

# Wood Burning



## Students will:

- Learn new techniques using various woodburning tools
- Express themselves through creative woodburning
- Gain familiarity with woodburning as an artform & craft.

# What is wood burning?

Wood burning also called Pyrography is the craft of touching wood with a heated poker to produce decorative burn marks, achieving a large range of decorative effects.



# History of Wood Burning

Wood Pyrography, is also called “pokerwork.” The term means “writing with fire” from the Greek words “pur” ( fire) and “graphos” (writing).



# History of Wood Burning

People have probably written with fire since fire was discovered.

How many of you have tried this?



# History of Wood Burning

The process has been practiced by a number of cultures including the Egyptians and African tribes since the dawn of recorded history.



# History of Wood Burning

In early 19th century it  
was used for  
decoration and  
classified as “Folk Art.”

1736 Artist Unknown



# History of Wood Burning

Artists such as Robert Ball Hughes and J. William Fosdick gained some acclaim for their pyrographic works during the second half of the 19th century, but the greater part of work in this medium was done by women in the home.

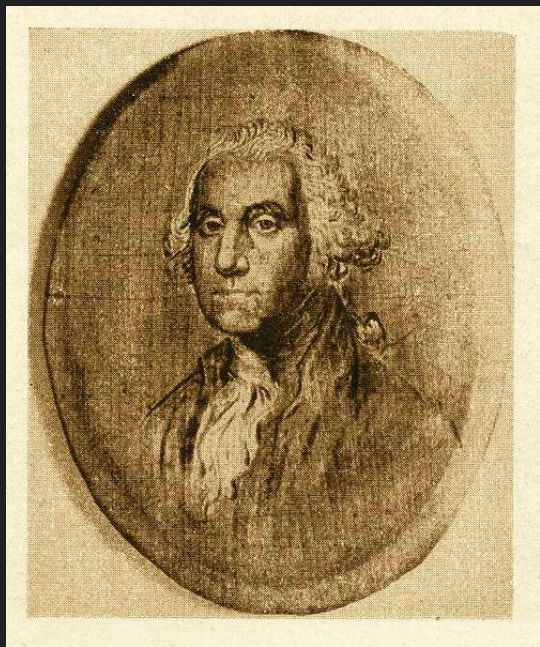


*One of the Witches of Macbeth*  
by R. Ball Hughes, 1840



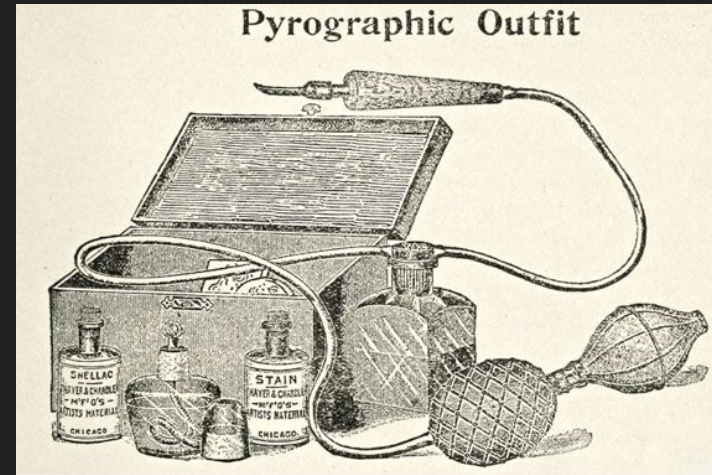
# History of Wood Burning

Artists such as Robert Ball Hughes and J. William Fosdick



# History of Wood Burning

- The greater part of work in this medium was done by women.
- Books and magazines of the time urged women to beautify their homes through handiwork — china painting, embroidery, beadwork and many other crafts.



# History of Wood Burning

- Unsurprisingly, many of the pieces created in the years around 1900 were in the Art Nouveau style.
- Generally characterized by flowing, sinuous lines and natural motifs, pyrography from this period was often decorated with flowers such as poppies and poinsettias, leaves, vines, and fruit.
- Objects such as this Nouveau Table were made 1900.



# Modern Day Wood Burning



A large range of shades can be achieved. Varying the type of tip used, the temperature, or the way the iron is applied to the material all create different effects.

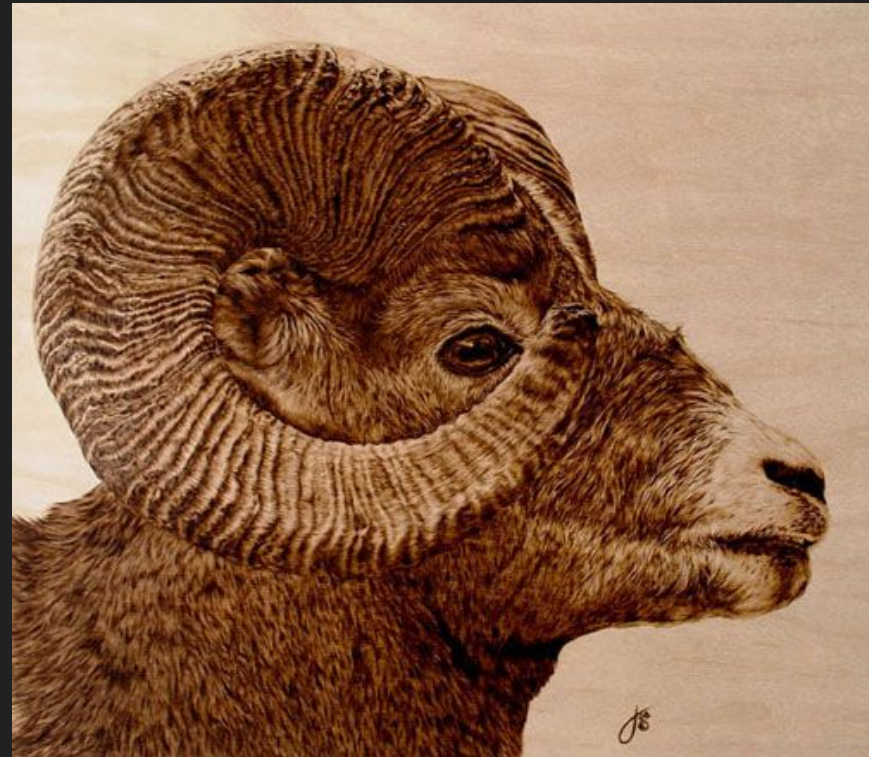


The White Horse, pyrography on [poplar](#)

After the design is burned in often images are colored. A variety of woods can be used beech, basswood, birch, sycamore are fine wood used for their light colors. However, maple, oak and pine are also used.



The Tawny Eagle. Davide Della Noce pyrography

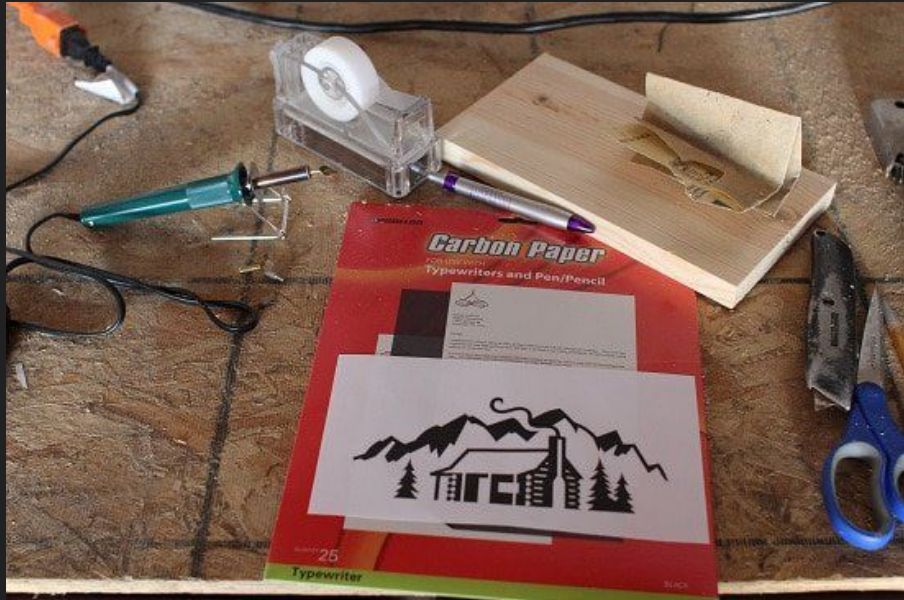








# Materials



Decorative piece of wood - you only get 1 piece, circle or square format.

Pencil, ruler, carbon paper and masking tape to make and transfer the design.

Sand-paper to prep the wood.

Woodburner with various tips for burning the wood.

Lastly, water colors, spray finish

# Step 1: Image Procedure

1. Search for an image of an animal or creature up close head view.
2. A image with a lot of texture, hair, scales, patterns to recreate. Image must be realistic. NO cartoon like images or word allowed
3. Image should be as large as possible it is hard to woodburn small images.
4. If you can draw well, draw the animal yourself, otherwise go to the Library and print out the photo in black and white sized to fit your wood shape. You can also use your home computer and printer.



## Step 2: Prepping the Wood



To prep your wood, if it's a "raw" piece like this, you'll want to sand it very well, and also decide which way you want the grain. It's much easier to burn with the grain than against it.

## Step 3: Get Familiar with the Tool



A woodburning pen is a very simple tool. It's a pen-like device with a metal end through which heat is transferred to a removable tip. With any kit, you'll get 4-7 different tips for various methods of burning: straight lines, rounded lines, shading, etc.

# Step 3: Get Familiar with the Tool



outlines



packed dots



random curl



ball tip



scrubbie



packed lines



dark fill



looped tip



simple shade



edge shade



short line shade



spear shader



detailing



short hair



edge shading



curved shader

Get a piece of scrap wood, plug in the woodburning tool and let it heat up for about 5 minutes, and test out “drawing” on the wood with the various tips just like you would with a pencil. It’s that simple. (Be sure to let the tool cool down for 5 minutes before changing out tips; it’ll then have to be heated up again for a few minutes.)

The key is to go slow and steady. If you’re jerky, it’ll show. If you go too fast, the wood won’t really burn like you want it to. Just like the tortoise, slow and steady wins the race.

# A Few Safe Pointers to Keep in Mind...

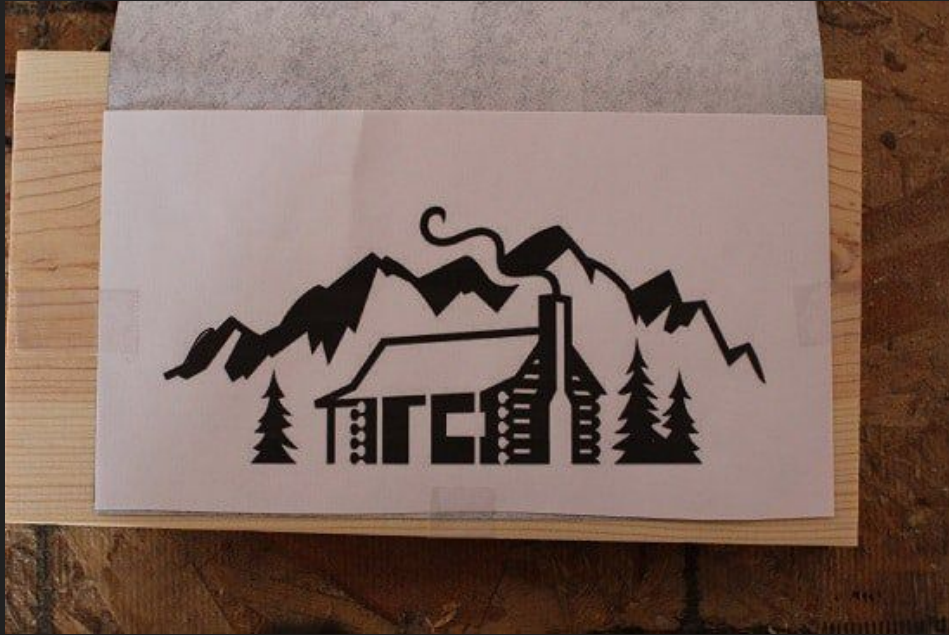
- Keep a wet paper towel on hand to wipe off the end of the tip every once in a while as residue from the wood builds up.
- If you're getting a lot of smoke, the pen is too hot. Try turning down the heat for a smoother, smokeless burn.
- Be mindful of safety. The tip gets extremely hot — several hundred degrees F, at minimum, in fact. So when the tool is plugged in, always be mindful of where the hot metal end is. Be sure it isn't touching anything and always have it resting on the metal stand when not in use.
- When changing tips, use pliers wrapped in electrical tape, as the tips stay hot for a long time.

# Practice on the Back of your project

1. You will watch a demonstration on what to practice.
2. Sign your name with the wood burner. (print or write cursive)
3. Practice making vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines.
4. Practice making curves
5. Then use a ruler and draw 6 one inch boxes.
6. Hatch lines in same direction, show 3 boxes with different values.
7. Cross Hatch lines show 3 boxes with different values.
8. Stipple dots and show 3 boxes with different values.

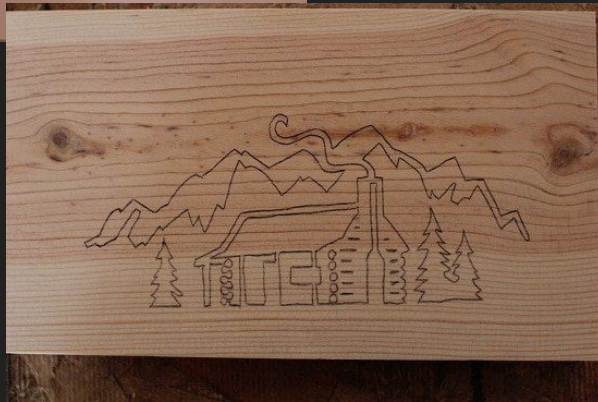
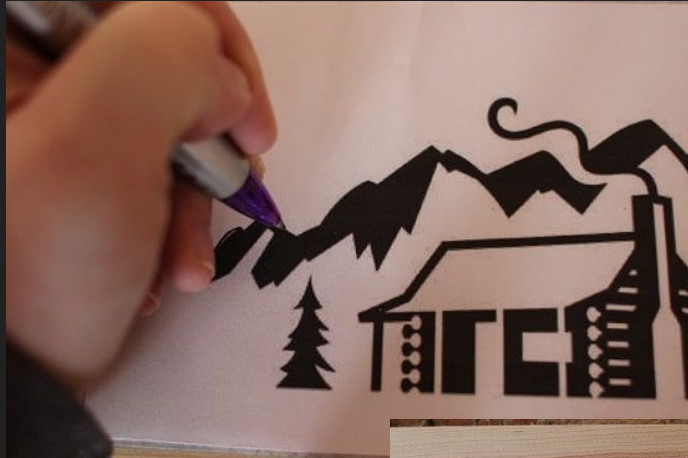


## Step 4: Transferring the design to the Wood



Tape your cut out design (a photo copied image is fine to use) to the carbon paper, and then to the wood. Be sure image is large and fills the wood and that the carbon side is facing down.

## Step 4: Transferring the design to the Wood



Use an ink pen to transfer the design from the carbon paper to the wood. It will produce a black outline of your image.

## Step 5: Burn the Outline

Check out videos by the same artist below. She will show you how to burn all kinds of things such as animals noses, whiskers....



## Step 5: Burn the Outline



Watch the video then use the smallest tip to make burn the outline.

Remember to go slow.

Always place pen in metal pen holder. Go with the grain as much as you can

## Step 6: Add the details and Shade



Once you have the outline done you will use the tips to shade, add texture and details. The most points will be given for textural techniques used hatching, cross hatching, stipple and areas that show value changes.

## Step 7: Final Touches (Optional)

Once you are done burning use watercolor pencil to add light hint of color to your work. DON'T use bold color that will distract from your wood burning.

