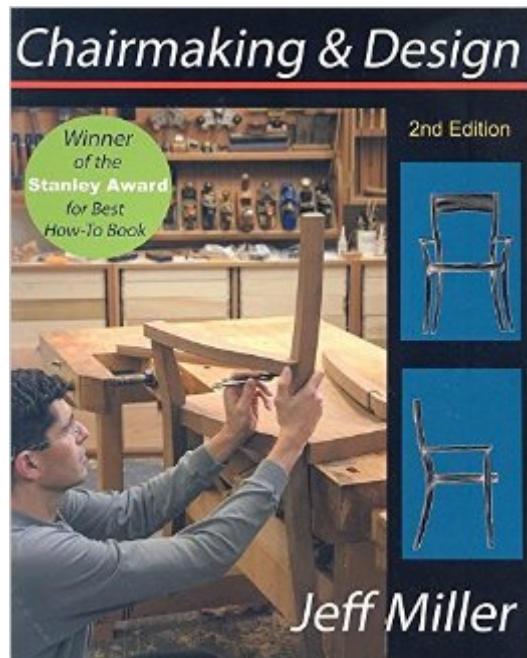


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Chairmaking & Design



Synopsis

The often-intimidating art of chairmaking is explained in this book of expert patterns and tips for creating seven elegant chairs. Through each project, craftspeople learn increasingly complex skills that build upon each other, making the manual a complete education in all of the basic chairmaking techniques. The straightforward plans and methods make the designs--such as a child's ladderback chair and even armchairs--accessible for home woodworkers. Illuminating discussions of construction and design fundamentals, along with an appendix on oils and waxes to give projects the finishing touch, round out this exploration of the art of building comfortable chairs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is really an excellent book for a woodworker seeking guidance with the particular challenges of chairbuilding. Most chapters cover some particular chair of the author's creation. Don't worry about whether Miller's designs will appeal or not. Plans are included, but copying them really isn't the point. They're presented here as case studies in conceptualization and construction, with lessons that are widely applicable. For example, how to accurately lay out and cut angled tenons, how to obtain a flat surface on an otherwise curved leg, how to fashion a slip seat, etc. And throughout, Miller details a bunch of clever jigs and methods of work. A caution: familiarity with the ABCs of furnituremaking and access to some modicum of shop stuff is assumed here. This isn't a beginning woodworking text, which only makes sense, given the subject.

Right from the opening sentence you will know that you have purchased a well written book by a very experienced chairmaker. Jeff Miller's book is not just filled with terrific plans, instead an emphasis is placed on design. Design decisions, pitfalls, and compromises are all covered in detail. Great for the intermediate or advanced woodworker.

I have attended several of Jeff's woodworking classes. He is not only a first rate woodworker, he is a first rate instructor. Even if you don't feel ready to try chair making, this book is worth having for the techniques you can learn.

I looked all over the Internet for this book a while back and couldn't find it. Used sellers are charging way too much (over \$100), so I finally just checked it out of the library (very available and no cost). This is a good book, and is the only one I know of with general chairmaking info that covers different chair types. The other chairmaking books I've seen seem to be specific to Windsor chairs. I would like to see more books like this ... until then get this one from the library.

I attended my first workshop (on making tables) at Jeff Miller's studio in the summer of 2003. I purchased this book shortly after completing the class. This book is a fantastic way to take Jeff's clear, creative teaching skills home, and has absolutely everything you need to know in order to build chairs, especially if you're doing it on your own and don't have a master craftsman to call on for help. I have referred to this book time and again, and am sure other furniture makers will find Jeff's concise but thorough style a terrific and worthwhile addition to both bookshelves and workbenches.

Really a fine book. Recently, I have been working a no-frills poplar extension dining-table following the indications of a number of Fine Woodworking's regular contributors. Both my brother and a good friend (both of them carpenters) said, whatever you do, don't make your own chairs, it'll take a lifetime, which then led me to a fruitless and saddening search for a chair on the various "unfinished furniture" websites. So, after receiving this particular title, I see that the included chapter on the dowel chair, which appears fairly easy to make, is perfectly analogous to the dining table I have been working on. So look around, I do not think you will find many books on the design and theory of dining-room chairs apart from this one. And thankfully, the inclusion of the "gallery of chairs" is only there to give one an idea of what it is to be a chair-design virtuoso. As for the rest, it thankfully concentrates on the essentials. For instance, roughly half of the designs as presented feature

straight-back chairs, before introducing curved-back chairs towards the end.

Although I give this book 4 stars, to be honest it did not help me at all. I was hoping to be able to make my own chairs but apparently lack the skills that are necessary...and the patience. I would say if you are a beginning wood worker like myself that this may not be the right book for you. That said, the book seems like to someone with the right skill set it would be very helpful. The directions seem to be pretty clear, but that doesn't change the fact that chair making is complicated!!! This book is staying on my shelf until hopefully some day I can pick it back up and actually make a darn chair. If nothing else this book made the chairs that I bought seem like a bargain, considering all of the work that goes into them!

There are several books on Windsor and country chair design but this is the only one that will let you produce, say, a set of elegant dining chairs. Miller takes great pains to de-mystify the what is a daunting project for many woodworkers. His projects start basic with each one introducing principles of design and construction that build throughout the text. The discussion clear and thorough.

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