

# Simple Carved Moldings



## Ribbon & Stick Molding

This is the trickiest of the four moldings. Beginners are often a bit heavy-handed and break out the wood. You are trying to give the illusion of a ribbon winding around a little central stick. This involves some relief carving.

Use the dividers to step out points along the molding at a width equal to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  the width of your fishtail chisel. If you use an 8mm chisel, the points will be 10mm (or  $\frac{3}{8}$ " ) apart. If you are using different tools, feel free to experiment with different dimensions.



**1**

**Outline the sides of the ribbon.** Use an 8mm #3 fishtail gouge to stab a winding cut around the bead, as you did in steps 1 and 2 for the rope molding. Be careful not to undercut the ribbon.



**2**

**Define the top of the stick.** Use a 14mm #1 fishtail chisel to flatten the wood between these cuts in every other unit. Take the wood down about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the bead height. Cut with the grain—you may need to work in the opposite direction. These "flats" form the top surface of the stick. If you find the fishtail chisel too wide, a regular, more narrow chisel will do—the important thing is to protect the edges of the ribbon and not to accidentally chip the edges.



**3**

**Rough in the stick.** Mentally divide the width of the flat into thirds. The middle third is the stick. With the chisel perpendicular to the blank, place the cutting edge along one of the imaginary lines so it touches the ribbon at each end. Rotate the handle of the chisel at an angle, so that the corner of the chisel moves in an arc and scoops out the wood along the imaginary line for the stick. Repeat the cut on the second imaginary line. This cut requires a bit of practice to master.



**4** **Make these cuts the length of the molding.** Remember, the deepest point of the cut is in the middle of the length of the stick, where you have plunged the corner of the blade down. Your goal is to get an even sense of the line of the stick passing from flat to flat by making controlled, matching cuts on both sides of the stick. It is important to keep the depth of the cuts consistent from one flat to the next.



**5** **Remove the chip of wood on either side of the stick.** Make a scoop cut with the corner of an 8mm #3 fishtail gouge. As you make this cut, bring the handle back towards you so the other gouge corner arcs down to meet the stab cut alongside the stick. This cut releases a chip of wood shaped like an orange segment. Work all along one side; then work back along the other side. When you have finished both sides, the stick will be clearly visible.



**6** **Shape the sides of the ribbon.** Use an 8mm #3 fishtail gouge to make two vertical stab cuts from the edge of the stick to the quirk to define the edge of the ribbon. Work along one side from end to end, and then work on the other side. Keep the line of the ribbon edge flowing. Slide a 14mm #1 fishtail chisel along the quirk to free the chip, similar to the chip you removed when carving the pea molding.



**7** **Add the final ribbon detail.** Run a little groove with a 2mm #11 gouge along the center line of each section of ribbon. It should be heavier in the middle, fading away as it winds around to the quirk. This line not only adds a little flair to the molding, but it also helps the viewer see the winding nature of the ribbon. A similar embellishment would serve the same purpose if added to the rope molding.

## materials & tools

### MATERIALS:

Several pieces of 3/4" x 3/4" x 24" basswood, mahogany, or wood of choice

### TOOLS:

Holding jig, hot glue, or nails (to hold the molding)

Router with bead cutting bit

Carving tools: In this case, I've listed my reasons for my tool choices; that way, if you do not have the same tools, you'll be able to adapt your design to the tools you have.

Pfeil cut #8 7mm gouge (Sheffield List #8 5/16" gouge)	The sweep of this gouge is a little narrower and flatter than the arc of the astragal.	
Pfeil cut #1F 14mm fishtail chisel (Sheffield List #1 1/2" fishtail chisel)	If you read through the projects first, you'll see you'll be able to substitute a non-fishtail chisel.	
Pfeil cut #3F 8mm fishtail gouge (Sheffield List #5 x 5/16" fishtail gouge)	Fishtails are light and delicate, the tools of choice for decorative work like moldings.	
Lockable dividers	To "step out" the repeat units of carving.	