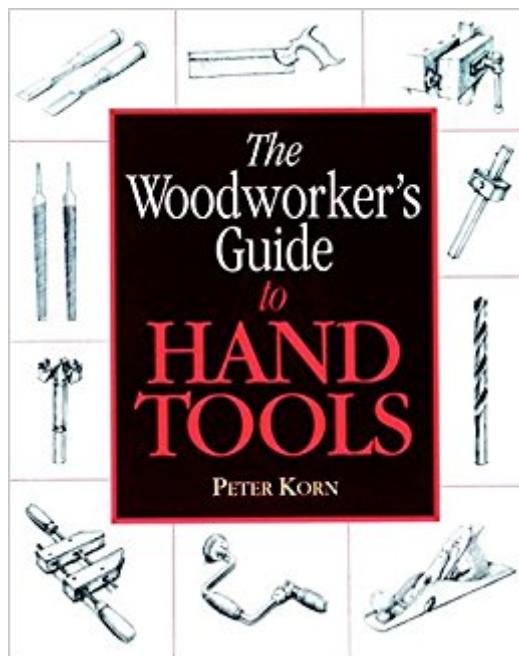


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# The Woodworker's Guide To Hand Tools



## **Synopsis**

Hand tools are essential to woodworking, but, unlike power tools, they don't come with detailed owner's manuals. Think of this book as the missing manual for your hand tools. Peter Korn covers virtually all the hand tools in the modern woodshop. For convenience, tools are listed alphabetically within chapters organized by function (abrading, cutting, planing, sawing...). Beautifully illustrated, *The Woodworker's Guide to Hand Tools* explains: what each tool is used for which tools are essential for your shop how to recognize quality when buying tools how to tune up tools for top performance and, in many cases, how to use each tool efficiently

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Known for its well-researched and produced books and magazines, the publisher has produced yet another winner. Korn's new work, detailing the nuances of tools and handwork, is as subtle yet comprehensive as his earlier *Working with Wood* (Taunton, 1993). In ten chapters on individual procedures in woodworking, Korn provides the basic information that generally comes with the purchase of power tool but is often missing with a hand tool. He fully explores differences between power and hand tools with clear prose and detailed but unobtrusive illustrations. There are many fine power-tool handbooks available, and the present volume can comfortably stand with the best. Recommended for collections with strong hobbyist demand. —Alexander Hartmann, INFOPHILE, Williamsport, PA

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With power tools being hot and sexy and, no doubt, hotly desired, it is refreshing to see a book about tools that are literally unplugged. Korn relays just about everything about the tools to use when the only form of power at hand is elbow grease. Returning to the days before the electric table saw and router may be desirable for some, yet if they want to go really sans electric, they must be willing to search seriously for some of the tools Korn discusses and to put out, too, for the likes of the chisels he presents, which, made in Japan, aren't exactly cheap (price tags can exceed three figures) but, perhaps, are geared more to the collector than the craftsman. The average weekend warrior stands to gain some historical perspective from the book, even if only for the sake of knowing what that mysterious piece spotted at the local warehouse is really good for. Jon Kartman

Got this because I liked Korn's book on Woodworking Basics - this is as much a 'fun' book about a wide variety of tools as it is a 'how-to' book. Out of print now, and the same information can probably be obtained by diligent google searches. Still happy to have this on the shelf as a reference, particularly for tools I may never actually obtain.

This book lives up to its title, along with good writing and excellent organization of its content. Each category of hand tool is clearly identified and explained. I especially enjoy how the book describes the tool's proper use, and more importantly, how to keep it working at peak performance with practical tune-up instructions. It's the best hand tool book I've encountered. If interested in gaining knowledge about hand tools and how to use them as well as how to maintain them, this is the book for you.

Excellent manual of hand tools and how they are used; their advantages and disadvantages. Peter Korn is excellent.

I wanted a source for using hand tools rather than power tools, and this book does that very nicely. Mr. Korn is very thorough in covering just about any type and style of hand tool. Now to put his knowledge to work.

Very tasty

Other reviewers are correct, other books have better detail. Especially, there are approaches that

use newer technology with far more currency. The value of this book is the discussion behind the tool. Peter thinks. He thinks about why things work. He's seen enough fine craftsmen to know that his way is certainly not the only way, and that any number of odd approaches seem to produce exceptional results. Combine this book with his *Woodworking Basics* and you pretty much have the content of his two week course at his school in Maine. Remarkably, what you will get out that course is not an expert ability to cut dovetails or sharpen chisels, it the comprehension of why you do what you do. There is a difference between education and training. Education gives you comprehension that allows you to extend what you know into areas you may not know. Peter's forte is education, and it is reflected in this book. I use it all the time.

Korn's book is a somewhat helpful introduction to various hand tools, though it focuses more on listing, defining, and classifying hand tools than it does on showing how to effectively use each tool. He does give information about use, though it is often more basic than the serious hand tool enthusiast needs. I suspect that Korn is accustomed to using woodworking machines and that hand tools are secondary in his workshop. Also disappointing is the fact that he is not always aware of the potential advantages of older tool designs. For instance, he claims that the leg vise has no advantages over other types of bench vise, though many other woodworkers have suggested that this is not true, the leg vise being especially suited to heavy pounding, as well as being cheaper to buy and easy to install (much of which he would know if he were aware of the tool's history as a blacksmith's vise). He also lists the sloyd knife, a Scandinavian carving knife, under "marking knives" when it is clearly a carving knife that might occasionally be used for marking--a quick perusal of something like Drew Langsner's *Country Woodcraft* would have corrected his mistake. He also ought to have read Roy Underhill's *Woodwright* series to round out his bibliography. Korn does include a helpful overview of sharpening methods in one of his appendices. If one were to buy only a few books on hand tools, this would not be a first choice. It contains some good information from an experienced woodworker, but on the whole there are more detailed treatments of hand tools available in print. Try Aldren Watson's *Hand Tools: Their Ways and Workings* for a more thorough and engaging treatment of the topic.

This is an excellent introductory book for someone new to woodworking, or someone new to hand tools. In fact, I would strongly encourage someone new to woodworking to read this book first and learn as much as they can about using hand tools prior to spending any money on power tools. Some of the tools and techniques are obviously obsolete given the development of power tools, but

read on. You will be a better craftsman for it. The illustrations in the book are clear and well thought out and I have found them to be very useful. This book would also make an excellent gift for a young person interested in woodworking, but unsure of where to begin.

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