

Make

Willie Worm



The appeal of wooden toys seems universal and this was a hit with my young grandson. The idea came from Richard Raffan's excellent video "Turning Toys" and I have added a few embellishments of my own. This wheeled bug is pulled along with a cord which runs the length of the wee beastie.

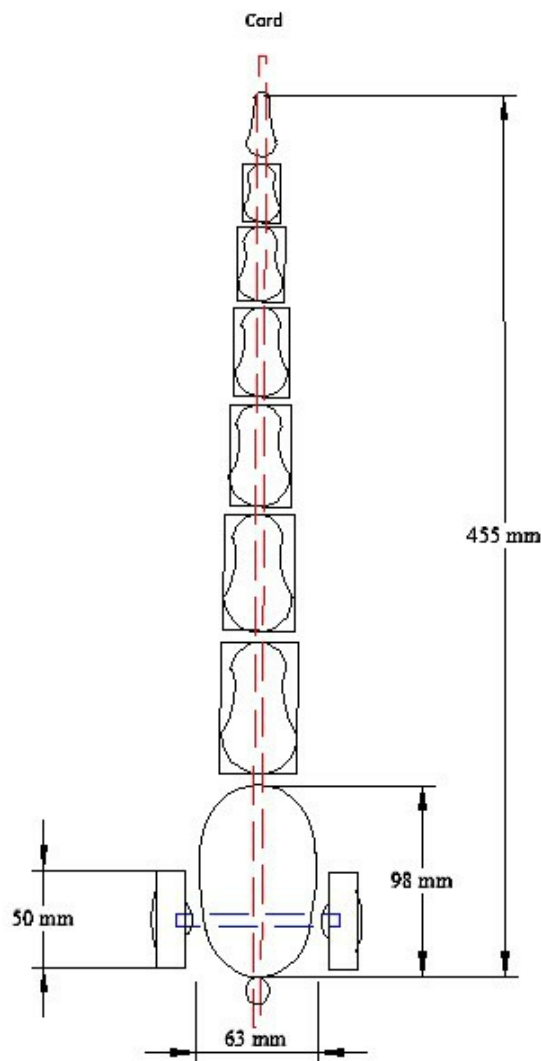
John Hawksell

Start by gluing a piece of sycamore or maple to one end of the square spindle blank you plan to use for the bug face. Next drill a couple of holes.

The first hole (blue on the plan) is 9 mm diameter and will accommodate the axle dowel. The second hole, at centre height, (red on the plan) runs longitudinally through the body and takes the cord. The diameter will vary according to the cord used. Don't make it too tight but do ensure that these two holes are well clear of each other.

The hole for the axle, needs to be below the hole for the cord. This is important because if the axle is placed too high up Willie will need larger wheels than those shown to allow the body to clear the

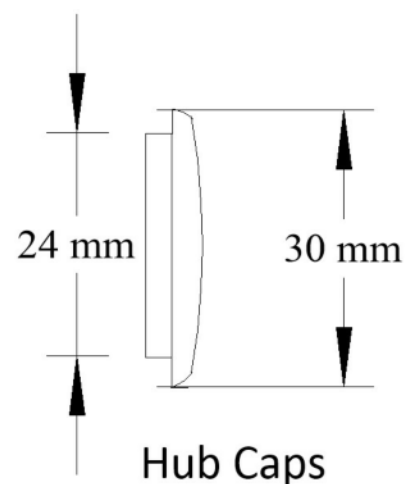
Sizing the 6 "vertebra" presents a bit of a challenge to ensure that they shrink in size as you move towards the end of the tail. To assist I have put them in boxes which get progressively smaller. If you turn the blank to the sizes shown in the table below before you start shaping it should work out correctly. As a rule of thumb the rear of each vertebra is about 4 mm narrower than the front. For example the first vertebra when finished has a diameter of 44 mm at the front and 40 mm at the rear.



Size Guide for the Vertebra (mm)

| No | Width | Length |
|----|-------|--------|
| 1 | 44 | 68 |
| 2 | 41 | 60 |
| 3 | 36 | 53 |
| 4 | 32 | 46 |
| 5 | 29 | 38 |
| 6 | 24 | 30 |

Before turning each vertebra drill a hole for the cord. Using the hole as the centre when turning will ensure the vertebra are aligned



Obviously the maple or sycamore wheel hubs and the face insert are optional but they add to the appeal of this toy. With the wheel mounted in a chuck drill a recess in the side about 24 mm in diameter and glue in the maple disc. Once the glue has set shape a shallow dome on the surface.

A food safe finish is required such as boiled linseed oil but any mineral oil will do.

You are now ready to thread the cord and put a knot at each end. Using pyrography and/or paint, decorate the wheels and put a friendly "face" on the bug.