

# Whittling 3-5 Owl



## *Another Whittling Whimsy*

**Whittling** is a time-tested hobby that is both relaxing and fun. However, starting out can be intimidating. This easy project helps you develop basic fundamental techniques and helps you build confidence in your abilities.

Completion of this decades old project requires all of the basic cuts: Stop cut, Push cut, Pull cut, Chip cut (basic triangular), and V-cuts. The project provides practice for whittling in-the-round to help develop 3D concepts.

Some whittlers claim this project can be completed in 3 minutes—others in 5 minutes, but experience says—35 minutes!

### **Supplies**

Materials	Tools
Wood: Basswood, poplar, or branch (at least 3" long; with square base) <i>Suggested: 1" x 1" x 3" or 1-1/2" x 1-1/2" x 4"</i>	Carving knife: basic bench knife Optional: U-gouge (1/4" #6)
Sandpaper or emery boards	Saw
Hardware: Small screw-eye ( <i>optional</i> )	Pencil
Finish supplies	Flexible ruler (6-in)

### **Scope**

The project uses traditional whittling skills to complete a whittling whimsy, blending the techniques of the *3-Minute Owl* and *5-Minute Owl* projects.

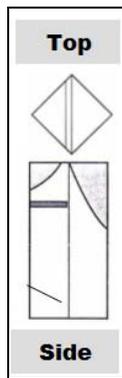
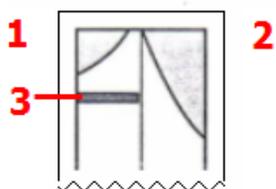
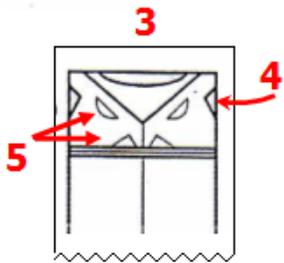
### **Pattern**

See *PAGE 5* for measurements and layout diagrams.

### **Objective**

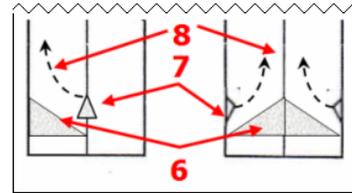
To complete an in-the-round project to boost rounding and basic knife skills and project process skills.

## Steps

Step	Directions	Image
1	<p>Selecting wood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use a basswood block, measuring 1" x 1" x 6" —OR— 1-1/2" x 1-1/2" x 4"</li> </ul> <p><b>Tip:</b> Adjust the measurements (<i>PAGE 5</i>) according to the block size; use any size block as long as it is square</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This provides a hand-hold while carving an owl on each end of the block</li> <li>■ When you finish the carvings, cut the block in half to yield <b>two</b> owls</li> </ul>	<p><b>Note:</b> This project does <i>not</i> require great detail. Experiment with different woods.</p> <p>Use <i>Butternut</i> for natural finished project?</p>
2	<p>Marking block</p> <p>Using your ruler and pencil:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Draw two lines on the top of the head to define the ears</li> <li>■ Draw and connect the lines Mark the bottom of the head and body</li> <li>■ Draw two lines from the front corner to mark the top of the feet</li> </ul>	<p>SEE PAGE 4 for block layout measurements</p> 
3	<p>Shaping head</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Using Push or Pull cuts— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Remove the triangles sketched in step 2 to form the front and back of the head (1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>◆ Leave 1/16" ridge at the top</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Use the cut best suited to the wood grain and your hand strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Using the knife point— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Make a shallow V-cut at the bottom of the head on the front sides (3)</li> <li>◆ Separating the head from the body</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
4	<p>Detailing head</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Using a shallow rolling concave cut, separate ears (3)</li> <li>■ Carve notches on each sides to define the bottom of the ears (4)</li> <li>■ Using the knife point— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Stop cut the eye sockets (5)</li> <li>◆ Cut notches to define beak (5)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

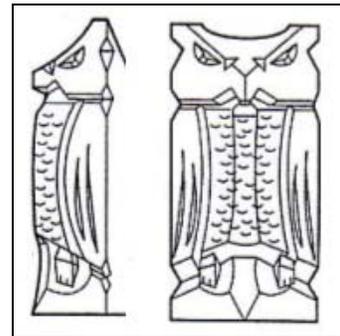
**Step** Directions**Image****5****Separating feet**

- Using a shallow V-cuts, separating the body from the feet (**6**)
- On the sides, cut notches to mark the bottom of the wings (**7**)
- **Optional:** Mark and cut the feet details (*SEE PAGE 4*)
- Using shallow V-cuts, separate the inside edges of the wings (**8**)

**6****Detailing and smoothing up**

- Deepen, round and smooth up cuts as desired
  - ◆ Chest and head
  - ◆ Feet and body
  - ◆ Wings and chest (under cut to emphasize)
- Using shallow Stop cuts add wing (feather) details
- Using a small U-gouge—
  - ◆ Put in chest feathers
  - ◆ Push in to eye slots to form pupils

**Note:** Add a dot with marker or pencil

**7****Taking two?**

- If you are whittling two owls on one block:
  - ◆ Repeat steps **2-7**
  - ◆ Cut the block in half to separate the two owls
  - ◆ Go to next step



If whittling only one owl—go to step 8

**8****Cleaning up**

- Smooth and round-up as desired
- Brush the carving with the toothbrush to remove loose chips
- Clean-up the fuzzies, sanding if desired
- Damp brush the carving
  - ◆ Using a toothbrush and soapy water
  - ◆ Pat dry and leave to dry
- Spray with quick-dry lacquer to seal the wood and let dry
- If whittling two owls, repeat

**9****Finishing project**

- If you want to save your block for show, apply a coat of clear matte lacquer or polyurethane and let dry (5 minutes)
  - OR—
  - ◆ Paint or apply antique gel (stain) and let dry— leave the bottom unpainted to show wood grain if you

Step	Directions	Image
	<p>wish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Apply antiquing gel (stain/wax) if desired—<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Apply with brush or dab on with cloth</li><li>▶ Wipe the gel down from the middle to the edges, feathering gel (stain or wax) to achieve a light-dark effect and allowing the gel to remain in or highlight the details</li></ul></li><li>■ Let all finishes dry overnight (10–12 hours)</li><li>■ Re-seal with acrylic sealer and let dry (5 minutes)</li><li>■ Optional: install the screw-eye if using as ornament</li><li>■ Sign and date the project</li><li>■ It is done!!</li></ul>	
<b>10</b>	<p>Displaying project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Use the owl as a tree ornament, bottle topper, or dust collector— add this to your gallery</li><li>■ Repeat this project several times to help develop your knife skills</li><li>■ Carve the project in other sizes to form a flock</li></ul>	

### Related Project

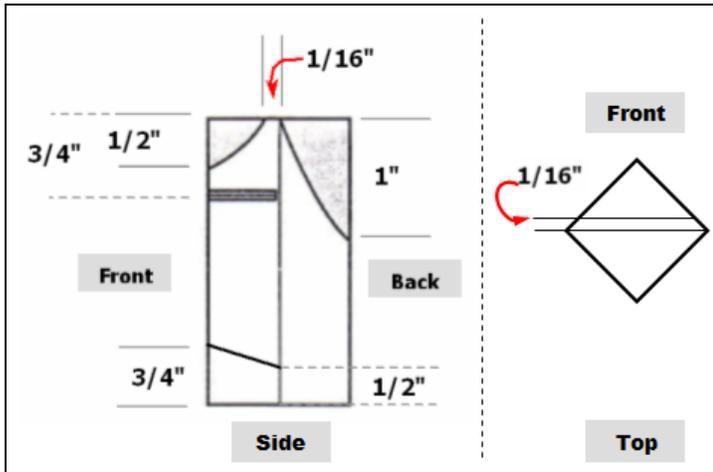
If you liked this project, ask for the *Whittling a 3-5 Kitty Kitty* project sheet.

## Patterns

### 3-Minute Layout

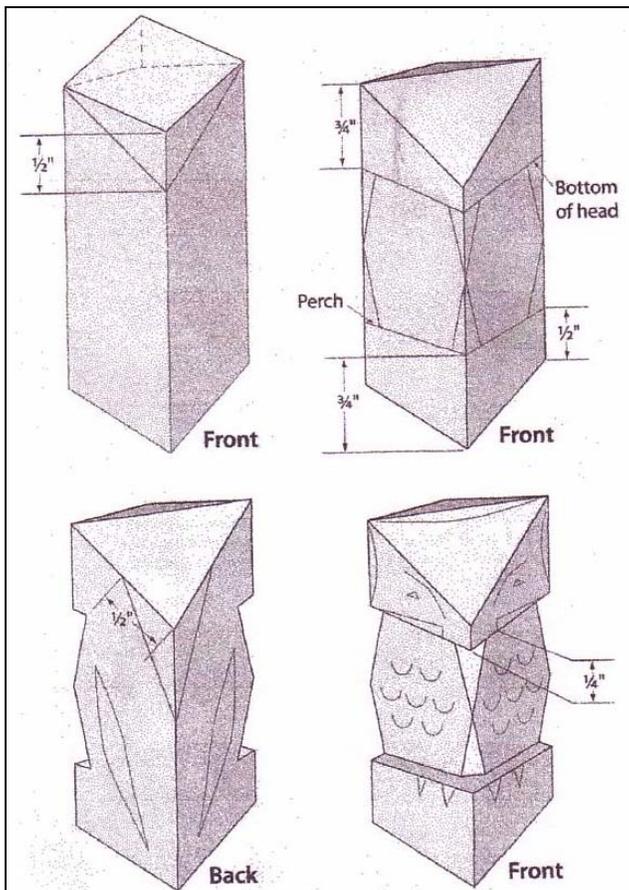
Use this diagram to layout your block.

- These measurements are based on a 1" x 1" x ±3" block
- Make adjustments according to the size of your block



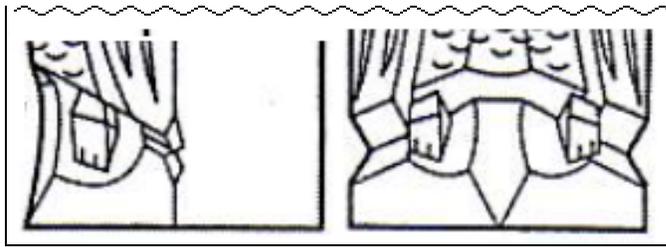
**Block Layout for 3-5 Minute Owl**

### 5-Minute Layout

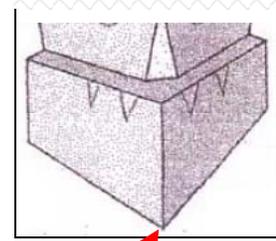


**Layout and Details for 5-Minute Owl**

## Foot Details



**Foot Details— Styles 3 and 5**



Optional cut:  
Use a V-cut to  
separate the feet.

## Resources

### Sealer

Any clear, matte lacquer available at home stores and WalMart paint departments

### Finishes

Watco® liquid wax: Available at Woodcraft, Lowe's (special order), and online at:

[http://www.woodnshop.com/Watco\\_Satin\\_Wax.htm](http://www.woodnshop.com/Watco_Satin_Wax.htm)

Paints and antique gel: check your local craft supply store

### Knives & Wood

Use the following list to locate suppliers for tools and materials. WD recommends these based upon reliability and stock availability.

Mountain Heritage Crafters	800-643-0995	<a href="http://www.mhcrafter.com">www.mhcrafter.com</a>
Woodcraft Shop	800-397-2278	<a href="http://www.thewoodcraftshop.com">www.thewoodcraftshop.com</a>
Smoky Mountain Woodcarvers	800-541-5994	<a href="http://www.woodcarvers.com">www.woodcarvers.com</a>
Texas Woodcarvers Shop	800-752-9781	<a href="http://www.texaswoodcarvers.com">http://www.texaswoodcarvers.com</a>
Little Shavers	206 767-7421	<a href="http://www.littleshavers.com/">http://www.littleshavers.com/</a>
Whittler Bob	N/A	<a href="http://www.whittlerbob.com">www.whittlerbob.com</a>

### Citations:

*Whittling a 5-Minute Owl*, Jan Oegema, Woodcarving Illustrated, Fall 2009

*Carve an OWL in just 3 minutes!*, Bob Reitmeyer Handout, August 2001

### Edited:

Whittle Designs

<http://whittledesigns.wordpress.com> ✂ <http://whittle.designs.tripod.com> ✂ [whittle.designs@gmail.com](mailto:whittle.designs@gmail.com)