

HALF PINT MINIATURE CARVING GUIDE

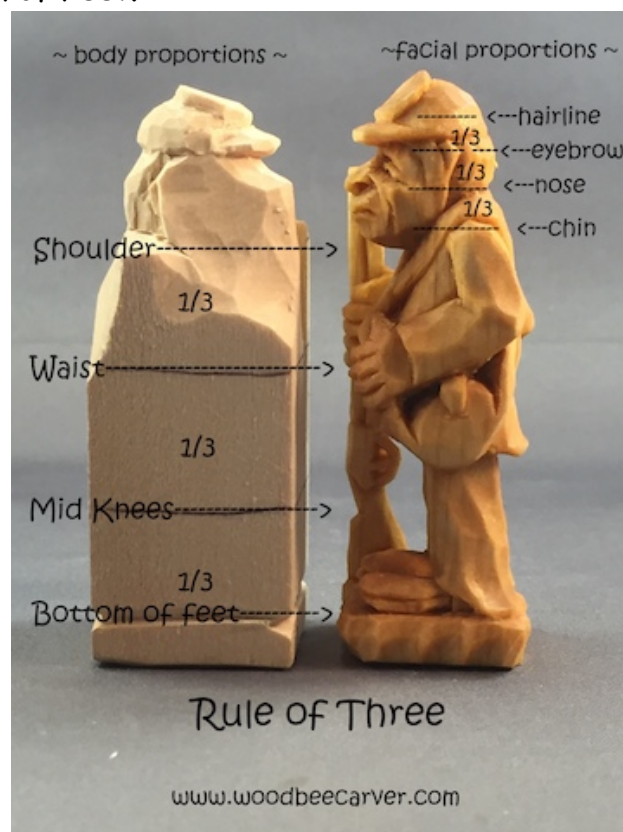


HALF PINT MINIATURE CARVINGS are three-inch-tall figures carved in the Whittle-Carving style of the Wood Bee Carver using only knives to carve these figures. Miniatures are commonly defined as a carving that will fit into a two-inch cube. Three-inch miniature is the classification used by the Affiliated Wood Carvers Association at the International Woodcarvers Congress competition. "Half Pint" uses the half inch scale of a half inch equals a foot which makes "Half Pint" proportionally equal to half of the average height of six feet tall humans.

Miniature carving is carved from a block of wood using the slicing cuts of a knife to open up the block of wood by carving the basic form of the figure. Ninety percent of any carving is carving to the basic form with the last ten percent saved for doing the detail carving steps. Carving to the basic form begins with carving the head covering first to approximate size and then the head is carved as it goes up into the hat. Once the head portion is carved to form, the body area from shoulders to bottom of feet is ready to be carved to form.

The Rule of Three for facial proportions and body proportions is used for the layout of the design of the carving project. This Rule is a guide to being able to see the carving project proportionally before and during the carving project. Seeing the "before" is the inner vision of imagination. The Rule of Imagination is ~ ***"If it can be imagined it can be."*** Imagination automatically sees "proportionately" while the Rule of Three defines the imagined proportions on the block of wood. During the carving process the inner eye of imagination guides the carving to proportional shape. The usefulness of the Rule of Three is that it applies to any height of the carving subject since its measurement is proportionally that fits any measured size.

The Rule of Three for facial proportions divides the length of face into three equal proportional which are Hairline to Eyebrow; Eyebrow to Tip of Nose; Tip of Nose to Bottom of Chin. The width of the face is two proportions or two thirds wide and three thirds long making the face an oval shape. The head covering will cover up to half of the Hairline to Eyebrow proportion. Once the head covering and head are carved to basic form, the remaining wood is divided using the Rule of Three for body proportions which are Shoulder to Waist; Waist to Mid Knees; and Mid Knees to Bottom of Feet.



Civil War Soldier is the subject of this carving guide which will be described through the use of photographic steps and written explanations. This method of instruction relies heavily upon the action of "imagination" reading between the lines of the visual images and written description to guide the learning that will take place in the carving process. ***"Carving is a learn by doing process and the more one carves the more one learns,"*** is the meaning of the Wood Bee Carver's motto: ***"Would be carvers would be carvers if they would carve wood."*** Every carving project becomes a learning experience and is a practice carving where discoveries in learning will be a serendipity experience. This is the joy of carving that inspires the carver to continue to carve. The Old Carver says, ***"Keep carving and carving will keep you carving,"*** which means that ***"the more we carve the better we carve."*** One lesson to learn over and over is that there are no mistakes only learning experiences.

In order to ***"stay sharp and never be dull"*** is to carve as often as possible, be it in the carver's imagination (day dreams) or actually putting the knife to wood to carve a project. Viewing a photo of a carving with a mental imagination of carving it in the mind is to learn from this imaginary carving exercise. It is helpful to repeat a carving project a second time to apply what was self-learned in the first attempt which will open the door to more leaning while carving the second similar project. For example, the Civil War Soldier of this guide will have several repeated carvings of the same basic subject but with a different pose, different facial feature and slight variation in the texture of the slicing cuts. What can be learned from this guide can be applied to the carving of any other subject of the Half Pint genre.

"The clothes make the man," can be applied to carving in that any of the facial features on the Civil War Soldiers pictured in this guide could be used as a face for a Santa, Sea Captain, Wizard, Pirate, Railroader, Cowboy, Policeman, Hobo and any other subject who would wear a different outfit and accessories. This means that what can be learned from doing the project in this guide coupled with imagination can be applied to any other subject to be carved and expand the learning.

The Wood Bee Carver prefers to use a curved cutting-edge blade because of the enhanced slicing function of this shape of a carving blade. Using a straight cutting-edge knife commonly used as a carving knife can be used providing it is stropped to sharpness and a slicing cut is utilized with each stroke of the knife. Slice cut is best envisioned as in slicing a tomato. Forcing the cutting edge down on

the tomato in a wedge cut will only squash the tomato, but a slicing cut in the push or pull stroke of the cutting-edge across the tomato will make a clean slice of tomato. Forcing the carving knife down in a wedge cut in wood will break the wood fibers before they are cut resulting in broken and jagged edges of the carved surface. The cutting edge of a knife is made up of micro teeth (much like a hand saw) and it is these teeth that when sliced through the wood that creates a clean and slick surface. Whatever kind of knife used, **"Slice with the cutting edge."** Carving only with a knife may be a struggle, at first, but it is a learning experience that allows the carver's creative imagination to guide the hand to discover new ways of using a knife in the carving process.

NOTE: at the end of this guide there will be suggestions of curved cutting edge bladed knives that one can purchase and reference to making knives of your own.

The Progressive steps for carving HALF PINT Civil War Soldier are depicted in the four photographs below. **Illustration A** ~ has marked off the Rule of Three divisions for the sake of instruction in approximate measurement of a three-inch-tall by one-inch square block of basswood. **Illustration B** ~ has the base outlined with a notch cut on all four sides. The head covering and head area has been rounded off into an oval shaped dowel. **Illustration C** ~ has the barrel of the rifle opened and the top of the head dowel has the front top sliced off at an angle to begin to shape the cap bill and the Kepi cap top. **Illustration D** ~ has the cap bill

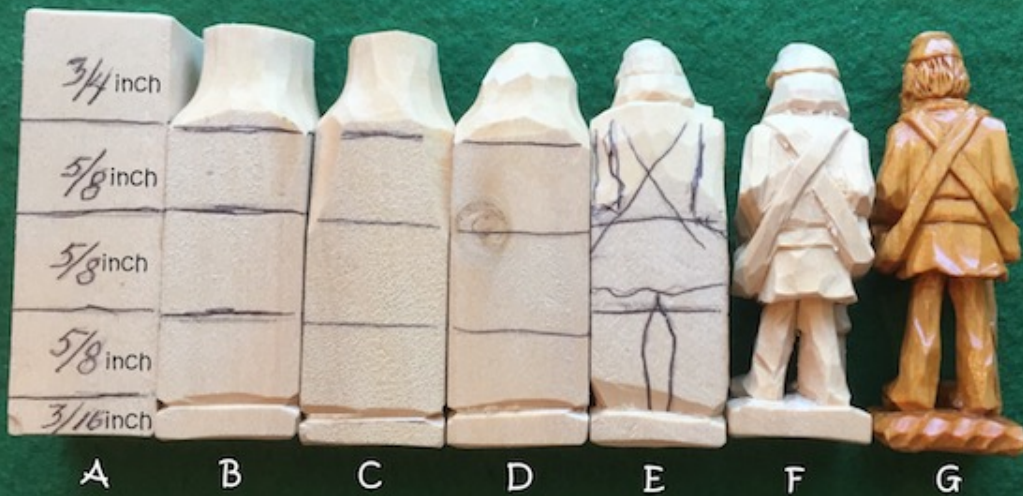


Progressive steps for carving HALF PINT CIVIL War Soldier



www.woodbeecarver.com

Progressie steps for carving HALF PINT CIVIL War Soldier



www.woodbeecarver.com



identified and the top of Kepi cap refined. **Illustration E** ~ has the Kepi Cap carved to its basic form awaiting future detailing and the head has been shaped to go it into the cap with the beginning of angles of the head and face. **Illustration F** ~ has the entire soldier carved to basic form awaiting detail carving. **Illustration G** ~ is a finished and mono-chromed stained soldier as the final step in the progression for comparative study,



(Photo above shows the top view of Illustrations B-C-D-E-F)

3 inch tall miniature - Carve hat first with head going up into hat - major landmarks of body guidelines drawn - Compared with the completed carving - step one.



www.woodbeecarver.com

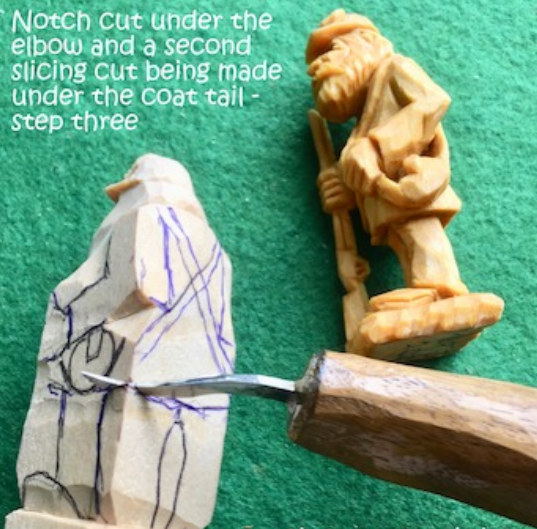
Open up the major areas as this example under elbow with a slicing cut followed by an angled cut to first cut making a notch cut opening - step two



The knife being used is a curved cutting edge that is more versatile than a straight cutting edge blade - Curved cutting edge allows for slicing cuts that can reach into tight areas.

www.woodbeecarver.com

Notch cut under the elbow and a second slicing cut being made under the coat tail - step three



←notch cut around the bottom has formed the base which strengthens the weakness of the thin cross-grain of the shoes.

www.woodbeecarver.com

First slicing cut under the left hand that is wrapped around the strap of the canteen - this will be followed by a second angled cut to form a notch for the area in front of the left leg - step four



Notice the notch cut at the back of left leg and coat tail from previous step.

www.woodbeecarver.com

Slicing cuts outlining the canteen and strap to be followed by angled slicing cuts to form a notch opening up the canteen - step five.



www.woodbeecarver.com

The inside crook of the arm is opened up by making a three cut triangular chip cut - first two cuts are slicing outside of arm to be followed by the third angled cut along the front of the chest to remove the triangular chip - step six.



www.woodbeecarver.com

The triangular chip is removed in this angled cut along front of chest towards the first two cuts of the previous photo - step seven.



www.woodbeecarver.com

Outlining the rifle is made with slicing cuts using as much of the cutting edge as possible followed by angled slicing cuts to make the width wider - this is done in the front and back of the rifle - as slicing cuts remove wood in front of the leg above the shoe as well as the side of the leg behind the rifle eventually an opening will appear



behind the rifle exposing the front of the left leg - keep the wood for the rifle thick enough for the final detail carving of the rifle - step eight.

www.woodbeecarver.com

Once excess wood has been removed on all sides of the legs which are still boxy - make a stop cut down between the middle of the legs - remove excess wood between shoes down to the base - step nine.



Slide a stop cut down the middle of the back of the legs from coat tail to base - step ten.



Make repeated slicing cuts down either side of the stop cuts (front and back) to widen the opening between the legs taking narrow slicing cuts and eventually an opening will appear front and back so that the legs can then be rounded to basic shape-step eleven



The soldier has been carved to basic form using the knife in the photo. Any small detail knife with a curved cutting edge can be used.



Finer detail carving was done using the knife in the photo that has the tip end curving up to make a curved skew cut.



Fine detail carving as done using the knife in the photo.



Notice in this photo with the two detail knives that the un-detailed Carving has face with basic form, hands with angles and planes in boxy form, shoes are boxy and rifle is boxy as well.



Notch cuts were made under the eyebrows and notch cuts made to angle the nose nostrils to lay a good foundation for the next details.



3 cut triangular cuts made at inside corner of eyes as well as at nostril and smile lines to form the mouth mound. Fingers carved



Eyes and mouth carved using the small detail knife in the photo.



Profile view of facial features.





The WOOD BEE CARVER ~ Donald K. Mertz ~ www.woodbeecarver.com



<http://www.helvieknives.com/> ~ Helvie Knives makes these knives and may be ordered on their web site ~ top knife is Mini Mertz #6-2, Middle Knife is Green Hornet # 29 and Bottom knife is Busy Bee 2 # 32.

HOW TO MAKE OWN KNIVES ~ <https://woodbeecarver.com/other-knives-for-carving-miniatures/#more-17488>