

Creative Woodworking

by John Gay

The dictionary defines creativity as “characterized by originality and expressiveness: imaginative.” Creativity is a huge tent—there is so much more to doing something unique than the dictionary describes. You can see this each and every month with the Show and Tell. So where does the inspiration for all these finely crafted pieces that we see each month come from?

There are many sources. You can see some plans for a project, maybe a photo of a unique piece of work, perhaps it can be something that you need. Perhaps someone will show you a picture of something that they want you to build. Great sources of inspiration, ideas and dreams are all over the place. We have a large selection of inspirational gallery books in our library. Finding something is the easy part. The hard part is taking an idea and turning it into a completed object. So let's say that you have a wonderful picture of something that you feel will make a great addition. Where do you start?

Sometimes when you make something from a photo you need to rely on what feels right, instead of

hard, known dimensions. How do you start? The first thing that I do is to determine a unit of measurement. I am not thinking in feet and inches, or metric or any other solid way to measure, only in units. So try to find something that you can relate to and use as a reference. Trying to come up with exact dimensions at this point would only lead to complications down the line. The unit of measurement that I found for this project is the width of the drawer pulls. With this unit, I can draw a grid on the project. Thus begins the measurements.

After drawing a grid over the project, I can assign a value to the unit of measurement. In this case, the drawer pulls happen to be 3" long. Then the grid is made of 3" x 3" squares. So with a solid grid, I can now proceed with all of the little details. All of the elements eventually fall into place.

Remember, this is your project now and make it for you first. There are many things that you can do to make this your one-of-a-kind piece. We have several books in the club library about furniture, sizing and standards for everyday use. Check one out.