhesive. Boards can be glued next to each other to make a large surface (such as a table top) or stacked to create a volume which can then be shaped. Veneers can be bent and then glued to create extremely strong, permanently shaped wood pieces – curved chair parts are examples of this. It can combine contrasting wood which will create patterns when cut or to add a linear element if, for example, the contrasting veneer is inserted between the various layers. Other materials, such as clear or coloured sheets of acrylic and metals, can also be sandwiched in. The laminated surfaces should be completely flat and thoroughly glued together. Once laminated the pieces of wood can be treated as a single block and can be shaped using any other woodworking techniques. Bending techniques should be appropriate to function. Objects made for outdoor use must be bent laminated with appropriate glues or steam bent. If contrasting woods have been used, the pattern created should compliment the overall design.

Carving

Various hand cutting tools (knives, chisels, gouges, and a mallet) and power tools are used. Carving techniques are used to create completely three-dimensional works (sculptures, lamp bases, etc.), reliefs (i.e. a rosette on the centre of a head board), or textural surfaces. It can also be used to create individual parts which are then assembled into a final article – i.e. carved handles for a dresser. The grain of the wood, the total form of the item and any other surface texture should all complement each other. Grain orientation must be appropriate to the structure of the piece.

Marquetry and Inlay

Inlay is the practice of inlaying one or more pieces of wood (or other materials) into a base – i.e. a laminated design which is inset into a box lid. Marquetry is the creation of designs, either geometric or pictorial, in a variety of contrasting veneers which is then glued down and applied onto a wood object or base. For both techniques the pieces should all be carefully cut and matched and should fit extremely closely. The final surface should be smooth and free of any ridges or raised corners which would catch.

Intarsia

Intarsia is the creation of designs either geometric or pictorial, in a variety of contoured contrasting woods which are then applied to a base. The pieces should be carefully cut and matched and should fit closely. The gap should not exceed the kerf of the saw used to cut the pieces. The final surface should be smooth and free of any ridges or raised corners which would catch. Intarsia built from patterns should be identified as such.

Fretwork

Fretwork is the creation of a design by removing material from a thin, flat, stock, which is done by the use of hand or power tools. The material must be appropriate to the design and should be free of visible saw marks and shipping. Fretwork from patterns should be identified as such.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Toys

Toys should be made from birch or maple. If plywood is the wood of choice, a high quality plywood is recommended (ie: baltic birch). The soft woods, especially cedar are not recommended, due to allergies and splintering. All edges of the pieces should be rounded and smooth to the hand.

Standards

Toys exhibiting good craftsmanship would exhibit the following qualities:

1. No saw marks of any kind.
2. No splinters or conspicuous tool marks.
3. No sanding scratches (ie: across the grain).
4. No poorly drilled holes (ie: roughness inside of the hole).
5. No burn marks.
6. Inside corners should be smooth.
7. Wheels and other attachments should be firmly attached (check by pulling on the wheels).
8. Pieces that attach together (ie: trains) should be attached with string, leather or wood pins and holes or magnets, which work better than hooks.
9. Axles should be fluted and glued doweled.
10. If the toy has moving parts it should move smoothly without sticking.
11. The toy must be durable.
12. The type of finish must be non-toxic and should be labeled.
13. Recommended age for toys should be indicated.
14. Craftsperson's name should appear on each item.

The use of purchased parts, such as wheels, pins, etc., is acceptable but must not form the majority of the toy, (ie: a toy assembled entirely from purchased parts is unacceptable).

Utensils

Appropriate material to the function for the design in each object must be used. The surface created should be smooth to the touch and have no visible scratch marks. An appropriate hardwood should be used for any utensils in contact with food. Finishes must be non-toxic, food safe.

Jewellery

In the case of jewellery, earrings should be labeled indicating all materials used, (ie: findings, wood, type of finish. Earrings have to be light to wear, well sanded, no visible glue and must generally exhibit a high degree of creativity and craftsmanship).

Constructing (Cabinet Making)

This involves the assembling of various pieces of wood to make a three-dimensional article. There are a large number of traditional working joints which can be used. All joints should be neat, strong, and attractive and all the working parts should move smoothly such as doors and drawers in a dresser. There should be no visible traces of glue or filler between the pieces of wood.

FINISHES

Often stains, which are applied to the raw wood and penetrate the surface, are used to change the colour of the wood and to enhance its natural grain. A mottled, and uneven surface is caused when dirt, grease, glue, etc. is left on the surface, if the sanding has been uneven, or by overlapping areas when applying the stain. These effects are to be avoided unless a conscious design effect.

Finishes, which provide a clear film on the surface of the wood, add lustre and protect the wood from moisture, dust and deterioration. Functional considerations should be a determining factor in the final degree of specific surface texture is being used, all pieces should be smooth to the touch and have no visible scratch marks – (ie: in turning, both the peaks and the deeply turned areas should be smooth). The finish may be wax, oil, shellac or lacquer, or varnishes such as polyurethane products. Whatever the finish, it should be smooth and have no brush marks, sags or foreign matter embedded in it. The finish should be appropriate to its use and should enhance the over-all form of the article.

STANDARDS (in addition to those listed above)

1. Several techniques can be used in combination. The chosen techniques should complement each other and enhance the inherent qualities of the wood itself – ie: a laminated block turned into a bowl; an inlaid veneer design on a head board; or a cupboard with hand-carved knobs.
2. All materials used should be of appropriate quality and moisture content – woods with knots, splits, checks, or warping should not be used unless for specific design effect.
3. Grain orientation must be appropriate to the piece.
4. The use of colour, the grain patterns, the use of texture, the choice of joints should all mesh into a single entity.
5. The proportions should be pleasing with all the parts relating to each other harmoniously. ie: the number and placement of drawers in a cabinet, silhouette of a chair.
6. All aspects must be treated as visible parts of the design. Ready made parts, such as piano hinges, metal knobs, or glass and mirror inserts are used. This is completely acceptable if they are subordinate to the total design and craftsmanship of the article.
7. Functional concerns should be considered.

Of course, not all items are functional and aesthetic consideration and all the basic concepts of design should be considered.

TOYS

When designing and crafting toys – Keep These Points in Mind:

1. Toys intended for use by children under 3 years of age should not contain separable parts or small pieces which could pose a choking hazard. Buttons ornamentation or other small pieces must be securely attached to withstand a 10 lb (4.5 kg) pull for 10 seconds.
2. Eye and nose attachments on Dolls, Soft Toys and Plush Toys, unless made of entirely soft flexible material such as felt, must withstand a 20 lb (9 kg) pull for 5 minutes. Eyes that are glued or sewn on may not withstand this pull.
3. Stuffing material must be nontoxic, clean and free of hard or foreign matter. Bean or plant seeds are not permitted. Manufacturers or importers of upholstered or stuffed articles should check with the Provincial Consumer Affairs office for more information on the Upholstered and Stuffed Articles Act.
4. Wooden toys must be smoothly finished.
5. No sharp edges or sharp metal points should be exposed under reasonable foreseeable use.
6. All screws, nails, staples and other fasteners must be properly secured and countersunk or covered if necessary.
7. Toy boxes with lids should have holes in 2 or more adjacent sides to prevent the suffocation of a child who may become trapped inside.
8. Play furniture should be firm and level.
9. Push and pull toys with a shaft-like handle that is 3/8 in. (0.95 cm) in diameter or less should have a protective tip on the handle to prevent a puncture wound.
10. Rattles should have all ends or protrusions large enough so that they will not easily fit into a child's throat. They should not contain plant seeds as a noise maker.
11. Coatings such as paint or varnish must not contain lead, barium or other toxic elements.
12. Toys sold in plastic bags that are 14 in. (35.6 cm) or larger in circumference, require a suffocation warning to alert parents to the dangers associated with giving a plastic bag to a child.

SLEEPWEAR

Loose fitting Children's sleepwear including nightgowns, nightshirts, bathrobes, tailored pyjamas and baby doll pyjamas are subjected to stringent flammability requirements. They should be made of less flammable materials such as nylon and polyester. Garments of these styles should not contain cotton, acrylic, rayon or acetate, or blends of these fibres. Garments that are tight fitting such as polo pyjamas or sleepers can still be made of cotton or the other materials noted above.

CERAMICS

All ceramics and pottery used for serving or preparing food, must meet the Glazed Ceramics Regulations which state that there should be no more than 7 ppm of lead or 0.5 ppm of cadmium released from the finished product. It is important to use food safe glazes and decals and to fire the pieces to the correct temperature.

RUGS

Rugs must meet all flammability regulations if over 24 sq. ft. (2.16 sq. m.), or has a linear dimension greater than 6 ft. (1.8 m). Rugs smaller than this can be made of more flammable materials such as cotton as long as a specified warning label is present to indicate that they should not be exposed to open flame or sources of intense heat.

CRIBS AND CRADLES

There are very stringent regulations on cribs and cradles. If you are planning to build a crib or a cradle please contact your nearest office of Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada for a copy of the Crib Regulations, as a child's life may depend on it.

PLAY TENTS

Tents, including play tents must meet flammability standards and be labeled with specific warning labels. Tents made of nylon are more likely to meet the flammability standard.