

## Peg Board

In my county, chair rail mouldings are common in older, traditional houses. Local people would make peg boards from leftover moulding material. A peg board is a piece of moulding with several pegs. The peg's tenon must be seated very tightly in the moulding.

If the pegs are very dry, 4 to 5 percent moisture content, and the moulding is 10-12 percent moisture content, the hole shrinks and strengthens the joint. To control the moisture there are pin-activated moisture meters that are handy and time-saving. This construction method, together with the wedge and the shoulder, creates a very strong joint if it is done accurately.



Birch peg board.

**Tools** Axe or froe, drawknife, gouge, knife, chip carving knife, V-tool, brace and bit, and smoothing plane

**Material** Dry, straight-grained birch (*Betula*) for pegs. Hard, deciduous wood for wedges. Green, straight-grain birch for moulding.

### THE MOULDING

Split out the peg board from the green blank. Shave it flat with a drawknife in the shaving horse or use a scrub plane and a jack plane at a workbench.

The moulding's profile should be roughly hollowed out with a gouge in green condition because the wood is easier to work. When it has dried to 12 percent, plane and carve the moulding again to remove any raised fibers or distortion. Decorative carving can be added at this point, for example, a V-shaped notch made with chip carving knife or V-gouge. (See page 47 for more on moisture content.)

Use a rubber band for spacing the peg holes. Mark lines on the rubber band with a ballpoint pen

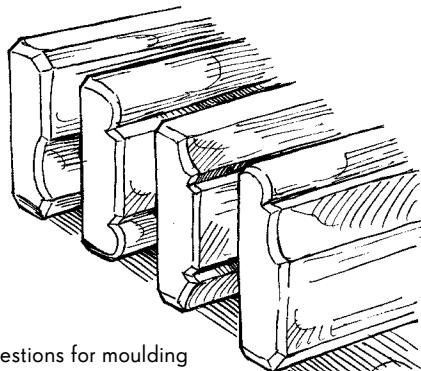
at intervals of approximately 1cm (3/8"). Stretch the rubber band so the markings are evenly distributed across the moulding. Mark holes for the nails or the screws, preferably between the two outermost pegs on each end.

**Drilling the holes** Bore from the front of the board, using a brace and bit or a twist drill. In order to bore straight you can tape a line level, which is a small spirit level, on the bit and fasten the moulding horizontally in the workbench. Position your body to align the bit at a 90° angle to the moulding. Bore, checking for level now and then. Stop when the tip of the bit goes through to the back. Turn over the blank and bore from the other side. That way, you avoid ugly tear-out.

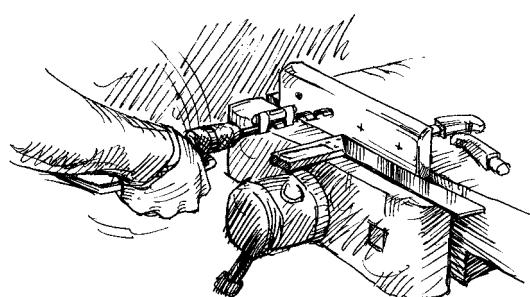
### PEGS

The peg design can vary. It is a good idea if they are bent up at the tip to prevent the bag or jacket from sliding off. There should be a shoulder on the tenon to make it stronger. If you want, place the shoulder at the lower edge only. If you choose this option, you need a rectangular blank.

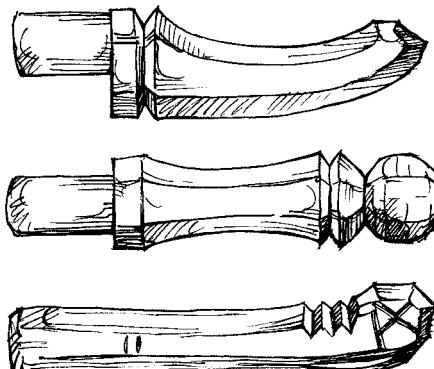
You can read more about carving methods and knife grips in the previous chapter. Decorate the moulding before you fasten the pegs. (See Chip Carving, page 96.)



Suggestions for moulding designs and profiles.



Use a line level on the drill bit to easily maintain a 90° angle.

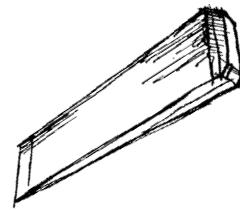


Examples of pegs. If you want a curved peg, you must make sure that fibers are unbroken from the tenon to the tip to avoid breaking under stress.

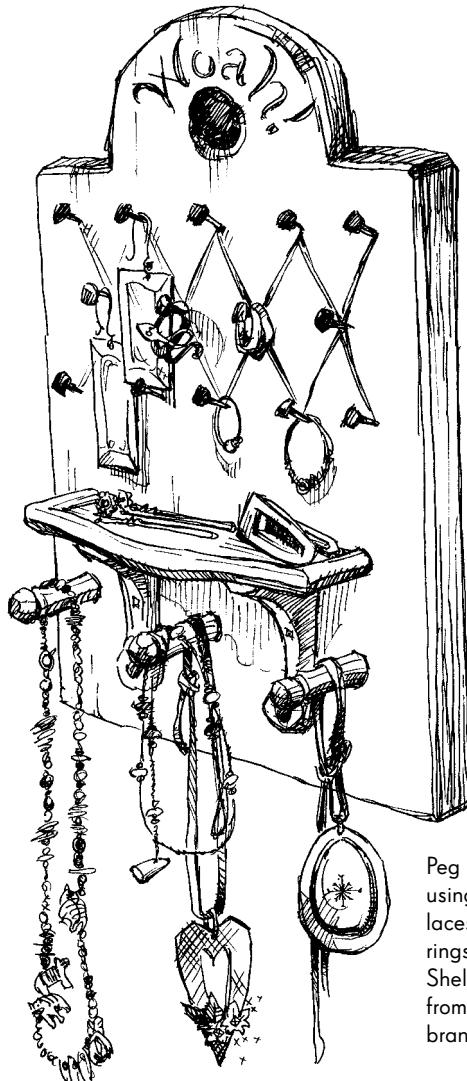
**Wedging** Cut out the wedge material from a piece of hard deciduous wood (see page 43 for the properties of woods). The wedge angle should be between 3° and 4° with a secondary bevel at the tip. The wedge mustn't be concave or convex.

Saw off the tenon, flush with the backside of the moulding. Make a scoring mark on the tenon with the knife at a 90° angle to the fiber direction of the moulding. Make sure it "responds," that is, that the tip of the peg supports itself on a firm foundation. Add a small dab of wood glue near the tip of the wedge and drive it in firmly until it doesn't go any farther. With the tip of the knife, scribe a line on each side of the wedge and break it off.

Bevel the back end of the wedge so it doesn't split when you drive it with the hammer.



If the tenon is too small, there is a risk of splitting in both the moulding and the peg. Cut the tenons flush to the moulding with a knife or a flat gouge. Carefully choose colors and take the time to paint your peg board using a thin coat of artist's oil paint.



Peg board for jewelry using knobs for necklaces and nails for rings and earrings. Shelf brackets made from small crooked branches.