

10 Ways You Can Make Money On Woodworking

Do you remember the days when people could pursue a regents diploma and go on to college instead of getting certified in a trade that would lead to an immediate job? In these days, a lot of factory and office jobs alike have moved overseas, so it is more important than ever to pick a trade that you can build a business around.

Given the number of disasters that can strike, a useful trade such as woodworking [can save your budget](#), or turn into a trade you can sell in time of need. Either way, woodworking is fairly easy to learn and adapt to a wide range of applications.

We found at least 10 ways woodworking can help you earn good money, or at least save some resources that otherwise would go to waste. Find them below, then start looking for the proper tools and practicing your skills to make your own money out of woodworking!

10 Ways to Make Money as a Wood Worker

There are tons of projects you may be asked to work on if you are skilled in woodworking, now or in a post-crisis world. Here are ten of them, and remember that you can easily specialize in just one of these categories or offer a wider range of service.

Start your business off as a sideline, and then expand from there. Even though most of your customers will be in the local area during a major crisis, you can still use the internet to market your products to a larger audience.

1. Repairing Furniture

I'm not the only person that has nailed a wooden chair back together or carried out other "minor" furniture repairs. It's no surprise that many people also think wooden furniture repair is the easiest of the woodworking trades to get into.

On the other side, even if the item is relatively intact, repairing the structure and then refinishing the surface can be incredibly complicated. In particular, if the repair is going to work, the wood moisture over time must match in the new pieces and the old ones. You will also find it quite a challenge to match the exact varnish color (especially if it has faded or changed over time) and surface quality.

2. Make New Furniture

Overall, you may find it easier and less time consuming to make new furniture from scratch. Try to create trademark designs or other elements that will grab the interest of prospective clients.

If you choose to make custom furniture, your capacity to create clear, attractive plans will also be very important. You may want to invest in a drafting table and better measuring tools so that you can create good quality sketches that your prospective clients can relate to.

Having a diverse supply of good quality wood is also essential for a business focusing on custom furniture. As you gain experience, you will organize your wood inventory by moisture matching levels and fits so that you can save a good bit of time between the planning and production stages.

3. Toys, Utensils, and Small Items

If you are going to make a profit on small items, you will usually have to produce larger numbers of items in a short period of time. Use the internet while you can so that you can sell to a larger audience.

Many people that focus on small household items also rent tables at local craft fairs and other venues where people interested in their products might show up. You will also find that interest in these items will vary with the seasons. For example, toys may sell best during the holiday season while wooden utensils may have more appeal in the spring and fall.

4. Building Construction and Repair

Overall, no matter how skilled you may be in woodworking, this is not a business you will want to go into alone. It is best to work with a team that has both good work ethic and skill so that you can meet the needs of your clients and maintain both good quality and safety standards. Before and after a major crisis, you are likely to find your services in high demand.

5. Replacing Plastic Items with Wood

If you look around your home right now, there may be all kinds of plastic trays, drawers, and tubs that you use for storage. Figure out now how to replace these things with wooden ones, and you might come up with a range of products that can be sold when plastic is no longer available.

Create your own trademark designs as this can give you a lucrative edge in the pre-crisis world as well as later on. No matter how bad a situation is, a business or products that becomes a household name will always be easier to sell than something from a relatively unknown source.

6. What About EMP Proofing?

Even though wood is an insulator, it cannot disburse an [EMP pulse](#). You can still offer wooden boxes that can be converted to [Faraday cages](#).

7. Boxes, Containers, and Storage

Aside from conventional boxes and containers, you can also create secret compartment boxes and furniture. You can make some very intricate designs from wood scraps and leftovers and still command a good price for the finished product. Of all the business options presented in this article, this is the easiest one.

8. Prototypes

It is truly part of human nature to try and invent new things. From better mousetraps to new car designs, you would be amazed at the number of things that can be made with wooden prototypes. While it may take a bit of extra work and time, you will enjoy the variety and challenges presented in this business option.

9. Weapons

If you do some research on indigenous weapons, you will find many uses for wood. In the post crisis world, the ability to make spears and other weapons is bound to be important as people move to use their time on other occupations.

10. Using Sawdust and Chips

Even though these are byproducts of woodworking, you may be

able to sell them to others for use as insulation or for other purposes.

What You Need to Make Money from Woodworking

First, you need some woodworking tools, but as you look at the list below, you will probably find out that you already have quite a few of them.

If you must buy new tools, or want to replace existing ones, try to improve the quality of your collection, even if you must search through used or vintage tools. Go with a brand name, such as Craftsman, that is recognized for producing durable, high quality tools.

Hand Tools

Most common tools that you might already have are block plane, chisels, hammer, hand saws (including coping saws which can be used to make curves) knives (X-actos and utility knives), level, saw horses, screwdrivers, tape measure, saw horse, goggles. You can add other essential hand tools to your collection, as the following:

- Calipers – no matter whether you are building furniture, toys, or other wood items, being able to create exact tolerances between two pieces of wood is very important. If you already do some woodworking, but do not have calipers, you will notice a tremendous improvement when you use these tools.
- Feather Board – used to finish off edges when cutting wood with power tools. I made my own from scrap wood, as do most other woodworkers.
- Hand Drill – even though most people use power drills, a hand drill is essential if you are concerned about situations where no power is available. You can still

purchase vintage hand drills that are still in reasonably good shape. Do not forget to include a bit that accommodates circular cutout tools.

- Layout Square (metal) – A layout square is a perfect combination of a protractor and 90-degree angle. You should also try to find one that includes an adjustable bevel so that it will be easier to plot other angles. Always choose metal measuring tools because they will not warp as easily as others.
- Moisture Meter – even though this is technically an electronic tool, it is still very important for wood working. When you do not know the moisture level of the wood and how it changes over the seasons, you will have a very hard time making wooden times that will be durable and useful. A moisture meter is also very helpful for testing wood out before you buy it.
- Nail Set – used for driving nails to just below the surface of the wood. Unsightly prints from hammer blows may not make much difference to you, however your clients will expect pristine surfaces on furniture and other items.
- Wood Clamps – there is no such thing as working with wood and not needing to keep various pieces stable while you work on them. Wood clamps will hold pieces of wood together without damaging the surfaces.

Power Tools

These tools can make wood working a lot easier, faster, and more precise, but they also require a good bit of power. Typically, you can achieve the same goals with hand tools as long as you develop your skills and have both the time and patience to apply those skills.

- Bench Grinder – you can use bench grinders to remove large amounts of wood or create curved shapes. Coping saws and files will do the same job, albeit slower. If

you have an especially thick chunk of wood, you can also use chisels and knives to remove the wood.

- Circular Saw – there is nothing quite like a circular saw for cutting straight lines fast. If you have the time and want to include some muscle building in wood working, handsaws will work just as well.
- Jig Saw – jig saws are usually best for cutting curves and circles, or working in tighter areas than recommended for a circular saw. Usually, coping saws will accomplish the same goal, but it will take a bit longer. You will also need to store away quite a few extra coping saw blades as they usually cannot be re-sharpened like traditional handsaw blades. When all else fails, you can also use files and knives to make curves on wood boards.
- Lathe – quite honestly, the lathe is one of my favorite woodworking tools, however I do admit that it's not a tool you can bug out with easily (unless you buy a smaller one that more than likely won't work very well). Lathes are used to produce rounded items from wood blocks. Rounded table legs, and many decorative items are made with relative ease using a lathe. You can still make these items with chisels and saws, however it will take a lot more time, and it will be much harder to get precision pieces from item to item.
- Metal Detector – if you are going to repair furniture or scavenge wood from other items, it is very important to make sure that power tools don't run into hidden screws, nails, or even staples. Aside from damage to the equipment, some very bad injuries can occur when bits of metal fly at you from broken blades or the metal object that was hidden in the wood.
- Rotary Tool – if you want a compact “one power tool does all”, a rotary tool is about the closest you will get when it comes to wood working. There are all kinds of attachments that will enable you to use a rotary tool as a sander, router, drill press, hand drill, and jig saw

(of sorts). If you don't need to cut through especially large or thick pieces of wood, a rotary tool can make the job go faster and give you a bit of extra accuracy in less time than if you were working exclusively by hand. Just remember that you can still do the same things with hand drills, hand saws, coping saw, files, and sand paper.

- Router – a router is used to make grooves and other shapes that do not go all the way through the wood. You can [make your own “hand” router](#) out of a chisel and block of wood, or other tools on an as needed basis. You may also still be able to find vintage hand powered routers at flea markets or online.
- Sander – typically, orbital sanders are recommended for wood working because they use a more random motion that reduces the risk of creating markings in the wood. Some of the finest surfaces you will ever find on furniture were made by hand sanding. Never overlook the simplicity of working by hand when it comes to sanding. A power sander may work faster, but there is never a replacement or substitute for skill and fine workmanship.
- Table Saw – as with the circular saw, a table saw is best for cutting large quantities of wood. If you have to choose between a circular saw and a table saw, go with the circular saw. Aside from doing similar jobs, you can always mount the circular saw to a table and then make your own guides so that you have something similar to a table saw.

Basic Skills to Master for Woodworking

Whether you choose to work with power tools or hand tools, you need to master a few essential skills in order to make money as a wood worker. These skills are not difficult to acquire; but you will still need to practice. Start off with cheaper,

softer cuts of wood or scrap, and then work your way up to better cuts and quality.

Some people do better starting off with larger sized projects, while others may be better served by working with smaller scale designs. I have personally found that both large and small pieces of wood can be quite challenging. It may not take as much strength or work to shape a smaller piece of wood, hand to eye coordination and precision are tested far more with smaller pieces.

Rather than concern yourself with the size of the wood, choose softer wood so that you can learn to control the tools more easily and develop good habits. So here are the more important skills that you need for woodworking:

1. Planning Projects

Let's say you want to build a cabinet. The worst thing you can do is simply measure the space where the cabinet will go and then go to the lumber yard for a few pieces of plywood.

Most, if not all wood working projects fail when people do not make detailed design plans before getting into the material acquisition process. You should know the measure for each piece of wood, the tolerances at each joint, how you will join the pieces together, and what kind of finish you will use once the pieces are assembled.

Maybe you aren't building something that can be taken apart again, you need to plan everything out as carefully as possible. Even if you are just replacing a leg on a chair, always have a solid plan of action so that you get the right materials and use the right tools.

2. Cutting Wood

It's fair to say that you will be doing a lot of cutting, so practice both straight cuts and curves. Always make your

pencil lines as sharp and precise as possible.

At the beginning, you may find it a bit hard to stay on the line, or within double lines. Just be patient and keep practicing. Eventually you will get the optimal motion for hand tools and learn how to adjust to the forward motion and proper pressure needed to keep power tools going exactly where you want them to.

If you are having an especially hard time, try to at least cut outside the line in the waste area. Later on, you can always file or sand the wood down to the exact size or shape that you need.

3. Carving or Whittling

This probably one of the most enjoyable parts of wood working. You can use knives or chisels to make just about anything of interest. Try your hand at hollowed structures as well as intricate interlocking, free moving designs.

As you work, think about how you can apply these skills to making jewelry, toys, tools/tool handles, or even special accents for furniture pieces.

4. Joining Wood Pieces

Cabinets, buildings, toys, and many other items will require joining pieces of wood together. The actual process of nailing pieces of wood together, using screws, pins, or even glue is not especially difficult.

On the other hand, choosing and preparing the wood can be quite complicated. Take care of how the wood shapes will change as moisture enters and leaves the wood. Even the best sealants will not prevent the wood from breathing and changing as the moisture levels in the environment change.

Judging wood moisture and predicting its effects is one of the

most important skills for woodworking. Contrary to popular belief, this isn't something you can do from just one measure. Rather, it can take weeks, months, or even years to evaluate different pieces of wood before you can be certain they can be joined together for furniture and other intricate items.

5. Pins and Other Joining Methods

Right now, nails, screws, and glue are readily available, which is not the case in the post crisis world when you need to join pieces of wood together, but do not have these fasteners on-hand. Fortunately, there are some fascinating methods from around the world that you can practice and use whenever needed.

Learn how to make and use wood pins, box joints, bridle joints, and trench joints. Once you know how to make these, you can modify them to suit just about any application.

Where to Get the Wood From

If you expect to make money on wood working, your ability to obtain and store wood will be very important. Most of the wood you will need to master basic skill can come from free wood pallets. Just go to local stores in your area and ask if you can have their used pallets.

As you gain experience, you should also be able to store away better quality wood in a shed or other area where it will stay clean and dry. Sometimes you can find good quality wood in the form of discarded furniture at the dump, or other places where people get rid of furniture. Even if you have to strip varnish and other finishes off the wood, it can still be used in a range of applications and also give you practice with harder wood materials.

In these times, you can still get wood from a lumber yard, or order from a wholesaler, but these options are not likely to

be available in a post-crisis world. More, simply trying to get wood from a nearby forest will put you in direct competition with others that want to use the wood for their own needs. In the long run, your best option is to create your own wood working orchard. Choose trees that will grow quickly, and [still produce wood](#) that will be suitable for a wide range of needs.

Grab your woodworking tools and start practicing your skills! You can start a business focused on small wooden objects or hideaway containers. As you develop more skills or find a team to work with, you can also expand into making furniture or even building homes.

Both now and in the post crisis world, woodworking is an important skill that you can profit from and use for your own needs at the same time.

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(That Most Of Us Have Forgotten)

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